

The Hospital

# Guardian

JANUARY-FEBRUARY, 1979



HOSPITAL  
EMPLOYEES'  
UNION LOCAL  
180

VOL. XVI, No. 1

## THE NOT-SO-FUNNIES! PAGE 5





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

# The Hospital Guardian

Official Magazine of the



**HOSPITAL  
EMPLOYEES'  
UNION** LOCAL  
180

The Hospital Guardian is published six times a year by the Provincial Executive of the Hospital Employees' Union, Local 180, under the direction of an Editorial Committee whose members are:

**W. D. BLACK** **J. D. GEROW**  
**JOHN DARBY** **JUNE BRADBURY**  
**GORDON MacPHERSON**

This Editorial Committee is responsible to the Provincial Executive of the Union, which is — in turn — responsible to the Members. The members of the Provincial Executive are:

<b>W. D. BLACK</b> President	<b>J. D. GEROW</b> Secretary- Business Manager
<b>JOHN DARBY</b> Financial Secretary	<b>JUNE BRADBURY</b> First Vice-President
<b>GORDON MEAGHER</b> Second Vice-President	<b>CLIFF WEISNER</b> Third Vice-President
<b>LARRY RICHARDS</b> Fourth Vice-President	<b>MAURICE SMITH</b> Fifth Vice-President
<b>GORDON MacPHERSON</b> Senior Trustee	<b>STEVE POLAK</b> Trustee I
<b>GWEN PARRISH</b> Trustee II	<b>BILL McDONALD</b> Regional Vice-President Fraser Valley
<b>SHEILA McMAHON</b> Regional Vice-President Kootenays	<b>WANDA RICKETTS</b> Regional Vice-President Lower Mainland I
<b>RENA GREENWOOD</b> Regional Vice-President Lower Mainland II	<b>ALBERTA DORVAL</b> Regional Vice-President North
<b>DENNIS JEFFERY</b> Regional Vice-President Okanagan	<b>GARRY CARLSON</b> Regional Vice-President Vancouver Island

The Union maintains offices at:

## Provincial Office

538 West Broadway  
Vancouver V5Z 1E9  
Telephone 876-2291  
Telex 04-507666

## Okanagan/Kootenay Office

No. 103, 2359 Highway 97 North  
Kelowna V1X 4H9  
Telephone 860-5115  
Telex 048-5102

## Vancouver Island Office

No. 303, 990 Market Street  
Victoria V8T 2E9  
Telephone 388-7304  
Telex 049-7150

## Northern Office

1584 Ogilvie Street South  
Prince George V2N 1W9  
Telephone 564-2102  
Telex 047-8017

Certain portions of the magazine are copyrighted;  
no reproduction of any portion should be made  
without prior consent of

**STEPHEN BREWER**  
Editor

MEMBER



## ORGANIZING



## LRB weighs workers' fate

The HEU was waiting at press time for the province's Labour Relations Board to certify its newest Unit, at Vancouver's Willingdon Private Hospital.

The move was expected after workers at the independent health care facility voted in early January, 29 to 5, to change their union membership from the International Union of Operating Engineers to HEU.

"The overwhelming support of those who voted makes it almost inconceivable the LRB would do anything but order our certification," Servicing Representative Gay Burdison told THE GUARDIAN.

Workers at Willingdon — which is owned and operated by the same firm which owns both Kensington and Normandy private hospitals, both already HEU Units — were given the opportunity to cast ballots on the question of union affiliation after two Union organizers signed a majority of them into the Union during a drive begun in early November.

The two — Sisters Jean Bieker (*King George*) and Joan Wright (*Altamont*) — were brought onto the Union's staff then to conduct organizing drives at seven Lower Mainland independent health care facilities, all at that time with existing engineers' union certifications (GUARDIAN, November-December, 1978).

British Columbia's Labour Code gives union members two months each year in which to consider and decide the question of

changing their trade union representation.

For the seven independents involved — Willingdon, Carlton, Southpines and Carlsbad private hospitals, Trinity Lodge and Richmond Lions' Manor — those two months were November and December.

"We set out with great enthusiasm to 'liberate' these workers, who were unlucky enough to belong to the IUOE," Sister Wright told THE GUARDIAN.

"We felt then, and feel now, that the engineers' union was a fine place for engineers to be."

"But what possible interest could the IUOE have in nursing and kitchen staff in private hospitals?"



Pick a number from one to seven.



Despite repeated efforts to convince workers of the benefits of belonging to the HEU, only one other certification bid was possible, at Southpines.

At press time, the Union had asked the LRB to set a date for a poll of workers there to determine whether they wanted to switch unions.

In other organizing, Sister Burdison said, about 115 workers at Vancouver's Shaughnessy Manor (a privately-owned personal and intermediate care facility, not connected with the hospital of the same name) had asked the LRB at press time to certify the HEU as their bargaining agent.

Since no other union was involved in the

certification bid, and since "far and away the majority of the workers" had signed HEU membership cards, the Board was expected to grant an automatic certification, she added.

"Automatic certification is granted in almost all cases where more than half of the bargaining unit members have signed membership cards," Sister Burdison explained.

## LEGISLATURE

# Victoria hospitals fighting limits

Two Victoria hospitals appear to be leading the fight against Health Minister Bob McClelland's 1979 budget guidelines, announced last November and limiting budget increases to a mere five per cent.

Victoria General and Royal Jubilee hospitals have announced 1979 budgets calling for increases of 22 and 14.5 per cent, respectively.

"It does not appear possible, short of curtailing services or jeopardizing patient care if appreciable numbers of staff are laid off" to meet the minister's guidelines, the Victoria General finance committee told a meeting of the hospital's board in December.

Committee Chairman Keith Terlson said at that meeting that his committee had pared its budget as low as it could without making reductions in hospital staff.

"We're not going to do that unless someone else tells us to," he told the board.

At Jubilee, administrator Michael Fraser made no such promises, though he *did* submit a budget reflecting a 14.5 per cent increase over 1978 to the ministry of health in late December.

Fraser did say his budget was in keeping with McClelland's stated objective — keeping hospital and health care costs down — before adding the minister's five

per cent ceiling would be an impossible one for his hospital.

The medical staff at Jubilee, however, was not as reticent.

In an advertisement placed in Victoria newspapers in early December, the RJH medical staff announced it had "resolved that the public should be made aware of a deteriorating level in patient care which has resulted from government measures of cost control."

"We would, therefore, appeal to the minister of health to make monies available immediately, without prejudice, for future planning, and — in consultation with hospital authorities — to hire sufficient staff at the hospital to restore the excellent and uniform standards of care that the citizens of Victoria have enjoyed in the past," the ad continued.

While newspaper accounts from around the province report many other hospital administrators and boards "concerned" or

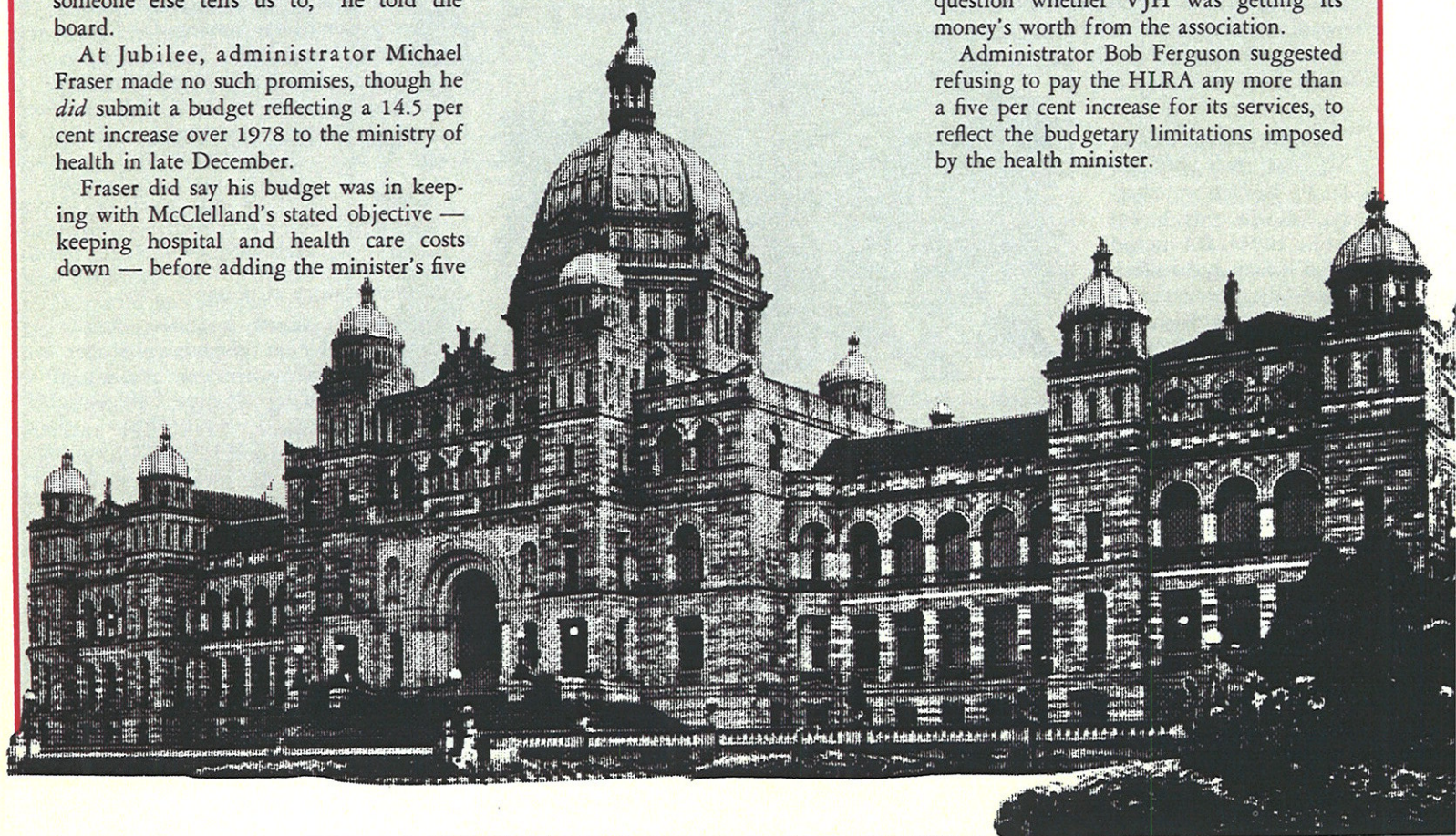
"worried" about McClelland's five per cent guidelines, it appeared — at press time — that only the two Victoria hospitals were prepared to battle the edict in any significant fashion.

But in Vernon, the budget guidelines were being felt, if in a somewhat different manner: Trustees of the Vernon Jubilee Hospital decided in early January they would pay the Health Labour Relations Association — bargaining agent for most public hospitals in the province — only one quarter of the assessment levied by the HLRA for 1979.

The decision to pay even part of the assessment came only after trustees voiced what the *Vernon Daily News* called "strong complaint over what they called an unreasonable increase in the cost of the HLRA's services."

The HLRA assessment represented a 16 per cent increase over the 1978 figure, leading board chairman Gerry Winters to question whether VJH was getting its money's worth from the association.

Administrator Bob Ferguson suggested refusing to pay the HLRA any more than a five per cent increase for its services, to reflect the budgetary limitations imposed by the health minister.





# Stubborn bosses stalling sessions

Delaying tactics by a stubborn administrator have stalled implementation of a new collective agreement in Trail, while budget limitations imposed by the provincial government have stalled talks on 1979 wage increases guaranteed under the Union's provincial master collective agreement.

Using a misdrafted memorandum of understanding between Trail's Columbia View Lodge and HEU as his excuse, Administrator Gordon Galbraith stalled implementation of a negotiated contract for about 40 workers there until the province's Labour Relations Board was forced to intervene to get the employer to implement the agreement.

The contract at Columbia — which offers parity with the master — was signed in mid-1978, after HEU Negotiator Owen Adams reached verbal understandings with the hospital to guarantee compensation for items—such as superannuation and dental plan coverage — which could not be made retroactive to June, when the Unit was certified.

It later developed that the memorandum signed to guarantee this compensation had been drafted in such a way that its strictly legal interpretation did not give the workers all the Lodge's administrator had agreed to.

Hiding behind that legal barrier, Galbraith refused to implement the award, until talks at the LRB, in late December, finally resulted in that implementation.

Encouraged by Health Minister Bob McClelland's budgetary limitations to cut costs, meanwhile, the HLRA moved in mid-January to block renewed talks on the issue of wage increases over and above 7 per cent for 1979.

The contract, of course, called for renewed discussions on further wage increases if the Vancouver Consumer Price Index rose above 7 per cent in 1978; according to Statistics Canada, the CPI topped that ceiling by .7 per cent.

Anticipating this, HEU served notice in mid-December that it wished to re-open negotiations for 1979 wage rates.

On January 12, HLRA responded with a letter refusing to sit down at a bargaining table with the Union because it felt the contract provision — already sanctified by an arbitration award and a decision of the Supreme Court (*GUARDIAN, September-October, 1978*) — was in violation of the federal Anti-Inflation Act.

The HLRA cited Section 47 of that Act as its base for argument, a section which, in essence, prohibits an employer and a trade union from conspiring to evade the intent of the anti-inflation program by deferring compensation until after the Act expired.

The situation had been, at press time, referred to an arbitration board for a decision.

In other bargaining, meanwhile, contracts close to — or at — parity had been signed at press time with Powell River's Olive Devaud Home and the Capital Region Association for the Mentally Handicapped. Both sets of negotiations were carried out by Vancouver Island Servicing Representative Bill Muir.

A contract had also been signed at Vancouver's Edith Cavell Private Hospital, where workers received parity with the earlier landmark independent health care facility contract won at Kensington and Normandy private hospitals (*GUARDIAN, September-October, 1978*).

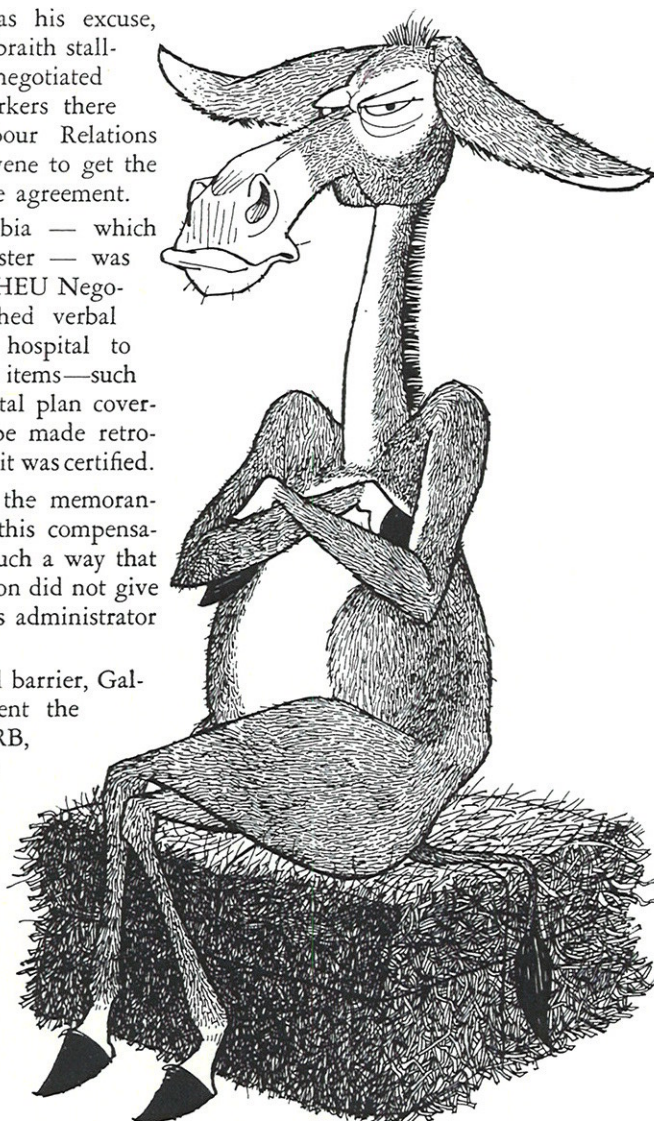
At press time, the HEU was waiting for an arbitration board to hand down its award covering employees at New Vista in Burnaby (where a strike vote was taken last year, *GUARDIAN, November-December, 1978*).

Mediation talks were continuing at Nelson's Willowhaven Lodge and Medical Associates Clinic, while negotiations were about to get underway between the Union and North Vancouver's Kiwanis Lynn Manor (where the current agreement expires March 31), Victoria's Rose Manor, Port Hardy Hospital and Vernon's Noric Lodge.

Meanwhile, the Dermott Owen-Flood arbitration board handed down its award for a new contract covering workers at seven Lower Mainland independents just as this issue went to press.

The award, called a "major breakthrough" by Union Negotiator Sharon Yandle, brings workers at Altamont, Como Lake, King George, Florence Nightingale, Ladner, Parkridge and Inglewood private hospitals within 10 per cent of parity with the provincial master collective agreement.

Full details of the contract will be reported in the next *GUARDIAN*.







## MASS MEDIA STORIES

### What are they doing to our heads?

by Robert C. Cosbey  
Professor of English  
University of Regina

The comic strips illustrating this article all have one thing in common: They are concerned with working people and their problems.

They are all put-downs of working people.

And they are all typical of the way working people are shown in stories told through the mass media: in comics, television, movies, magazines and books.

What happens in the comics may not seem very important — the reason so many people read the comics first is that they are just meaningless entertainment.

At least that's what most readers will tell you.

But isn't it interesting that in this "just entertainment", whenever there are episodes about workers, the workers are always laughed at and put down as lazy, incompetent and helpless?

Dagwood and Blondie have been making readers chuckle for over half a century.

In all that time — while Dagwood has been shown as a nice, friendly guy — he has also been shown as the worker who is at the mercy of his boss.

The way Mr. Dithers bullies him and puts him down when he asks for a raise has always been a joke, part of the entertainment for people to laugh at.

It's interesting that when we see a foolish worker like Dagwood we always laugh at him.

But it's even more interesting to ask, "Where are the serious workers, the real workers, in this world of media stories?"

In our real world, it is the many productive workers who keep society going, but you wouldn't know that from watching TV stories or reading comics.

There, you will find workers in offices, like Dagwood (but very seldom see them actually working), and you'll find people doing vague work in advertising agencies, like Mary Tyler Moore, and some working entertainers, like the Partridge family.

But where, among all these people, are real workers, the kind that keep the world going with their work?

You'll find doctors in Real Workers' stories, doing their professional jobs.

You'll find detectives, and policemen — lots and lots of policemen — going about their duties.

But where are the workers?

And where are the unions?

How does it happen, in our society, that we can find "just entertainment" in the lives of doctors and policemen, but not in the lives of unionized workers?

The workers in the mass media stories are there to be put down and laughed at, not to be admired like the doctors and policemen.

The workers are always lazy or helpless.

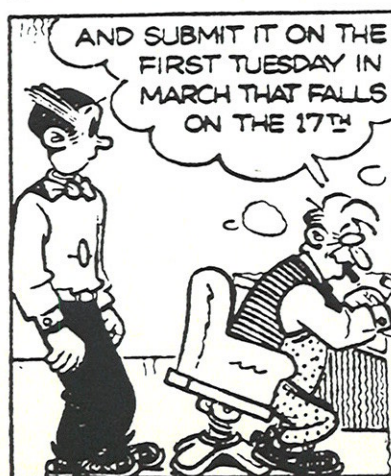
In fact, a lot of mass media stories carry what can only be called the propaganda message of the helpless worker taken care of by the generous boss.

Sometimes, the boss is a skinflint who has to repent and become generous, which — in these stories — he always does.

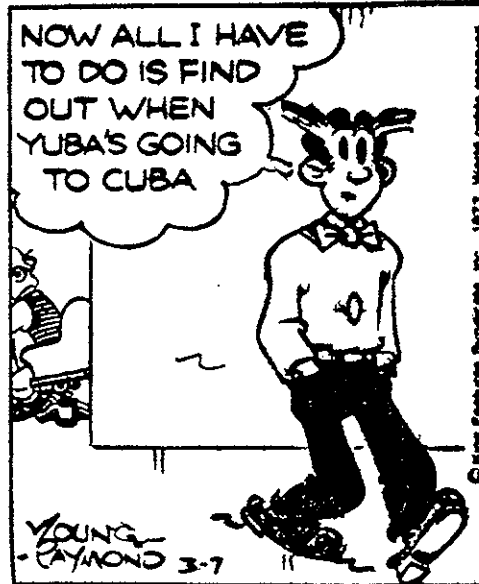
Over 130 years ago, Charles Dickens wrote a story called "A Christmas Carol," which has become the most popular Christmas story in the English-speaking world, next to the Bible story.

It's about a boss and a worker: hard-hearted Ebenezer Scrooge and his employee, poor, foolish Bob Cratchit.

Did you ever notice how much nineteenth-century Bob Cratchit's situation is like that







of twentieth-century Dagwood Bumstead?

Bob is completely at the mercy of his boss.

The only possible solution to his problems is the hope that his boss' hard heart will be softened — and indeed old Scrooge has a change of heart, realizes that he is really a nice guy, and sends a turkey to the Cratchits, so all is well.

In other words, this most popular Christmas story has been preaching a lesson about industrial relations and workers' problems all these years, mixed in with the Christmas cheer and the entertainment.

The message is that the boss is really a good-hearted guy under his gruff exterior, so be patient, and everything will come out all right.

In December, 1977, I tuned in *The Six Million Dollar Man*, a TV show with one of the largest audiences in the history of mankind, and saw the same old Christmas story in modern terms, with the same old message mixed in with the entertainment.

Steve is investigating some accidents in a company producing life-support systems for a space program.

The boss, crusty old Mr. Budge, has an employee named Bob, whom he keeps so poor that Bob cannot even afford a Christmas tree for his kids.

Remembering the Charles Dickens story, Steve uses his super-human electronic me-

chanical powers to trick Mr. Budge and soften his hard heart.

Mr. Budge then dresses up like Santa Claus and takes a bag of toys to Bob's family, so everything comes out all right.

(Please don't any trouble-makers ask where was the union in Mr. Budge's factory, and why didn't Bob go to it for help? And don't ask why the super-hero of our mass media stories is never fighting for solidarity. A real hero would have organized a strike, but you can't even imagine any of our mass media heroes doing *that*.)

Once you take the clue and start looking for the way workers are shown in mass media stories, you'll find that one propaganda message is even more widespread than the suggestions that unions don't exist (or are bad) and that workers should trust the good hearts of their employers.

The deepest message is that solidarity is taboo.

In these stories, people never get together and push for group solutions to their problems.

All problems are only personal, and all solutions are individual.

Notice that Dagwood, Bob Cratchit, Leonard Tweety, Hi, and all the other workers are always shown as *alone*, never as part of an active group.

In fact, this message is so important that it

is repeated in all the mass media stories, not only those about workers.

All solutions are individual in these stories; they are never the result of solidarity.

This message is so important that it must be built into stories, even if that makes the stories unreal or ridiculous.

Suppose Cannon the detective finds out the bad guys are in a warehouse, and have the girl captive there.

He must somehow rescue the girl and foil the gangsters.

But there are a dozen of them, all heavily armed, and only one of him.

What does he do?

He does exactly what James Bond did on the island of Dr. No, exactly what Tarzan did when the bad guys had Jane, exactly what Tom Mix or the Lone Ranger did when the bad guys had the girl on the ranch: he walks right in, all by himself.

Their bullets miss him.

He just happens to find a way to defeat them.

He rescues the girl, *all by himself*.

Why are such unreal stories as that told over and over?

Why should our entertainment consist of such crazy dreams of individualism?

Everywhere in our mass media stories solidarity is taboo; problems can only be solved by individuals, and usually by super-heroes, not just people like you or me.

Come back to the idea that we watch or read stories "just for entertainment"; the idea is that there is no social meaning in our stories.

Actually, that's a very curious idea.

The myth of meaninglessness is one of the oddities of our culture.

Anthropologists and folklorists know that most of the stories of any culture express the values of the ruling class of that culture.

If you want to know the values of those in power in any culture, look at the stories of that culture.

Every anthropologist and folklorist knows, too, that stories help the readers or listeners to form their own ideas about what life is like.

Bruno Betelheim, in his recent book *The Uses of Enchantment*, shows how fairy tales help kids grow up.

Take stories like *Jack the Giant Killer*, or *The Little Tailor*, in which a little guy conquers the giant and wins the princess (partly by a kind of solidarity, by the way — he helps people in need, and they help him).

Such stories encourage the little kid to believe that he will grow up some day, and solve his problems.

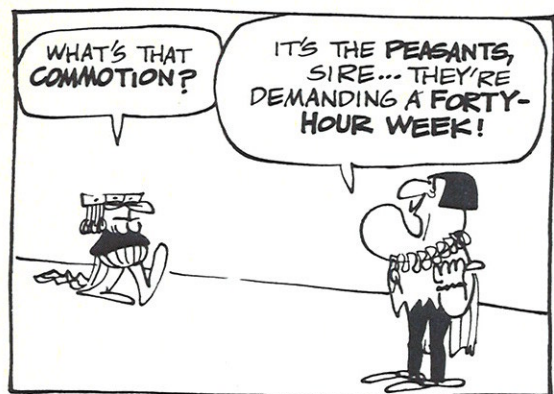
Not that he learns a conscious lesson from the story; rather, his whole feeling about what life is like is gradually affected by the stories.

If you get the same kind of story over and over, it affects your view of life.

Another example is the woman who reads *Harlequin Romances*, especially the woman who reads eight new ones every month.

She is putting herself into a world where there are no social problems, a world, for instance, in which nothing needs to be done about the status of women.





Her only problem is how to get a man, and that is solved in every story by some wealthy aristocrat falling in love with her.

What is that doing to the woman's head? Won't it help make her a passive person, one who *cannot* work to change the status of women in the real world?

Take a close look at the stories of our mass media, and notice how very few of them affect your mind so as to encourage you to take action, or to take pride in your own life.

There has been a lot of criticism of television in recent years, on many grounds.

Watching too much television when they should be active keeps little kids from de-

veloping co-ordination of the small muscles.

Watching violence makes them tolerant of violence in real life.

As union members, we must add another charge: TV and other mass media stories make us spend a lot of our mind-time in an anti-worker never-never-land.

What does that do to our heads? What does it do to the heads of non-union people, and the way they think of us?

It will not be easy to change the mass media, although there are some things we can change.

Active campaigns have recently forced some changes in the books children use in

schools, to make them less sexist and less racist (though no campaign I've heard of is trying to make them less anti-worker).

But the big thing right now is to recognize what mass media stories are doing to our heads, and to the heads of the rest of the people in our society.

Perhaps then we'll use the "off" switch more, and get our heads back into the real world, our own world, the world in which solidarity is not taboo.

Reprinted from **The Public Employee** (Vol. 1, No. 1; Spring, 1978), a CUPE publication; by permission.

## JOB EVALUATION

### Time needed for best job

The Joint Committee on Job Evaluation "has taken so long [to formulate a job evaluation program] because it is determined that it is not going to foist onto [the Union], or onto the employer, or onto the people of this province — who also have a stake — a . . . plan which is inadequate."

That was the message delivered to delegates to the Union's eleventh biennial convention in Richmond last October by Hugh Wilkinson, chairman of the Joint Committee (JCJE).

Wilkinson, whose committee has now handed both the HEU and the Health Labour Relations Association a proposal for implementation of the JEP (the Union's provincial executive was meeting at press time to study the proposal), made the statement in a report to delegates on the first day of the four-day convention (GUARDIAN, November-December, 1978).

The chairman said he was appearing before the convention to "give you what you really deserved for a long time . . . an accounting, a statement, as to what has happened [to] . . . all the promises you have heard about job evaluation for many years and all the money you have spent . . .".

"Why has the implementation of job evaluation, which we thought was taking place last year, not taken place in any hospital yet?" he continued.

"When is something going to happen? And is it all worth it?"

Wilkinson briefly reviewed the history of the JEP, noting as he did that "your Union is quite remarkable in that for more years than I care to mention . . ., [it] has been pushing for job evaluation . . . and taking leadership in an area which is usually reserved for the managerial organizations in most industries . . .".

A "committee . . . was set up in 1974 to develop a job evaluation plan."

The committee drew up a plan, contained in the "Blue Book", about which there was much controversy before the question of implementation of it finally went to arbitration.

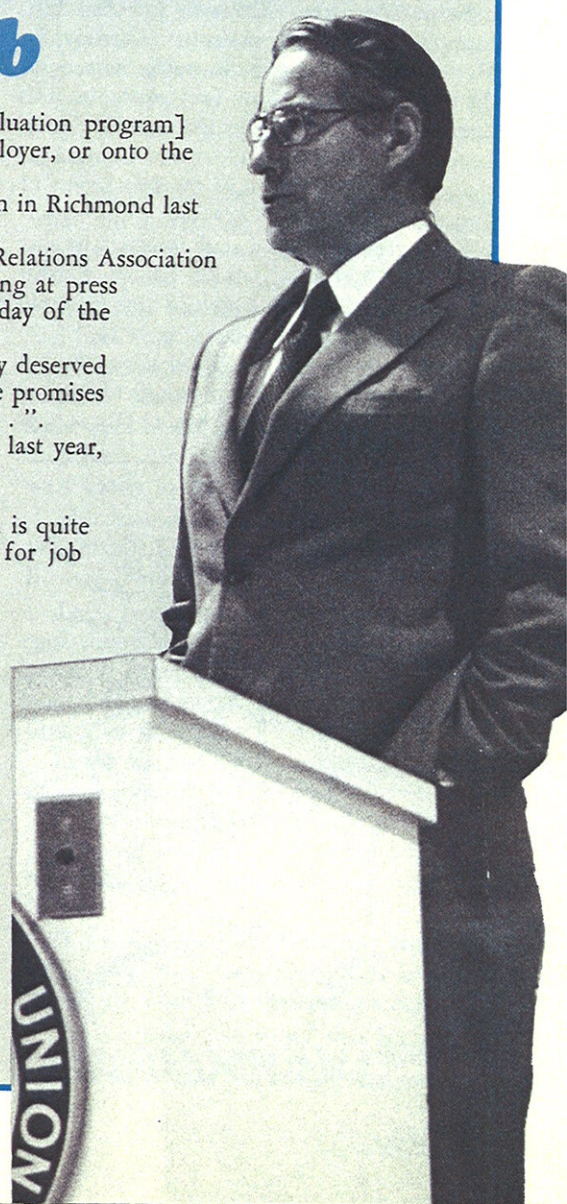
The arbitration award, brought down in early 1977, established the current JCJE.

"We thought our job was to implement a JEP which had already been developed . . . [but] what we found, very shortly after getting into the test hospitals, was that the plan was not satisfactory . . .".

"At first we thought it was just a few deficiencies in the plan, but the further we got into our tests in the test hospitals, the more problems we found."

"What the committee knew was that a good job evaluation plan can be a boon to employees and employers . . . but that a poor JEP would be a curse from the moment it was implemented."

What is needed, and what the JCJE is trying to formulate, he concluded, is "a system which will stay with you for 20 to 25 years, one that will — during that time — measure in a stable, equitable way the work and apply to it the appropriate differentials in pay . . .".





## PEOPLE



—VGH photo

**WHEN A GROUP OF DELEGATES** pooled their resources to win a television set at the eleventh biennial convention's "Las Vegas Night", there was some question about how the delegates were going to manage to divide the prize. Not really a problem, the delegates assured their brothers and sisters: They wanted the set so they could present it, on behalf of the Union, to the Health Centre for Children. The presentation was made recently to a young patient at the Vancouver facility by Sisters **Verna Offley** (right) and **Doris Dante** (second from right), while one of the hospital's play therapists looked on.

## Robinson a 'good scout'

Sister Margaret Robinson and her husband, Byron, were recently awarded the Medal of Merit for outstanding service to the Scouting movement in Canada by His Excellency, the Right Honourable Jules Leger, recently-retired Governor-General of Canada and Chief Scout of the Boy Scouts of Canada.

Sister Robinson — a staff cafeteria worker at St. Paul's Hospital and a Union member since June, 1963 — followed her husband into the Scouting movement in 1954.

Starting as an assistant Cubmaster, she has since held many different positions of responsibility in the Capilano Scout District of

North Vancouver.

She is currently assistant district commissioner for Cubs.

She and her husband have worked on many training courses for both Scout leaders and the boys themselves in the last 25 years.

Together, they attended two international jamborees, and plan to attend the next such world conference of Cubs and Scouts, scheduled to be held in Merritt this July.

Their dedication to the Scouting movement has involved them in many hundreds of freely-given hours of their time, time spent helping young boys become better citizens.

Somehow, all that involvement didn't keep them from raising their own family, though (in fact, it probably helped): eight sons and four daughters have each had the opportunity to participate in the Scout and Guide movements.

## Cook a winner

Southern Vancouver Island hospitals may soon find themselves being rated by someone other than the Canadian Council on Hospital Accreditation.

The *Michelin Guide* — world-renowned judge of restaurants — could start including those hospitals in its next edition, awarding at least two of them one or more of its coveted gold stars (so prestigious an honour that one great French chef is rumoured to have taken his own life when his restaurant lost one).

Saanich Unit chairperson Janice Ashmore's

culinary feats have already been reported (*GUARDIAN*, July-August, 1978).

Now comes word from another Island Unit that Sister Pat Erickson, head cook at Ladysmith General Hospital, has been awarded the prize for best student upon her graduation from Malaspina College's food program.

She was also presented an award by Doris Shaw, widow of Wally Shaw — co-founder of the Canadian Federation Chef de Cuisine — for outstanding food production.

Does one eliminate the garlic from the *escargot provincial* for patients on bland diets?

## FILM



**Brother Dick Lazenby** is a script writer for Telesound, the Vancouver film company which has just completed a half-hour film report of the HEU's eleventh biennial convention (that film will be ready for screening at Unit meetings early this year). On hand for all four days of the convention, Brother Lazenby — a member of five separate entertainment trade unions — prepared this report of his impressions of the biennial meeting for *THE GUARDIAN*:

The job call was "Richmond Inn, October 16-19, HEU Convention".

Instructions: "Selected Highlights from the convention, including registration, chairman's opening, a bit from guest speakers, reports from secretary-business manager, trustees and financial secretary. Also, some footage of debates on resolutions and constitutional amendments."



The doctor's out of town. His nurse said take two aspirins and call another doctor.





Unit photo



ERICKSON

STEWART

## MILESTONES

### RETIRED:

—*Sister Marion Stewart*, December 8, at the Canadian Red Cross' Vancouver Blood Transfusion Service (BTS).

Canada's longest-serving blood transfusion service clinic assistant, Sister Stewart was honoured last year by being named on Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Silver Jubilee Honours List (*GUARDIAN*, May-June, 1978).

A Union member since HEU was certified at the BTS in 1975, Sister Stewart has worked for the Red Cross since 1941.

Her service took her to Britain in 1944,

where she worked for two-and-a-half years as a member of the Volunteer Aide Detachment.

In December, 1947, she began her job as a clinic assistant in Vancouver.

Already honoured with a 30-year service pin by the Red Cross, she was guest of honour at a farewell party thrown by her Unit.

—*Sister Edna Beadman*, last December, at the Olive Devaud Home in Powell River. A cook there since 1973, she has been a union member since HEU was certified in January, 1975. Former conductor of her Unit, she plans now to move to Vancouver.

## Film crew likes convention atmosphere

Sunday afternoon, while the camera crew filmed exterior shots of the hotel and arriving delegates, the lighting crew checked electrical feeds and calculated equipment needs.

Back before 0700 Monday, the camera crew filmed registration, while lighting and sound hookups were completed in the main hall.

All along the corridors, people were meeting and greeting each other, faces lighting as old friendships were renewed and new ones begun. It felt more like a family reunion than a convention . . . the new delegates looked a bit cautious, the experienced people were relaxed and friendly, a feeling which persisted when proceedings got underway.

People were sometimes a bit nervous, speaking to more than 300 delegates, but they soon saw they were among friends. There was a good deal of laughter mixed into the reports and questions, lending a feeling of intimacy, even in a crowd of that size.

One of the most interesting things about film work is the way a crew can become a part of the process they are recording. In order to get the pictures wanted, the camera must be plunked down right in the middle of things, complete with operator and camera assistant, lighting crew and sound man.

There is no way to be discreet or invisible when a blinding bank of lights are turned on before the camera rolls. Everyone's attention is distracted the first few times this happens.

But, after a while, people get used to being under the lights and they forget all about the camera and keep right on with the job at hand. The film crew and equipment become part of the proceedings, allowing the camera to capture the ordinary actions and reactions, the little hesitations, as well as the polished speeches.

Our crew, like the delegates, took its cues from the chairman in the filming of the

opening remarks. Then we relaxed, while the chairman sorted through roll call and business details.

After lunch, we filmed part of the remarks of a guest speaker, and the opening section of the secretary-business manager's report.

By this time, we were getting interested. Long after the camera stopped, we were still listening to Brother Gerow's state of the Union report, learning where the HEU had come from, what its problems were, and what the future would hold for it.

On Tuesday morning, we again set up our lights, so we could film the comments of the delegates on the convention floor. Their reactions were interesting: Polite skepticism for evasive verbiage, sympathetic attention for a nervous speaker, good-humoured appreciation of the difficulties which speakers encountered in answering thorny questions, and real concern for issues delegates wanted to bring to the attention of others.

The reports being made were printed be-

forehand — they were carefully prepared and very detailed. But a lot of important information and union history still emerged during the question periods.

About this time, we began to understand the convention itself was a giant training seminar for all the delegates, as well as for the officers, who had to have satisfactory answers for a whole range of unexpected questions. Part of their responsibility, we began to see, was to ensure there would be responsible delegates and officers in the years to come.

Our film crew began to understand, when we moved the camera into one of the smaller caucus rooms to record committee meetings, that the delegates knew the future of the HEU was truly in their hands, as they had been told by the secretary-business manager. Everyone contributed to the caucus discussions, sometimes by seeing the difficulty, sometimes by not seeing it — after a problem had been carefully explained, the answers were easier to find.

The discussions and debate on the convention floor also reflected the concerns and beliefs of Unit representatives.

They found much to laugh at, but they took things seriously. Common problems and common experience make common cause. If one delegate raised an issue, many others supported it.

In the heat of debate, people argued with passion about things they felt strongly about . . . but, on those few occasions when delegates spoke sharply, they quickly returned to the microphones to make amends with their friends.

What impressed us? How nice the people were, how well organized this Union is. Above all, how well the sessions ran . . .

But you'll be able to see that for yourself — HEU made a movie about it.



Scalpel! — Clamp! — Harp!



## ROUNDUP

It started, last October, in Chilliwack, where Unit officers reviewed the Unit's practice of trying to encourage members to turn out for Unit meetings by offering both a \$15 and a \$10 prize at each monthly meeting.

The idea, Unit Chairperson *Bill McDonald* (he's also the Fraser Valley regional vice-president) decided, was a good one . . .

But the chance to win, at most, \$15 wasn't really enough to promote attendance at Unit meetings.

He reasoned there are at least 10 Unit meetings each year; what if the prizes offered for attending were \$75 and \$50?

The scheme he put to the Unit at its October meeting called for awarding four prizes each year, two \$75 cheques and two \$50 cheques.

To be eligible for the draw, a member would have to attend three of the first or the last five Unit meetings of the year; once the member had attended three meetings, their name would go into the draw bucket three times.

For every meeting they attended thereafter, their name would go in one more time, until the draw was held.

By July, a member who attended all of the first five meetings of 1979 would have five chances, in the same draw, at either \$75 or \$50; the same would

happen if the member attended all five

## The LANGLEY UNIT'S HAWAIIAN GIVEAWAY '79

of the second five meetings.

It doesn't cost the Unit one penny more than it was already spending on door prizes, and upped the member-drawing potential considerably.

The Unit endorsed the idea, which is now in force.



When Langley Unit heard about the Chilliwack door prize decision, it was intrigued.

It too, offered door prizes for each meeting, an incentive which was no longer really working.

The members at the November meeting liked the "big prize" idea, but added their own touch, at the suggestion of Unit Chairperson *Tom Culley*, who had just heard about an airline flying out of Seattle which was offering round-trip tickets to Hawaii for \$99 a person.

After brief discussion, the Langley Unit Hawaiian Giveaway was born, with a prize of two round-trips from Seattle to Hawaii (to a maximum of \$250), or — if the winner prefers — a cheque for \$250.

The rules are similar to Chilliwack's, except that the Langley draw operates on a 10-meeting schedule: To be eligible for the draw, a member must attend six meetings, after which their name will go into the hat six times.

As at Chilliwack, their name is added once for every meeting they attend after the sixth, to a maximum of 10 times.

The draw is scheduled for this November, with the winner allowed to take their Hawaiian holiday whenever they can get the time off.

We'll keep you posted on how both experiments work out.



## LETTERS

## Christmas 'blasphemy' disgusting

The Editor, Sir:

The consensus of opinion in this office is that the *Parting Shot* "cartoon" in the November-December, 1978, *GUARDIAN* was a disgraceful display of blasphemy on the part of Union officials.

These sort of utterances, obviously endorsed by our Union officials, destroy all the efforts of good union people to improve their image in the eyes of the public.

We suggest to the editor of this magazine that irreverence towards things sacred be left to publishers of obscene and pornographic literature.

*P. Marsh, I. Poole,  
R. A. Smith, V. M. Sanders,  
M. Gracie  
Plant Services  
Royal Jubilee Unit*

The Editor, Sir:

I read your publication . . . with great interest, finding it a constructive and informative magazine.

It is well put together and easy to read.

It is with surprise and sorrow, therefore, that I read the Christmas Issue, which arrived on my desk this morning.

I refer particularly to the old masterpiece on the back cover, with its disgusting caption.

It is degrading of the human person and makes laughing stock of the bargaining process, both of which were dearly won and should be cherished.



*All he does is eat, sleep and cry, doctor. I think you delivered us a male chauvinist piglet.*

I hope others will also voice their opinion; but even if I am the only one, I could not remain silent.

*Sister Margaret Doris  
Administrator  
Mt. St. Francis Hospital*

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** All cartoons and jokes for publication in *THE GUARDIAN* are screened and selected by the Editor **ONLY**; the magazine's Editorial Committee (see page two) neither reads, nor approves, the cartoon selection or readers' letters.

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR** on any subject related to the Union or the trade union movement, to the delivery of health care, or to any item appearing in *THE GUARDIAN*, are welcomed. They are subject to editing to meet legal or space requirements, though most will be run exactly as they are received. All letters must bear the writer's name and address. Address letters to: *The Editor, THE GUARDIAN, 538 West Broadway, Vancouver V5Z 1E9.*



Those who say "Unions are no longer needed," are really saying that now that they're enjoying the benefits unions have won, they don't want the inconvenience of strikes, or the expense of Union dues, any longer.

Or, as they say in Britain, "I'm all right, Jack, too bad for you".



The Canadian Council on Hospital Accreditation has awarded St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver a three-year certificate of accreditation, officially recognizing that the hospital provides a superior level of service and that it exceeds required standards of excellence.

The granting of a three-year accreditation to a hospital as antiquated as the St. Paul's facility (soon scheduled to move into new buildings) "is a tribute to every member of our staff," Dr. H. D. McDonald, St. Paul's executive director, said when he announced the award.

The accreditation team singled out several areas for special mention in its accreditation report, prepared after three days in the hospital in late September, 1978.

The hospital was commended for a well-maintained physical plant, with special emphasis on the high standards maintained by the housekeeping department. The power plant was "absolutely spotless" during the survey, and the staff there was commended for its efforts to keep it that way.

Among the other departments where the survey team found standards maintained by Union members to be worthy of special mention were dietary, pharmacy and medical records.



A Christmas Bingo was held at Victoria General's school of nursing auditorium on December 4. Prizes were Christmas goodies, both for the games and for door prizes. Coffee and coke were served.



Thank goodness I'm sick. I'd sure hate to feel like this if I was well.



**HOSPITAL  
EMPLOYEES'  
UNION** LOCAL  
180

## ESSAY CONTEST

More and more, the people of British Columbia are being told they would benefit from so-called "Right to Work" legislation for this province.

But few of them realize exactly what Right to Work means, or what it has done in the 20 American states where it has been the law for many years.

In order to stimulate thought on the subject, the Hospital Employees' Union, Local 180 is sponsoring an essay contest for Union members across the province, with the hope the entrants will learn for themselves, as they research the subject, exactly how dangerous the Right to Work movement is, and what would happen in this province if its proponents succeed in having it legislated.

The topic of the essay is to be **"Who Really Wins With Right to Work?"**

The essay should not exceed 4,000 words, and must be typed, double-spaced, on one side of each sheet of paper submitted.

All HEU members are eligible to enter.

Entries need **not** support the Union's anti-RtW stand.

One prize of \$250 will be awarded.

All entries must be in the hands of the judges by midnight, **April 15, 1979.**

Entries must bear the entrant's name, home address and telephone number, as well as the name of their Unit. The entrant's name should be typed at the top of each page.

All entries should be mailed to: Essay Contest; Hospital Employees' Union, Local 180; 538 West Broadway, Vancouver V5Z 1E9.

The winner will be announced — and his or her entry published — in the July-August, 1979, edition of **THE HOSPITAL GUARDIAN**.





# How to change plan rules



**GOT A QUESTION** about the Municipal Superannuation Plan? Address it to: The Editor, THE HOSPITAL GUARDIAN, 538 West Broadway, Vancouver V5Z 1E9. We'll do our best to get an understandable answer for you.



That member must decide how to change the plan to bring about the desired effect, then must have that proposal endorsed by their local Unit, in the form of a resolution to the biennial convention.

If endorsed by convention delegates, the proposal would then be considered by the MEPC (HEU currently has three representatives on the 20-member MEPC), which — if it endorsed the idea — would pass it on to the Union of B.C. Municipalities Advisory Committee on Pensions (UBCM ACP).

The UBCM ACP includes representatives from both the unions and the employers — if its membership can be persuaded to endorse a proposed change, the question is referred to the executive of the UBCM itself, for consideration.

It the UBCM executive approves the proposal, it goes back to the UBCM ACP, which then presents it to the provincial government (*since the plan is the result of an act of the provincial legislature, it requires amendments to existing law to change its scope, nature or method of operation*).

Only if the legislature can be persuaded to make the recommended changes (not an uncommon occurrence — amendments have been proposed, and enacted, at virtually every sitting of the legislature since the Municipal Superannuation Act was first passed) can changes be made, Brother Anderson told the delegates.

While the process of change sounds slow and complicated (there can be no doubt it is the latter), he added, change *can* be achieved . . . and it can be brought about faster than is the case with most other pension plans.

Still, an HEU member who wants to improve something would be well advised to start formulating a proposal now — and working to build support for it — in anticipation of the twelfth biennial convention, slated for 1980.

Delegates to the eleventh biennial convention endorsed a revised resolution — which combined the feelings of four separately-submitted proposals — which called upon the Municipal Employees Pension Committee (MEPC) to seek two changes in the Municipal Superannuation Plan (MSP).

The changes include a bid to have MSP funds invested in such a way as to get higher interest returns, and a proposal to lower the minimum retirement age, without penalty, to 55.

At the same convention, Brother Gordon Anderson — an international vice-president of the International Association of Fire Fighters and current president of the MEPC — told delegates he supported both proposals and was glad the delegates were bringing them forward.

He told delegates the question of interest earned on invested funds was rather complex, and explained many current investments were made many years ago, when interest rates being offered were much lower than they currently are.

He also explained that all investments are reviewed constantly, and — when it is possible to close out an existing investment yielding low interest to switch to a higher-paying one, without losing money on the transaction — that the MSP watchdogs do just that.

The MEPC has been seeking the lower retirement age for some time, he said, but has been blocked in its efforts by its employer counterpart, the Union of B.C. Municipalities, and by the government.

Changes to the MSP, he explained, come about when, for example, an HEU member decides something needs alteration.

## PARTING SHOT



**JANUARY DIET**