

Greetings OFL delegates

Sisters and brothers of organized labour, we wish you success in your deliberations at the November 27th to November 30th Convention! OWW continues to support the OFL Women's Committee activities. We urge all delegates to participate in the Women's Forum being held in the evening of November 27.

We are eager to see brothers and sisters join, voice and vote, on issues and resolutions dealing with working men and women.

You will find OWW members who are delegates on the floor of the Convention, participating fully in the democratic struggle for justice. Toronto area locals have sent forward to the Convention several resolutions debated at the OWW Skills Workshop, which are of par-

ticular interest to women. These resolutions deal with cutbacks in the public sector, child care, International Year of the Child, equal pay for work of equal value, and first contracts with the minimal base of the Rand formula.

OWW members will be distributing our printed materials to interested delegates. Sister delegates are welcome to relax and discuss issues of particular interest. We will have resource material available.

It promises to be an exciting Convention. The ramifications of this Convention are significant to women and men, both organized and unorganized. What we win for ourselves we work to gain for others. Look for OWW at the Convention.



UNION WOMAN

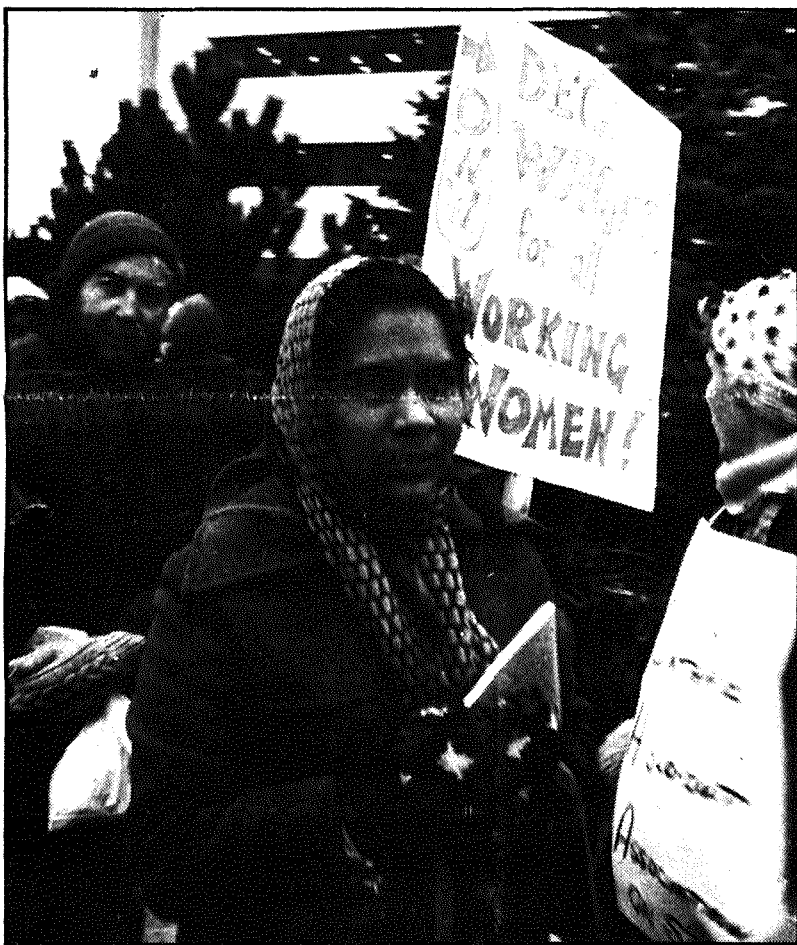
PUBLISHED BY ORGANIZED WORKING WOMEN (TORONTO AREA)

OFL delegates

**Join in the
Women's
Forum
Nov. 27**

VOL. 2 NO. 7

NOVEMBER 1979



OWW members journeyed to Barrie to join their sisters on the picket lines at Radio Shack Nov. 7. The Barrie strikers returned the favor by joining the Blue Cross picket in Toronto the same day.

FLECK ALL OVER AGAIN!

Women battle for union rights at Radio Shack

It's Fleck all over again! This time, Radio Shack, part of the multi-national electronics empire, Tandy Corporations, battles the United Steelworkers of America. The company kicked and screamed all the way through organizing and certification. Now it won't bargain in good faith and is opposing compulsory dues checkoff.

Radio Shack's Barrie warehouse distributes foreign-produced goods. It employs 85% women for warehouse work. In Barrie, women constantly lift 50, 70 or even 100 lbs. Six strikers interviewed grossed an average of \$193 for forty hours — not much for a "man's" job.

But the women complained mostly of hazardous lifting conditions, no job security, inconsiderate treatment and favoritism. At layoff time seniority was ignored. A woman might be picked out for

layoff or names put in a hat and a draw made to see who'd lose her job. Back injuries were commonplace. Favoritism was common in assigning relatively light or heavy work. Shifts were changed arbitrarily, without notice. This left employees with the serious problem of re-scheduling babysitters.

So they organized, and the company launched a not-too-original campaign of intimidation of unionists. Five were fired but later two were reinstated by court order. Harassment took its toll. 40 per cent of those originally signed up no longer work for Radio Shack.

On the picket line, the boys in blue and brown shove women, remove hat and badges, refuse to identify themselves (though Provincial Police regulations require them to) and display paddy-wagons and a doberman.

Local Justice of the Peace, E.J.

Burton, refused a number of assault charges against cops but jailed a strike supporter for the Thanksgiving weekend over a trifling matter. Meanwhile, the company continues to stall, uses the courts to hassle the union, and so forth.

In spite of all this, our gutsy sisters stand firm, turning some customers away from the retail outlet, and trying to dissuade scabs. They warm themselves by a fragrant, roadside wood fire, and they warm our hearts. On strike since August 9th, they deserve our support. Until this strike is settled:

- Boycott Radio Shack;
- Tell your friends to boycott Radio Shack;
- Let your Radio Shack store know where you stand.

Joan Osborne — member of CUPW, Toronto Local.

3,000 at Queen's Park

Teachers, parents, kids demand end to cutbacks

Joint action by parents, teachers, students, trade unionists and public service workers outside Queen's Park against the Provincial government cutbacks called for an end to cutbacks in social services, especially as they affect children. The organizers of the rally Cutbacks Hurt Ontario Children (CHOC) planned it to coincide with the eve of the United Nations' International Day of the Child on October 23rd. OWW worked with the CHOC Organizing Committee and was out there with our banner.

Merylie Houston, a parent,

chaired the rally. She spoke out on the need for quality education and for the government to make children our first priority.

Children highlighted the rally with readings from "the Rights of the Child". Speakers included Heather Smith (CUPE), Vic Cooper (OPSEU), and representatives from Social Services Agencies, OSSTF, OFS, OTF, the Liberals, Conservatives and NDP, and Chairman of Metro Children's Aid Society, Douglas Barr.

After Keith Norton, Social Services Minister spoke, Bette Stephenson, Education Minister,

informed the crowd that if they wanted more services they'd have to pay more taxes. She avoided the question of tax giveaways to corporations.

Much more pressure is needed to make the government see that we just won't accept cutbacks — especially when it hurts our children. The organizers of CHOC will be meeting soon to assess the success of the rally and to plan further action — part of this is to be a Conference in January, which will have representatives from all of Metropolitan Toronto.

Tina Cartwright — member of OPEIU 343.



More than 3,000 people gathered at Queen's Park Oct. 23 to protest the Tories cutbacks on educations, health and social services.

—Tribune photo

UNION WOMAN

Production this issue: Tina Cartwright, Lois Bedard, Holly Kirkconnell, Joyce Rosenthal, Kerry McCuaig, Joan Osborne, Jean Dirksen

Union Woman is published once every two months by Organized Working Women. The Editorial Board of the newspaper is the Executive Council of OWW.

Union Woman is free to members of OWW and is available for distribution to union locals on request.

Letters to the editor, opinion pieces and news stories should be sent to:
Union Woman, 15 Gervais Dr., Suite 301,
Don Mills, Ont. 447-7462.

Editorial

You and Organized Working Women

Organized Working Women continues to work through our unions to educate, to articulate, to build, to extend activities, to further the economic and social status of working Canadians. In 1976 it was created to bring more women unionists into union activity. Through our newspaper *Union Woman*, our educationals and our workshops we have helped women integrate into the on-going activities of collective bargaining units.

Our members are quite often delegates at their national and provincial union conventions. We will have members as delegates of their unions at the OFL Convention and we will continue to play a part in the establishment and on-going activity of the OFL Women's Committee. We helped organize and participate in women's solidarity picket lines and demonstrations at Fleck, CHOC, Radio Shack and Blue Cross. We helped to raise funds for Inco, and Lumber and Saw Mill Workers Women's Support Commit-

tees. We are leaders in the International Women's Day Celebrations.

In the first two years of our organization, OWW had major funding from the Secretary of State — \$19,000 in 1976-77; \$25,000 in 1977-78. In our third year we decided to turn to our brothers and sisters in the unions to help support our program. On the basis of a commitment of \$5,000 from the OFL this year, we requested and received a grant from the Secretary of State of \$8,500. OPSEU (Brother Sean O'Flynn) donated \$500, and Local 1000 CUPE (Ontario Hydro) donated \$500. On the basis of our own drive, the money committed by the OFL and the Secretary of State, we engaged, under contract, a part-time Executive Secretary to keep our office and committee work moving efficiently.

In a recent issue of the OFL Magazine, *Ontario Labour*, Brother Cliff Pilkey says: "Working Women are here to stay. Organized labour should not ignore

the major contribution they are ready to make to the Union Movement".

We know that brothers and sisters in their locals will respond fairly to the coming OFL appeal in support of OWW and its program for women unionists. OWW continues to hold monthly educational membership meetings, workshops, and solidarity demonstrations.

The right to bargain collectively as workers for full employment is our late spring workshop and a full scale two-day Conference on Child Care will be held in February, co-sponsored by Humber College. Full employment and wages based on skill not sex are legitimate demands of all workers. As more women become involved in the process of collective bargaining, these demands will be won to the benefit of all workers. The purpose of Organized Working Women is to hasten this process.

Support us so we can support you.

Skills workshop success for OWW

Sixty union women representing over seven different unions enthusiastically participated in an OWW Skills Workshop on Parliamentary Procedure on Saturday, Oct. 27.

Each registrant was given a CLC booklet "Point of Order" to digest with coffee and doughnuts at 9:00 a.m. Following a speech of welcome by the OWW President Joyce Rosenthal at 10:00 a.m., Evelyn Armstrong addressed the group on the democratic benefits of Rules of Order and Parliamentary Procedure. The UAW film on "Parliamentary Pro-

cedure" reviewed and detailed the speech.

Delegates then turned over their badges to find that they were assigned to one of three mock unions; Local 1 of Agnes MacPhail Union or Local 1919 of Sylvia Pankhurst Union or Local 1929 of Nellie McClung Union. In addition, each was supplied with a mock agenda, minutes and treasury report and a sample set of resolutions. Under the careful leadership of one of the three group leaders — Heather Smith, Vi Thompson or Ev Armstrong acting as Business Agents, the

designated officers and members "conducted" their union meeting using the Parliamentary Procedures already discussed. Each member spoke in some capacity. Each union passed two or more resolutions and forwarded them to the resolutions committee of the plenary session.

Each union member then became a "delegate" to the Annual Plenary Session in the afternoon. Over a delicious lunch the union "delegates" discussed the ways to win support for their resolution and how to prepare to address the Plenary Session. The Resolutions Committee brought forward a "Resolutions Booklet" of motions previously submitted to them for 2:00 p.m.

From 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., under the leadership of Vi Thompson, the union delegates assembled, deliberated and dealt with six motions. At 4:00 p.m. the Plenary Session adjourned so the registrants could enjoy a social hour or two over wine and cheese.

The Evaluations Sheets all extolled the benefits of this workshop with such comments as "I learned how to participate in a union meeting", "I feel I can now speak at my union meeting", "Now I understand how to take the floor to express my ideas". This experience amongst new union friends has been most enjoyable".

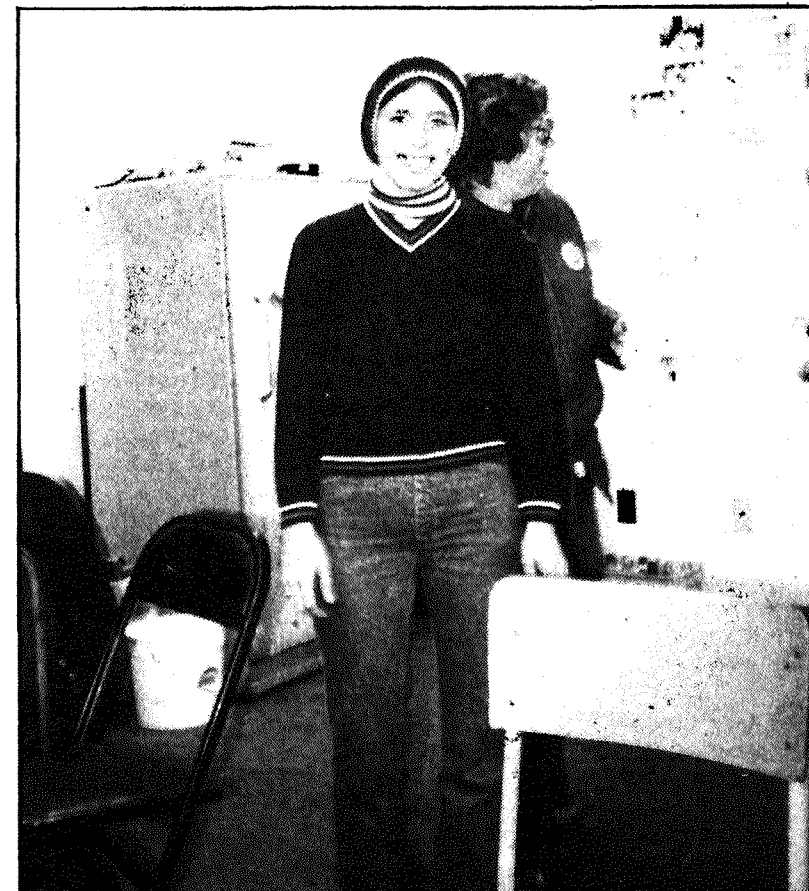
The Education Committee of Holly Kirkconnell, Nancy Bailey, Fran Robinson, Carol Haffenden and Lois Bedard enjoyed helping to organize this successful workshop.

Lois Bedard — member of OSSTF, Executive Member of OWW and is on the Educational Committee.

AT RADIO SHACK



Linda Lloyd, below shown here in Steelworkers' Strike Headquarters, was shoved around by a provincial police officer on the picket line. Ed Ziemba's efforts to identify the officer, in order to lay an assault charge, resulted in his being convicted of assault himself. Linda is short and slight. Above: Radio Shack pickets on the line.



DECEMBER Meeting
Meet 'N' Greet OWW Members
Thursday, Dec. 13
7:30 P.M.



OPSEU
1901 Yonge St. at Davisville
7th Floor
Wine & Cheese Party

CUPE campaigns to fight cuts

The Canadian Union of Public Employees 1979 Convention, held Oct. 15 to 19 in Quebec City, was heavily publicized for its resolution demanding the resignation of Canadian Labour Congress President Dennis McDermott. Brother McDermott's response to the criticism implicit in this resolution, has been to attack the opposition as a dangerous, subversive element intent on the destruction of the labour movement. This rank and file expression of anger with the existing labour movement leadership reflects an oft-articulated militancy among the grass roots on the 1979 convention floor. This militancy was not the work of a handful of subversives; rather, it was a genuine, spontaneous cry for a strong and united labour movement, forging together its varied components to challenge escalating attacks on the rights and livelihood of organized workers in Canada.

We arrived at convention eager to debate as many of the resolu-

tions submitted as possible — resolutions calling for unequivocally strong policies and strategies to deal with the critical issues facing our members. Delegates were articulate and forceful in directing the executive to formulate a plan of action. Opposition to the weakening and manipulation of resolutions was strong. Demands from delegates to approve a course of action before the convention was over were met with the presentation on the last day of an action program.

The action program calls for the co-ordination of anti-cutbacks coalitions across the country, a special programme to defend the specific needs of women members, the drafting of a reform programme in the CLC in solidarity with other public sector unions, a campaign to meet the needs of health care workers, to name its major points.

The ambitious program to fight cutbacks is of major concern to women workers, who generally suffer the most from cutbacks.



CUPE's criticism of CLC head McDermott was in response to the need for a strong labor movement.

Furthermore, the building of coalitions will enable us to co-ordinate our struggles with non-unionized women workers.

Resolutions submitted on issues of concern to women called

for the establishment of women's committees, open to all CUPE members, provision of free day care at CUPE functions, campaigns to fight for economic equality and free day care. The resolutions calling for women's committees did not make it to the floor. This is unfortunate, to say the least, in light of recent regressive events in Ontario — the CUPE Ontario Division rejected a call for establishment of a women's committee at its annual convention in May, and the Metropolitan Toronto CUPE Council weakened its women's committee by changing it to an "Equal Opportunity Committee". A composite resolution was passed to provide day care to CUPE National functions, but at the user's expense, which inhibits full participation of parents. A very good resolution was passed calling for action to achieve economic equality.

A lesson learned by many women at this convention was the necessity of more organization to

get resolutions through. Margaret Smith (CUPE 2189), Frances Scovil (CUPE 1230), and Julie Griffin, staff representative, worked positively to bring women together at several caucus meetings during the convention. In future, we must get moving in such caucuses early in the convention, to lobby to have women's issues tabled at the beginning. Our resolutions came to the floor late, by which time they received little time for significant discussion.

Delegates fought a good fight at our convention. We cannot rest, however, until our next convention. Our responsibility is to follow through on the action we demanded. Democratic participation entails commitment and hard work, without which we leave ourselves open to scornful accusations of membership apathy, which in turn allows alienation of the leadership from the rank and file.

Jean Dirksen, CUPE 1996, Nov. 7, 1979



Ontario's equal pay law limited

Although Ontario was the first province to initiate equal pay legislation back in 1951, today it has one of the worst records in the country. The present legislation contained in the Employment Standards Act is so narrowly defined that few women can make use of its provisions.

Equal pay is required where men and women perform work that is substantially the same in skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions, and is performed in the same establishment. The Act provides a list of exceptions based on seniority, merit, a system that measures quantity and quality of production or "any factor other than sex."

Ted Bounsall, NDP MPP, has sponsored Bill 3 in the legislature which would consider the total of a person's skill on the job, rather than forcing the woman to prove that each criterion is the same. If passed, this legislation would greatly aid women in their fight for equal pay.

There are, however, problems with the present legislation which

will not be covered by the proposed amendments. The requirement that work be performed in the same establishment enables employers to avoid compliance by simply not employing men and women for the same job in the same place, particularly by companies with numerous plants in the same city.

The situations where men and women consecutively fill the same position, employers may legally pay women less than men when they succeed men in a job. With the Act not providing for this, it offers another easy way to avoid paying women equally with men.

Because the Act only equates jobs where men and women work together, the legislation ignores the job ghettos where women work. It is well known that clerical, sales and service jobs continue to employ more than 63 percent of working women and that these jobs are notoriously underpaid. The key concept of equal pay for work of equal value is missing from the Act. It allows no provisions, for example, to compare the job skills and training of a woman at a typewriter and her male counterpart at a computer key board.

Presently, Bill 3 has passed second reading. It is now in committee and public meetings are scheduled for January or February, with assurances given that it will come to third reading in the spring legislature.

The trade union movement and women's organizations will have to lobby heavily to ensure that when brought for third reading it passes. Bill 3 will not solve all the problems. We also have a responsibility to pressure for all the loopholes in the Act to be plugged, so all working women may have the financial remuneration owing to them for their work.

Kerry McCuaig is a member of the Southern Ontario Newspaper Guild.



Any effective equal pay laws cannot ignore the job ghettos where women work.

Quebec women make gains

QUEBEC (CP) — Finance Minister Jacques Parizeau has offered Quebec's 125,000 female public-sector employees a plan for fully paid maternity leave that he describes as one of the most progressive in the history of the province.

Parizeau, locked in tough negotiations with the common front of government employees, said in a statement Nov. 1 the plan would allow women a 20-week leave, with full pay and benefits.

Women could extend their leave to two years without pay if they wished to care for their infants.

"These measures are among

the most progressive ever offered by an employer in Quebec, and they entirely meet union demands on the subject," the minister said.

The plan would also allow women 10 weeks with pay for child adoption and give fathers two days of paid paternity leave. It would provide special leave when there is a danger of miscarriage and for doctor's appointments during pregnancy.

A spokesman for the common front of public service unions welcomed the government proposals, saying they "correspond with union objectives."

Marcel Gilbert, a negotiator with the Confederation of National Trade Unions, said the government's earlier maternity

clause proposals were "morally unsupportable."

"The new offers are a good basis for negotiations, and will go a long way toward rectifying a serious, long-standing injustice."

But daycare services and parental leave are not mentioned in the offers, the union complained. Protection for the health of pregnant mothers has been left to provincial health-and-safety legislation, now before the national assembly.

Intensive negotiations continue, aimed at settling contracts for the 200,000 public servants by Christmas. The last collective agreements expired June 30 of this year.



Although supportive of the Quebec government's maternity leave provisions, the unions also want daycare included in the offer.

Our place in society teachers and unions

The Trade Union Act of 1872 made unions legal in Canada. Prior to that Act workers, united in action for adequate wages and better working conditions, were treated as conspirators. This attitude still lingers in the mind of Canadians when they think of the public sector workers.

The School Act of 1871 established secondary schools, and compulsory education, for boys, was instituted. The teachers in these schools were, for the large part, maimed war veterans of the British Army, footloose wanderers, young women establishing a dowry and young men out to make a stake en route to law, medicine or business.

Diverse individuals like this were not builders of either professional organizations or teachers' unions regardless of the Trade Union Act of 1871.

Nevertheless, in 1866, Perth County teachers at St. Mary's organized "A Teachers' Protective Society". One of their aims was to show solidarity with fellow teachers thrown out of employment for adherence to by-laws of their "union". A "union" that formed committees to fill vacancies for teachers in the county to provide sick benefits and to give some unemployed members assistance.

There was the Ontario Educational Association (OEA) concerned with passing resolutions favouring higher salaries and tenure practices. These actions resulted in the 1971 Superannuation Act. Superannuation is under criticism today by some reactionaries.

Many teachers felt that the fragmented short-lived groups and the OEA were not enough. The militants met, talked it over and decided to do something about it with their colleagues.

In 1918, the Federation of

Women Teachers of Ontario (FWTO) was formed.

In 1919 the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation (OSSTF) began.

In 1920 the Ontario Public School Men Teachers Federation (OPSMF) was organized.

Separate school teachers using French as the language of instruction (AEFO) organized in 1931 and those using English (OECTA) in 1944.

In the twenties, civic leaders, members of the legislature and parliament were convinced that any new organization of working people was "Bolshevik" inspired. They were forgetful that, at that time, teachers had no contracts or contracts that permitted termination without reason, given one month notice.

In the thirties and forties, the American Federation of Labour and the Western Canada Unions were active in teachers' groups in New York State and British Columbia. It is small wonder that the Conservative legislature passed the Teaching Profession Act in 1944, solidifying areas of jurisdiction of each existing body under a parent body called the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF). In return for a standard contract, license to teach, check-off and compulsory membership, teachers gave up direct affiliation with the trade union movement. Any revision of our relationship would require an act of the legislature.

When the groups of teachers originally formed their own associations their original aim of each was to collectively influence salary, contracts (tenure) and superannuation. These three areas are still of major concern to teachers in all affiliates.

In the thirties, teachers were given a minimum 10% cut in pay and many had to take even more

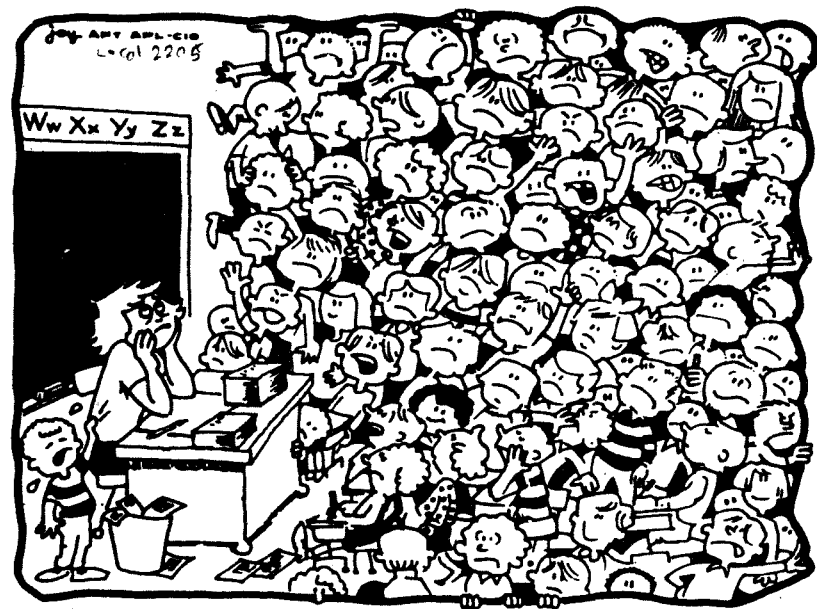
cutbacks. In the War years, little or no advance or recuperation of former status occurred. In the forties, many teachers felt it "unprofessional" to bargain or "haggle" over salaries. Board members felt that they were unanimous to even listen to a federation salary committee. More often than not, there were no real "negotiations" and boards merely told teachers what salary they would receive in the next year if they return.

This is the current thinking of thirty Boards of Education in Ontario now, who have teachers working without a 1979-80 contract. Four of the thirty active groups of teachers with high profile are the North York OSSTF District 13; the Peel OSSTF District 10; the Peel OPSMTF and the Peel FWTO.

Union sisters and brothers, these are your fellow workers — the teachers of your children, who are simply struggling with basic workers' rights. For this, the Minister of Education is talking of removing teachers' right to strike. The Conservatives think they gave the teachers the right to strike in passing Bill 100. Of course we know that the right to withhold your labour is a human right. Before Bill 100, teachers of Windsor struck twice. The Board took them to court and could not prove that the Windsor teachers could not strike.

The shortage of secondary teachers that became evident during the Second World War gradually resulting in small increases in salaries in an attempt to compensate teachers for compulsory 10% decreases, enforced during the depression years and the limited increases during the War of 1939-45.

The basic reason for increases during the fifties and sixties were shortages of teachers. The con-



I GUESS THIS IS WHAT THEY MEANT BY STREAMLINING GOVERNMENT WITH A TAX CUT!

tinuing rise in the cost of living resulted in Boards competing for teachers.

In the 70's, teachers have never kept pace with the rising cost of living. Boards of Education have endured grant freezes and cutbacks. The Province's share of costs of elementary and secondary school education has dropped from 61.4% in 1975 to 51% in 1979. General legislative grants for special programmes to school boards have increased only 4.3% over the last year — fact of 8% plus inflation. All these cutbacks are undermining the quality of education and causing problems for the retarded children, for children with learning disabilities, for children who need help with English as a second language and for the parents. At times like these, the Boards should not strike out at teachers but at a wealthy legislature that could re-allocate funds from provincial revenues as yet untapped.

Teachers should be able to teach with dignity. "All labourer is worth his hire." Teachers, like all public sector workers cannot do quality work with depleted resources both material and human. Work to rule, pink listing, "mass" resignations and strikes are being forced on teachers.

The problem common to taxpayers and public sector workers (teachers) is a Conservative Pro-

vincial Legislature. The Conservatives see teachers, parents and the community fighting one another over real or proposed property tax increases instead of seeing needed services, financed fairly and adequately under new tax bases founded on the real wealth of the province.


The legislature and the trustees in Peel and North York are forcing confrontation and then complaining about the concerted action of its teachers. They use the administrative employees to work against the rank and file teachers who work without contracts in an arena of hostile parents and pupils.

It is time that all union members who are taxed both provincially and municipally to join their over taxed teachers to see that our taxes are spent on services purchased under union conditions. Teachers are members of bona fide collection bargaining units that as parents and professionals ask for your solidarity in their "union" struggle.

Lois Bedard is a member of the OSSTF.



Join OWW!



Membership in OWW is open to all women in the Toronto area who are members of bona fide collective bargaining units or a bona fide organizing committee of a union. Membership is \$10.00 per year.

To join OWW, send in this application form with proof of union membership to the OWW office, address below.

Name

Address

..... Telephone

Union Local

**Organized Working Women,
15 Gervais Drive, Suite 301,
Don Mills, Ont. M3C 1YB.**

CRITIC'S CORNER

Films to see about women's struggles

There are a number of excellent film resources available on women and unions that can be used at local union meetings. Showing one of these is a good way to introduce issues concerning women and trade unions — women and work to your fellow union members. The following is a list of some of the best of the lot



One of the sisters 'starring' in Union Maids.

and also the most easily attainable.

Union Maids — Through an effective combination of historical footage and interviews with the same women today, Union Maids is a very moving documentary of three rank and file women involved in organizing CIO unions in the 1930s. This 16-millimetre film is 40 minutes long, in black and white and available from the Development Education Centre (DEC), 121a Avenue Road, 964-6901, for a fee of \$35.00.

With Babies and Banners — This film is an account of the Women's Emergency Brigade which played a very important part in the success of the sitdown strike of UAW workers in Flint, Michigan during the 1930s. In this excellent film again, the technique of historical footage combined with present day interviews with some of the women involved is used. The film is 40 minutes long, in color and available from DEC.

Maria — is the account of a young garment worker's attempt

to organize a factory where she and some of her family work. It is a strong document of both the personal and political process of change. This film is 46 minutes in length, black and white and can be borrowed at no cost from the National Film Board, 1 Lombard St., 369-4093.

Operation Finger Pinky — A dramatization of the successful organizing drive of the support staff at York University several years ago. At times very humorous, the film pin points the problems faced in organizing in a white collar setting. This film runs 35 minutes, is in color, and is available from the National Film Board at no cost.

Films are a very useful medium for informing our membership of the rich history of the trade union movement. The problems faced in the past are still with us today. We can all benefit from the lessons learned through labor's struggles.

Holly Kirkconnell is a member of OPEIU.