

# Hospital Guardian

Local 180

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' FEDERAL UNION

VOL. 1 No. 6

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Publishers News Letter.

Dear Readers:

June is a month of brides, summer vacations and holiday spending, but in order to ensure that we are economically capable of taking the fullest advantage of our standard of living, it is very necessary that we give serious thought to its continuity. This will be the motive of our June meeting which will be an extraordinary one for many reasons.

We shall hear our delegates report on the two very important conventions from which they will have just returned. The results of these conventions can have far reaching effects on us in the near future. We must also, and this is most urgent, prepare our thinking for the negotiations which will commence early in September. It will be more essential this year than ever, that our thinking be clear and our objectives definite.

In view of this let us ALL rally around to give direction and help before the contract is signed, - not say after, "what should have been". Remember the date, June 28th, 8 p.m. We remain,

Fraternally yours,

Education and Contract Committee.

Chairman, Hugh Duff - Jim Ballard,

Charlie Steele, Audrey Jeffery

Jean Robertson, Jack Brown

Eric Thomas Harold Shultz

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## COMING EVENTS

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### JUNE REGULAR MEETING

This is an extraordinary meeting; do not fail to attend. 8 p.m., June 28th. 307 West Broadway. Delegates will report and a very thorough discussion of the outlook for the coming year will take place. YOU are as important to this meeting as the meeting is to you.

### BEACH PARTY

Beach Party will be held 1st. or 2nd. week of July. Watch the notice board for further information. Social Committee. Charlie Oldham, Chairman.



### YOUR BUSINESS

The following is a Radio Speech given by W.M. Black, Business Manager H.E.F.U.#180, June 7, 1955, 7 p.m. on Station C.K.W.X. "Labour Forum."

Good evening: Tonight we are going to examine for a few moments, the "freeze order" issued by the Provincial Government, to the various hospitals throughout British Columbia.

In the opinion of the Hospital Employees' Federal Union, Local 180, which is the major bargaining agency for hospital employees in the Province of B.C. this order will bring to an end collective bargaining and will freeze wages in all hospitals. This in itself can create a dangerous precedent for the entire labor movement.

We have always taken the position that the onus does not rest on the shoulders of the hospital employees to subsidize an important service enjoyed by all the people in the Province of British Columbia. To suggest that hospital workers are overpaid, or to suggest that Nurses Aides whose salary will range from \$150 to \$170 per month, Kitchen Help \$150 to \$160, Orderlies \$230 to \$250, Janitors \$210 to \$230, are extremely well paid, in view of all the other economic conditions in the Province of B.C., is incorrect. There are still many fringe benefits not enjoyed by the hospital workers which are enjoyed by other public and industrial workers in the Province. They have no group insurance, no medical coverage, no unemployment insurance; only two hospitals out of the many in B.C. are covered by superannuation. Needless to say, the freeze order has had a detrimental effect on the morale of all hospital workers in British Columbia, developing a sense of insecurity. Their wages have been frozen while all other classes of workers are permitted to improve their standards of living.

The Government is saying to all local hospitals -- "if you increase wages, you must find the money to finance them" -- without telling hospital administrations where they can find the money. At the moment the Provincial Government is financing hospitals to the tune of 80% of the operating costs, the balance from private room accommodation. If we review the history of the British Columbia Hospital Insurance Service, it was a "hodge-podge" from the very beginning. The scheme was ill-conceived; the Government proceeded to put into operation a hospital insurance scheme that was not actuarially sound; experts were not called in to ascertain the true cost of hospitalization.

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Now the Government has a lion by the tail but dare not let it go, attempting to shift the responsibility onto the shoulders of the hospital employees, using them as a scape-goat for the high operation costs of hospitals.

There are many factors that increase the cost of hospitalization—our favorable climate and favorable hospital scheme has attracted and we have within our Province, more senior citizens who require hospital care per population, than any other Province in Canada; in many centres acute beds are used for chronic purposes. There has been a tremendous increase in life expectancy due to the contribution being made in medicine. All these, combined with the high standard of service expected and demanded by the public, are contributing factors to the cost of hospitalization. This is borne out by the fact that hospital beds have increased by 33% in the last six years.

This decision to freeze wages came after the majority of hospitals had concluded collective bargaining for the year 1955. The hospital worker, the long neglected public employee in the Province, has every right to the greatest degree of economic and social security humanly possible. They have every right to take advantage of the economic possibilities of their time. They are performing on behalf of all the people, a very important service.

One thing is certain, the Government will never solve the problem of hospital financing by the issuing of freeze orders. In the years to come, due to increase in life expectancy and the standard of hospital care demanded by the general public, this will all tend to push the costs of hospitalization ever higher. We suggest to the Government that they must determine and give direction to the various hospital administrations as to the type and quality of service to be rendered to the general public. The Government must undertake the construction of chronic bed hospitals in strategic centres throughout the Province of British Columbia to relieve acute hospitals of this type of care.

We have suggested to the Minister of Health and Welfare, that the entire question of hospitalization should be reviewed at the next session of the Provincial Legislature and that this order to freeze wages which is dangerous to all workers, be withdrawn until the review has been made and the scheme placed on a sound actuarial basis.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Have you read the Constitution and By-Laws of the Union, a copy of which you received at your initiation? If you look at the first page, immediately after the "Order of Business", you will find the Preamble. You may think this unimportant, but take a second look - "believing it to be the right of those who toil, to enjoy..... the HEALTH created by our labor".

What does this mean, and why this wording? The wording was sparked and argued through by one of our superannuated members, at that time a senior orderly, Bro. Percy Ritchie. The usual wording would be, "to share the wealth created, etc." but as Bro. Ritchie pointed out, our business as hospital workers was not to create material wealth (as automobiles, garments, bread, etc.) but to promote the health of the public; and as the creator of material wealth was entitled to share in the fruits of his labors, so we, hospital workers, were entitled to our share of the health we helped to produce.

But how, you may ask, does sharing health relate to the usual aims of a union, higher wages, shorter hours, better working conditions? Let us take wages. If your wages are so low you cannot afford the necessary food and shelter, your health will suffer, and worry over these conditions will further reduce your chances for good health. At the time of our organizing, our wages were definitely below the standards of decent and healthful living, therefore our claim to a share of the health we produced meant we must seek higher wages.

In the matter of time off, we find the air breathed in and around the hospital during our hours of labor is very heavy and germ laden, as it cannot help being. In order to maintain health in this environment our resistance must be kept high; and the best way to do this is to find restful relaxation in the fresh air, such as gardening, boating, golfing, fishing, (or what is your choice?)

But to get the relaxation we must have time off in which we can get away from all the heavy air of our daily work. This was the basis of our campaign for straight shifts, an eight hour day, a five day week and also the basis for our **fight** for three weeks vacation after five years service.

In all these matters we are only seeking to enjoy a fair share of the help which we help to bring to others.

JEAN ROBERTSON.



### Children's Jubilee Camp

School will soon be out; have you planned your children's holiday?

Your Union has been an active supporter of the Children's Jubilee Camp and it is an ideal spot to send the kiddies for a 12 day session, in one of the best equipped and certainly the best conducted Camps in B.C.

The Camp comprises 125 acres and is located at Orlomah Beach on the North Arm of Burrard Inlet about three miles from Deep Cove, opposite Lake Buntzen Power House.

Registrations start June 6th. Hours 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Electrical Hall, 111 Dunsmuir St. The Camp operates from June 27th until Labor Day. The fee is \$15.00 includes the return fare, 12 days at Camp and complete insurance on the child from two days before arriving at the Camp until two days after leaving the Camp.

A wonderful holiday for any child from 7 to 12 years and extremely reasonable.

K. Cowan.

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### CORRECT ADDRESSES.

Make sure the Union Office has your correct address. If you move or if you are having any difficulty with your mail, please telephone Mrs. Lord at EM 5822 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday to Friday

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### THE UNION BUSINESS AGENT'S DREAM.

A man knocked at the Heaven Gate,  
His face was scarred and old,  
He stood before the man of fate  
For admission to the Fold.

"What have you done"

St. Peter asked,  
To gain admission here?"

"I've been a business agent, Sir,"  
he said,

For many and many a year."

The pearly gates swung open wide,  
St. Peter touched a bell -

"Come in and choose your harp,"  
he said,

"You've had your share of hell."

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"Let me kiss those tears away,  
sweetheart," begged the petroleum  
engineer. She fell into his arms  
and he was very busy for a few  
moments, but the tears flowed on.  
"Will nothing stop them?" he asked  
breathlessly.  
"No," she murmured, "it's hay fever  
but go on with the treatment."

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"I shore wish I had my wife back"  
sighed the mountaineer,  
"Where is she?" asked a friend.  
"Sold her for a jug of mountain dew"  
"I reckon you're beginning to  
miss her!"  
"Nope. I'm thirsty agin."

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We know this about the speed of  
light: it gets here too early in  
the morning.



## UNITY = STRENGTH

The amalgamation of the two big unions will without doubt, strengthen the Canadian working class organizations and result in better working conditions and improved living standards for everyone in Canada.

On the other hand, the opponents of labor, big business, are not going to sit idly by and watch developments unfold; they too are going to tighten their ranks so as to strengthen their own position and to hamper the unions.

Evidence of this is already apparent across the Dominion and here in B.C. we are particularly conscious of the "hold the line, reduce staff" policies of the Government who is the first batter-up for reaction in this province.

Representatives of the Government are spilling forth a stream of propaganda which is being swallowed whole by the local newspapers and burped up into scary headlines.

We are apparently entering into a period of hard and relentless struggle and if we are going to withstand the assaults of our enemies and protect our standards, then we must maintain the fullest unity within our ranks.

I have in mind not only the unity at the top between the big unions which is extremely important, or the unity between the trades, branches, districts and other groups which is of equal importance, but I am thinking particularly of the unity the rank and file membership in the locals who are the root of the labor movement.

The most effective way that this unity can be developed is for every member to attend as many meetings as possible and fulfill his or her responsibilities to fellow-workers.

It is my personal opinion that a member who attends less than six monthly meetings per year is shirking his responsibilities and therefore is a poor union member.

It is essential that we all try to eliminate minor differences and become conscious of the fact that we are all in the same boat and must pull together or sink together.

E.R. Thomas



### HOLD THE LINE

"There cannot be any wage advance as far as the hospital worker is concerned, WE MUST HOLD THE LINE". We do enjoy a fair wage and the standard of efficiency has increased throughout our hospitals as a result but, the Hon. Eric Martin must remember that we are no longer in the charitable class of receiving donations for the support and upkeep of our hospitals, but that every man, woman and child in B.C. is providing the funds for that purpose.

Our effort in the labor market today is just as vital to the well-being of our City and Province as the policeman or fireman. We are doing everything in our power to ease the burden of the sick twenty-four hours a day. Compare our wages with the policeman or fireman and you will find we are the lowest by far. Our living costs increase just as theirs does and yet we are not supposed to need any more money to meet them. Did the Government hold the line when they advanced their own expenses and wages? They are the ones to show a good example, - and they have. That is why we cannot hold the line. We must have a square deal just like other workers. If we are going to hold the line let's start at the right place, and not with the lowest paid scale of wages in the Province. They say we are progressing, yet on the other hand they know they have broken their word by contradicting their own boards of conciliation and arbitration.

If we get a raise in wages the Government states we will have to reduce service and that will cut down the efficiency of our hospitals. Who are the ones who will suffer most from that? The sick and the maimed who cannot help themselves. If the tortured taxpayer, as Mr. Martin states, is hollering now about paying too heavy taxes, he will shout louder and longer if he has to wait half an hour for a drink of water or for a bed pan. It could happen even to the Hon. Minister of Health and Welfare, so let us be sensible and keep the field of progress open. Let us not recede. We must go forward, that is progressing, so let us not hold the line. It used to be "hold that tiger" and we would not like to see our Government with a tiger by the tail.

JACK LAWSON.

"Sir, I have something here which will make you popular, make your wife happier, and bring you a host of friends".  
"I'll take a quart".

Pablo had been married and a friend asked how things were going. Pablo answered - "OK, I theenk-but I theenk maybe I married my seester."  
"Why do you think that?"  
"Well, alla time she giggle and say to me, "Oh, brother!"



### DARWIN'S MISTAKE

Three monkeys sat on a coconut  
tree,  
Discussing things as they used to  
be,  
Said one to the others, "Now  
listen you two,  
There's a certain rumour that  
can't be true,  
That man descended from our noble  
race,  
The very idea is a disgrace.

No monkey ever deserted his wife,  
Starved her babies nor ruined her  
life,  
And you've never known another  
monk,  
To leave her babies with others  
to bunk,  
Or pass them on from one to  
another,  
Till they scarcely know who is  
their mother,

Another thing you'll never see,  
A monk build a fence around a  
coco-nut tree,  
And let the coconuts go to waste,  
Forbidding all other monks to  
taste,  
Why if I put a fence around this  
tree,  
Starvation would force you to  
steal from me.

Here's another thing a monk won't  
do,  
Go out at night and get on a stew,  
Or use a gun, or a club or a knife,  
To take some other monkey's life,  
Yes, man descended, the nervy cuss,  
But brother he didn't descend  
from us.  
Submitted by Yvonne Muise.

### HAVE YOU EVER BEEN LONELY?

Is there any greater sense  
of loneliness I wonder, than at  
the moment we start a new job?  
Remembering back to my start in  
the Main OR.-a cold feeling in  
the pit of my stomach, feeling  
lost and lonely, then Bill Lewis  
came on the floor (he was Senior  
Ord. at the time) and under his  
friendly guidance and direction  
the lost feeling vanished. I re-  
alize how patient and tolerant he  
must have been; busy as we were  
he was never too busy to help or  
explain anything I didn't know.  
How different it could have been  
had he been sullen, selfish or in-  
tolerant. Remember, I was new  
only to the Dept., I had worked  
in the Hospital three years. Think  
then how much more a really new  
employee needs our help and en-  
couragement. Things which are  
commonplace and very simple to us  
loom enormous to a new person.  
This is a huge hospital and must  
be a bewildering labyrinth of  
tunnels and passages to someone  
unfamiliar with them.

Therefore, let us be a little  
more kindly, tolerant, and help  
our new people as much as possible  
(we were all new once). Many of  
the relief personnel may never  
work with us again, but be sure  
of this, if they go away feeling  
they are leaving friends behind,  
we shall gain their respect now,  
and have their goodwill through-  
out their careers.

Further to this, we shall  
have increased our efficiency.

Hugh Duff.