

THE HOSPITAL GUARDIAN

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION, 180

Vol. XI

VANCOUVER, B.C., MAY, 1974



No.3



IN DISPUTE:

- ... STAT HOLIDAYS
- ... SEVERANCE ALLOWANCES
- ... COST OF LIVING CLAUSE
- ... JOB TRAINING

See story page 4



AFTER VOTE is taken by members of Mackenzie unit, the officers take a break following the meeting. They are, from left: Vice-Chairman Marie Crooks; Chairman Penny Fulton; Secretary Dorothy Vos. Mackenzie was one of several northern units which voted recently to accept proposed terms of settlement.

Under H.E.U. contract

Northern Units face increased vacations

As spring weather transforms B.C.'s northern areas, hospital employees in newly-organized units face the pleasant prospect of their first four-week annual vacations — as well as higher wages and other benefits.

Members of 100-Mile House and Mackenzie units, who joined Local 180 late last year, voted recently to accept proposed terms of settlement, which will bring parity with other hospitals.

Annual vacation time will double for workers with less than three years' serv-

ice. Those with more than three years' will, with the four-week vacation allotment, gain a week on their previous terms of employment.

They will receive, of course, many other benefits from their new collective agreements.

Stuart Lake and Burns Lake have also voted to accept the proposed terms of settlement. Their vacations were at the three-week mark and are now four weeks annually. Other gains include wages and working conditions

Nurses aides' wages will jump by \$156 a month or more, in some cases.

Licensed practical nurses will achieve parity with other organized hospitals.

Meetings were held in the early part of April for voting on the proposed terms and for the election of officers.

Just a cheeky observation . . .

On the recent anniversary of Lady Godiva's famous ride — notwithstanding the penchant of young women and men to shed their clothing and streak, exposing their shortcomings — a noted psychologist observed that if a naked woman today were to ride a horse down a busy street it would cause quite a commotion.

"Many city people have never seen a horse," he said.

Lalonde eyes Pension Plan improvements

Some important changes in the Canada Pension Plan are in the works, according to a letter from the office of Marc Lalonde, federal Minister of Health and Welfare.

Lalonde was urged to push for changes by the Municipal Employees Pension Committee, on which H.E.U. and other Unions are represented, in February.

One of the committee's chief concerns was a discriminatory aspect of the current Canada Pension Plan. Lalonde, through executive assistant Ann C. Jamieson, conceded the point.

"The lump-sum death benefit is the same in the case of a widow or a widower. It is true, however, that with respect to the payment of survivors' benefits, a widower is treated differently from a widow."

Lalonde explained that when the various provisions of the Canada Pension Plan were being considered in the formative stages, they were based on the philosophy of providing a basic protection for all families when the main breadwinner was lost. Therefore, survivors' benefits were created to provide for a family in the event of the father's death, or the mother's death when she was responsible for maintaining the survivors wholly or substantially prior to her death.

A number of measures have been adopted, Lalonde said, including the escalation of benefits according to the full increase in the consumer price index, and the raising of the level of the earnings ceiling.

As for other amendments, including the matter of equal contributions and benefits, these have been the subject of extensive study in federal-provincial discussions, Lalonde said, but he didn't indicate exactly when changes could be expected.

He did, however, agree that "such discrimination does not belong in our laws."

Lalonde's assistant assured the committee that "in the light of the federal government's commitment to the enhancement of equal opportunity for women, Lalonde is determined to rectify this situation."

"Fundamental issues, such as the one you have outlined, will form a priority part of Mr. Lalonde's discussions with his provincial colleagues at future meetings on the Canada Pension Plan."



DEBBA READ . . . Vice-Chairman, 100-Mile House unit

EMPLOYEES 'COME HOME'

Housekeeping service employees working in Langley and Prince George hospitals have voted unanimously to rejoin H.E.U. after having been members of another Union for several years.

The representation votes at the two hospitals were held recently as part of an application for certification. The 26 employees in Prince George and 13 in Langley are employed by Modern Building Cleaning, a company which contracts its services.

When the two hospitals' cleaning services were first contracted out several years ago, Local 180 lost a number of members to Service Employees' International Union. The employees involved, however, have decided to come home to H.E.U. The pay increases resulting from the move will go as high as \$1.74 an hour, in the cleaners' category. Maids will receive raises of \$1.33 to \$1.50 an hour above their present rates. The provincial master agreement will be negotiated.

This isn't the first time Local 180 has done business with Modern Business Cleaning. The firm's employees in Cranbrook were signed up a few years ago — and within a year the hospital there discontinued contracting out the services. Those employees are now employed by the hospital and are members of Local 180's Cranbrook unit.

Also in the area of representation votes, a vote at Vancouver Island's Saanich Peninsula Hospital yielded 87 per cent approval to join H.E.U.



EAGER UNIT MEMBERS in Cranbrook attend seminar on interpretation of 1974-75 collective agreement, one of a series held by the Union in various parts of the province. Unit members were joined for a time by supervisors at the Cranbrook hospital.



UNIT MEMBERS at Surrey Memorial Hospital were among the total which attended contract seminars run by Local 180 Staff Representatives to acquaint members with the collective agreement.

New complex planned

H.E.U. ORGANIZES SHAUGHNESSY

H.E.U. has applied for certification for what could become British Columbia's biggest hospital complex — Shaughnessy Hospital in Vancouver — and the George Derby unit in Burnaby.

Local 180 organizers were greeted with an enthusiastic response from employees at Shaughnessy and George Derby. A membership meeting was scheduled for May 15 to elect officers and shop stewards, set up the unit as a functioning unit of H.E.U. and select delegates for the Convention in June. For certification to be approved, 51 per cent of employees in the unit must be members in good standing in the Union.

Shaughnessy and George Derby recently were turned over from federal to provincial jurisdiction. Under the agreement,

announced publicly by Health Minister Dennis Cocke, Ottawa will make capital grants to the province of \$7,710,000 to renovate and improve buildings and to improve the standard of equipment in the hospital.

When all new construction is completed, Shaughnessy could have as many as 2,500 beds and a total work force of 7,500, eclipsing the total for Vancouver General, currently B.C.'s biggest hospital.

The 43-acre site could contain between 1.8 million and 2.5 million square feet of floor area, resulting in a teaching and tertiary referral hospital requiring 1,000 square feet per bed. The actual takeover by the provincial government is not expected until the end of July.

Shaughnessy will come under the cor-

porate umbrella of the B.C. Medical Centre, as is Vancouver General, St. Paul's, Children's, G. F. Strong, U.B.C. Health Centre and the Cancer Institute.

The first new construction at the Shaughnessy site will be a children's hospital. As soon as the hospitals are taken over, H.E.U. will serve notice to commence collective bargaining even if certification has not yet been approved, to protect the interests of employees pending certification. Bargaining will be based on the provincial master agreement for wages and conditions, except for superior benefits, if any, under the federal system.

The total number of beds now stands at 886 for Shaughnessy and 211 at George Derby.

THE HOSPITAL GUARDIAN

Published by

Provincial Executive, Local 180, Hospital Employees' Union

All submissions and correspondence to be sent to:

JOHN DARBY, Financial Secretary

538 West Broadway

Vancouver 9, B.C.

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

BROADWAY  PRINTERS LTD.

New agreement broken while ink barely dry

The world changes. Governments come and go. But one thing remains constant. The B.C. Hospitals Association blithely goes its same unchanging way.

In its contract bargaining with the Registered Nurses' Association of B.C. and the Hospital Employees' Union the B.C.H.A. once again demonstrated it cannot and will not negotiate without the spectre of a hospital strike lurking in the wings.

It took H.E.U. almost five months of strenuous bargaining, and the efforts of a government-appointed Industrial Inquiry Commission, to reach a negotiated settlement for 1974-75.

The registered nurses were forced to serve strike notice on their employers and eventually resort to a binding decision to resolve their contract talks.

But what of the parties' conduct after the contracts have been negotiated?

Once again we find the B.C.H.A. instigating its traditional, spiteful industrial relations policies: what it could not overcome or stop at the bargaining table it attempts to deny after the contracts are signed.

This conduct by the employers' bargaining agency is excused by them on the basis that the people who negotiate the contract for the hospitals are not the people who interpret the contract for the hospitals.

This laissez-faire approach to the economic conditions of hospital employees can only lead to industrial anarchy.

The ink of the 1974-75 contract isn't even dry yet and already employees are being denied the full benefits of its provisions. The terms on which the Union and its members agreed to settle the current contract are not being honored by the hospitals.

Good Friday not so good

Patients' needs require hospitals to work on holidays. For the first time the

Union's bargaining committee was able to establish that these employment demands, that don't confront the majority of other workers, should be recognized and that the employees affected should be compensated.

It was agreed at the bargaining table, written into the contract and signed by the hospitals that "employees who are required to work on Good Friday, Labor Day, or Christmas Day shall be paid at time and one-half rates in addition to their regular monthly pay rate."

Spokesmen for the B.C.H.A. opposed the Union's proposal originally. However, when they were unable to thwart the thrust of the Union's arguments, the compromise establishment of three "super stats" — as opposed to the Union's original proposal of 10 super stats — was settled.

But this agreement is not being honored. Hospitals have paid their employees for Good Friday on a basis that resulted in half-time rate — not 1½ times — in addition to their regular monthly pay rate.

Also, interpretations emanating from the B.C.H.A. affecting the operation of contract provisions concerning the cost of living escalator clause, portability of severance allowance, supplementary vacations and superannuation are in conflict with the negotiated settlement.

Earlier this month, H.E.U.'s bargaining committee was reconvened on instructions from the Provincial Executive and met with the B.C.H.A. On the committee were June Murdoch of Trail; Albert Tetz, Vernon; Marion Perry, Kelowna; Pete Endres, Victoria; and Peggie Heinze, Prince George. The B.C.H.A. bargaining committee consisted of Director of Employee Relations Joe Roberts; Cranbrook administrator Lyman Swenerton; Gordon Storey, personnel manager at Vancouver General; St. Paul's personnel officer

(Continued on page 6)

H.E.U. proposal on ambulances becomes reality

H.E.U.'s recommendation that a province-wide ambulance service be set up will become a reality. Health Minister Dennis Cocke announced recently in the legislature that the provincial government will assume responsibility for all ambulance services in British Columbia, possibly as soon as July.

The recommendation was made last year in H.E.U.'s brief on health care to the provincial government.

The ambulance service recommendation was one of several by the Union which was backed by Dr. Richard Foulkes in his two-volume report, Health Security for British Columbians, released last December after more than a year of study.

Lower fares

The move by the government will create a province-wide network of ambulance services, including a single phone number for use throughout B.C., co-ordination of ordinary ambulances as well as air ambulance and remote area services, and reduction of ambulance fares to about \$5 per trip. Some services, said a provincial government news release, currently cost \$25 and more.

Cocke said the new program will cost about \$6 million for the fiscal year, and \$9 million the following year. The move will assist municipalities, which now must operate their own service or pay a private service to be available.

He said ambulance services will be standardized to ensure that each ambulance has sufficient facilities and ambulance operators will be offered advanced training programs as paramedics to enable them to administer drugs and perform other emergency medical procedures under radio direction.

Higher standards

It could take two years, Cocke added, before all ambulance services are brought up to the provincial standard, particularly services in remote areas which often have difficulty getting any service at present.

To further assist remote areas, Cocke announced that the government will create medical aid posts which will be equipped to provide emergency aid until an air or ground ambulance from a more fully equipped area arrives.

EDITORIAL

A DINOSAUR'S MOAN

Nothing is quite so pathetic as a political dinosaur, lying in the wilderness foaming at the mouth as it nears the fossilization stage while changes are going on all around it that it should have recognized years ago.

The endangered species is, collectively, known in this instance as the Social Credit Party, whose attitudes were exemplified recently by Langley MLA Bob McClelland.

McClelland, being one of a rare type of Socred — he won a seat in the last election — was considered worthy of a few column inches in the *Vancouver Sun*, in which he attacked Health Minister Dennis Cocke for "interfering" in the bargaining process of hospital workers.

McClelland was referring to Cocke's actions which prompted the steps to remove discrimination against women in the hospital field, steps which, when completed will see licensed practical nurses being paid the same as orderlies.

The anti-discrimination move was long overdue, of course, as anyone with a minimum of perception would concede.

But there was the Socred MLA, ranting in the legislature about how "the hospital workers got a good deal out of this agreement — they had a friend in court," adding that other workers may also be seeking "a friend in court."

Health Minister Cocke, according to McClelland, had no business becoming directly involved in negotiations between H.E.U. and the B.C. Hospitals Association. The Socreds charged, in a debate over Cocke's budget estimates, that the Health Minister's involvement will play havoc with other wage negotiations.

It's obvious that McClelland has no interest in the welfare of B.C.'s licensed practical nurses, who until now have seen no relief against blatant discrimination, working for lower wages than their male counterparts while performing essentially the same work.

Twenty years of Socred rule did nothing to rectify the unjust situation and it obviously irks the political offspring of W.A.C. Bennett that now someone in power for such a relatively short time has made progress and listened to the call by H.E.U. and others for a just solution.

McClelland's accusation was frosted with the kind of nonsense we all became used to during his party's oppressive reign. When Cocke set out the plan to pay anti-discrimination raises to practical nurses, bargaining on the new collective agreement between Local 180 and the hospitals had not yet begun.

As Cocke pointed out in the House, he got involved because the 1972-73 contract, worked out by the now defunct provincial mediation commission, left several issues open for discussion.

"What we tried to do was make sense out of the chaos," Cocke said. "I think we succeeded."

The point that McClelland ignores is that the issue has been around for quite a while. H.E.U. has been pushing for an end to such discrimination since before the previous contract was signed.

During bargaining for that contract — the 1972-73 agreement — one of the Union's primary demands was to establish a program to eliminate wage discrimination based on sex.

The final solution came about because the Union was able to negotiate directly with the paymaster — the provincial government, or more specifically, Cocke's department — rather than with the B.C.H.A., which didn't want to become involved at all.

H.E.U. has no "friend in court." All Cocke was doing was to participate in long-overdue negotiations in an issue that had been put off for too long. The Union's proposal to deal directly with Cocke was designed to avoid the nebulous results of shadow bargaining with the B.C.H.A.

It's obvious, however, that if Socred MLA McClelland had his way, discrimination would still be rampant and the written complaints of hundreds of practical nurses, which accumulated in the offices of the Human Rights Department, would still be ignored.

But McClelland and his crew don't have their way any more. They can only clutch at political straws and grab occasional headlines with baseless vitriolic attacks, while people like Dennis Cocke get on with the job of cleaning up the old mess.

Legislature moves to adopt new B.C. holiday

An 11th statutory holiday will be enjoyed by H.E.U. members when B.C. joins the rest of Canada in creating an August long weekend.

British Columbians, the only Canadians without a Monday stat in August, will have that dubious distinction removed when "B.C. Day" comes into effect. A bill to create the holiday was introduced in the legislature recently by Provincial Secretary Ernie Hall.

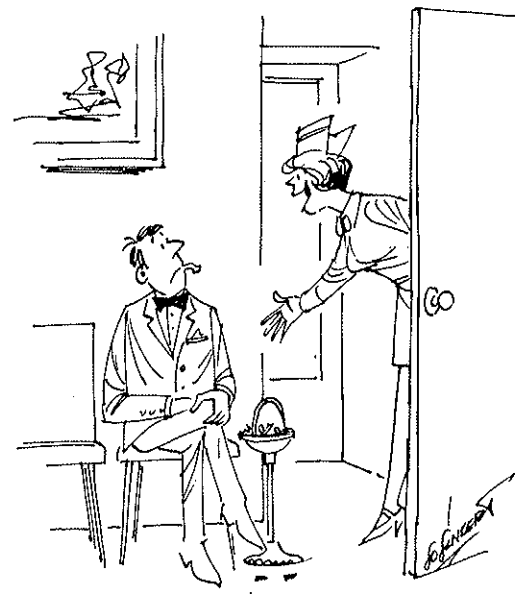
William Hamilton, president of the Employers Council of B.C., was quick to condemn the move, telling reporters the holiday "certainly is inflationary because they have automatically added to production costs without in any increasing output. This has to be a concern to management."

In that way, Hamilton ignored a factor that was observed long ago: that days of rest, allotted at appropriate intervals, can increase production. In any case, the rest of Canada seems to have survived the annual occurrence.

For B.C. hospital workers, the new holiday will be automatic, as provided in the collective agreement, Article 9, Section 1.

The holiday will bring to 115 the total of days off per year for H.E.U. members, exclusive of annual vacations.

The other stats are New Year's Day, Easter Monday, Empire Day, Dominion Day, Thanksgiving Day, Labor Day, Boxing Day, Remembrance Day, Good Friday and Christmas Day.



"IMAGINE IT! All but one could be named after hurricanes!"



GUEST OF HONOR at annual banquet and dance of Okanagan Labor Council was Bill Muir, H.E.U. Staff Representative for Vancouver Island. Bill, who joined Local 180 last fall, was president of the O.L.C. from 1970 to 1973. "We're going to miss you, Bill," said the council's current president Gord Stoutenburg of the Federation of Telephone Workers. And as a token of their gratitude for Muir's years with the organization, Bill was given an attache case. B.C. Federation of Labor Secretary Len Guy was guest speaker at the banquet, which was held in Penticton.

UNION HELPS OUT

Fire claims husband of L.P.N.

Fellow workers rallied to the aid of LPN Helen Townsley recently at a time of tragedy for her and her family.

Mrs. Townsley, a member of the Ladysmith unit on Vancouver Island, was in the hospital as a patient when the news was brought to her: an early morning fire had destroyed her home and taken the life of her husband.

Fortunately, her three children and a

foster child were spared; they had spent the night with friends.

Firemen arrived at the scene at 4:30 a.m. and fought the blaze for more than four hours but were unable to save the house. It wasn't until 9:30 a.m. that they could enter the gutted structure, where they found the body of William Edward Townsley, 43. Positive identification was made two days later.

Police said it appeared that Mr. Townsley had been smoking and had fallen asleep on the living room chesterfield.

The tragedy left Mrs. Townsley and the children with almost nothing.

A collection was taken at the hospital and among friends, and the Ladysmith unit voted, at a subsequent meeting, to send the family a cheque for \$100.

The Provincial Office was contacted and the Provincial Executive soon afterward approved a donation of \$500 to Mrs. Townsley.

The cheque was given to Mrs. Townsley in Ladysmith by Financial Secretary John Darby.



John Darby . . . gives cheque

AGREEMENT BROKEN

(Continued from page 4)

Doug Deane; and Bill Bower, trustee of Trail Regional Hospital Board.

It is obvious that the employers' bargaining committee which was charged with the authority to bargain now has little interest, and no responsibility, in seeing that the principals implement their contract.

A confrontation is now inevitable.

Some items were strike issues when the Union was at the bargaining table: severance allowance for employees with more than 10 years pensionable service; penalty payments to employees working on Christmas Day, Good Friday or Labor Day; the escalator clause as a buffer against galloping inflation; an apprenticeship program. These and other negotiated benefits are being challenged and diluted by the employer.

The hospitals' bargaining agent, the Employee Relations Council of the B.C.H.A., is copping out. It claims that interpretation of the contract by the B.C.H.A.'s bargaining committee is only "personal" and that "official" interpretation is determined by the 14-member Employee Relations Council.

That council was established at the height of former Health Minister Ralph Loffmark's infamous 70 per cent edict in an attempt to hamstring the Union.

Since that time the Council either directly or indirectly continued to receive monies from the public purse and continued its anti-union activities to the detriment of hospitals and hospital employees alike.

Verbal notice has already been served on some hospital managements that if members of Local 180 are denied the full benefits of the negotiated contract, disruption in hospital service can be expected.

THIS WAY TO HEAVEN...

In the not-too-reassuring dept., here's something that might have been better put, from the Hertfordshire, England, Mid-week Mercury:

"A 20-year dream is coming true at Hertford County Hospital with the opening this Friday of the new £150,000 twin operating theatre unit. Enter the unit and you feel as if you're entering another world."

PROBLEMS AROUND

'Moat' surrounds B.G.H. ivory tower

There are two kinds of hospital administrations, H.E.U. Representatives find in their dealings with hospitals.

There is the open, employee-oriented administration, aware of the concerns of employees and the problems they can face.

And there is the "ivory tower" type, where those in control shut themselves away from the realities of employee relations as if surrounded by a moat.

Top administration people designate the responsibilities of industrial relations to underlings but don't give them adequate authority to make decisions.

Such an administration — the second type — is found at Burnaby General Hospital. It is one of the most problem-ridden of Local 180's units, largely because the Union usually has to deal with people who are unable to make final decisions.

For a Union Representative facing such poor communication methods, it can

be a frustrating situation. At Burnaby General, there are numerous problems and concerns of employees which aren't acted upon.

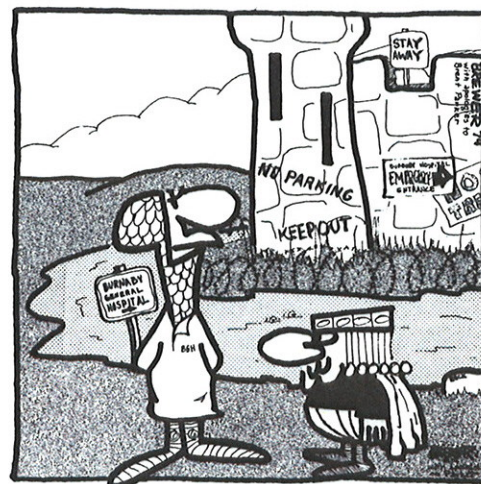
For example, employees must pay for parking spaces, despite the fact that the Burnaby hospital is in a suburban setting; the locker rooms and plumbing facilities are inadequate and have been a source of complaints for almost a decade; the dining room closes at 6 p.m. even though, as in virtually all hospitals, there are employees on the premises 24 hours a day.

The tangle of apparent red tape and deliberate stalling extends beyond the administration to the hospital's board of trustees, which in theory has the ultimate responsibility for running the hospital.

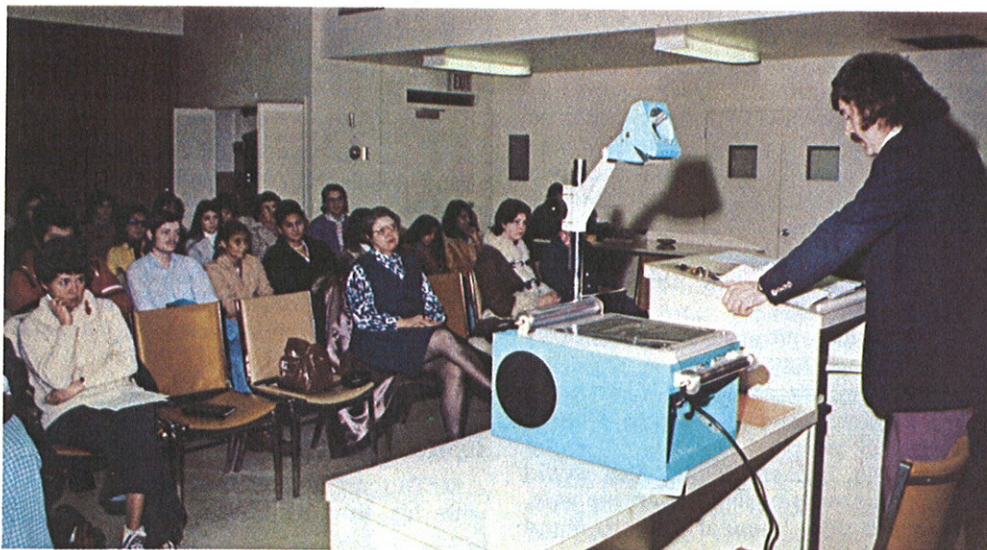
But it's questionable how much the trustees are aware of. One of them, when told by the Union of some of the problems, said he was surprised that such things would go unnoticed at Burnaby General.

Adding to the difficulties is the hospital's committee on labor relations. Unlike most hospitals, which designate the chief executive officer and selected trustees as members of that committee, Burnaby General has an unorthodox committee on labor relations consisting of the assistant administrator and the personnel manager.

In most problems, the Representative would have already dealt with those two people. They are unlikely to have learned any more about the problem and likely don't have the authority to do anything about it anyway.



"... And if the signs don't intimidate them, put some crocodiles in the moat."



DISCUSSING THEIR RIGHTS . . . on-call V.G.H. employees meet with Staff Representative.

'On-call' employees get full benefits

Some 250 to 300 employees at Vancouver General Hospital are receiving benefits resulting from a battle by the Union that began last year.

They are "on-call" employees, who were classed as temporary and received only the starting Union rate, no statutory holidays or benefits and only four per cent vacation pay. They were not eligible for Union membership according to the hospital even though, in some cases, they were scheduled as much as five days a week.

H.E.U. didn't see it that way and took the matter to arbitration. The milestone decision in the case of dietary aide Linda Snow went in favor of the Union. But V.G.H. refused to give in for all employees affected.

Many meetings followed. The hospital finally swung around for all employees affected, bringing them wages and benefits they were entitled to and adding some 300 new members to the ranks of Local 180.

EVALUATION COMMITTEE EYES PROCEDURE

The three-member administrative committee (job evaluation committee) struck under an agreement last year between H.E.U. and Health Minister Dennis Cocke, has had several meetings and come to some conclusions about an approach to an appropriate job evaluation program.

Details of its progress are not yet available but the committee has had meetings and has begun planning its task of ruling on unresolved pay rate adjustment requests.

Among the procedures under consideration is the selection of resource personnel to assist in the evaluation of all the requests for pay adjustment.

The committee consists of D. R. Blair, W. Rolfe and H. R. Slade.

All adjustments will be retroactive to Jan. 1, 1974.

AFTER 34 YEARS

Founding H.E.U. member Jim Ballard retiring

After more than 34 years in the hospital industry, Jim Ballard is retiring.

The past 2½ years have been spent at the Provincial Office of H.E.U., between servicing trips to his units in the Kootenays and, previous to his out-of-town assignments, servicing at Vancouver area units.

To Jim, it doesn't seem that long ago that he applied at Vancouver General Hospital for a job as orderly. That was in 1939. He got the job and remained there for seven years, until he took over a position he kept for the next 35 years — looking after anesthetic equipment at VGH.



Jim in 1940s

It was during his early years at the hospital that H.E.U. was born. When he joined the work force there, a Union of sorts was already established, but one without any teeth in it.

"We didn't have certification of our own," Ballard recalls.

"We were affiliated to the Civic Employees Union at City Hall. The Union had no strength.

"We didn't even have the women (who were in a separate 'association') — that's how weak we were."

By 1944, the Hospital Employees' Union, Local 180, had gained certification, and Jim Ballard was a catalyst in the movement.

His involvement had started with the original Union at the hospital, which he got actively involved with for a reason he now chuckles at.

He wondered what made the Union tick, how it was run.

"So I ran for office to find out."



JIM BALLARD . . . time now for hobbies.

Jim found out — and his involvement with the unit after being elected lasted until he joined the Local 180 staff.

When the newly-formed H.E.U. was finding its feet, Jim was helping to set up the first Convention. Over the years he subsequently served on the Provincial Executive, a total of nine times.

That didn't end his participation at the unit level, however, where he was chairman of the VGH unit four times, and held the office of secretary and other positions many times. In fact, he admits his main interests have consistently been with the unit.

Over the years, his accumulated experience and wisdom have been invaluable at both levels of Local 180. But Jim is quick to emphasize the importance of constantly bringing new blood into the workings of the Union.

"As you get older, you get smarter," Ballard reflects, "but sometimes the very smartness can defeat you if you're not careful."

You have to have eager young people says Jim.

"Young people bring fresh ideas. That's so important."

Ballard joined the Provincial Office in 1971 as a Staff Representative, and was assigned to familiar territory: Vancouver General, as well as Burnaby General, St. Paul's and Louis Brier.

He was later given the Kootenays to service, the territory he covered until now.

"I thoroughly enjoyed being the Kootenay rep," says Jim.

"It's not just the area, which is rugged and beautiful. It's the people. They're very special people."

As for his present plans, Jim would like to do some travelling when his wife, Rita, retires from hospital work in about a year.

In the meantime, he's got some time on his hands but he's not sure how he'll fill it. He doubts if he'll take up the guitar again, though many years ago he played the instrument and sang — "until our house burned down and the guitar went with it."

"I'd like to go to school, maybe take up a hobby or two," he says with a vagueness that makes taking life easy enjoyable.

To help him, Jim has more than \$3,000 as a severance allowance. (He was among the first to enjoy that benefit included in the 1974-75 collective agreement.)

In any case, he now has time to think about it . . . and about 34 years of valuable service.

Washing Away

This report from below the border bears mentioning for future inspiration.

A California court recently awarded a policeman one year off with pay. Why? The policeman told the court that job tension had caused him the hives, the hives itched and caused him the seek "alcoholic beverage" relief, and that heavy drinking resulted in his discharge from the job.

Since his "disability" was job-related, he received a full year's wages.

Hear about the man who didn't pay his exorcist? He was repossessed.

McTAGGART APPOINTED JUDGE

Ted McTaggart whose law firm has represented H.E.U. for over 15 years, has been appointed a county court judge in New Westminster.

He is ruling on criminal cases, and financial matters between \$1,000 and \$5,000.

County court is the second of three levels of courts: provincial, county and supreme.

McTaggart has severed all connections with his firm McTaggart, Ellis, Melvin, Cocking, Martin, McDonald and Black.

Although his dealings with Local 180 are now over, he had barely warmed the bench, as it were, before being called on to help settle a trade union dispute at the Cominco plant in Trail, which was shut down when some employees walked off the job.

McTaggart was appointed a special officer under the Labor Code, and flew to Trail to meet with both sides.

At a second meeting a settlement was reached, bringing a successful ending to the first application of the new section (112) of the Code.

Judge McTaggart welcomes the challenges of his new position but says he has enjoyed his long association with H.E.U.



APPRENTICESHIP steering committee at one of its meetings, working on implementation program. From left: H.E.U.'s Jack Gerow; Chairman Bert Blair; B.C.H.A.'s Bill Rolfe; and Blair Anderson of the provincial Department of Labor.

DIGNITY DENIED

U.S. Hospital Employees Battle Anti-Labor Laws

B.C. hospital workers who were around before H.E.U. was formed would be able to identify with many of their less fortunate counterparts south of the border.

In the magazine *The Laborer*, published by the Laborer's International Union of North America, the depressing conditions of workers in non-profit U.S. hospitals was described recently.

There was an optimistic note: legislation before the U.S. Congress is designed to improve their conditions by striking out a section of the National Labor Relations Act of 1935 which denies workers at non-profit hospitals the rights to organize that are enjoyed by other hospital employees.

Meanwhile, working conditions at such hospitals are hard to believe in the 1970s. To emphasize its point, *The Laborer* cited the example of St. Mary's, a Catholic Hospital in Streator, Illinois, where employees have been fighting an uphill battle to be represented by the L.I.U.

Practices at the hospital that led to their seeking representation included the treatment received by a licensed practical nurse who had put in 17 years of service. She was approaching retirement age, at which time she would receive the grand sum of \$68 a month as her pension.

Three weeks before her retirement day she was discharged for no apparent reason and denied her pension benefits.

Other examples are just as numerous: employees suffering an occupational disease are often refused sick leave, must

pay their own medical bills and are even fired if they don't return to work quickly enough; employees pay \$40 a month for a totally inadequate health insurance program; employees were pressured and forced in "voluntary" contributions, deducted from their pay cheques, when the new hospital was built six years ago; a grievance procedure has been instituted with an attitude of: "If you don't like it . . . quit!"

Some wages: housekeeping employees start at \$1.80 an hour and can hope to reach a top level of \$2.28 after five years. Nurses' aides are paid \$2 or less to start and might reach \$2.28 after five years.

But their situation is not unique. Other non-profit hospital employees across the United States face similar conditions. Vital legislation to improve their lot has been blocked in the past by such lobbyists as the reactionary American Hospital Association and the anti-union "Right to Work" Committee.

But even the A.H.A. has conceded that "hospital workers remain among the lowest paid workers in the national economy" in the U.S. To add salt to the wounds, the American system includes individuals in the same hospitals making as much as \$90,000 and \$100,000 a year — creating an explosive climate highly conducive to bitterness.

Legislative changes designed to grant basic civil rights to this large section of the work force, and allowing such workers some human dignity, is hardly coming too soon.

THOSE BENEFITS REALLY ADD UP

Maureen Howland noticed a few people staring at her when she went to pick up her pay cheque.

She knew the amount was going to be larger than usual, to include back pay she had coming, but Mrs. Howland was still confused at the obvious attention she was getting . . . until she saw the cheque.

It was made out for \$2,240.

"I couldn't believe it," says Mrs. Howland. "I almost fell over."

The story with a happy ending began in May, 1970, when Mrs. Howland started working part-time as a medical stenographer at Lions Gate Hospital in North Vancouver, averaging 15 hours a week. Her position was termed casual, and her pay cheques included some holiday pay.

But she wasn't aware that she was entitled to sick benefits and statutory holidays, and these weren't included in her wages.

The situation remained unchanged until last Christmas, when Mrs. Howland worked some statutory holidays. It led her to check with Unit Secretary Lois Reimer on just what benefits a part-time worker is entitled to.

Lois talked to the personnel manager, and the figures were later added up.

After receiving the cheque — which included \$2,000.83 in back pay — Mrs. Howland put it in the bank but was reluctant to touch any of the money.

"I was afraid it was a mistake and I'd have to give it back. I just couldn't believe it was true."

HOSPITAL PRIMER

LESSON 1



SEE THE PRETTY THERMOMETER. THE NICE PRACTICAL PUTS IT IN YOUR MOUTH TO TAKE YOUR TEMPERATURE. ISN'T SHE NICE? SHE'S A STUDENT PRACTICAL NURSE. SHE IS USING A RECTAL THERMOMETER.

INFLATION CLIMBS AND CLIMBS AND ...

Recent rises in the cost of living in B.C. are proving the high value of the anti-inflation clause in the current collective agreement.

During the first two months of this year the cost of living in the province has risen two per cent. Since inflation wage adjustments after the first six-month reference period will be based on increases above two per cent, any cost of living hike after February, 1974, will be matched by a wage increase. March and April figures indicate a further two per cent rise in the cost of living.

The Vancouver Consumer Price Index in December was 146.4, but by February had risen to 149.5 — an increase of more than three points representing a 2.1 per cent rise in the cost of living.

Because the first contract reference period will end June 30, increases recorded in March, April, May and June will be matched by wage adjustments.

The Consumer Price Index is compiled by Statistics Canada.

Since its establishment in 1961 with a base figure of 100, the index has never gone down.

Ruff salutes H.E.U.'s anti-discrimination wage 'breakthrough'

B.C. human rights crusader Kathleen Ruff has praised anti-discrimination achievements for hospital workers as a "real breakthrough" in the fight for equality.

In an interview in a Vancouver newspaper, the director of B.C.'s Human Rights Commission commended the raising of wages for licensed practical nurses to the level of orderlies, in which some \$5 million is being paid to women throughout the province.

The move followed submissions by the Union to the provincial government.

"To my mind," she said, "that was a real breakthrough."

"It was like a class action. I am sure that it's the biggest amount that's ever come out of a discrimination case in Canada."

Kathleen Ruff heads a team of four other Human Rights officers with a recently-approved annual budget of \$250,000.



—Ed Robertson photo

SMALL PROTEST GROUP still seeks to keep Cumberland General open as an acute care hospital, as shown in a recent public demonstration in the Vancouver Island town, but work has already begun on the intermediate care centre that will replace the historic facility, one of the Island's oldest hospitals.

Ashcroft man wins fight for his job, reputation

A battle that involved arbitration and criminal charges has ended happily for an H.E.U. member.

The arduous events began for maintenance engineer Fred Woodworth last July when he was terminated at Ashcroft and District General Hospital.

Administrator G. H. Bramha listed eight "reasons" for the termination. A grievance was filed that day, and the administrator's subsequent response rejected further discussions short of arbitration.

H.E.U. became involved at this stage. Bramha insisted the matter be referred to arbitration, as did the hospital's committee on labor relations soon afterward.

During the course of these discussions, however, the case took a new turn.

Members of the R.C.M.P. turned up at Woodworth's house and informed him criminal charges had been laid against him. Woodworth had been accused of having hospital property in his possession.

His house was searched and a summons was issued.

The case was set for Feb. 12. An H.E.U. Representative and legal counsel brought in by the Union appeared with Woodworth in Ashcroft provincial court, and heard a startling admission by the prosecuting attorney: the prosecution had no evidence to back up the charges. The prosecutor requested a stay of proceedings but the judge denied the request, throwing the charges out of court.

That left the way clear to proceed with arbitration. At the hearing, the Union supplied four witnesses, the hospital six.

The arbitration board ruled — unanimously — that Woodworth was wrongfully terminated from the hospital. He was reinstated in his former job and awarded several thousand dollars in back pay.

After a nine-month fight by Woodworth and H.E.U. to clear his name and win back a job he should never have lost, justice had finally prevailed.

HOSPITAL PRIMER LESSON 2



**SEE THE
HEAD NURSE.**
She's very efficient.
She tells everybody
what to do
and where to go.
All the nurses would
like to tell her
where to go.

Strikes illegal

Ontario workers losing inflation fight

Charles Smith, an orderly at Victoria Hospital in London, Ont., has a lot in common with his counterparts in British Columbia.

At work, he has duties that are similar to members of H.E.U. Local 180.

After work, he faces many of the same responsibilities, a similar environment and the same spiralling cost of living.

But when he gets his pay cheque . . . there's no comparison.

Smith (not his real name) looks back to 1969 and recalls he was bringing home about \$93 a week.

Meagre sum

Five years, one promotion and two children later his pay envelope promises about \$100 a week — a meagre sum to combat mortgage payments, ever-climbing food costs and the needs of two fair-haired toddlers.

He is one of about 700 workers in the hospital who are members of the Service Employees International Union (S.E.I.U.) Local 220. The Union represent some 20,000 hospital employees in Ontario.

The contract under which Smith works expired last Dec. 31. Because \$100 is the most he ever hopes to make in his present job and there is no higher pay category he can hope to move into without special training, Smith is hoping desperately that his Union's demands for substantially higher wages and family benefits will be met.

Doubts

But he has strong doubts that they will. Under the Hospital Labor Disputes Arbitration Act passed in 1965, it is illegal for Ontario hospital workers to strike. To do so would mean a \$100-a-day fine.

When a 7.9 per cent restraint on increases in hospital budgets for 1973 was announced, the S.E.I.U. called it "an undesirable burden on the backs of hospital workers" because it limits the possibility of these people getting "living wages."

Working poor

The Union said a high percentage of its members would be better off on welfare.

Smith, interviewed by a London newspaper, said he isn't familiar with the term

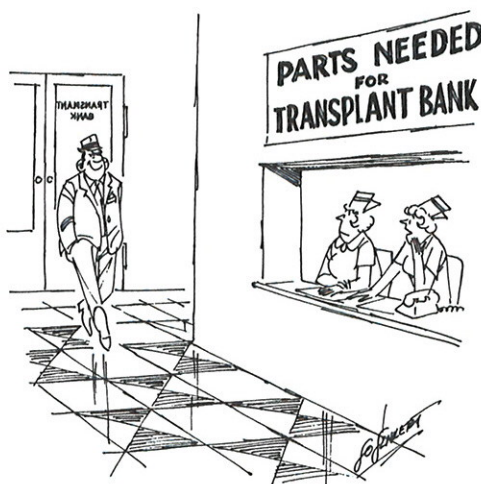
working poor but firmly believes in earning his own way.

So do those who work with him but many of them, he said, are forced to take on second jobs to get by.

For him, his fellow workers and their Union, the pursuit of decent wages with such a low starting point — and without that crucial right to strike — is a steep, uphill climb.



TRIMMED TO SIZE, the last of the abridged 1974-75 collective agreements are given the finishing touches by cutter foreman Walter Whyte at Broadway Printers in Vancouver. A total of 10,000 copies of the agreement were printed in the handy pocket size.



"I'LL SCREAM, if it's another wise guy offering his double hernia."

BULGING BEDS ... AND OTHER LGH BLOOPERS

News in a light vein is part of the content of The LGH Lampoon, a newspaper published and circulated at Lions Gate Hospital by employees there.

One of the regular features is "Hospital Bloopers" and here are some excerpts:

Twenty-six beds were purchased for A-3. Lovely beds, but they are too wide to go through the door. This is not surprising. After all, we have mattresses that are too short for the beds, so what is wrong with beds that won't go through a doorway?

Some new white water jugs were bought but they won't fit in the dish machine. What is the answer to this—possibly to purchase a larger dish machine?

B.C.H.A. changes its name

The B.C. Hospitals Association has been given a name change.

The B.C.H.A. will now be known as the B.C. Association of Hospitals and Health Organizations.

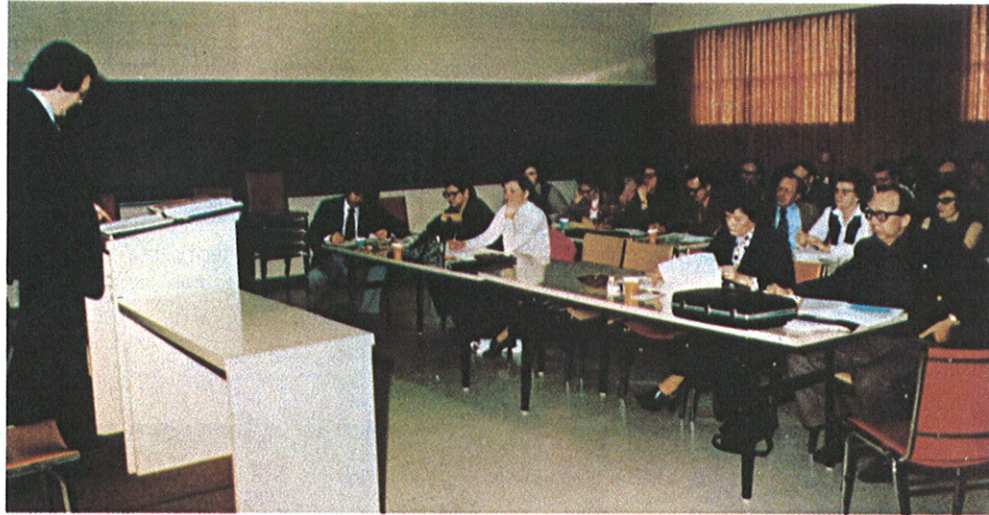
Could it be the sunshine?

Here's a piece of information Dr. Richard Foulkes might have missed during his research:

Of 800 people living in Vicamba Valley in Ecuador, 18 are between the ages of 100 and 142 — as corroborated by baptismal records. All are so healthy they're still working. And they have no doctors.



EMPLOYEES AT ST. VINCENT'S Hospital in lower mainland are now enjoying the benefits of H.E.U. membership, and recent contract signing (below) made those benefits official, bringing the provincial master agreement into effect at the hospital. It was the culmination of a long but worthwhile effort involving organizing and handing out copies of the *Guardian* (above) to St. Vincent's employees.



SEMINARS held across the province at the unit level were preceeded by a two-day seminar at the Provincial Office for Staff Representatives and some unit officers. Details of the contract were covered thoroughly throughout the session.

'Judge not' (No. 1)

UNION AHEAD OF JESUS? — TRUSTEE EATS WORDS

Abbotsford's Menno Hospital, set in the green surroundings of the Fraser Valley, has not been noted for controversy. Founded and run by the area's Mennonites, the facility — an extended care hospital with a work force totalling some 60 employees — operates in an atmosphere of quiet dedication.

But controversy struck recently after a conference of United Mennonite Churches of B.C. when one of Menno's board members, Gerhard Peters, made a startling statement about the hospital's employees and their membership in H.E.U.

Peters gave a speech in German, which included an attack on Menno employees.

Later, his charge was freely translated and printed in the church's newspaper, the *Mennonite Reporter*, which quoted him as saying that some employees at Menno are "transferring their loyalty from the love of Jesus, with which they started out, to the employees' union, with the result that Jesus is excluded."

His remarks were also published, in German, in booklet form and they didn't go over the heads of the hospital's employees.

Many of them speak German fluently and others are at least expected have a working knowledge of the language, and in some cases Russian as well, because of the ethnic backgrounds of the patients they care for.

The unit members were furious. An apology was demanded and the case was referred to the Provincial Office, which contacted Local 180's solicitors.

Peters was advised of the effects his statements were causing, and he wrote a letter to the solicitors containing a half-hearted retraction.

Peters conceded in the letter that he "may have given the impression of passing judgment on a certain group of people," and threw in a quote from the Bible: "Judge not that ye be not judged."

But that wasn't good enough for the Menno unit members, who also reasoned that since Peters made the accusation at a public meeting, he should apologize at one.

The opportunity was at hand, in the form of the annual meeting of the Mennonite Benevolent Society, which was coming up.

The statements were a below-the-belt punch for the Menno employees, whose especially difficult task of caring for the aged is one that requires intense dedication.

Peters gave in. He spoke at the annual meeting — and apologized without qualification, admitting he was wrong in making the accusations.

'Judge not' (No. 2)

A judge, unable to keep his mind off his work, goes to a baseball game to relax.

At the first pitch the umpire yells "Strike," to which the judge shouts "Injunction granted."