

Unionist call for day care campaign

By JOYCE ROSENTHAL

In the past year, there have been two important trade union conferences on day care. The first, "Day Care and the Union Movement", sponsored by Organized Working Women and the Centre for Labour Studies, Humber College and organized with the help of the Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto, was held in March 1980 and drew over one hundred unionists, mainly from the Toronto area. The second, "Sharing the Caring", sponsored by the Women's Commit-

tee of the Ontario Federation of Labour, was held in October and attracted about 150 participants from across the province.

The attendance and discussion at these two conferences indicate the importance that day care is assuming for union members, women and men. At both conferences, the demand for a publicly financed system of universal day care was supported. Both endorsed efforts to bargain for day care as part of a strategy for winning such a system.

The real solution, as partici-

ants in both conferences recognized, is government funding of publicly run centres. Both conferences also stressed the central role the union movement has to play as the force that unites and rallies other groups in the fight for day care. In the words of the OWW publication, "Unions and the Fight for Day care":

Government resistance to a comprehensive day care policy is an indication of the fight unionists and others will have to wage. If we are concerned with a day care system, rather than one or two

additional centres, we are talking about a fight for the union movement comparable to the fight for medicare and other substantial social gains.

A union-led campaign for quality day care is urgently needed. Such a campaign must stress day care as a social right and the goal of universal day care. These principles can be emphasized in the fight for immediate objectives that include:

- An end to the Ontario government's cutbacks strategy of channeling public funds to

commercial day care centres instead of new public centres;

- An immediate increase in the number of public day care centres available through a crash programme of provincially funded construction;

- The elimination of the obligation on the municipal government to cover 20% of the operating and renovation costs of day care centres and 50% of the costs of construction of new centres;

- The removal of day care

• Continued on Page 2



UNION WOMAN

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VOL. 4 NO. 1



NOVEMBER 1980

**Solidarity
DANCE
Saturday
Dec. 6
See you there!**



— photo J. Rosenthal

ORGANIZED WORKING WOMEN was there Oct. 18 with 10,000 workers from across Ontario demanding government enact policies to put the province back to work. OWW has also been part of the petition campaign organized by the Ontario Federation of Labour to apply pressure on the government for its demands of full employment. Victims of "the last hired, first fired" syndrome, women are particularly hard hit when companies close up shop and move elsewhere.

Skills workshop great success

THE SECOND ANNUAL OWW Skills Workshop was held Saturday, October 25. Over thirty union women attended, and the response was overwhelmingly positive and enthusiastic from all the participants (as was the case last year.)

This year the focus was on pub-

lic speaking. A learn-by-doing approach was taken, which had each group preparing and delivering one-minute introductory, two-minute impromptu, three-minute and five-minute speeches.

Nancy Vichert, a member of OSSTF and a part-time instructor at the Centre for Labour Studies

at Humber College, provided invaluable tips and feedback at the plenary sessions.

The OWW Education Committee is to be commended for their excellent work in organizing this educational event.



— photo Joyce Rosenthal

AT THE SKILLS WORKSHOP a sister delivers impromptu speech.

Unions and day care

OWW has published a valuable paper, "Unions and the Fight for Day Care". This paper is the result of a conference, "Day Care and the Union Movement" held in March 1980. The conference was co-sponsored by Organized Working Women and the Centre for Labour Studies, Humber College. Copies of the paper are available at the cost of \$2.00 from the OWW office. Phone or write to: Organized Working Women 15 Gervais Drive, Ste. 301 Don Mills, Ontario tel: 447-7462

Why a trade union women's organization?

ORGANIZED WORKING WOMEN was created to bring more women trade unionists into union activity, to strengthen the trade union movement so that we can improve our position as workers. It arose from the fact that women are ready to move. Its purpose is to integrate more women into the ongoing activity of trade unions and to get more of women's demands met in contracts. We can express unity and work with women outside the trade union movement, but work starts within our own ranks. It is the existing labour movement that must be strengthened, both to confront the employers and to organize the many unorganized workers, of which low paid women form a great part.

Amidst the crisis in the economy, we are reminded that the only institution in Canada that has made any substantial gains for workers, male or female, is the trade union movement. Were it not for long and bitter struggles to organize, to strike, to bargain collectively, we would not have gained even our present standard of living. Now that standard of living is jeopardized, as well as our right to bargain collectively.

Equal pay and day care are not 'women's issues' any more than national chauvinism is a 'French' issue or racism a 'Black' issue. Inequality divides and weakens all workers. If an employer can get a job done for less, because it is traditionally a woman's job, then he is successfully employing the tactic of using cheap labour to undercut better paid labour, the oldest trick in the book. Where workers accept this, we are all held back.

The right to bargain collectively with full dignity for the jobs that we do is key to the fight for women's equality and key to the trade union struggle. They are inseparable. The problems women face as workers are central to the problems all workers face—problems of full employment, wages based on skill and not the sex of the operator, and being able to advance to positions commensurate with skill, experience, and seniority. They involve our right to be able to work without fear of being fired, without anxiety as to whether or not our children are safe, without fear of industrial diseases and occupational hazards — the list goes on. All this and more is included in our legitimate demands as workers.

Indeed, demands such as equal pay for work of equal value, child care, maternity benefits, have all too often been left by the wayside because they have been characterized as 'merely women's issues' and not workers' issues, and hence legitimate trade union demands. What actually gets into a contract is a result in the long run of what the workers have fought for. As more women become involved in the process of collective bargaining and organization, increasingly will their demands be regarded as legitimate trade union demands. The purpose of Organized Working Women is to hasten this process.

The above is excerpted from a document, "Why a Trade Union Women's Organization", which was adopted at the founding convention of Organized Working Women in March of 1976.

UPDATE



— photo J. Rosenthal

OLRB RULES AGAINST FOTOMAT

As of November 9, Jean Beauvais and Chris Auvie have been on the picket line in Oshawa for a year and still walk it daily. The Ontario Labour Relations Board recently handed down a decision confirming that the company bargained in bad faith. The Steelworkers are trying to get Fotomat back to the table.

CR's FOCUS OF OPSEU BARGAINING

Ontario Public Service Employees negotiators will emphasize raises for Clerical and Office Services groups in upcoming bargaining rounds. They have also formulated demands concerned with the effects on office workers of technological change.



— photo M. Phillips

THIS RALLY highlighted the militancy and determination of the 11,000 PSAC clerical workers in their first strike.

GAINS MADE IN PSAC STRIKE

Federal Government clerks surprised Canada with an impressive display of solidarity and militancy during their first-ever strike. Formerly docile, low-paid office workers became a force to be reckoned with as other government workers lent power to the strike by honouring picket lines.

As negotiations dragged, designated clerks (legally required to stay on the job) staged a defiant one-day walkout. Even a few of the better-paid, higher-status civil servants joined the picket lines.

Negotiators for the Public Service Alliance felt compelled to give in on the principles of a cost of living adjustment, a shorter work week and total amnesty for strike supporters this round. They recommended the clerks settle for a 24% wage hike over two years, a good increase over the best pre-strike offer. The settlement was ratified by 71.2% with a significant minority of almost 29% rejecting it.

Some of the CR's now back at their desks have expressed bitter disappointment but Canada's labour history is a record of disappointment, setbacks and internal union disputes. All the same great progress has been made. The clerical activists have flexed their bargaining muscles and earned respect and a bona-fide place in the labour movement. And they now have better salaries.

— Joan Osborne

Joan Osborne is a shop steward for the Toronto Local of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers.

Lessons from the Toronto Library workers' strike

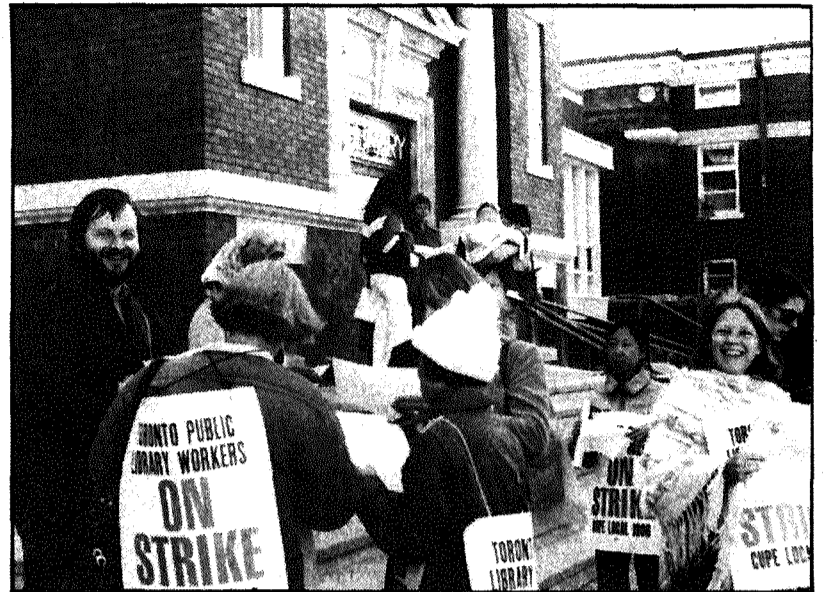
Toronto Public Library workers, members of Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 1996 were on strike for five weeks in October this year; Kathy Viner, local president provided **Union Woman** with this account.

Just five years after certification we entered our first strike. When we certified there was discussion over the fact that the local encompassed all staff; clericals, technicians, assistants, and librarians. It was felt that this could cause problems in the future, and there have been problems. These last three weeks have served to illustrate that the right decision was made.

Although each of these groups have concerns unique to themselves, there has been a gradual shift away from isolating issues by category, towards approaching them as a unit. This was most evident during the strike when librarians spoke up on the inadequate salaries and vacation credits of the clericals, and clericals spoke up over exclusions from the bargaining unit and the increased gapping of vacant positions.

The major issues were wages; a job evaluation program; improved vacation entitlements; and a multilingual bonus. These issues are monetary, illustrating the fact that library workers have traditionally been underpaid. The bargaining unit at Toronto Public Library exemplifies what is termed a "women's job ghetto". Library workers have realized that the strike route has to be taken to make gains and get out of these ghettos. The salaries at TPL were, and still are, very low. The average salary for librarians was \$18,700, for a position requiring a two year post-graduate degree. The average salary for non-librarians was \$11,800, with one-third of those people earning only \$10,660!

The job evaluation program was initiated to correct wage inequities since it was known that many non-librarians were actually doing "librarian-type" jobs. The multilingual bonus has been an issue in this local since certification. Many staff, particularly clericals are providing service to the public in languages other than



— Carol McDougall

Striking Toronto Library workers.

English and are receiving no compensation for this.

Not all demands were achieved, however some gains were made. The wage settlement amounted to a 10% increase plus a lump sum payment, a portion of which will be folded in to the salaries of the lower classifications. A portion of the money originally allocated for the job evaluation program will be used to upgrade positions identified as being "underpaid". The multilingual bonus and the vacation proposals had to be dropped. As a result not all members are happy with this settlement.

Several members stated, both during the strike and after, that no matter what we won at the table, what we have won for this local in terms of friendships, and solidarity cannot be measured. People who had been hiding their lights under bushels for the past five years came forward. One member opened her home as a daycare centre. Others organized coffee and food to be delivered to the picket lines each day. And the community contacts built up over the years were put to the greatest use ever. When it was finally over, one member remarked that she was sorry to see it end!



— Joyce Rosenthal

Union delegates throughout Ontario met at the Ramada Inn in Toronto to discuss day care at a conference sponsored by the OFL Women's Committee. Cliff Pilkey, OFL President, opened the conference. Delegates also heard from NDP leader Michael Cassidy and Bob Nickerson, co-chairperson of the OFL Women's Committee.

Day care campaign

• Continued from Page 1

from the welfare context through the enactment of a Canada Day Care Act that would provide the framework for a substantial federal government contribution to the capital and operating costs of provincial day care programmes;

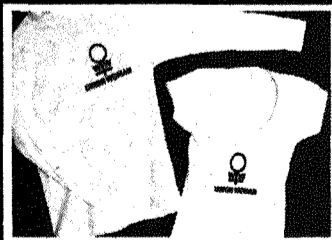
• An increase in the salaries and benefits and an improvement

in the working conditions of day care workers.

The winning of these demands will be a good starting point for the continuing struggle by the union movement for a system of universal day care.

Joyce Rosenthal is a member of OPEIU 443 and is OWW treasurer.

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Hall report urges outlawing extra-billing

By CATHI CARR

"The practice of extra-billing is inequitable. Not only does it deny access by the poor but it also taxes sick persons who, besides paying premiums, are already paying the major cost of the system through their taxes."

Thus spoke Mr. Justice Emmett Hall, the special commissioner appointed by the former Minister of Health and Welfare, David Crombie to review the state of health services in Canada. The report entitled "Canada's National — Provincial Health Program for the 1980's 'A Commitment for Renewal'" was released on August 29.

Of the many important subjects dealt with by Justice Hall in public hearings conducted in every province and the Northwest Territories and in some 450 submissions received from those hearings, and by mail, two items occupied a dominant role, eclipsing many others in the public, professional, and governmental perceptions, and frequently almost monopolizing many hearings. These were the growing practice by physicians to extra bill and the controversies that flow from the conflicts between the medical profession and the provinces over the scale of fees payable to physicians.



JUSTICE HALL

Hall states in his report that although seen as separate problems, they are inextricably interrelated. The medical profession maintains that it has the right to determine its own fee structure and the fees charged. The provinces insist that in the absence of agreement with the profession, they have the right to fix the fees payable to physicians and that physicians must comply.

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The Royal Commission on Health Services conducted in 1961 dealt with this issue and stated the following:

"The notion held by some that the physician has an absolute right to fix his fees as he sees fit is incorrect and unrelated to the mores of our times. When the state granted a monopoly to an exclusive group to render an indispensable service, it automatically becomes involved in whether those services are available and on what terms and conditions."

Justice Hall, however, does not believe that the State has the right to conscript the services of physicians; but he recognizes that to date efforts to harmonize these conflicting concepts have been unsuccessful in every province. The report warns that it is imperative that some solution to solve the conflict be found, otherwise Medicare as Canada has known can fail in time.

One could look however at the position taken by the Quebec government. There a physician is either **totally in** or **totally out** of the provincial plan. Patients of opted-out physicians are not re-imbursed by the plan. It is not surprising that less than 1% of Quebec physicians are out of the health insurance plan. This is in stark contrast to Ontario where doctors have no incentive to remain in the plan and as a result as many as 98% of some specialists have opted-out of OHIP in some areas.

The report concludes and recommends that when negotiations fail and an impasse occurs, the issues in dispute must be sent to binding arbitration. It goes on to recommend that the Federal Government revise 'The Medical Care Act' to provide:

- That extra-billing by physicians inhibits reasonable access to services and is contrary to the intent and purpose of the Act.
- That the provinces should develop a mechanism to ensure reasonable compensation to physicians.

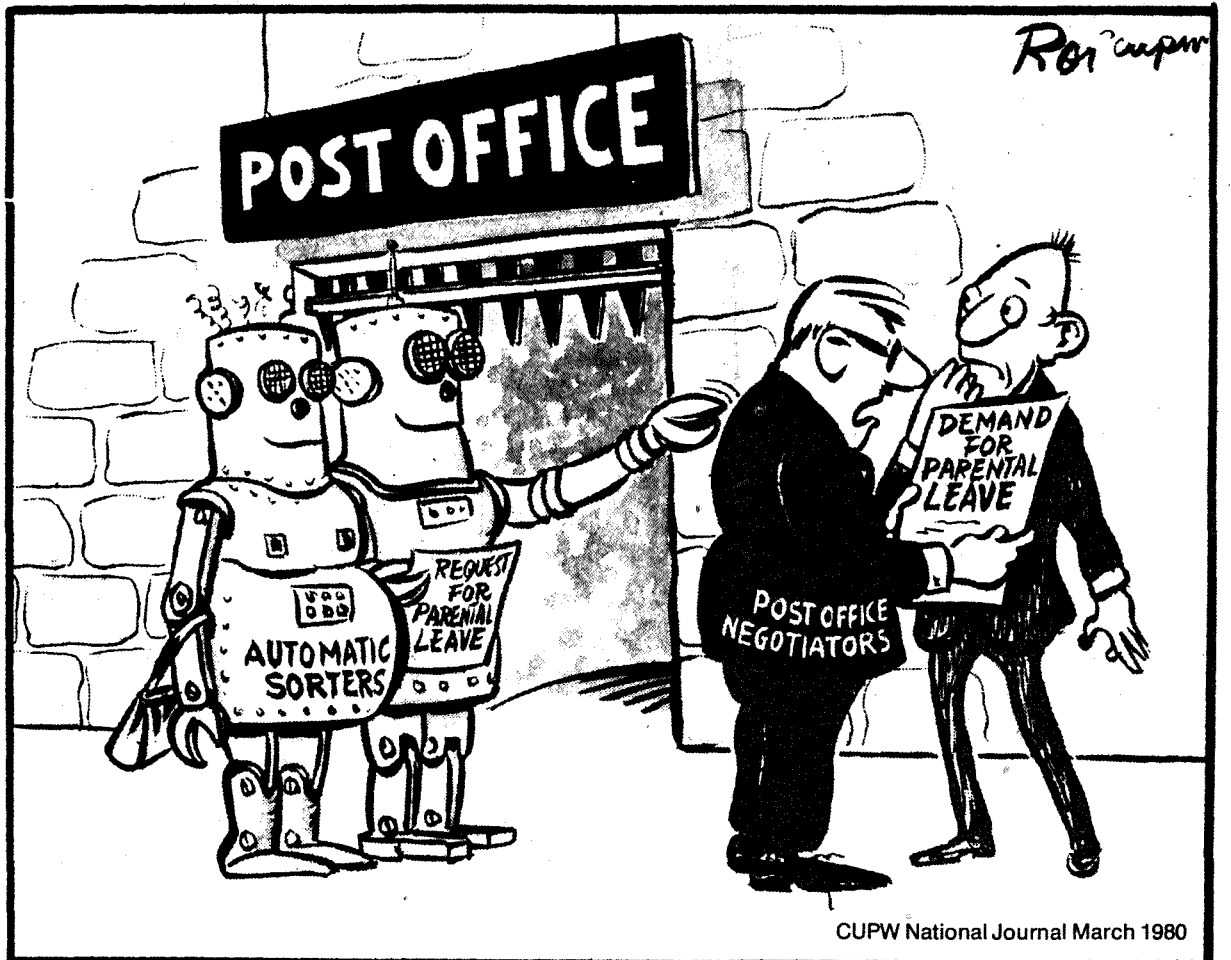
Hall's concerns with respect to extra-billing echo those expressed by labour. Cliff Pilkey, OFL President, speaking on behalf of the Ontario Health Coalition told Justice Hall in a hearing which took place in April, "good health is a basic social right. A right that is due every Canadian regardless of social economic or geographic distinction."

The labour movement was a driving force behind the institution of medicare in Canada. It must now pressure government to ensure that the recommendations of the Hall Commission are implemented.

Other Hall Commission recommendations:

- abolish premiums within next five years;
- free dental care — at least for pregnant women and children under 18;
- free orthopedic and prosthetic devices;
- proper pre and perinatal care to help prevent birth defects.
- transportability of health care plans from one province to another;
- free medical care for Native people, integrating their culture and expertise into their health care system;
- extensive family life and sex education programs integrated into the school system to combat teenage pregnancy.

Cathi Carr is the Health & Safety Representative with the Ontario Nurses' Association Staff Union.



CUPW National Journal March 1980

"At least those damn machines can't get pregnant!"

Maternity leave focus of translators' strike

By HOLLY KIRKCONNELL

"The leaders of our government are not willing to accept paid maternity leave under any conditions. Despite pressure from women's groups from all over the country, the Government feels there is no justification for it."

This statement was made by the Treasury Board to the Canadian Union of Professional and Technical Employees (CUPE) in rejecting a conciliation board report. The report recommended that the Translation Group, the majority of whom are women, should be granted paid maternity leave under their collective agreement.

The federal government translators have been without a collective agreement since March 19, 1979. In December of 1979, a conciliation board was established which did not report until the middle of August 1980.

In terms of maternity leave provisions, the initial demand of the translators was for 20 weeks leave paid at 100% salary. In line with the recommendation of the union's nominee on the conciliation board, the demand was then dropped to 17 weeks at 100%. Their last position was 17 weeks at 60%. Other demands include 3 days paid paternity leave, pay raises equivalent to the cost of living, and improvements in vacation leave.

To back their demands, these workers started to work-to-rule on August 21. Since October 20, they have been out on strike. This is the first strike where the main issue has been paid maternity leave.

Canada is far behind other countries in providing paid maternity leave. The following facts were outlined in a letter from CUPE asking for support:

- Sweden has nine months parental leave at 90% salary, and the father and mother can share this;
- Denmark has 14 weeks at 90% salary;
- Great Britain has six weeks maternity leave at 90% salary and 29 weeks without pay;
- Italy has 20 weeks maternity

leave at 100% salary in the public sector (otherwise, 80%);

- France has 14 weeks at 90% and parental leave of 2 years without pay;
- Germany provides 14 weeks at 100% in the public sector, and leave without pay for one to three years;
- The Netherlands has 12 weeks at 100%;
- Spain has 14 weeks at 90%;
- Workers in Poland recently obtained 1 year at 100%, the second year at 50% and the third year at 50%.

The majority of workers in the CUPE Translation Group are from Quebec, where 200,000 provincial government workers are covered by an agreement which provides 20 weeks paid maternity leave at 93% plus a 7 percent pension supplement (which totals 100%).

Two years ago, the translators made representations to their bargaining committee asking that paid maternity leave be a priority demand in the next round of negotiation. As a result, in the current negotiations, the demand for paid maternity leave has been

a key issue. Unfortunately, the translators have just recently been forced to drop this crucial demand completely. The Treasury Board has consistently refused to negotiate other items unless the demand was dropped.

Lise Montcalm, Vice-President of the 1,200 member Translation Group of CUPE, expressed in an interview that the members were sad to have to let the demand go. "If more unions joined together to press for and support the demand of paid maternity leave, it could become a reality".

The issue of paid maternity leave with full benefits and seniority is an important one for all women workers. The Canadian Union of Professional and Technical Employees, formed only two years ago, has taken the lead in this fight. Let's all work to ensure that next time they are not alone.

As Union Woman went to press the CUPE strike was settled. Details are not available.

Holly Kirkconnell is an executive member of Organized Working Women.

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OWW Calendar of Events

November 24-27	Ontario Federation of Labour Annual Convention Sheraton Centre, Queen Street West
December 6	OWW Solidarity Celebration Benefit Scadding Court Hall, 707 Dundas Street West 8:00 p.m.
January 14	OWW Membership Meeting 1901 Yonge Street, 8th floor 7:30 p.m.
February 21-23	Women and Employment Conference Co-sponsored by OWW and the Centre for Labour Studies, Humber College O.I.S.E., 252 Bloor Street West

Organizing the unorganized

By BARBARA LINDS

FOR MANY UNIONIZED workers, the initial organizing process is only a memory. Either their workplace has been unionized for a long time, or, as is the case for workers employed directly by the federal or provincial governments, their "employee organization" has been designated by government regulation.

For many women workers, unionization is fairly new. A large number of women work in small offices, banks, daycare centres, or in service occupations. Work locations are often small and isolated, and until recently, remained a relatively low priority of unions because of the difficulties associated with small bargaining units.

For recently organized workers, and for the thousands who are still unorganized, the process of organizing seems totally bewildering, technical, and long.

It is the experience of union organizers that the initial "push" to unionize comes about for two general reasons. The first is the buildup of frustration on the part of a number of workers over a short or extended period of time, to the point where "something has to happen". This frustration may be because of low wages, or because of feelings of powerlessness

over the terms and conditions of their employment. The second is a "crisis" which makes people realize how vulnerable their position is. This may be the result of discipline or dismissal of a co-worker.

In the majority of situations, an organizing campaign is started with only a small number of active workers. They approach one or more unions asking for information and assistance. An organizing representative or a staff representative from the union meets with them, and together they map out a strategy for the campaign. The key people in the campaign are the members of the organizing committee. They are the link between the union and the workers in the plant, institution or office.

"Signing people up" can be a relatively simple process, or can take a lot of hard work and time. In a workplace where everyone is aware of their rights and is in favour of unionization, and employer intimidation is limited the task can be easier. Where there are a large number of workers, or where there are problems in reaching and informing workers of their rights and the benefits of unionizing, the task is time-consuming and often difficult. The organizing committee must deal with:

Fear — Threats, harassment, coercion and intimidation are commonly used tactics by employers during organizing drives. The Ontario Labour Relations Act offers some protection against these unfair practices. Frequently workers are not aware of their rights.

Lack of understanding about unions — Many workers express the views fostered by the media that unions are undemocratic, constantly on strike, and that "the union" will be their other master. The organizing committee, with the help of the staff representative, must deal with the many myths about unions that seem to blossom in a workplace (often with the knowledge and support of the employer) during an organizing campaign.

Once a majority of employees have signed membership cards, the union is in a position to apply for certification on behalf of the bargaining unit to the Labour Relations Board. This part of the process is the most technical, for it deals with the Labour Board policies and practices with respect to appropriateness of the bargaining unit, exclusions of positions because of managerial capacity or because of access of certain employees to confidential information with respect to labour relations.

In a relatively simple application, where there are few disputes between the union and management, and where the union's membership is strong, the union may be granted certification within three or four weeks of filing the application. In complicated situations, where there may have been a number of unfair labour practice charges against the management, where the number of managerial or confidential exclusions asked for by management is high and not based on a true picture of the job duties and responsibilities of the employees, or where there has been a representation vote ordered by the Labour Relations Board, the process takes much longer and can be much more complicated.

The long and technical process before the Labour Relations Board is often the most difficult for workers to deal with. It is therefore obviously important to keep the membership well informed during the proceedings, so that once certification is granted, an up-to-date and active group of new members can begin their next project — demand setting, and the negotiation of their first collective agreement.

Barbara Linds is an organizer for the Ontario Public Service Employees Union.

OWW launches fund raising drive

OWW is entering its fifth year. It serves a growing membership of rank and file union women. Our meetings, workshops, conferences and newspaper, *Union Woman*, are unique. Informed participation in labour struggles with our sisters and brothers has been and continues to be our work.

Government grants which financed OWW for several years have disappeared and a membership fee will not in itself, support our program. So, we are launching a major fund raising drive within the union movement to finance our membership's directives. The campaign is being carried out as follows:

Appeal to OWW members and friends In October a letter was mailed to all persons familiar with OWW's objectives requesting financial support by upgrading their membership to a Sustaining Member or by donating to OWW. We invite all our brothers and sisters to become sustaining friends of OWW for only \$30.

Appeal to prominent union activists A letter was sent to leading union activists inviting their individual support of OWW by becoming a Financial Endorser. Bro. Wally Majesky, President of the Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto has honoured us by accepting the Chairpersonship of this Financial Endorsers Committee.

Appeal to trade unions Many prominent unionists have indicated their support by becoming Financial Endorsers and we are preparing a special letterhead listing their names. Using this "special" OWW letterhead, an appeal will be sent to every local union. We urge you to bring this appeal before your membership meeting.

Increase OWW membership The membership fee is a basis of financial support. Over the past year, OWW has increased its membership, particularly among public sector women.

OWW raffle and benefit OWW is holding a solidarity celebration benefit on December 6. At this time the raffle will take place. See ads this issue.

This Fund Raising Drive, when successfully completed by the helping hands of all, will bring us to our goal of \$20,000.

OWW needs your moral, active and financial support to carry out the goals set by our annual meeting. I am sure you will find your way to participate to the best of your ability. Thank you for your continuing support.

Joyce Rosenthal, Treasurer

Commentary

Commentary is a forum for debate and discussion on issues of interest to trade union women. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of Organized Working Women.

Child care tax credits

By LIN GRIST

The fight for adequate daycare facilities for working parents has been and continues to be an uphill fight. The issue is complex: government monies to fund daycare come from the federal, provincial and municipal levels and those who have taken part in the struggle will tell you that all three levels are masters at "passing the buck."

In the struggle to find adequate, affordable daycare for working parents however, the issue of tax credits seems to have been placed on the back burner. The issue is purely a federal matter, since it is the Department of Revenue in Ottawa that decides what is and isn't an allowable expense.

At the moment working parents are allowed \$1,000 per year per child to a maximum of \$3,000 or the actual cost of child care, whichever is smaller. This works out to approximately \$19.25 per child per week.

For the bulk of working parents

\$19.25 represents perhaps one third of actual cost (in Toronto, costs vary from \$50-\$80 per week.) Even assuming the minimum cost of \$2,600, only \$1,000 of this is tax deductible.

Since this deduction can only be claimed by the mother, or in the case of a single parent, the parent having custody, and since the majority of single parents are women, this particular piece of regressive legislation works primarily against them. Either parent should be able to claim child care costs.

A self-employed businessman can entertain clients in exclusive restaurants and deduct the costs of such "expenses" without limit at the end of the year. But a working mother who must have daycare is allowed \$19.25 per week, hardly the cost of one restaurant meal at today's prices.

Lin Grist is the secretary of CUPE Local 1281.



From Everywomen's Almanac, Womens' Educational Press

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.

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If you are not eligible to join OWW, you are invited to subscribe to UNION WOMAN at \$10.00 per year.