

# THE HOSPITAL Guardian

Volume 7 Number 2

Fall 1987



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# THE HOSPITAL Guardian

"In humble dedication to all those who toil to live."

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By Jack Gerow

**T**he Social Credit Government under Bill Bennett introduced the "restraint" program in 1982.

This program was dressed up to look like a strategy that would balance government revenues and expenditures. It was supposed to maintain government services and provide reasonable compensation to public sector workers.

Almost from the beginning, however, a number of political analysts declared it was more than just a way to control expenditures. These government watchers concluded that the program was much more insidious. It was really designed to restructure society in order to preserve and expand profits for big business, even at the cost of public rights, public services and public employees.

Since 1982, of course, big business has continued to gain new levels of profit. And at the same time, public rights, services and employees have gone by the wayside.

Even though this trend continues, even though working people and small business continue to struggle in order to survive, this provincial government seems relentless in its drive to maintain its hold on power by rewarding its friends in big business with a restructured economic and social order.

And now in 1987, just five years after "restraint" was introduced, we are faced with another Sacred reward-the-friends tactic presented by Bill Vander Zalm.

This time it's called "privatization".

Most working people and small business owners know that "profitization" is a more accurate expression to describe what the provincial government is up to.

When the government in Victoria boasts about bringing more free



## *'Free' has its price*

enterprise to B.C. through privatization, most British Columbians know what that really means.

"Free", means that if you are a big business, you are free to buy successful, money-making government corporations, productions and services at fire sale prices. This way, you can make even more excessive profits — even if it is at the expense of the worker, the taxpayer and the user of the service.

If you are a small corner store owner, "free" means the freedom to go bankrupt because there are too many workers who have lost their jobs and too little disposable income. Free also means that you're free to compete with the concentration of corporate power, as has happened with the advent of the mega shopping stores.

If you are a student, you are "free" to buy your own textbooks because the government is selling off its revenue producing crown corporations and, claims it cannot afford enough money for proper education.

If you are a mother with an

infant child requiring specialized health care, you are "free" to go with your child to Alberta to receive that health care, because it's not available here in B.C.

If you are a senior in a long-term care facility, you are "free" to sit long and lonely hours strapped to a chair waiting for an over-worked aide to find enough time to care for and comfort you.

If you ever require hospital care, you are "free" to look forward to the Americanization of B.C.'s health care system. Because that is what privatization will do to B.C.'s health care system.

At first, the steps will be barely noticeable.

Relief jobs will be contracted out. Management functions will be contracted out. Eventually whole hospitals will be contracted out to the private sector. Health profits will have to be made, so services and staff will have to be cut-back even further. And then you will be "free" to spend your savings, if you have any, on hospital bills.

You will be "free" to enjoy a health care system just like the Americans. In the U.S. there is a standard for the rich and a lower standard, complete with hardship, for those who are not rich.

Just as restraint was a disaster for our province, so will privatization be a disaster, but even more so.

Once a crown corporation is sold, once a public service is privatized, you can rest assured that big business will also get ownership of the money-making government enterprises as well. And with their friends in government, there is no need to think that there will be any government reluctance to sell out — big business is paying the piper so it will call the tune.

Even though the government appears to be hell-bent on selling British Columbia to the highest bidder, they will find sooner or later that most British Columbians don't want to be privatized, don't want to be profitized, don't want to be Americanized.



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...of room for a within wall

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# FOR SALE: ONE PROVINCE ... CHEAP!

**T**hat short statement contains two brief and dire warnings to the people of British Columbia.

Although not intended as such, we should take them as words of caution from Premier Bill Vander Zalm. Speaking to the media during a three-day summer caucus meeting, the Premier described a government move to bring B.C. closer to the edge of a massive privatization scheme.

Judging from what little is known about the Socreds plan for privatization, it will no doubt cause a lot of excitement. Look at all the excitement the Socreds caused with their new labor reform legislation earlier this year.

As a point of fact, Bill 19 was the first real step towards privatization. Without curtailing the democratic rights of the work force, privatization would be very difficult. Prime crown corporations and government services are made all the more appealing to potential buyers when unions are no longer around to protect the workers.

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*"It's very exciting,  
but it's very secret."*

*Premier Bill  
Vander Zalm/  
August, 1987*

---

As a businessman-politician, Vander Zalm is enamoured with the steps toward privatization taken by Britain's Conservative government under Margaret Thatcher.

Vander Zalm makes no secret of his admiration for the concept of privatization. Before the elections in England earlier this year, Vander Zalm credited Thatcher's wholesale hawking of government enterprises with turning around the sagging British economy. And he candidly added that it would probably get the British Tories re-elected.

But reports from England say

that country has lost almost two million manufacturing jobs since Thatcher came to power in 1979.

Unemployment in Great Britain remains high, while the manufacturing output of the country is below 1979 levels.

But as Vander Zalm predicted, the British Conservatives did get re-elected.

There is strong evidence from economists that, contrary to turning around the economy of the U.K., privatization could be the final death rattle of the once mighty British Empire.

Nonetheless, the details of the Vander Zalm plan are expected to closely parallel the British, where it is Thatcher's intention to reduce government ownership in public corporations by up to one half by 1988.

Closer to home and by the Premier's own account, the implications of the privatization conspiracy will be greater than any other bill introduced by his government.

As far as being secret, that's nothing new. The Socreds have

operated in a clandestine manner since they hoodwinked the electorate with empty promises and were whisked into power last fall.

**Sacred talk of privatization is nothing new to B.C.**

Even though he will be long remembered for uttering that B.C. is not for sale, former premier Bill Bennett wanted nothing more than to divest his government of the corporations (like the Insurance Corporation of B.C.), established during the NDP's reign during the early 70s.

In 1983, he succeeded in selling off Beautiful B.C. Magazine, the glossy tourist promotional publication that has gone on to make more money for its new owners.

Under Bill Bennett, there was the predominant belief that the government's place was not in competition with private enterprise.

His government maintained that profit was for the entrepreneurs and it was the duty of the government to provide only those services and goods that could not be provided by a company bent on turning a profit.

Making money was the realm of businesses; spending money was the empire of governments.

But Bennett knew when to stop. He didn't go so far as privatizing B.C. Hydro (established by his father, W.A.C. Bennett, in 1961).

The provincial power company was formed by the elder Bennett to take advantage of Federal tax laws and develop the power potential of the Peace River.

Today, B.C. Hydro has more than \$8.7 billion in assets and annual sales in excess of \$2 billion. It even manages to make a few million dollars a year profit for the provincial treasury.

For his part, Vander Zalm is ready to sell off not only entire crown corporations, but parts of them as well.

---

*"Nothing is  
protected.  
Everything  
is up for  
consideration.  
We have  
an open  
mind on  
privatization."*

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The spectre of B.C. privatization re-emerged when Premier Vander Zalm visited Ottawa in May of this year and proudly told Prime Minister Brian Mulroney that everything the B.C. government operates is being considered for sale.

In a news conference at that time, the Premier told reporters, "Nothing is protected. Everything is up for consideration. We have an open mind on privatization."

Vander Zalm went on to say that even hospitals and B.C. ferries are possible targets for privatization.

Not one to let facts get in the way of an ideal, the Premier tried to claim the reason for the move towards privatization was lack of profit. "We don't have a crown corporation that makes money. We don't have a crown corporation that breaks even."

Shooting from the lip, or perhaps stunned by the bright newscamera lights, the Premier appeared momentarily unaware of several crown corporations that not only

break even, but make lots of money as well.

For 1986-87, the Liquor Distribution Branches poured \$400 million into the provincial coffers. Both ICBC and B.C. Hydro have also had profit-making years and the B.C. Lottery Corporation returns are being plundered to bail out Expo '86.

It came as a surprise to all of Canada, and to British Columbians especially, that B.C. would be the first to sell out.

Earlier this year, Intergovernmental Relations Minister Stephen Rogers was given a mandate by the Premier to compile an exhaustive list of all government agencies, corporations, business interests and programs.

The work by his staff culminated in a 4,000 item list in a binder four inches thick.

Rogers also traveled to Great Britain to observe, consult and conspire with the architects of the British privatization plot.

And since then, Rogers has hosted several contingents of British privateers intent on getting the job of flogging the first of B.C.'s crown corporations.

In mid-August, the Socreds met at Qualicum Bay for a three-day caucus meeting. The most pressing and far reaching topic on their agenda was an item-by-item discussion of the lengthy list compiled by Rogers' office.

Emerging from the meeting, a smirking Premier offered little more than a smile and has kept British Columbians in the dark ever since, promising a report from the privatization task force some time in October.

"Political gambles, that's been my life," said the Premier.

There's no doubt in anyone's mind that this time the maverick Premier is gambling with the livelihood of thousands and the common property of all British Columbians, now that he's taken it upon



himself to divest the province of its business assets.

When the government begins its fall sitting in mid-November, the main topic for legislative debate will be privatization.

Vander Zalm has already boasted that privatization is a key element of the Socred grand design. "Unless we deal with that (privatization), there's really not much point in having a fall session."

The Socreds expect expeditious passage of the privatization legislation. Vander Zalm is so confident and intent on the bills passing that he has boldly stated that he expects the session to be brief, although he is ready to force the MLAs to sit right through the Christmas holidays if necessary.

Unfortunately for British Columbians, the results of the Socred privatization master plan will be devastating as the prospects of more unemployment, higher taxes, cuts in social services and a loss of control loom before us.

Like Thatcher's England, the initial injection of money from the sale of our crown corporations may seem to both temporarily alleviate financial strain and reduce the provincial debt. It might even get the Socreds re-elected.

Privatization will be a boon to the owners of private businesses, who will benefit from the removal of competition and regulations created by the government. It is the large private businesses that are just waiting to snatch up crown assets and companies at fire sale prices.

When Vander Zalm said his plans for privatization will be very exciting and very secret it sounded as if he was talking about a new kiddie ride for his fun park.

As the rightful owners of the crown corporations, British Columbians should have the final say in whether or not they want to take that ride.

## What is privatization?

**E**verybody's doing it ... France, Italy, Germany and the United Kingdom. They've all jumped on the privatization bandwagon to sell off crown corporations and other government services.

Most recently, the privatization fever has spread across the Atlantic, as the Federal government and the B.C. Socreds face-off to see who can flog the family silver fastest.

As with most things that our elected representatives do, there are two schools of thought with regard to the advantages or disadvantages of the program.

Advocates of privatization see it as a way to remove the government from the operation of businesses, so that profits go to people in business. They feel governments have no right to compete in the business world and that governments should devote all their energy to running the country.

Critics of the plan however, view privatization as an immediate, one shot chance at reducing the present government's own deficit. This move sometimes results in the economy getting a misleading momentary boost. After taxpayers' money has gone towards building up the assets and the successes of the government enterprises, the government decides to sell them off without the consent of the real owners. Critics also warn about increased taxes or the end of government services, like health care, workers' compensation, unemployment insurance and welfare if privatization is brought in. Those services were never intended to make a profit and are financed, in part, out of the returns from profitable crown corporations.

A simple definition of privatization is the selling of the government's control in businesses and programs to the private sector.

European governments have had

the privatization bug for quite some time, although the most talked about form of privatization is the "Thatcherization" of the United Kingdom. Canada is taking its cues and lessons from Great Britain and following in the footsteps of the British Tory plan.

According to Dr. Madsen Pirie, president of the far right British think-tank and architect of the British Privatization scheme, the sale of government businesses is usually carried out in any one of six ways or combinations thereof:

- 1) Break the public company into component parts and sell only the profitable parts.
- 2) Sell off 51 per cent of the company and wait until that portion becomes profitable and then dump the 49 per cent of the government's interest.
- 3) Sell the government enterprise to the employees.
- 4) Give the company away so the government can cut off funding for it.
- 5) Repeal the government monopoly and force the crown corporations to compete with private enterprise.
- 6) Contract out the various support services presently done by government workers.

For Canada and B.C. however, the following three methods will most likely be considered and incorporate many of the features mentioned above.

They are:

### DIRECT SALE

A direct sale to an outside party is just as the term suggests: where a company or service is sold to an individual or another corporation. The sale of de Havilland Aircraft Co. to Boeing and Canadair to Bombardier are recent Canadian examples of the direct sale approach.

This method is often favored by governments when a decision is



made to unload a burdensome or costly enterprise. Rather than risk injecting any more capital into an ailing company, the government will sell the firm and assets at a tremendous loss and even retain the accumulated debts of the company if need be.

The direct sale approach also works well with profitable companies. In this case, governments end up settling for far less than what a company is worth in the long run, just to get out of the business.

The companies that snag profitable government enterprises during fits of privatization are the real winners. It is a guaranteed, sweet deal.

### EMPLOYEE PURCHASE

Employee purchase occurs when the government offers employees the first crack at buying the company. Pacific Coach Lines, the company which runs the bus link between Vancouver and Vancouver Island, is an example of this type of privatization.

This method of sale usually works well and is based on the theory that employees will work harder for a firm in which they have a personal financial interest. This theory doesn't concede that steady work, job security and a paycheck from an employer also qualify as financial incentives.

Some marginally run companies have flourished when privatized under this scheme, although it is unclear whether the employees worked harder or simply ran the company better than did the government.

Other companies sold through employee purchase have folded or go on receiving steady injections of capital from the government. And in a privatized country, taxes, not revenue from crown corporations are used to keep the sinking companies afloat.

### PUBLIC SHARES

Public-share offering is the third of the conventional ways in which governments divest themselves of business involvement. In this



Inside postal workers protest Federal government decision to privatize portions of Canada Post.

instance, the government places shares on the open market so the public can become involved in buying a part of a crown corporation that they already collectively own.

Analysts and critics believe this method works best when the initial shares are placed on the market below their real price. For the public, this undervaluing of the shares results in an almost immediate rise in their value and keeps the purchaser pleased. The government is then able to distance itself from the sale and can then blame any subsequent fall in value as due to the very nature of the stock market.

This clever little marketing scheme gets those taxpayers with money to purchase something they already own. And for the rest of society, unable to purchase the new shares, the revenue from the company is gone once it is sold.

Bill Bennett's sale of the British Columbia Resources Investment Corporation is an example of the above type of sale gone terribly wrong.

Regardless of the way in which a government succeeds in ridding itself of business involvement, several things are inevitable. Once the businesses and services are gone, then so are the profits, the

revenues and the control.

And with the loss of earnings from lucrative government enterprises, the burden of social programs is shifted solely to the backs of taxpayers.

Profits and revenues can, in theory, be recaptured under tax schemes, but seldom are and never to the degree when the companies are government owned.

Likewise, control remains an elusive goal. One of the strongest arguments for privatization is the belief that private industry can manage the companies better than government. And better in this sense necessarily includes a minimum of government interference and therefore, no controls.

But then the losses in profit, revenue and control appear to be the price politicians are willing to pay to free themselves from the burden of running both businesses and country.

Selling something that doesn't belong to you can net a jail term and a criminal record, yet the Socreds are planning to do just that. In a mad attempt to rid themselves of all business involvement and patronize private enterprise at the same time, the Socreds are selling British Columbia right out from underneath its real owners.



# Welcome to privatized health care



It's three in the morning when you're jarred awake by crying in the next room.

Your seven-year-old, who went to bed early because he wasn't feeling good, is drenched in sweat and complaining of a stomach ache.

His temperature is just over 104, and you can't raise your doctor through his answering service.

There's nobody else to call, so you wake up your 10-year-old daughter and tell her that you're going to the hospital and that she better come along too.

You bundle up the sick child and carry him out to the car while your half asleep daughter follows with the car keys and your purse.

The hospital is only three miles away and there's no traffic so you reach the hospital quickly, and drive completely around the building before you find a parking place near the front entrance.

With your child in your arms and your daughter trailing wearily behind, you're met at the door by a security guard.

He won't let you pass... unless you can prove that you have private health insurance valid at the hospital.

"I'm sorry ma'am. Our Emergency Ward can only treat people

with the proper health care insurance. It's privately owned and operated. You'll have to take your kid to the general hospital across town."

Cursing the man, the government, the doctors and the owners of the hospital, you can only turn around and head for the other facility.

Parking there is a nightmare.

Your son's fever seems worse and your daughter is sound asleep in the back seat of the car. Once again, you wake her and with your youngest in your arms you walk to the emergency ward.

It is packed.

There was a bad accident on the bridge and an early morning apartment blaze. You sit on the floor with your son on your lap and your daughter resting her head on your shoulder. Only one person is at the emergency desk, so you sigh and prepare yourself for a wait of an hour or more. Meanwhile, the people ahead of you, without the proper papers, argue and swear at the admissions clerk who patiently tries to explain the procedures.

The wait there is only eclipsed by the wait to see a harried intern who can only give you and your children a slightly quieter place to

sit in a gloomy waiting room, while she goes off to find another intern for assistance.

As dawn breaks, so does your son's fever. The doctors say there is nothing more they can do and give you some medication to help the lad rest.

You and your two young charges are sent on your way.

That little foray into the privatized health service not only cost you a night's sleep, but will yet cost you at least half a day's pay.

From the time you get home and put both your children to bed, you will have to find a sitter, phone your work and explain why you'll be late and write a note to your daughter's teacher.

Privatization of health care will be like that.

It will open doors for private health insurance companies, so that those who can afford it will receive the best medical care money can buy... in addition to the care that everyone else is entitled to.

Today, in spite of cutbacks, Canada's health care system is still one of the best in the world. Under privatization we will be lucky if the health care system, as we know it, survives at all.





# The history of Crown Corporations

**T**he pros and cons of privatization can best be dealt with by examining the circumstances which led to government involvement in the world of business in the first place.

Crown corporations have always been effective in bringing a country together while ensuring equal treatment for all citizens. Governments are often the only organizations with enough capital to take on enormous, high risk ventures to provide a service to constituents.

Crown corporations allow governmental control of key industries and keep foreign competition in check.

Government-run businesses are often the only way in which large, uneconomical enterprises can be operated. They also provide

employment to every corner of the country and all sections of society.

The threat of privatization places all the above at risk if crown corporations and government programs and services are sold off.

Using Canada as an example, the large crown corporations like CBC, Canada Post and Air Canada were started as ways to link the country together.

Unifying Canada has always been the task and the problem of the Federal government. And in the past, no private enterprise could either afford, or was willing, to put up the tremendous costs of blanketing the entire country.

The Federal government, with an almost unlimited base of funds (taxes), was the only organization capable of financing such an effort.

The injection of money has also resulted in billions of dollars worth of assets bought and paid for by taxpayers' money. Apart from the cost, crown corporations are not without their advantages to governments as well. Being a monopoly, Canada Post charges whatever is necessary to keep the mail moving and even if there is a deficit, the taxpayers pick up the tab.

As a service, the post office should not have to break even or make a profit. Taxes are paid and collected to go towards providing the service.

The cost of the service is not important. What is critical is that all Canadians are eligible for, and receive, the service.

Even crown corporations that don't monopolize the market have



their virtues.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation enables the Federal government to keep a strong hold on the country's airwaves, while at the same time setting the standard for private business ventures.

### SOVEREIGNTY

An important offshoot of this strategy is the maintenance of our sovereignty by keeping American radio and television signals at bay. Cultural sovereignty through the airwaves is still an important issue in Canada and was being considered in the negotiations for a free trade deal with the United States.

As far as sovereignty and unity are concerned, cost is no object. Profit for crown corporations is an irrelevant term as the benefits to the citizens are placed before any monetary gains.

Government services were never intended to make a profit. It is favorable when they do, but not critical when they do not. Some government enterprises were developed by governments solely because they cannot be made profitable, but are important to people. These services, such as health care and pension plans, could never exist to the present extent in a free market system.

Another crown corporation worth noting is Air Canada. For the last 50 years, the airline has provided air service to the far corners of Canada. Places too far or not profitable for private airlines to service, get regular flights from Air Canada or one of its subsidiaries.

To deal with the cost, Air Canada uses the money from its profit making flights to subsidize the money losing or more costly runs.

Similarly, yet on a smaller scale, British Columbia's crown corporations provide services that would otherwise be too costly or out of the realm of private enterprises.

B.C. Ferry Corporation links

Vancouver Island with the mainland and is subsidized with taxes to the tune of \$43 million a year (1984-85).

It is abundantly clear that no private company could stay in business with losses like that. Under private ownership, access to Vancouver Island would be both expensive and less frequent.

But not all crown corporations are a drain on the government's treasury. The Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC), begun by the NDP government in the early 70s because private enterprise wasn't doing an adequate job, turned a \$73 million profit in 1985.

And B.C. Hydro, which received no government subsidies in 1986, had a \$16 million profit on \$2.094 billion in revenue.

Both of these corporations provide a huge boost to the economy as well as providing thousands of jobs to British Columbians.

Crown corporations make good economic sense, regardless of whether or not they end up in the black every year.

Federal tax breaks for provincially owned companies work out in favor of the provinces.

Crown corporations enable the provincial government to exercise limited autonomy from the rest of the country and exert strict control over the guarantee and quality of their services and products.

Without crown corporations, Canada would be flooded with foreign based companies, intent on making a dollar at the expense of Canadians.

National unemployment would skyrocket as a consequence of privatization. The sale of crown corporations would make turning a profit the prime motivational factor for the new owners.

Reducing the work force is the first move companies always make when their attentions are turned to maximization of returns.

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Canadians can expect a rapid decline in the quality of goods and services as the result of privatization. And the poor will suffer the most.

For example, without the government's control over a service such as health care, only the wealthy will be able to afford to pay for quality care.

For those who cannot afford the high cost of private medicine, the government will still have to foot the bill and operate public health clinics and hospitals.

But in a privatized industry, even the government will have to pay the going price for specialized services for the needy.

Another example of what to expect as a result of privatization will be the dropping of unprofitable air routes to remote communities. Those routes deemed essential will require, and receive, massive government subsidies to be maintained.

### MAD DASH

Contrary to the ideology behind the formation of crown corporations (as the bond that holds the country together), the current mad dash to sell off government businesses and programs is a frantic and panic driven move to reduce government debt.

Now that Canada has been developed and is linked together via air, rail, road, radio, satellite and telephone, the governments want to sell the crown corporations. The Federal and Provincial governments want to sell off the billions of dollars of assets bought with taxpayers' money to decrease the current government deficit they helped create.

Privatization is a one time chance to recoup a small amount of the loss. The debt will be reduced, but not eliminated.

And once all the crown corporations are gone, so too will be the geese that lay the golden eggs.



# WHO SPEAKS

**R**ealistic, equal, active for life. As an acronym, that is what the R.E.A.L. in REAL Women stands for. But as far as the rest of the Canadian women's movement is concerned, it's what REAL Women is opposed to that is causing problems.

A sort of "mom and apple pie" organization for Canadian women, the group is as misleading as its name.

REAL Women claims its primary aim is to promote, secure and defend legislation which upholds Judeo-Christian views of the traditional marriage and family.

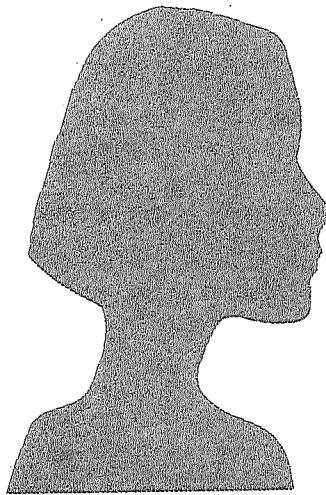
And that is why other Canadian women's organizations, such as the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), are rallying against the group.

In their policy papers, REAL Women have come out against free choice on abortion, no fault divorce, affirmative action, equal pay for work of equal value, homosexuals and the concept of universal daycare.

What disturbs the Status of Women is that the above list contains many of the concepts that other women's groups promote and have been fighting for since the 60s.

At issue here, say the members of REAL Women, is that "traditional" women's groups fail to represent all Canadian women and those women who fall between the cracks of the predominant feminist ideologies are also entitled to fair representation and government funding.

In response, the NAC says that the vast majority of Canadian women are represented by the multitude of other legitimate women's groups. And with only limited funding available from federal sources, it is vital that the



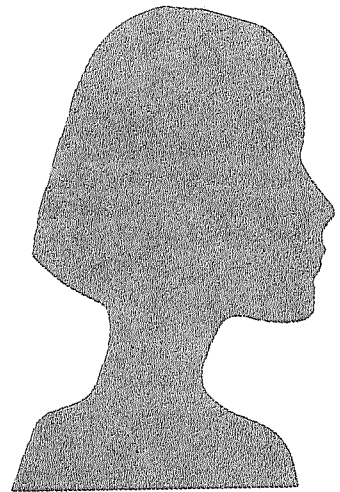
money be used to represent the largest number of women possible and not frittered away on fringe groups representing only a small portion of women.

The battle between REAL Women and supporters of the NAC has resulted in two distinct camps, both vying for the limited amount of federal funding available from the Secretary of State's Women's Program.

On the one side is REAL Women: a small, but vocal group started in Toronto in 1983. Members see themselves as conceivers of a new branch of feminism that will carry the struggle of women into the 21st century.

Unlike the feminists groups ("radical, anti-family feminists" they call them) that sprung up during the 60s and 70s, REAL Women say they are devoted to the concept of family life... the Judeo-Christian family life. They firmly believe that fragmentation of the Canadian family is one of the major causes of disorder in today's society. They also claim to be non-denominational, yet offer no explanations as to why the Judeo-Christian family unit is the model of their choice.

In the skirmish between the two



groups, REAL Women say they represent a broad spectrum of women not included among the ranks of the "militant feminists."

On the other side is the NAC, the umbrella organization that lists approximately 500 member organizations throughout Canada and reports a membership surpassing several million women, which had its beginnings in Toronto around 1966.

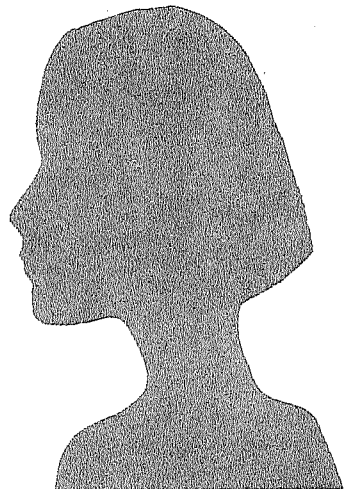
Since then, the NAC has been active in all facets of Canadian feminism, including the formation of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in 1967, which marked a turning point in the Canadian women's movement.

For the past 20 years, the Status of Women has been heralding the rights of Canadian women and has been committed to promoting equality between the sexes wherever inequality is found.

As far as the NAC is concerned, REAL Women is staffed and supported by a group of upper middle class, right-wing elitists, with no concept of the real problems facing Canadian women.



# FOR WOMEN?

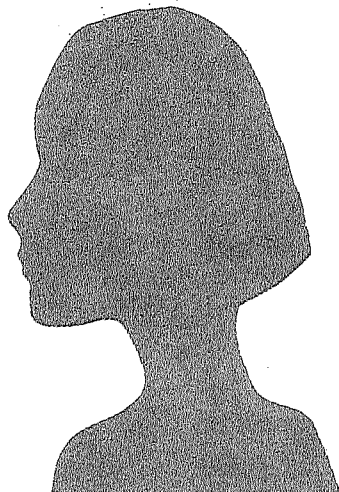


As a result, in the four years since REAL Women was founded, the NAC has been tireless in its all out assault on the group. And to this end, the NAC has been very successful in gathering the support of the public in questioning the credibility of REAL Women and in keeping REAL Women from obtaining federal funding from the Women's Program.

The latest round of confrontations between the two rival groups emerged last winter at the Standing Committee on the Secretary of State review of the funding criteria of the Women's Program.

In the year and a half preceding the hearings, REAL Women had complained to the Secretary of State that their application for operational funding to the Women's Program had not been dealt with in a fair, competent and courteous manner.

REAL Women's first request, \$1,138,500 for operational funding in mid-1985, had been rejected by



the Secretary of State. The second solicitation for funding was a drastically smaller amount (\$566,620 in mid-December of 1986), and was later also turned down.

Secretary of State David Crombie said the refusal was because REAL Women's application failed to fall within the guidelines set out by the program. The Women's Program requires a proven ability in project management before operational funding is approved for any group. REAL Women has no such record.

While the second request from REAL Women was being considered, both REAL Women and affiliate groups from the NAC, including the B.C. Federation of Labor, presented their cases to the Standing Committee of the House of Commons.

The NAC's case was designed and written to explain why government funding of groups such as REAL Women "... would be illogical, counter-productive and harmful to the women of Canada."

In the NAC's 34-page presentation, the Status of Women accused REAL Women of outright misrepresentation of its views to garner financial support from the government.

In summing up its case, the NAC also inferred that the motives and objectives of REAL Women were contrary to the general principles expressed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and were not in line with the Canadian government's stand on the concepts of international human and women's rights.

Partially as a result of the strong case put forward by the NAC, REAL Women lost their second request for funding under the Women's Program guidelines.

The NAC can take some of the credit for the Secretary of State's decision. It was a major victory in the fight to prevent funding from going to groups that do not promote equality and the concerns of women.

But the war is far from over.

REAL Women can still apply for operational funding, providing its objectives change to fall within the Women's Program boundaries. That is still a distinct possibility and one that other women's groups have not discounted.

Since last winter's defeat, REAL Women has all but disappeared from public scrutiny, amid rumours of discontent among its affiliate groups.

But that doesn't mean that the rest of the women's movement has forgotten them.

REAL Women claim they are merely remaining low-key in order to regroup and reassess the current situation.

REAL Women's B.C. Representative Peggy Steacy says the group is presently undergoing some major internal organizational changes, has not disbanded and that they will return.

And when they do, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women will be ready.

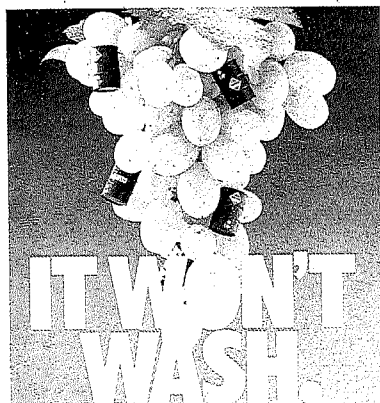


## Wrath of grapes review

HEU is doing what it can to support the United Farm Workers in their boycott of California table grapes.

In early August, UFW president Cesar Chavez forwarded a request to the Provincial Executive asking that HEU provide office facilities for a UFW organizer. Her task was to circulate copies of the 14 minute video titled "Wrath of Grapes."

Ailsa Rands, a Saskatchewan member of the UFW, worked out of the Provincial Office for a week and used the time to update local

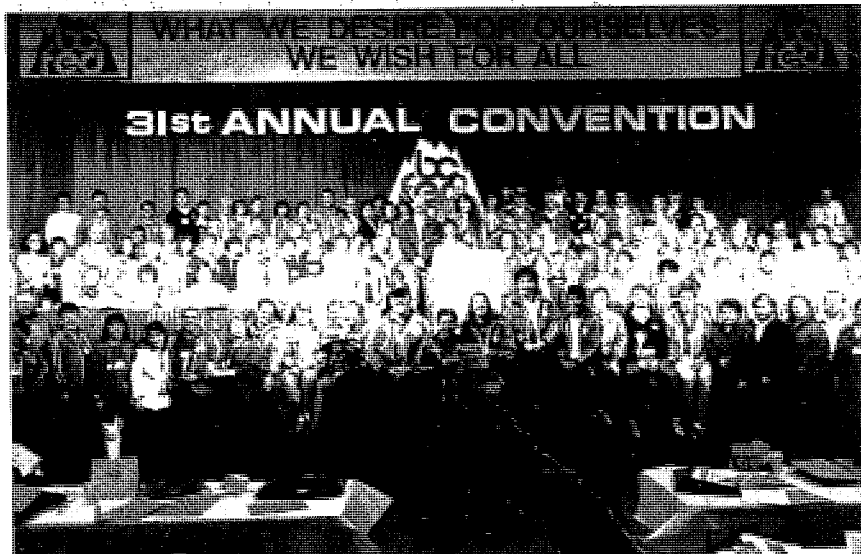


unions and community organizations of the ongoing boycott. During her short stint, Ailsa managed to distribute 500 copies of the video.

HEU units are invited to request a copy of the video from the Provincial Office. The superbly produced and informative presentation, narrated by Mike Farrell (B.J. Hunnicutt from M\*A\*S\*H), explains in graphic detail the horrifying conditions facing farm workers.

Working under hazardous conditions, United Farm Workers

## 32nd annual convention



HEU delegates attending the 31st Annual B.C. Fed Convention in 1986.

More than 1,000 trade union delegates from 83 affiliates and 750 locals are expected to converge on Vancouver for the 32nd Annual B.C. Federation of Labor Convention. This year's convention falls on a non-election year and will run between November 30 and December 4, 1987.

At *The Guardian* press time, the B.C. Fed was 99 per cent certain that this year's convention will take place at the Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre.

Discussion of Bill 19 will likely dominate much of the upcoming convention, as will subjects like

privatization, contracting out and the recent free trade agreement.

The B.C. Fed Convention is held every year to give affiliates the opportunity to meet and discuss Federation policies. Members also gather to debate new resolutions put forward by the various locals.

This year's convention is the third in a row for the Hospital Employees' Union. At press time, delegate selection for HEU's 180 delegate entitlement for the convention was underway.

Coverage of the 32nd Annual Convention will appear in the next issue of *The Hospital Guardian*.

members report being subjected to poisonous chemicals by their employers.

To make matters worse, the California state government appears to have sided with the grape growers by ignoring laws aimed at protecting workers.

The UFW wants the government of California to put an end to the use of some of the more than eight million pounds of pesticides sprayed on California grapes each year.

The toxic chemicals (a full third of which are known carcinogens)

are said to be causing deaths, birth defects, cancer, miscarriages and a litany of other ailments. Besides affecting farm workers and their families, the harmful pesticides are also spreading to surrounding areas and eventually to consumers. The resilient pesticides are long lasting and some even remain after the tainted fruit is thoroughly washed.

HEU supports the UFW in their boycott and encourages the showing of the video to all HEU members.



## HEU buys new building

As this goes to press, negotiations have been completed for HEU's purchase of an office building from the International Union of Operating Engineers.

HEU President Bill Macdonald said lack of space forced the Provincial Office from the previous location and the move to downtown Vancouver was only a temporary measure.

The new three-storey building, located at 2006 West 10th Avenue, with 20,000 square feet of office space, is almost twice as large as the old office on West 12th Avenue.

Macdonald cited an increase in union staff over the last few years, plus the ongoing effort to provide



improved services to our membership as the reasons for needing more office space. The expansion prompted the Provincial Office to relocate in the downtown core in June of this year, while the search for bigger and better permanent facilities was underway.

The larger office has sufficient

facilities to meet the growing needs of the union. The new building will also enable the Provincial Office to serve HEU members more effectively.

Macdonald said a decision on when to move the Provincial Office to the new building will probably be made some time later this year.

## Winners of union bursary awards

The Hospital Employees' Union is pleased to announce the winners of the bursary awards for the 1987-88 academic year.

Vesta Giles, Overlander Unit — Edward J. Ashmore Memorial Bursary, \$1,000. (Sponsored jointly by the Surrey Unit and the Provincial Executive)

Raymond LaPerriere, Crossroads Unit — \$500. (Provincial Executive Bursary)

Beverly Milligan, Ponderosa Unit — \$500. (Lions Gate Unit Bursary)

Tracy Hamilton, Luther Court Unit — \$500 (Royal Jubilee Unit Bursary)

Anthony Bischoff, Surrey Unit — \$500. (Prince George Unit Bursary)

Richard Low, Vancouver General Unit — \$350. (Vancouver General Unit Bursary)

Cheryl Kozyniak, Prince George Unit — \$350. (Vancouver

General Unit Bursary)

Wanda Leslie, Creston Unit — \$350. (Victoria General Unit Bursary)

Tracy Warren, Summerland Unit — \$350. (Mission Unit Bursary)

HEU members with one year's continuous service, their spouses

and children are eligible for the bursaries which are administered by a Bursaries Committee under the direction of the Provincial Executive. The bursaries are awarded to post-secondary students who need financial assistance and demonstrate satisfactory academic standing.

## Free riders club

*If you know people who are always badmouthing unions and blaming the woes of the world on organized labor, then you might want to cut out this card. Give it to those people. Tell them to sign it and see just how strong their convictions really are.*


I am opposed to all unions, therefore I am opposed to all benefits unions have won through the years, paid vacations, paid holidays, sick leave, seniority rights, wage increases, pension and insurance plans, safety laws, workers' compensation laws, Canada pension, time-and-a-half for overtime hours in excess of eight in one day and 40 in any one week, unemployment benefits and job security.

I refuse to accept any benefits that were won by the unions and hereby authorize and direct the employer to withhold the amount of all union won benefits from my pay cheque and donate it to charity.

Sign here . . . . .



# Stormy skies over Vernon



“There were the good old days at Vernon Jubilee Hospital (VJH) where everything looked calm and rosy on the outside. There were problems, but management just refused to acknowledge them.”

That's how Ken Strange, HEU's representative in charge of the Okanagan Regional Office described the way it has been at the facility nestled in the heart of the Okanagan.

“For years, employees at VJH have been repressed by the tactics employed by the hospital administration.”

Strange said that the current problems at VJH are the latest in a long history of turbulent employee-

management problems. The Hospital Employees' Union has been trying to get the administrators at VJH to play fair, but they refuse to cooperate.

Strange said that a favorite policy of the VJH administration seems to be to try and single out or punish any employees who exercise their rights: especially those individuals who file formal grievances.

“The biggest impediment to establishing good employee-management relations in the Okanagan has been management's reluctance, and sometimes downright refusal, to recognize that employees have rights.”

Strange noted that Marie Trentini, the personnel manager at



*"What we're experiencing at Vernon Jubilee is only the tip of the iceberg. We've got a long way to go before labor and management are on equal footing."*

VJH, also directs labor relations at three other local hospitals.

To deal with the difficulties, Strange says there is a new strategy being developed by the Okanagan HEU officers that is intended to clear up this ongoing problem with the VJH administration. It's a tough, no nonsense style in dealing with the abuses.

"We're directing our energy and dedication to the concepts of democratic rights and to the rights of employees as guaranteed in our collective agreements."

HEU Secretary-Business Manager Jack Gerow had similar words on the issue.

"With the introduction of Bill 19, the provincial government has placed an incredible strain on labor-employer relations. We realize that now we have to be very careful in everything we do to maintain the rights we've fought so long for.

"With Bill 19, employees can't take anything for granted anymore. Our new stand is to fight fairly, but be strong."

To illustrate his point, Gerow outlined the circumstances leading to a current rift between the Hospital Employees' Union and the administration at Vernon Jubilee Hospital.

In less than a year, two active trade unionists employed at the

hospital have each been suspended twice as a direct result of their union activities.

The first round of suspensions meted out to the employees centered on their conduct during the Health Sciences Association strike in October, 1986, and resulted in eight and ten day suspensions.

The union is currently grieving the suspensions and the matter has been referred to arbitration.

The second bout of suspensions for the same pair of employees came after the one day General Strike of June 1, 1987.

For their part in protesting the oppressive new labor legislation, both workers were given three day suspensions — the only suspensions handed out to employees of VJH.

When they received their suspensions, the HEU members were told that they were being disciplined because of poor work records.

Both workers strongly deny the accusation and point to their exemplary work histories as proof.

To make matters worse for the employees, the suspensions have had other far reaching effects.

"I applied for another position in the hospital and the supervisor told me that because of what he's heard, he assumed I was a poor

worker. Then when he saw my employment report with all of my job evaluations, he said he wondered if I was the same person he'd heard about," said one of the two persons suspended.

As representative in charge of the area, Ken Strange said that the way the hospital administrators handled the excessive and unnecessary discipline following the General Strike is typical of the mismanagement he has come to expect at VJH. Strange concluded by saying that the letters of reprimand handed out to other HEU members as a result of the General Strike are currently being grieved and the three day suspensions are going direct to arbitration.

"The provincial government's plan to weaken organized labor with the introduction of Bill 19 has backfired. Bill 19 has forced labor to band together even tighter and to take up the battle at all fronts," said Gerow.

"What we're experiencing at Vernon Jubilee is only the tip of the iceberg. We've got a long way to go before labor and management are on equal footing."

For the administrators at Vernon Jubilee, now is the time to come out of the dark ages and enter into the era of fair labor relations.



## Be careful out there!

Looking around these days at everyone who is into fitness, it's hard to believe that the recent health kick has only been with us for a number of years. We tend to forget that the idea of taking good care of ourselves has only recently become a top priority.

Jogging, aerobics, smoke free zones, cholesterol, artificial sweeteners, the environment, calorie count . . . the list of new buzz words and phrases goes on and on. And it's all part of a heightened awareness of what we put into our bodies and what we subject our bodies to.

Although it started off as a trend, healthy living is now a way of life for most of us.

As we spend half of our waking hours at work, it makes good sense to be especially health conscious while on the job.

To this end, HEU has begun issuing "Health and Safety News."

This publication, posted on your bulletin boards, contains brief articles that alert you to some of the hazards you might run into at work.

The increased emphasis on health and safety was discussed repeatedly at HEU's 15th Biennial Convention. A staff committee has since been formed to deal with on-the-job health and safety issues, monitoring the WCB and pursuing compensation claims.

The staff committee will also encourage the establishment of health and safety committees at all HEU units, hold educational classes for safety stewards and participate in research proposals aimed at reducing the incidence of work related back injuries.

**WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD**  
OFFICE COVERING WORKER'S HOME AREA

ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS, SIGN AND MAIL TO BOARD OFFICE COVERING WORKER'S HOME AREA. USE INK OR TYPEWRITER. THE ACT REQUIRES THAT AN EMPLOYER COMPLETE AND SUBMIT A REPORT WITHIN 3 DAYS. FAILURE TO DO SO IS AN OFFENSE AND MAY RESULT IN THE EMPLOYER BEING CHARGED WITH PART OF THE COST OF THE CLAIM.

Claim No. \_\_\_\_\_

Firm No. \_\_\_\_\_ Loc. \_\_\_\_\_ Class & Sub. \_\_\_\_\_ Coded by \_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Ma \_\_\_\_\_  
Mrs. Miss \_\_\_\_\_ Worker's last name

Employer's Name (As registered with the Board) \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Social Ins. Number \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Mo. Day Year \_\_\_\_\_

Location of plant or project where injury occurred? \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
Marital Status \_\_\_\_\_  
Single \_\_\_\_\_ Married \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

Type of business \_\_\_\_\_

1. Date and time of injury \_\_\_\_\_  
2. OR period of exposure resulting in industrial disease \_\_\_\_\_  
3. Describe fully what happened to cause the injury and mention all contributing factors: description of machinery, weight and size of object involved, etc. \_\_\_\_\_  
4. Injury was first reported to employer on \_\_\_\_\_  
5. In cases of industrial disease, describe fully how exposure occurred, mentioning any gases, vapors, dusts, chemicals, radiation, noise, source of infection or other causes. (Use reverse if necessary) \_\_\_\_\_

6. Were worker's actions at time of injury for the purpose of your business? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
7. Was worker part of employee's regular work? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
8. Did you have any reason to feel that injury did not occur as stated? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
9. Were there any witnesses? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
10. Did worker receive first aid? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
11. Is worker a relative of employer or a partner or principal in firm? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
12. Was any person not in your employ to blame for this injury? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
13. Are you aware of any previous pain or disability in the area of the worker's present injury? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
14. Are you aware of any defect or disability of the worker prior to the injury (lost finger, blind eye, deafness, etc.)? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
15. Did worker attend a physician or qualified practitioner? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
16. State ALL injuries reported, indicating right or left if applicable. \_\_\_\_\_

17. Did the injury occur on your premises? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
18. How long has worker been employed by you? \_\_\_\_\_  
19. Do you expect the worker to be off work beyond the day of injury? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
20. Worker's gross earnings at time of injury: \_\_\_\_\_  
21. If leave room and/or meals are supplied in addition to above earnings, indicate date: \_\_\_\_\_  
22. Do these earnings include rental of equipment? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
23. Was any equipment made by your firm for period of disability? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
24. Show normal work week by entering hours worked each day: \_\_\_\_\_  
25. Enter normal work hours on day of injury: \_\_\_\_\_  
26. Date and time last worked: \_\_\_\_\_  
27. Is employee working now? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
28. If YES, specify date and time of return to work: \_\_\_\_\_

19 \_\_\_\_\_

WCB Form 7-20-40 (Rev. 1-78)

## Health & Safety News

The main message of the Health and Safety Committee is to be careful in everything you do. But if you are injured at work, the following suggestions should be followed for your own protection.

1. Stop what you are doing and report the accident to your supervisor.

2. If the accident occurred in the presence of others, get their names and addresses.

3. Note the weight of the patient or the item involved if this is a case of back, shoulder or arm injury.

4. Take photos of the work site if this is relevant.

5. Ask the employer to file the "Employer's Report of Injury or Industrial Disease" (form 7) with WCB.

6. See a doctor immediately or as soon as possible. Tell the doctor about the work injury and remind your doctor to file a Physi-

cian's Report with the WCB.

7. See your doctor regularly until all the symptoms from the injury disappear.

8. Keep a daily diary of your symptoms and any medications taken.

9. Don't work while you are hurt.

10. Be consistent in your description of how the accident happened.

11. Get your Occupational Health and Safety Committee involved if appropriate. For example: if a similar accident has occurred in the past or if the circumstances that led to your injury have not been remedied.

12. If a claim is denied, or cut off prematurely, an appeal to the Review Board must be filed within 90 days, (there are provisions for late filing if there is a good reason). See your Servicing Rep as soon as possible.



## Premier lacks understanding of hospital bed closures

Premier Vander Zalm gets the golden bedpan award this month for his suggestion that hospital overcrowding in winter and bed closures in summer are caused by hospital workers taking their vacations in the summer months.

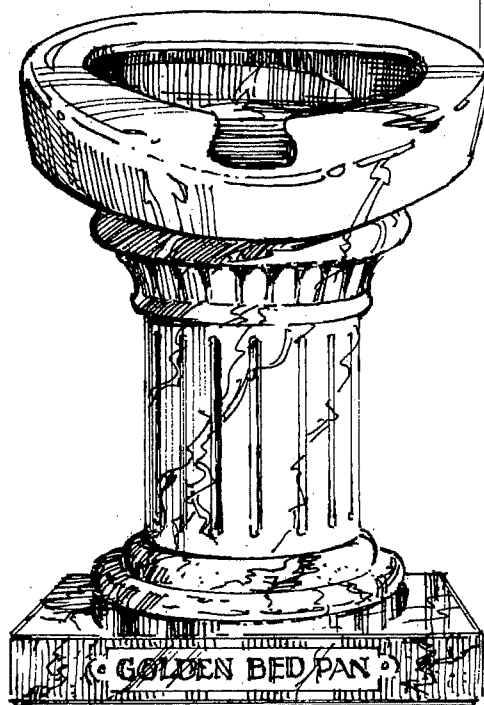
The Premier's announcement came in early September when it was revealed that the provincial Health Ministry is studying whether a financial incentive should be offered to hospital workers to encourage them to take holidays in winter instead of summer.

The Premier's remarks came as a shock to the people in the health care industry who know that overcrowding and bed closures result from government policies that force hospitals to work with inadequate funding.

HEU Secretary-Business Manager Jack Gerow called the Premier uninformed. "Vander Zalm's statements show a shocking lack of understanding of how the health care system works in this province."

Gerow said the idea of paying workers more to take their holidays during the winter is ridiculous and comes nowhere near to addressing the real source of the problem.

"Vander Zalm is trying to deflect criticism for his current hospital funding policies onto the employees. Instead of blaming the workers, the government should fund hospitals so they can operate all year long and not just ten months out of twelve.



"Hospital administrators encourage their employees to take time off during the summer months so that beds can be closed down and operating budgets reduced. The problem is not with people going on holiday, it's that hospitals can't afford to operate 12 months of the year."

With his capacity for grasping the obvious however, Vander Zalm said, "We have tremendous capital costs in facilities, equipment and beds, and if we could utilize that year-round, we would all be better off."

## Comparability . . . at long last!

It took a long time (17 months), but the more than 1,300 HEU members at 29 long-term care facilities across the province have reached comparability with the HEU/HLRA Master Agreement.

Negotiations with the Continuing Care Employee Relations Association (CCERA) began March 25, 1986, and the often turbulent bargaining sessions reached an impasse this past July.

The provincial government had appointed Industrial Inquiry Commissioner Dalton Larson to find an end to the dispute in January, 1987. And in his final report to the Minister of Labor in July, Larson recommended comparability in the long lasting feud between the Hospital Employees' Union and CCERA.

HEU members at the 29 facilities voted 97 per cent in favor of the new contract in late August, followed by the employers accepting the terms several weeks later.

The final obstacle, approval from the Compensation Stabilization Program, was also obtained.

The new three-year contract will be in effect from April 1, 1986 to March 31, 1989 and means substantial wage and benefit increases for HEU members.

An example is found at Nelson Jubilee Manor, where Resident Care Aides working at the existing monthly rate of \$1064 will be entitled to a maximum wage of \$1883 (for those with 36 months of service), when full comparability is reached on October 1, 1988.

The union held a two day seminar in Nelson in early October to thoroughly explain the new contract to HEU members.



# BOYCOTTS BOYCOTTS

All HEU members are being asked for their support by the B.C. Federation of Labor in boycotting the following products and companies.

In the hope that boycotting will force the resolution of the long-standing disputes, the unions representing the workers have approached the Federation for our support.

The boycotts will remain in effect until the disputes are settled.

- Shell Canada and Royal Dutch/Shell (Canadian Labor Congress): all goods and services.
- Electrolux (Canadian Labor Congress): all goods and services.
- *Consumer Reports* (Union Label & Service Trades Dept., AFL-CIO, and New York Newspaper Guild): all Consumer Union publications.
- Hyundai (Building Trades Council): all Hyundai products.
- Chilean goods (B.C. Federation of Labor): check labels on grapes, peaches, plums, raisins, nectarines, lobster, onions and wine.
- Lettuce (Canadian Labor Congress): Donny, Red, Coach, Big Fred, SAS, Big A, Bobby and Andrews.
- Louisiana Pacific Corporation/Forest Products (Carpenters/IWA): construction material, waferwood construction panels, Pabco Xonolite insulation, Weatherseal windows and doors.
- Victoria Plywood: any items identified by the "Vicply" logo.

- California Table Grapes (United Farmworkers of America).

In addition, Federation affiliates are requested not to purchase or handle the following brand names:

- South Africa: any products originating there.
- Sno Boy: fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Stand By: canned goods.
- Sunshine: packaged goods (Retail Wholesale Union, Local 580): institution use.
- H&R Transport Ltd.: handles scab products and crosses picket lines on a regular basis. H&R handled a large portion of the Gainers' scab products.

## HOT EDICTS

- Calwood Industries (Carpenters Union, Local 1928): Surrey company manufactures millwork and interior fixtures mainly for large projects in the Lower Mainland.
- Hyundai-Kerkhoff (B.C. & Yukon Building Trades Council).
- Royal Canadian Legion Branches in the Fraser Valley (Hotel, Restaurant, Culinary and Bartenders' Union, Local 40): branches #4 in Chilliwack, #15 in Abbotsford and #265 in Aldergrove.
- Slade and Stewart Ltd. (Retail Wholesale Union, Local 580): located in Kamloops, Terrace and Vancouver.
- Okanagan H-R-I Supply Ltd. (Retail Wholesale Union, Local 580): all products and services.
- Purolator Courier (Retail Wholesale Union, Local 580): all B.C. operations.
- Stevenson Construction (B.C. & Yukon Building Trades Council): Pennyfarthing site.
- Entex Door Systems Ltd. (Carpenters' Shop, Local 1928): all products of this Port Coquitlam company.

## Ten ways to kill a union

1. Don't come to the meetings.
2. But if you do come — come late.
3. If the weather doesn't suit you, don't come.
4. If you do attend a meeting — find fault with the work of the officers and other members.
5. Never accept an office — it's easier to criticize than to do things yourself.
6. Nevertheless, get sore if you are not appointed to a committee; but if you are appointed, don't attend the meetings.
7. If asked by the president to give your opinion on an important matter, say you have nothing to say — wait until after the meeting, then tell everyone how things should be done.
8. Do nothing more than is absolutely necessary; but when other members roll up their sleeves willingly and unselfishly, using their abilities to help matters along — howl that the union is being run by a clique.
9. If your local is struggling from a financial standpoint to maintain offices on your behalf, be sure to muster all the help you can — to vote against a raise in dues.
10. Don't bother about new members — let the other person do it.



# Know your rights

The legal counsel for the Hospital Employees' Union, has put together three information newsletters aimed at keeping members aware of their legal rights in the work place.

Under the heading, "KNOW YOUR RIGHTS" the series begins with a newsletter outlining employee rights during an investigation by an employer. The subsequent newsletters deal with your rights during an employer's investigation of a fellow employee and your rights concerning medical examinations and physical searches.

For the convenience of HEU members, all three of the newsletters are reprinted below:

### INVESTIGATION OF YOURSELF

The employer calls you into the office to investigate your conduct with a view to discipline. What are your rights?

You have a right to have a Shop Steward present. Instead of saying anything yourself, ask for the presence of a Shop Steward. If the employer refuses to permit a Shop Steward to be present, then refuse to participate further in the meeting.

If the employer complies with your request, then once the Shop Steward is present, the Steward should request that the employer confirm the nature of the meeting.

Once an answer is obtained, the Shop Steward should then consult with you privately.

After consultation, the Shop Steward will record all enquiries of the employer and advise the employer that all questions are being taken under advisement for

the purpose of considering a reply.

All possible answers to the specific enquiries of the employer should be discussed with the union representative.

### INVESTIGATION OF A FELLOW EMPLOYEE

The employer calls you into the office to investigate the conduct of another member. What are your rights?

You have the right not to volunteer information. If you are requested to answer specified and particular questions, then you should immediately request the presence of a Shop Steward and an opportunity to consult privately with the Steward prior to the interview proceeding any further.

The Shop Steward should then record all of the questions and advise management that while the employee is not refusing to answer, the questions will be taken under consideration and a reply will be forthcoming.

Except for information that is known for certain to be a matter of public record, the Shop Steward should contact a union representative for advice before any answers are given.

The same procedure applies even if the employer's lawyer or a representative of the employer's bargaining agent (such as HLRA or CCERA) is present.

If the matter proceeds to arbitration and you are served with a summons, signed by the arbitrator and accompanied by a minimum of a \$5 witness fee, you must appear at the arbitration hearing.

Contact your union representative immediately.

Even if you have been served with a summons, this does not give the employer any more rights to interview you. The same procedures as outlined above should apply.

### MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

The HEU/HLRA Master Agreement and other applicable collective agreements have specific provisions that strictly govern the right of the employer to request medical examinations. The agreements set out the procedures to be followed in carrying out allowable examinations. Upon receiving a request from management, consult your Shop Steward immediately.

### PHYSICAL SEARCHES

Generally, physical searches of employees and their personal effects, (including lockers, etc.) are not permitted. There are very limited circumstances when searches are permitted, in which case you should always and immediately contact your Shop Steward who will, if necessary, consult with the union representative for guidance before any search is permitted to be carried out.

## MILESTONES

After 22 years, Maude Andestad says she has hung up her apron and put away her hair net and traded them in for a fishing pole and a fish net. She has retired from Creston Valley Hospital where she worked as a Dietary Aide.

Maude also worked as a cook, a sausage stuffer and ammunition maker (in the War plant), during her 51 years in the work force.

Maude has lived in Creston since 1965 and said she'll be spending her well earned retirement time fishing and visiting her family in Calgary and Winnipeg.



# Fighting for our jobs

British Columbia's health care workers and their unions are bracing themselves for a major battle against attempts to introduce privatization and contracting out in the province's acute care hospitals and long-term care facilities.

Although details of the government's grand scheme to privatize public services are still under wraps, it has become increasingly apparent that no area will remain untouched. Health care services, once considered "safe" from the threat of privatization, are under review according to government officials.

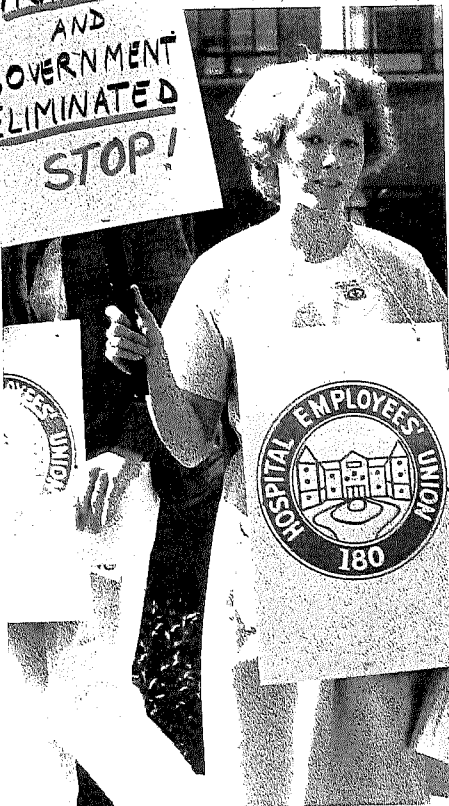
At a recent news conference, Premier Vander Zalm said that "nothing is protected," and that even our hospitals are possible targets for privatization.

And while convincing arguments exist against the privatizing of any government service, nowhere is the danger more critical than in the health care system. Indeed, privatization, and its companion, contracting out, pose a real and immediate threat to health care and its workers.

## HEU PLANS CAMPAIGN

To examine this threat and develop ways to protect health care from privatization, the Hospital Employees' Union Provincial Executive decided in late 1986 to establish a special sub-committee. This committee, made up of both executive and staff, is currently studying the impact privatization will have on HEU members.

LPN'S ARE  
GOVERNMENT  
TRAINED,  
AND  
GOVERNMENT  
ELIMINATED  
STOP!



Part of this study includes a membership survey that was being conducted at *The Guardian* press time. The random survey was designed to help determine how much contracting out has already been done, and to test membership awareness and perceptions of the problems contracting out poses.

The results of this survey will assist the union in fighting the contracting out threat. In addition, a special internal membership campaign is planned so that all HEU members are fully informed of the issue, so that they can take the argument to the lunchroom, coffee shop, workplace and community.

## JOB SECURITY FOR PRACTICAL NURSES

Another job security matter of vital importance to the sub-committee is the possible elimination of Practical Nurses from the health care system.

The decision by some of the province's hospitals to replace PNs with Registered Nurses remains a real threat to these HEU members.

The impact of the elimination of PNs is also tested in the HEU survey, and here too, the results will be invaluable in helping prepare an ongoing campaign to save PN jobs.

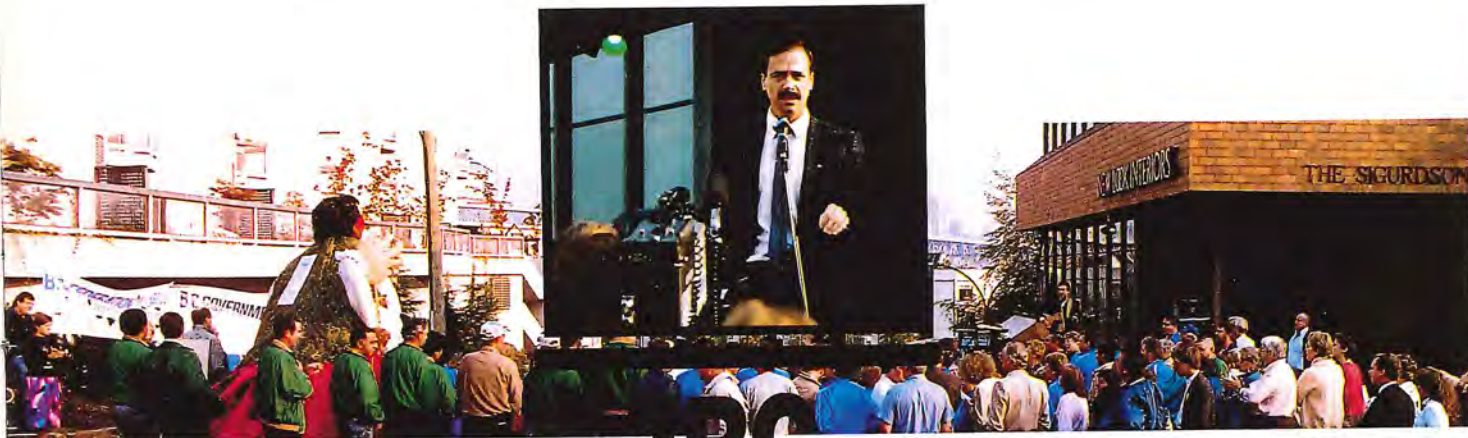
One of the primary objectives in the PN campaign will be to raise the level of awareness among all HEU members of the threat to Practical Nurses. As well, a major effort will be required to educate the public on the importance of the role played by the PN in the delivery of essential health care services.

## HEALTH CARE AT RISK

Whether the issue is phasing out Practical Nurses or phasing in privatization, both are serious threats to the job security of HEU members. And in both instances, the end result will be a reduction in the quantity and quality of B.C.'s health care services.

Because health care is our primary concern, the 26,000 members of the Hospital Employees' Union will be front and centre in the upcoming battles against privatization and contracting out.





# IRC IRKS HEU

When the Hospital Employees' Union discovered that the Industrial Relations Council had scheduled a hearing to decide whether the union's participation in the June 1 General Strike was illegal, a call went out for trade union support.

More than one hundred concerned trade unionists heeded the call by showing up for a demonstration rally outside the IRC office in Vancouver on Thursday, September 27.

HEU refused to attend the hearing as part of the B.C. Fed's Bill 19 boycott, which covers most dealings with the IRC.

The IRC hearing date resulted from an application by the Health Labor Relations Association. HLRA was seeking declarations by

the IRC for unlawful strike action and picketing by HEU members on June 1, 1987.

The demonstration was held to coincide with the hearing and featured speeches from B.C. Fed President Ken Georgetti, HEU Secretary-Business Manager Jack Gerow and HSA Executive Director Bob Moore. All three praised the various groups in attendance

for their support. Gerow called HLRA's actions underhanded and predictable. He said the idea of holding the hearing with or without the union's participation was farcical, biased and a waste of time.

But as it happened, the hearing did not take place.

The IRC, on its own, decided to adjourn the hearing after informing the HLRA that an arbitrator has the power to decide if the picketing and strike action were illegal.

However, HLRA did not withdraw its application from the IRC and can still pursue the matter if the arbitrator decides against HLRA and in favor of HEU.

When they do, HEU will be waiting.



Tom Hawken led Bill 19 Boycott supporters in a rousing series of labor songs outside the IRC office in Vancouver.



Many different labor locals turned out at 9:00 in the morning to hear the news that the IRC adjourned the HLRA's hearing.



# BOYCOTT STRATEGY

**B**ound in gray and stamped "CONFIDENTIAL", the 23-page B.C. Federation of Labor Boycott Manual was distributed to the Hospital Employees' Union and other labor affiliates in the first week of August 1987.

It wasn't carved in stone however, and from the very beginning was meant only as a guideline for boycotting Bill 19.

Although the strategy had been in the planning stages for months, the passage of the new labor laws a week earlier had prompted the printing of a formal handbook.

Offering a preamble on the incidents leading up to the boycott, the manual also outlines the mechanics of the strategy and the correct procedures to be followed by all affiliates.

Members should have no dealings whatsoever with the Industrial Relations Council (IRC) and refuse to deal with all matters pertaining to the IRC via employers.

An avenue whereby affiliates could apply for an exemption to the boycott was also written into the manual. The exemption provision is intended to be used by unions whose disputes involve extenuating circumstances. And B.C.'s teachers were given a six month period of grace from the confines of the boycott to allow them time to certify following the passage of the legislation known as Bill 20, which allows them to form and join unions.

During the original development strategies, the Federation officers and executive council took into account that the plan didn't contain all the answers for all the situations that might arise.

More importantly, it was acknowledged that the boycott would cause some pain to labor as well.

In order to minimize the detrimental effect that the boycott might have on its members, the Federation decided to make the boycott flexible: one that could change with the demands and pressures felt by its affiliates.

A major concern was that an unyielding and total boycott would leave Federation members open to raids from opportunistic and less scrupulous organizations.

That's exactly what happened.

The General Workers Union of B.C., Local 1 and the Canadian Iron, Steel and Industrial Workers' Union both took advantage of the boycott to raid other unions and

file certification applications with the IRC.

Local 97 of the Iron Workers and the Construction and General Workers both accused the non-affiliated unions of raiding and being "opportunistic", while all the time acting under the cloak of trade unionism.

Responding to the situation, the B.C. Fed altered the boycott dramatically and now allows its affiliates to deal with the IRC on matters pertaining to certification.

Explaining the latest changes and the future of the boycott strategy, B.C. Fed president Ken Georgetti said, "It's always going to be altered. It's supposed to be malleable."

Future changes in tactics may be forthcoming, but British Columbian workers have the assurance of the B.C. Federation of Labor that the boycott of the Industrial Relations Council will remain until Bill 19 is repealed.



## IRC demonstration



When Bill 19 came into effect on Monday, July 27, HEU's Provincial Executive turned out in force to surround the new Industrial Relations Council office on West Sixth Avenue in Vancouver. (See Boycott story above.)

The Hospital Employees' Union is one of the strongest supporters of the B.C. Fed strategy to boycott the contentious labor law.

Other labor groups were also in



# Victory for garment workers

Workers at Marjorie Hamilton Ltd. in Vancouver now have their first contract after a two and a half year battle with the women's garment manufacturer.

The International Ladies' Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) began organizing the employees in February 1985, and won certification 15 months later. But since the beginning, the employer has fought the union every step of the way, incurring charges of human rights violations and unfair labor practices.

The ILGWU had wanted to go to the Industrial Relations Council to force an end to the dispute. The union applied to the B.C. Federation of Labor for an exemption of the Bill 19 boycott, but was turned down.

In a show of solidarity, affiliates of the B.C. Federation of Labor, including HEU members, gathered outside the premises of the women's clothing manufacturer for a lunch hour strike in late August.



Iona Stephens, Anthea Bussey, Morag McGruer and Dorina Picco (from HEU's Provincial Office) at the noonhour demonstration while five of Vancouver's finest look on.

B.C. Federation of Labor President Ken Georgetti told the crowd that the employer wasn't just dealing with the ILGWU. He said that workers at Marjorie Hamilton had the full support of the B.C. Fed behind them.

Less than three weeks later,

ILGWU had good news for its members in the form of a signed three-year contract.

Union representative Phyllis Webb said she was pleased with the agreement and that the contract is more favorable than what they expected from the employer.



attendance as the two hour demonstration attracted attention from the media and received wide support from passing motorists who honked their horns and waved in approval.

Jack Gerow, HEU Secretary-Business Manager called the protest a visual support of discontent and a reminder to the government that organized labor will not rest until Bill 19 is repealed.



HEU's Provincial Executive joined a multitude of other B.C. Fed affiliate members outside the IRC office in Vancouver when Bill 19 came into effect on Monday, July 27.



# Union drive

In one sense, Bill 19 is proving a boon to organized labor in the province.

Recent polls indicate that more British Columbians than ever before are turning to unions for protection, as the devastating impact that Bill 19 is having on the democratic rights of all workers becomes apparent.

The B.C. Federation of Labor has reported a marked increase in the numbers of non-unionized workers wanting to join unions. And in response to the demand, the B.C. Fed has begun a campaign to sign up those workers.

The B.C. Fed estimates that there are at least half a million non-union workers in B.C.'s private sector and will target certain industries in the province-wide blitz.

The Fed will offer its support to assist affiliates in setting up long-term, formalized organizing strategies for their industries.

B.C. Fed President Ken Georgetti said the sign-up campaign is

the largest of its type in the province and that the time is right for unions to go on the offensive and recruit new members.

Georgetti also said the success of the campaign depends on the maximum number of affiliates participating and stressed the need for all unions to be aggressive and positive in their actions.



Far from pulling organized labor in B.C. apart, Bill 19 has forced labor to pull together. More people than ever before are showing an interest in joining unions to gain protection from unfair legislation.



# Who's who behind Bill 19?

**T**he boycott of Bill 19 means boycotting the Industrial Relations Council (IRC) as well, because it is the instrument being used to carve up labor. (see page 24)

As one of the largest affiliates to the B.C. Federation of Labor, the 26,000-member Hospital Employees' Union has been supporting the boycott.

It stipulates that no contact, either direct or through employers, will be made with the IRC and decisions made by the IRC will not be recognized.

HEU units have been advised to return (unopened) any correspondence from the IRC and to consult their servicing reps if there are any questions about the Bill 19 boycott.

The B.C. Fed considers any person willing to work for the IRC a traitor to the concerns of workers. Those who have chosen to implement Bill 19 are viewed as biased. Therefore, any decision they make pertaining to the affairs of labor would echo their prejudice.

While the boycott is underway, the Fed advises its supporters to consult with employers to seek out a mutually agreeable third party to mediate and arrange the settlement of any disputes.

Without the participation of the B.C. Fed affiliates, the IRC's workload has to be considerably lighter, yet the staff continues to show up for work and collect their paycheques.

Although labor has been vocal about the new legislation, little has been said about the new IRC, the key players and their jobs.

The most powerful labor relations person in British Columbia's history and probably all of Canada, Ed Peck's job as Commissioner



(with a \$120,000/yr. salary) makes him responsible for the entire operation of the new Industrial Relations Council.

He was appointed vice-chairman of the LRB by the NDP in 1973 and became head of the Compensation Stabilization Program in 1982.

His newest appointment includes taking over the functions of both the Mediation Services Branch and the duties of the dissolved Labor Relations Board.

Bolstered by the new Industrial Relations Reform Act, Peck now has the power to:

- appoint mediators, factfinders and public interest inquiry boards.
- designate essential services.
- force employees to vote on an employer's final offer.
- allow employers to discipline employees who disobey IRC rulings.

— make final rulings that are not subject to appeal through the courts.

— interpret the new labor laws.

Under Peck's control, the IRC is divided into two divisions. Bud Gallagher, a vice-chairman of the IRC has been designated as chairman of Industrial Relations Adjudications and Darwin Benson, another IRC vice-chairman, is chairman of the Disputes Resolution Division.

Also included on the IRC staff are 11 more vice-chairmen (although that number can change at any time as the legislation doesn't stipulate a minimum or maximum number).

The 11 are: Ken Albertini; Robert Arseneau; Katherine Bruce; Michael Davison; Paul Devine; Barry Goff; Richard Longpre; Shelley Nitikman; Nora Paton; Lloyd Sim and Bryan Williams.

With the current B.C. Fed boycott of the IRC, the vice-chairmen are forming one-person panels to hear applications to the Council and (so they say) are otherwise being kept busy clearing up the reported backlog of the 900 cases left over from the dissolution of the LRB.

Many of the vice-chairmen held similar positions with the old Labor Relations Board and just shuffled over to the IRC when Bill 19 became law. Others have experience with the WCB or backgrounds in trade unions, law or labor relations.

These are the people who make up the Industrial Relations Council and have been given plum positions to enforce undemocratic laws that are aimed at destroying the hard won rights of workers.

Along with Bill 19, these are the people the boycott is aimed at.





By Lois Boone  
New Democrat MLA for Prince  
George North and Provincial  
Health Critic

Quality health care is our right in British Columbia. It is not a privilege. Rights are not something that can be given or taken away from us by government.

And health care is most definitely not something that should be handed over to profit-making businesses. "Privatization" of our health care services is nothing more than the commercialization of health — turning everyone's right to quality health care into a money-making operation in which those with the money get the quality.

New Democrats fundamentally believe that people shouldn't make money off the health of others. That's point one. We want a non-profit health care system with high province-wide standards which works for all British Columbians. That's point two. But these are more than just statements of principle and ideological belief. They make good economic sense.

Ask yourself this: If hospital service presently run by the government (and government, remember,

# How about you and me?

is elected to represent our interests) are turned over to profit-making companies, who will benefit? Will the average British Columbia family continue to receive quality health care?

If we simply examine the basic operating principle of profit-making companies, we'll get the answer. What is their priority? The answer is easy: to make money. And how would they make money on health care services? By maximizing profit, which means: 1) lowering salaries of working people, 2) lowering standards, 3) increasing cost of health care services for you and me.

Clearly, it is the average British Columbian who's hurt by the commercialization of health care. It's the family whose six-year-old daughter develops a sore throat or 12-year-old son breaks his leg playing hockey, only to find that the quality services they've always had before are no longer there or now cost money.

It's a little girl in Prince George who has to go out of province because the local hospital didn't find it profitable enough to continue providing the operation she needs. And it's you working in the health care field as a Licenced Practical Nurse or support staffer who'll be getting a smaller paycheque with less money to feed your family.

Examples of this abound. We've seen it in the United States where big corporations like Humana Inc. have taken over hospitals and cut services that weren't making a profit. We've seen it in Canada,

and with the Social Credit government we'll increasingly see it in British Columbia.

The Socreds say turning health care over to profit-making business will benefit us all by saving money. Perhaps as has happened many times before, their friends and supporters will be the ones to benefit by selling health care services. But how about you and me?

Let's look at a specific example which may well arise if the ambulance service you and I own as taxpayers is turned over to commercial business. Right now, the ambulance system provides fair and equal service to everyone regardless of where they're living in B.C. What will happen if it becomes a commercial venture? And what in particular will happen to the average B.C. family living in a small community outside the Lower Mainland?

The result is predictable enough. Smaller communities will simply not be economical areas for private business in which to operate. And that means the ordinary British Columbian in these communities will have only sub-standard service compared to what they have now. Or they'll have to pay more as has been the case in Alberta.

Or they just won't have any ambulance service at all.

That's what it comes down to. "Privatization" will turn your and my health into another commodity, making money for somebody at our expense. Is that what we want in B.C., the commercialization of our health?

I don't believe so.