

Labour and  
Meech Lake



Bad faith  
bargaining



The Wrath  
of Grapes

Vol. 1 No. 2

March/April 1988

# Alliance




Public Service Alliance of Canada

Quality  
Child Care



**Kids need it. Parents need it.**





# EVERY YEAR MORE THAN 300,000 FARM WORKERS ARE POISONED BY THE FOOD YOU EAT.



Welcome to Death Valley.

Each year, hundreds of thousands of people who labor in the fields are poisoned by toxic pesticides like those used in the cultivation of table grapes.

The fruits of their labor are birth defects, cancer, chronic illness. And death.

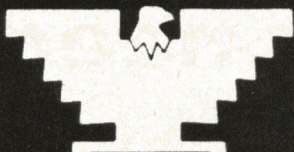
But the danger of pesticides isn't just to field workers. The danger sits right on your table.

You see, one third of all pesticides are known to cause cancer.

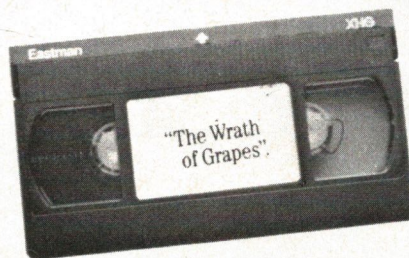
And some of them won't even wash off under your kitchen tap. Which means that you could unwittingly be poisoning yourself or your family with every table grape you eat.

There is only one way to know the whole story. Send for our free video cassette, "The Wrath of Grapes", and see how the farm workers have dedicated themselves to saving their lives. And yours.

What you choose to do after that is up to you. After all, we don't want to poison your mind. We just want to give you food for thought.



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OF AMERICA



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(416) 441-3710

YES! Please send me a copy of "The Wrath of Grapes". (Available in VHS format only.)

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Labour leaders are starting to worry that, under the guise of protecting "individual rights", the Charter of Rights may be used to undermine unions and roll back hard-won gains for working Canadians. We look at labour's rights in the Meech Lake era.

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Only a few hundred of our 180,000 members will attend this April's PSAC Triennial Convention. But the process that gets those delegates to Halifax ensures that the concerns of all Alliance members are voiced. Here's a quick convention primer.

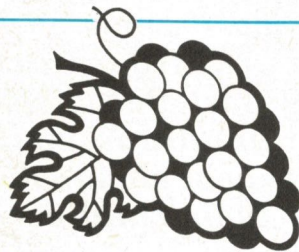
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When the PSAC proposed a quicker and more effective way to streamline bargaining for our 160,000 members employed by Treasury Board, the employer responded by charging your union with bad faith bargaining! Welcome to the world of public service contract negotiations.

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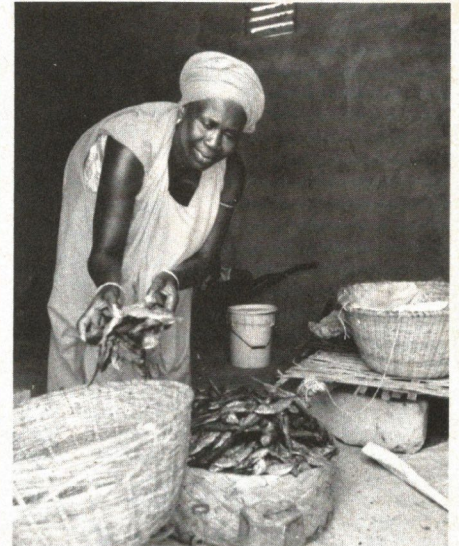
For over two years, the PSAC has been shadow-boxing with the Conservative government over the progress of legislation removing our federal public service members' right to fully indexed pensions. When the Tories moved C-33 to the fast track last January, the Alliance was quick off the mark in publicly denouncing the Bill.

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For over 20 years, Mexican-American farm workers have used the consumer grape boycott as a powerful weapon in the battle for personal dignity and union recognition. Now, they're asking for our help in the fight against cancer-causing pesticides that are killing their children.

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PSAC Rep Jean Ouellette recently returned to Canada from two years of working with the emerging trade union movement in francophone Africa. It was a rewarding experience that brought into focus the developed world's responsibility to the peoples of the "Third World".

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## OFFICER CUSTEDDY

The most popular Correctional Services Officer in the country is less than two feet tall and spends as much time guarding cribs as prisons. Meet "Officer Custeddy", a mascot that's as big a hit with adults as with kids.

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March/April 1988



Public Service Alliance of Canada



CALM Canadian Association of Labour Media

is the bi-monthly magazine of the Public Service Alliance of Canada. The 180,000-member PSAC is Canada's third-largest union and is affiliated to the Canadian Labour Congress and, internationally, Public Services International. Authors' opinions may not reflect the policies and views of the PSAC.

Editorial Committee: Daryl Bean, Alan Pryde, Nancy Mitchell  
Layout and design: Janet Jorgensen

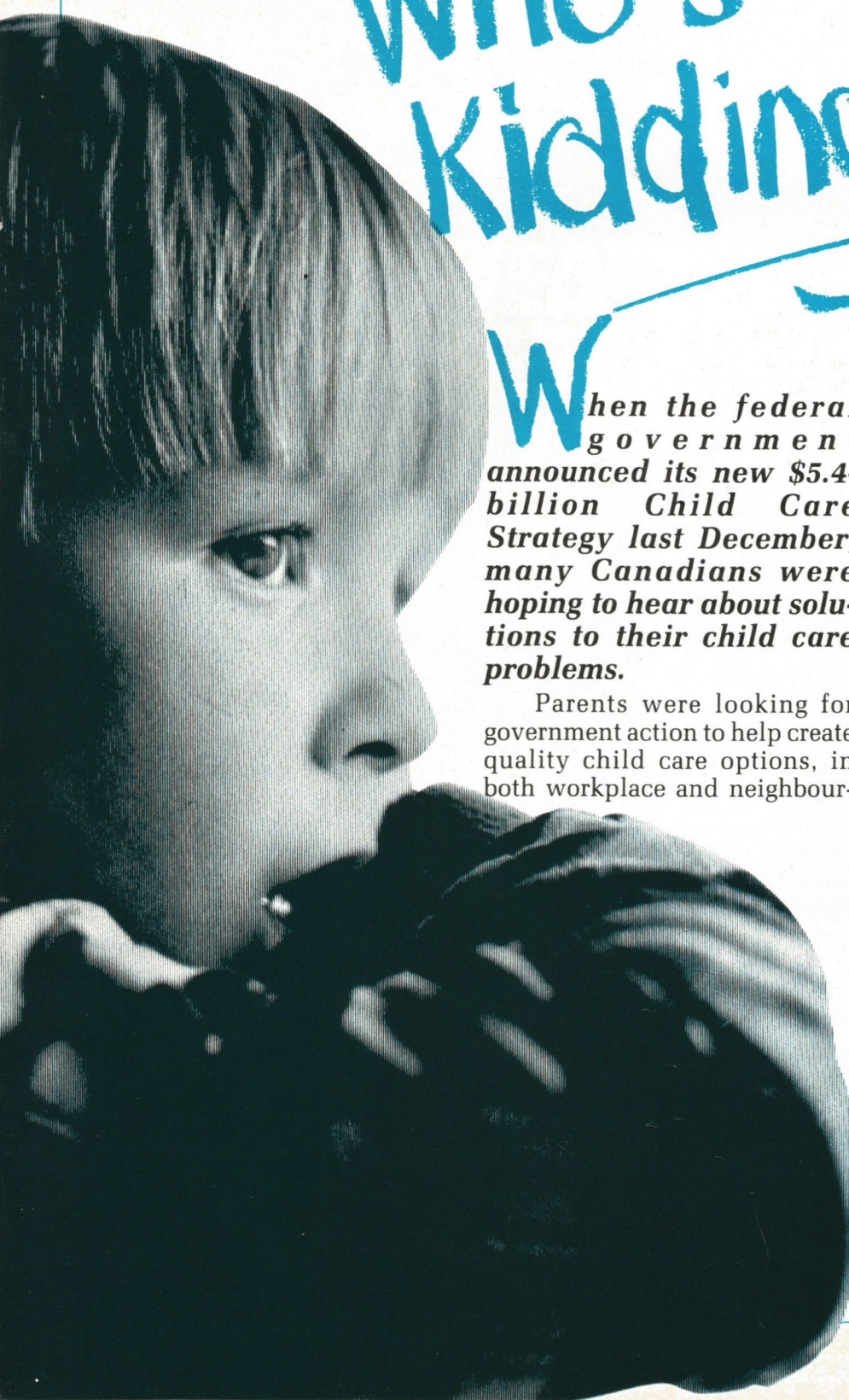
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# 'New' child care policy

Who's  
kidding who?

by Penny Bertrand



**W**hen the federal government announced its new \$5.4-billion Child Care Strategy last December, many Canadians were hoping to hear about solutions to their child care problems.

Parents were looking for government action to help create quality child care options, in both workplace and neighbour-

hood settings, at affordable prices.

Few expected overnight miracles. But, after numerous studies, committees and task forces had documented the problem, one could reasonably expect the government to direct the necessary resources towards the creation of a national child care system.

Incredibly, the government has chosen to ignore the needs of Canadian families and has presented instead a hodge-podge of regressive tax measures, old recycled money for an inadequate number of spaces, new spending limits and increased funding for commercial child care.

Although the government document, *Sharing the Responsibility*, repeatedly refers to "quality" child care, the new plan specifically avoids any measures which would ensure quality care.

In fact, by choosing to allow funding of profit-making operations, they are turning their backs on research which shows non-profit child care is better



able to deliver quality.

In response to almost unanimous demands for improvements in maternity and parental leave benefits, the new strategy concludes "such changes are not appropriate at this time". On the issue of workplace child care in federal buildings, the key phrase is "consideration is being given".

What does the Conservative strategy contain? There are three major initiatives:

### 1. A Cost-Sharing Program with the Provinces and Territories

Under new legislation, the *Canada Child Care Act*, the federal government would spend up to \$3-billion over seven years on:

- capital grants (cost-shared with 75 per cent federal funding and 25 per cent provincial) for new non-profit child care spaces; and
- 50 per cent federal cost-sharing of operating costs for both profit and non-profit services. This includes both low-income subsidies and operating grants. Poorer provinces can receive up to a 90 per cent federal share, dropping to 50 per cent after seven years.

### 2. \$2.3-billion in Tax Assistance for Families

For families with receipted child care expenses, an increased tax deduction provides up to \$4,000 per child for children six years of age and under or with special care needs. (The current maximum tax deduction is \$2,000 per child, to a maximum of \$8,000 per family.)

For low and middle income families, a phased-in \$200 per



year supplement to the Child Tax Credit is provided for children six years and under. (The present tax credit is \$564 per child.)

### 3. \$100-million for a Child Care Special Initiatives Fund

A \$100-million fund has been set up for demonstration projects, research and public awareness programs to improve the quality of child care services.

An analysis of this new strategy reveals a number of areas of concern.

#### Inadequate Increase in Spaces

Clearly, the need for new child care spaces is a national crisis. To meet the needs of even half of the children of parents who work or study out of the home, we would need one million new spaces. The new federal strategy proposes to create 200,000 new spaces over seven years.

"It's just not meeting the demand," says Joanne Oberg, PSAC member and National

Secretary of the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association (CDCAA).

"Eighty-two per cent of children here in Whitehorse don't have licensed child care spaces. Sure, some are in satisfactory arrangements. But I know children who are bouncing around from one care-giver to another. I don't see these new initiatives changing that.

"The CDCAA research shows that, given current growth rates, we could have expected licensed care to increase by over 300,000 spaces in seven years — without the new strategy!"

#### Old Money — New Limits

The \$3-billion includes what would have been spent on subsidies currently funded under the Canada Assistance Plan. It is estimated that \$1.3 - to \$1.7-billion would have been spent under CAP over the next seven years.

CAP is open-ended; what the province is willing to spend, the federal government will



match. The Conservative government's "new" money will be spent under the Canada Child Care Act and will be subject to limits.

### Funds for Profit Child Care

Under the new program, operating funds will be made available to profit-making child care centres. The fact that capital funding will be available only to non-profit operations will neither hurt nor halt the growth of commercial child care. Large commercial operators already have access to private sources of funding.

Without the time-consuming task of consulting parents and community boards, the chain operators can quickly move into place.

The PSAC has consistently opposed profit-motive child care. With its low staff salaries and resultant high staff turnover, and its need to make a profit, commercial child care can't deliver quality service equal to that provided by the non-profit sector.

"For me, it's a question of accountability," says Catherine Craig-Bullen, a PSAC member working in Ottawa's National Archives. "My son is in a non-profit centre and I feel confident about the fact that parents, community members and child care staff sit on the board of directors to help ensure good quality.

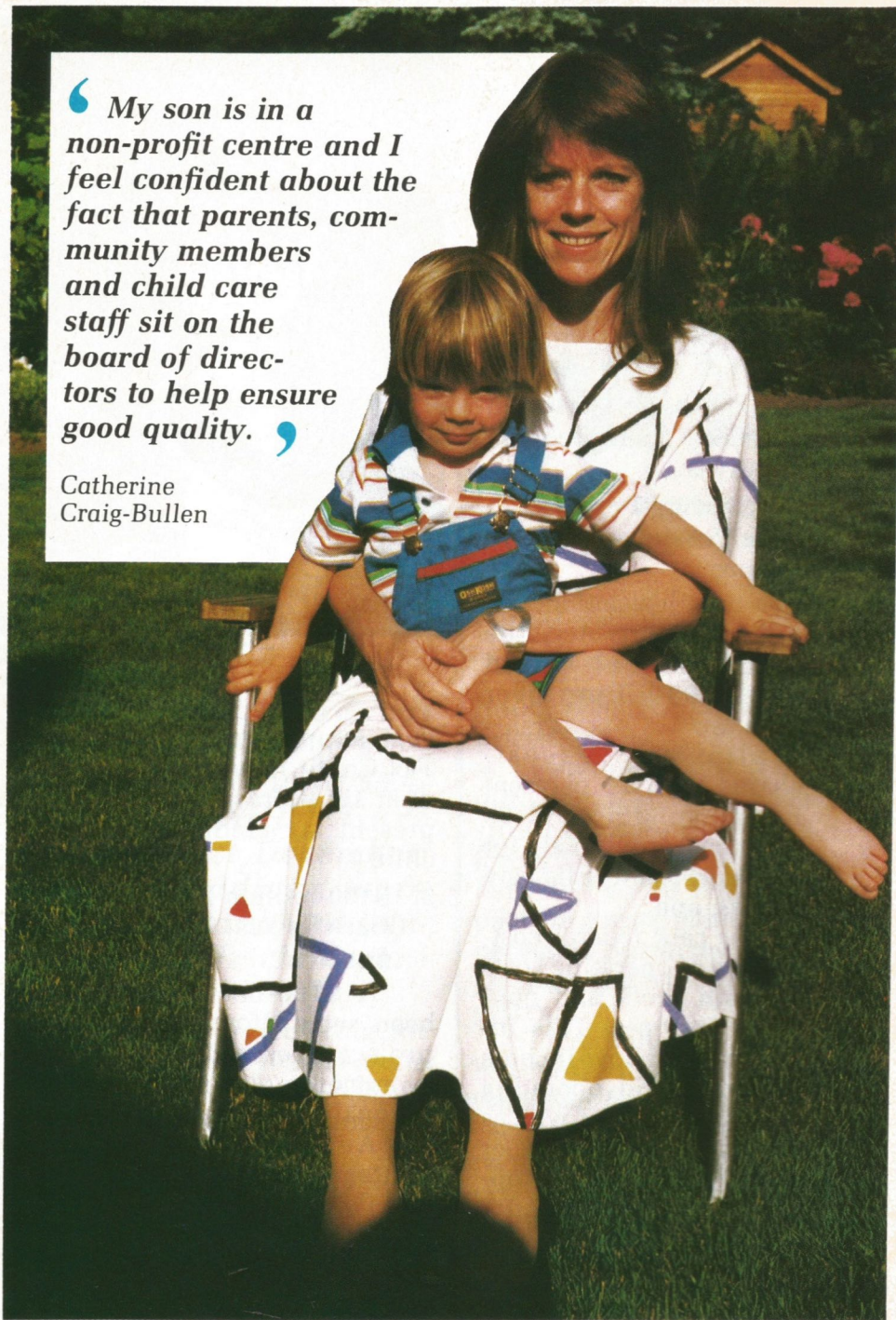
"The money goes to pay for staff salaries, equipment, food and rent. It's all accounted for — and needed! Obviously, at commercial centres they have to show a profit. That money is taken from the children's needs."

### Regressive Tax Measures

From a government preaching tax reform, the in-

*My son is in a non-profit centre and I feel confident about the fact that parents, community members and child care staff sit on the board of directors to help ensure good quality.*

Catherine  
Craig-Bullen



crease in the child care tax deduction is a step backwards. It is a regressive tax, worth more to higher income earners.

Beyond that, the tax credit measures will not create the kind of child care system we need. It is a costly way to put a few dollars in parents' pockets without providing any choices on how to

spend it.

"Giving me an extra two hundred dollars won't help me find a good quality child care space for my four-year-old," points out Joanne Oberg. "If you want to give parents some cash, fine; but don't pretend to be addressing our child care needs!"



The government, with one hand, will give you back some tax money — money that it's saved from the partial de-indexing of the family allowance and child tax credit. With the other hand, it will open the doors to a proliferation of profit-making child care centres.

PSAC member John MacLennan, who works at Ottawa's Uplands Canadian Forces Base and is the father of two young children, agrees the tax measures are inadequate.

"They certainly don't begin to cover the inflationary costs of caring for children. The government doesn't seem to recognize that with both of us parents in the workforce, we need quality child care we can count on."

### No Quality Control

Aside from promising to "discuss" standards of quality with the provinces and territories, the federal government has admitted that there will be no "strings" attached to the federal dollars. There are no federal standards to be met by child care services in order to receive funding.

Government spokespersons maintain they have no authority to act in the area of standards because child care is under provincial jurisdiction. Critics have pointed out that it would have been possible to establish national objectives, as was done for the provision of health care.

The Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association has recommended four basic objectives for quality service:

- non-profit administration;
- comprehensive planning in consultation with the local community to in-

clude a variety of child care services;

- accessibility to all families who choose to use the service; and
- a high quality ensured through licensing and monitoring by the provinces and territories.

### No Commitment to Workplace Child Care for Federal Employees

The PSAC called for the establishment of workplace child care in our 1986 brief to the Special Committee on Child Care. However, the only commitment the new strategy makes is to consider the issue.





The Conservative program presents an opportunity for the government to demonstrate leadership by providing a high standard of care in appropriate worksite environments.

Few employers are in the advantageous position of having access to appropriate space in federal buildings, experience gained through three pilot projects and funds for start-up and operating costs.

"We'd have been very interested in workplace child care if we could be assured of high quality care; that is, better than the provincial minimum standards," says John MacLennan.

#### **No Improvement in Maternity or Parental Leave**

The outright refusal to budge on this item makes a complete mockery of the government's stated commitment to "give parents choices".

Staying home for longer periods of time with a young baby is an option many parents would choose if they could afford it.

The PSAC was joined by most of the groups that presented briefs to the Special Committee on Child Care in calling for improvements to existing maternity benefits and the introduction of paid paternal leave.

The Committee report followed an earlier government-commissioned task force report in recommending such measures. However, the Tory Government concluded such changes "are not appropriate at this time".

PSAC members will likely recognize this government's child care "initiative" as being very much in line with current Tory policies.



In the spirit of the Meech Lake constitutional accord, it grants all real decision-making power to the provinces. It gives a nod to free trade in its endorsement of the commercial child care sector.

And, its familiar lack of commitment to equality for women is glaringly obvious in the failure to create a child care system that working parents and their children so desperately need.

"The PSAC is well familiar with the broken promises of this government," says Alliance Vice-President Susan Giampietri. "Now the public is being treated to its same short memory".

"Prime Minister Mulroney's previous statements, promising to deal with the real crisis in child care, have to be added to the promises of better labour leg-

islation for the public service, more jobs for Canadians and no free trade deals."

The PSAC is not alone in opposing this child care package. The Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association refers to it as a "child care restriction program". The National Action Committee on the Status of Women calls it "smoke and mirrors" and "a complete failure to address the problems".

The Canadian Labour Congress and the Canadian Union of Public Employees joined the Alliance in labelling it a totally inadequate response. The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women found that the proposals "fall far short of recognizing the reality of Canadian families today".

Can this initiative be stopped? The government intends to consult with the provinces over the next few months and then table the new legislation in June.

Soon, many of the unions, women's organizations, community groups, child care activists, providers and parents will join together to launch a campaign to oppose the government's plans.

It is important that Alliance members join with other Canadians in expressing our disappointment and dissatisfaction with this so-called response to our needs.

It is equally important that child care be an issue in the next federal election.

We must maintain pressure for the kind of child care choices that we need and that our children deserve.

*(Penny Bertrand is a PSAC Regional Representative and child care activist.)*

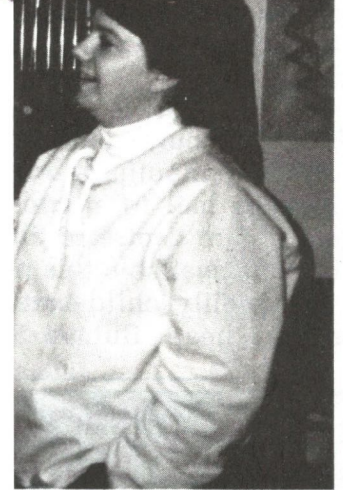


# Workplace child care: IT WORKS!

by Alan Pryde

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The three-year-old is one of



his father Bob and Zhenier.



**VOUS AVEZ  
REÇU « ALLIANCE »  
EN ANGLAIS?**

***Veillez nous  
en excuser!***

*(lire au verso)*

M.P.S and Senators.

As is increasingly the case, Blackburn and his wife Jean both work outside the home. Unlike most working parents, workplace child care was an available option.

The Blackburns are big boosters of "Children On The Hill":

"We think it's top-notch," Blackburn says. "We looked around a lot and studied various

wonderful. For instance, last week Jean called during a snow storm to say she was late. So, I got Alexandre and brought him to my office to wait for our usual ride home.

"It's horrible to think of all the parents who have to travel — often by bus — from home to child care centre to work and back again. And that's assuming they can find decent community child care in the first place!"

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Nicole Ruckman, Director of the fully bilingual centre, herself has an early childhood education degree with extra specialization for children with special needs.

Ruckman worked for nine years in Sweden, where she saw that country's excellent system of workplace child care firsthand.



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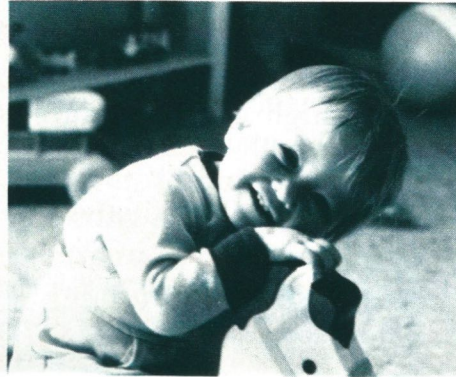
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## Vous avez reçu « Alliance » en anglais?

### *Veillez nous en excuser!*

Pour des raisons d'économie, le magazine « Alliance » paraît séparément en anglais et en français. Notre ordinateur est en mesure d'identifier la langue préférée, mais il se peut que l'AFPC ne possède pas l'information nécessaire à ce sujet.

Si nous avons commis une erreur, nous nous en excusons. Pour corriger la situation, veuillez coller votre étiquette d'abonnement sur le carton pré-affranchi ci-joint, qu'il suffit de déposer à la poste. Nous verrons à ce que les renseignements vous concernant tiennent compte de la langue préférée.

### *Merci de votre compréhension!*

their children so desperately need.

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by Alan Pryde

**A**lexandre Blackburn is too young to know just how lucky he is.

The three-year-old is one of a small minority of pre-school children in this country who have access to quality, accessible workplace child care.

Alexandre is enrolled in the "Children On The Hill" child care centre, located in one of the buildings that make up Ottawa's Parliament Hill complex.

"Children On The Hill" was launched in 1982, after several years' planning by parents and Parliament Hill administrators. It's a fine example of the kind of centre the PSAC would like to see in federal government workplaces across Canada.

Alexandre's father, PSAC member Bob Blackburn, was elected to serve on the Board at the centre's first general meeting. A technician in the Parliamentary Library, his job involves reviewing 25 newspapers to produce a daily news summary for M.P.s and Senators.

As is increasingly the case, Blackburn and his wife Jean both work outside the home. Unlike most working parents, workplace child care was an available option.

The Blackburns are big boosters of "Children On The Hill":

"We think it's top-notch," Blackburn says. "We looked around a lot and studied various



*Camera-shy Alexandre Blackburn with his father Bob and "Children On The Hill" teacher Louise Chenier.*

options and centres. In the final analysis, nothing could touch what we have now.

"The convenience and peace of mind that comes from knowing your kids are close at hand is wonderful. For instance, last week Jean called during a snow storm to say she was late. So, I got Alexandre and brought him to my office to wait for our usual ride home.

"It's horrible to think of all the parents who have to travel — often by bus — from home to child care centre to work and back again. And that's assuming they can find decent community child care in the first place!"

The high standard of quality care is evident from the moment one walks into "Children On The Hill". There are five teachers and one program co-ordinator for the 38 children; all the staff have early childhood education degrees or its equivalent.

Nicole Ruckman, Director of the fully bilingual centre, herself has an early childhood education degree with extra specialization for children with special needs.

Ruckman worked for nine years in Sweden, where she saw that country's excellent system of workplace child care firsthand.



“Education plays an important part at our centre,” she says. “We observe the child and meet his or her needs.”

The centre’s waiting list gives a good indication of both its reputation and the pressing need for more such centres — over 200 children are on the waiting list for 38 spaces.

And, Ruckman notes, two of those children have yet to be conceived! “The would-be parents called us up to ask if they could reserve ahead because they were planning to start a family.”

Alexandre is a case in point. The Blackburns put in his name only two months after his birth. He still had to attend another child care centre until a space became available this past year.

Quality child care doesn’t come cheap. But, at \$450 per

child per month, that’s lower than the going rate of \$550 for quality community-based child care in Ottawa.

There are two main reasons for the cost difference. “Children On The Hill” is a non-profit, parent-controlled centre. And, Parliament Hill provides the centre with rent-free space.

“Sometimes we think we can’t afford it,” Blackburn says, “but you can’t put a price on your child’s well-being.

“This type of child care really humanizes the workplace. It reminds us that we’re not all machines when we have our children near-by.

“The kids get to visit where their parents work. Most of the time, children have no idea what their parents do or where they work.

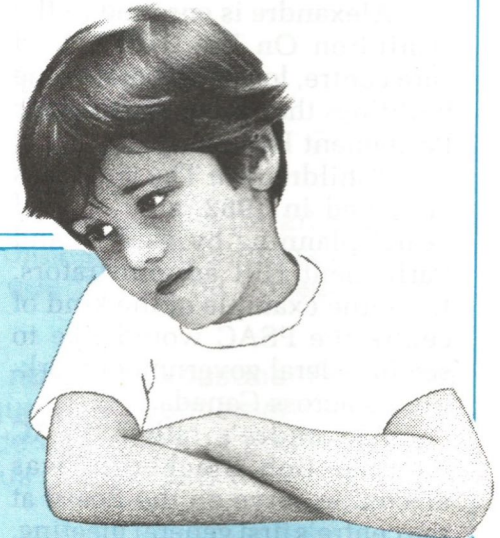
“The employer benefits

from our peace of mind in knowing that we don’t have to worry about not being close at hand if something should go wrong.”

Alexandre isn’t the first Blackburn to graduate from “Children On The Hill”. His older brother, eight-year-old Robbie, was part of the centre’s first “graduating class”.

“It’s just great seeing the parents come back three years later to enroll a new child,” says Ruckman. “That’s the greatest compliment anyone could pay us!”

*(Alan Pryde is Director of the PSAC Communications Branch.)*



## The PSAC wants: *Child care that is...*

### **Affordable**

In today’s economy, child care is a necessity rather than a luxury. Quality child care shouldn’t be restricted to those rich enough to afford it. Income should be no bar to child care services.

### **Accessible**

There’s no use having affordable child care if there’s not enough of it to go around! Child care — whether in the community or in the workplace — should be accessible to parents.

### **Of High Quality**

A child’s early years are critical to personal development. We should expect a high standard of quality care from our child care system. And, we should see to it that the system is well

enough funded to attract skilled and caring child care workers.

### **Publicly-funded**

The development of a quality child care system shouldn’t be left to the whims of the market place. Public funding can assure us of uniform standards and consistency. Placing our children in child care shouldn’t be a “trial and error” exercise.

### **Non-Profit**

We wouldn’t turn over our public school system to private sector profiteers. So, why should the profit motive be allowed into this critical stage of our children’s education and development? Our kids deserve quality care, not “McDaycare”!



# CHARTER OF RIGHTS: Labour out in the constitutional cold?

by Alan Pryde

**I**f you're like most of us, talk about the Canadian Constitution is a sure-fire remedy for insomnia.

But court interpretations of the right to free collective bargaining under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms are casting doubts on the ability of unions to effectively represent their members.

As more and more Charter decisions are handed down by the Supreme Court of Canada, labour lawyers working for unions are worried about a tendency to expand individual rights at the expense of collective rights or the rights of society as a whole.

Right-wing groups, such as the National Citizen's Coalition, have realized that the Charter can be used as a blunt instrument to hammer away at the rights unions have achieved for their members.

And many constitutional experts see the Charter as having introduced an unwelcome American view of individual rights.

Broadly speaking, U.S. courts tolerate collective action only as long as perceived individual rights are not encroached upon.

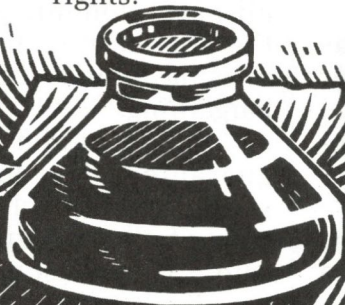
This attitude has seen the constitutional right of U.S. citizens to bear arms override the greater community's right to peace and security through the enactment of such strong firearms control laws that we in Canada enjoy.

American employers have used an employee's "right" not to join a union to greatly weaken labour's power and position south of the border.

So-called "right to work" states — primarily located in the high-growth south and southwest — make it extremely difficult for American unions to organize and function.

So how is it that Canadian unions failed to see the danger signs?

In 1981-82, the labour movement remained largely outside the debate on the Trudeau government's campaign to patriate the Constitution and adopt a Charter of Rights and Freedoms.





The main concern of the PSAC and other unions at the time was to assure that the right to free collective bargaining, including the right to strike, was protected.

Robert Kaplan, then Acting Minister of Justice, gave what appeared to be a categorical reassurance to a special Parliamentary committee on January 22, 1981:

“Our position on the suggestion that there be specific reference to freedom to organize and bargain collectively is that it is provided already in the Declaration or in the Charter; and that by singling out association for bargaining, one might tend to diminish all the other forms of association which are contemplated — church associations, associations of fraternal organizations or community organizations. If one tears apart that general freedom of association, it may diminish the general meaning of freedom to associate.”

The Alliance, like the rest of the labour movement, took Kaplan at his word and abandoned efforts to get specific recognition of free collective bargaining rights.

It was a mistake.

On April 9 of last year, a majority of the Justices of the Supreme Court of Canada ignored Kaplan's commitment and upheld as constitutional C-124, the former Liberal government's “6 & 5” inflation restraint legislation.

The PSAC and its members had waged a vigorous but unsuccessful campaign to block passage of C-124 — the so-called Public Sector Compensation

Restraint Act. Having lost the fight in Parliament, the Alliance had turned to the courts to test the constitutionality of C-124.

The union based its case on the presumed protection of free collective bargaining in the new Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The PSAC also argued that C-124 breached various conventions of the International Labour Organization, signed by Canada, guaranteeing full free collective bargaining.

**‘Constitutionally guaranteed freedoms are not solely for the exclusive protection of the individual’**

The Supreme Court decision was a shock. Speaking for the majority, Justice Le Dain ruled that the Charter “does not include a guarantee of the right to bargain collectively and the right to strike.”

The Court at the same time handed down two other decisions upholding separate but similar legislation affecting the rights of Saskatchewan dairy workers and Alberta public sector employees.

For labour, the decisions undercut the very reason for their existence. Without the right to bargain and strike, unions were little more than glorified service clubs.

The reaction from the PSAC was swift and bitter. Before a

packed room of television cameras the day of the Supreme Court decision, National President Daryl Bean said the ruling pointed to the need for the Alliance and its members to step up their political involvement.

Experts are divided as to the actual impact the April 9 Supreme Court decision will have on labour's existing rights.

Section 1 of the Charter holds that individual rights can be limited by law if those limits “can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.”

And Section 33 provides that Parliament or a provincial Legislature can override the Charter in declaring an Act effective “notwithstanding” other Charter provisions.

Four months after the Supreme Court brought down its “six and five” decision, the PSAC had another kick at the constitutional cat. The occasion was a special hearing by yet another Parliamentary joint committee into the ‘Meech Lake Accord’.

Last June 3, Brian Mulroney and the 10 Premiers put their names to the accord that finally brought Quebec into the Constitution as a full signatory. The joint committee was set up to study the proposed amendments to the Constitution.

The PSAC seized the opportunity last August to press the all-party committee to amend the Charter to include the now-missing right to free collective bargaining.

“Constitutionally-guaranteed freedoms are not solely for the exclusive protection of the individual,” Bean said. “They must also recognize



the rights of the collectivity made up of individuals exercising their freedom of association.

"We must disagree with those who believe that the Charter should only protect the right to enter an association and not the objects of the association, or the means of attaining those rights."

The Meech Lake Accord, following so closely on the Supreme Court's judgement on C-124, "provides Parliament with a unique opportunity to correct the interpretation that has been placed on the Charter's right of freedom of association since Parliament last debated the Constitution in 1981-82," Bean stated.

The Alliance President ended by proposing a Charter amendment recognizing freedom of association with the right to organize, bargain collectively and strike.

While Bean's arguments were persuasive and well received, the die had already been cast. The Conservative majority on the committee had received their marching orders — no other changes to the Charter.

So labour joined Northerners, women and natives in the list of those who feel their collective rights have been left out in the Constitutional cold.

The arena now shifts to future federal-provincial constitutional conferences, where the lobbying will continue for justice and rights for all.

As well, the PSAC intends to take advantage of the next federal election, expected as early as this summer, to press for Charter changes.

*(Alan Pryde is Director of the PSAC Communications Branch.)*

PSAC members get real value for their union dues. When you join the Alliance, you've got the country's third largest union backing you up. That clout is with you on the job and at the bargaining table.

To give you even more for your dollar, the PSAC has negotiated special discounts with outside suppliers on home and auto insurance, home heating oil and life insurance.

Remember, these benefits are available *only to PSAC members!* If you're not a member, and if you're eligible, contact your nearest PSAC Regional Office about joining today!

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PSAC members can save money on home and automobile insurance when they deal with Trafalgar Insurance.

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Ontario and Manitoba	Toll Free 1-800-387-1495	Local (416) 961-5013
Quebec	Toll Free 1-800-361-5684	Local (514) 871-9933
Atlantic Provinces National Capital Region:	Toll Free 1-800-565-1577	Local (902) 429-7722
Ottawa, Ontario		(613) 233-3338
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## SAVE ON LIFE INSURANCE

PSAC members qualify for low group rates on life insurance provided by the Confederation Life/Le Groupe La Laurentienne insurance group.

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For further information and/or an application card, contact:

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PSAC members who contract with Petro-Canada and its agents to provide home heating oil will receive a discount of 0.0176 cents per litre (or, approximately eight cents a gallon).

Prices charged are Petro-Canada's prevailing tank wagon prices to retail domestic customers at the time and place of delivery. The discount will be credited to the member's Petro-Canada furnace oil account.

This offer is available to Alliance members in most communities across Canada. Members should contact their nearest Petro-Canada home heating dealer to obtain application forms.



# + *Unity* *action*

## PROGRESS

### 1988 TRIENNIAL CONVENTION THEME

by Nancy Mitchell

***Unity Plus Action Equals Progress*** is the theme of the PSAC's eighth triennial convention to be held in Halifax, April 18 to 22. The theme was chosen to show that unification and action within the union can bring progress to both the PSAC and society.

Some issues of major concern will be highlighted at the convention: collective bargaining, political rights, health and safety, job security, tech change, personal or sexual harassment, indexed pensions, equal pay, free trade, deregulation, privatization and contracting out.

The convention, held every three years, is the supreme governing body of the PSAC. It sets the policies, budget and direction of the union.

When the convention wraps up, delegates will be all too

familiar with words such as resolutions, motions, debate and referred. During the course of the convention, they will on more than one occasion hear a motion from the floor that a resolution be referred back to the appropriate convention committee with instructions.

This could be because they don't agree with the wording of the resolution or they want something added to the resolution. However, the intent of the resolution cannot be changed.

The numerous resolutions that will be on the convention agenda will be debated by the more than 400 Alliance members — also known as delegates — who have been elected at their Component conventions. These delegates, representing their Locals, face a busy schedule for the week, which includes:

- keeping notes of all proceedings and being prepared to report on their return to the body selecting them in the first place;
- being prepared to serve on committees, before and during convention, for which they may be chosen; and
- being attuned to matters of national interest and problems for the benefit of members in other areas.

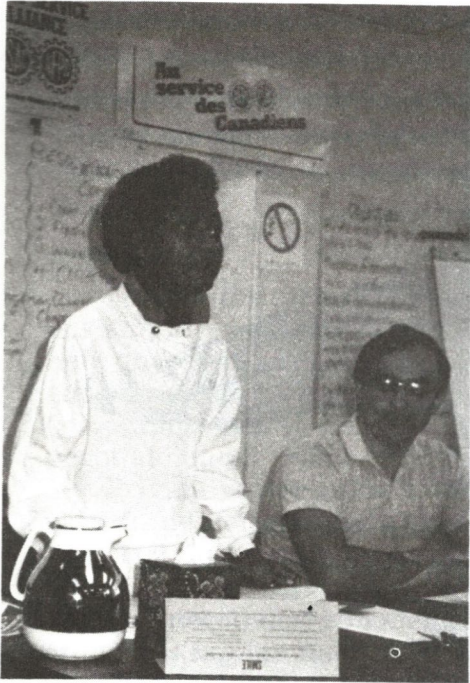
This is not to say that problems of a local nature should not be given voice. Indeed, many local problems exist nationally. Only by airing them in the first instance can the union determine the extent of the problem.

The resolutions that are brought to the convention have already been discussed and debated by members on the various convention committees. For this convention, the committees met in Ottawa, February 15 to 19.

The committees, established by the Executive Management Committee are: Constitution, Finance, Collective Bargaining and General Resolutions.

Convention committees meet prior to the opening of the convention but cannot conduct business while the convention is sitting without permission from the delegates. So, when a motion to send a resolution back to committee with instructions is passed on the floor, the committee must deal with the issue when the convention is recessed for the day.





**Pam Sealey, Canada Employment and Immigration Union Local 569, speaks out on a resolution developed during the Convention Procedures Seminar in Toronto, Sept. 19 and 20.**

In some instances, the committees will combine resolutions, bearing in mind that the intent must not be changed.

Resolutions at past conventions came either from Component conventions or the National Board of Directors (NBOD). However, for the first time, delegates to this convention will deal with resolutions adopted at the 2nd PSAC National Women's Conference, held last November in Montreal.

The Component convention resolutions originated either at the Local or Component national executive levels. In both cases, proposed resolutions had to have received majority approval of the meeting in question to be forwarded to the PSAC convention.

Area Councils submit resolutions to the NBOD one year prior to the PSAC convention.

Resolutions sent to the convention by the NBOD also come from board members and board committees.

A resolution usually concerns itself with the basic principle contained therein, not the means by which to achieve it. Similarly, to avoid complicated and confusing debates, and to achieve better understanding and acceptance, resolutions should not contain more than one objective.

Sometimes, emergency resolutions are placed on the floor, but the delegates must agree that they are of that nature and set a time to deal with them.

However, the entire convention doesn't centre around resolutions. One important highlight takes place on the last day — the election of officers. This election is divided into two parts.

The first part is the election of the five full-time officers of the Executive Management Committee (EMC) — a president and four vice-presidents. The second part is the election of the five national directors and their alternates.

For the election of the president and four vice-presidents, all delegates except Area Council delegates cast a secret ballot. For the national directors, only delegates from the geographic areas concerned may vote. These areas are: B.C., Yukon and NWT, Prairies, Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic. The election of the sixth national director — for countries outside Canada — is done by the NBOD after convention.

Delegates also must adopt the union's budget for the next three years. Prior to convention, the NBOD discusses the proposed budget and looks at ways to

trim it in an effort to keep any dues increase to a minimum.

When the NBOD is reviewing and discussing the budget they must also keep in mind what is required to maintain the current level of union services and, if need be, make improvements. When the board puts the finishing touches to the budget, it goes to the Finance Committee.

For some delegates, convention procedures will be familiar. For others, the 1988 convention will be their first. However, many of them will be prepared because they will have taken the convention procedures course.

Some of the areas covered by this course include:

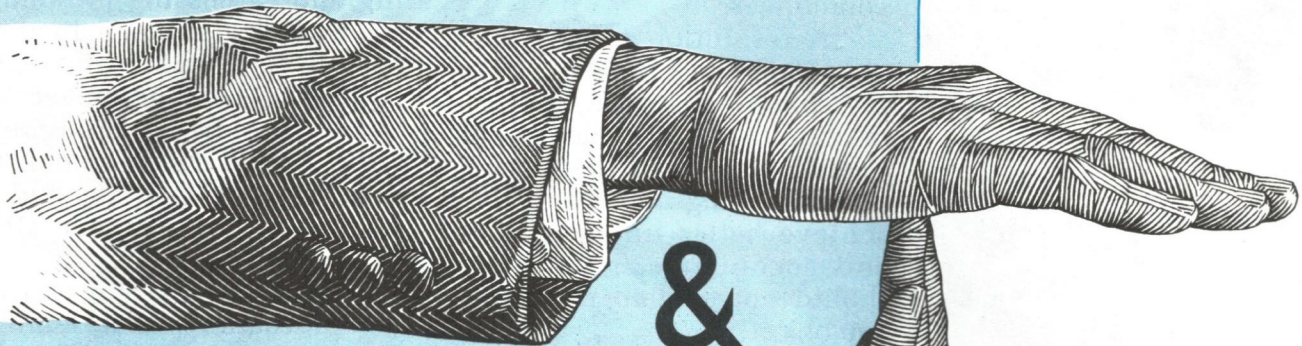
- the formulation of resolutions and how they are dealt with at convention;
- how resolution committees function and how they help speed up the convention;
- an explanation of the rules of order and how these rules help the debate go more efficiently;
- the procedures followed for the election of officers;
- the role of the delegate and his/her responsibility to take the information back to the Local to ensure that the decisions made at convention can be implemented; and
- a mock convention allowing prospective delegates to go through the motions.

In all these ways, the PSAC convention is structured to ensure the fullest, democratic representation of the membership.

*(Nancy Mitchell is a PSAC Communications Officer.)*



# DELAY

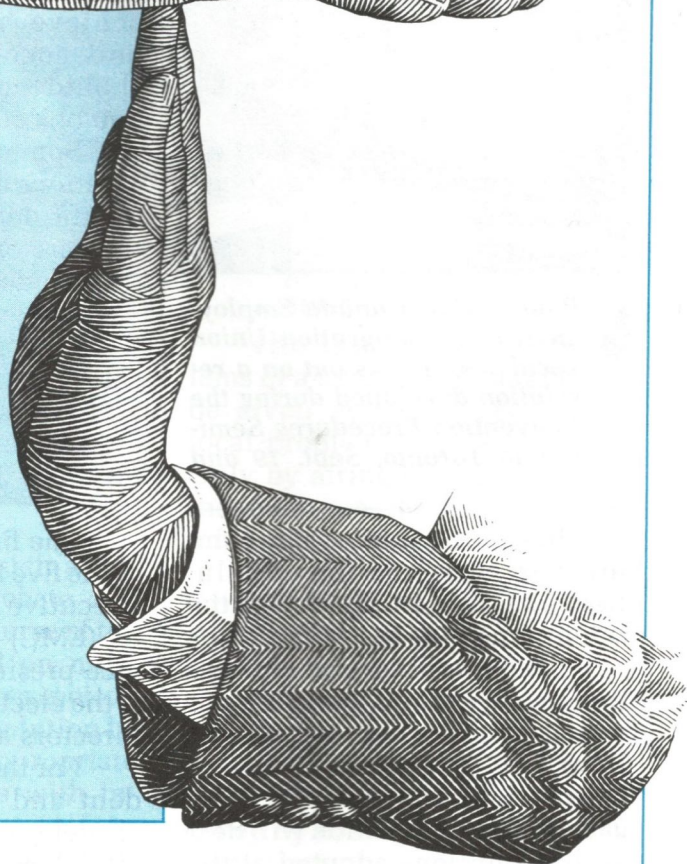


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# DIVIDE

## Treasury Board fights streamlined bargaining

by Alan Pryde



**I** *magine if you, a PSAC member, found a way to increase government efficiency and save taxpayers a million dollars in the process.*

Why, Treasury Board President Don Mazinkowski probably would hang your picture in every federal office in the land!

But, if you happen to be the PSAC itself, you get charged

under the Public Service Staff Relations Act with “bad faith bargaining”!

You don’t follow? Makes no sense?

Welcome to the world of federal public service negotiations!

It’s all related to our efforts to streamline the bargaining process for our 160,000 members employed by Treasury Board.

We agree when many of those members tell us they’re

tired of the length of time it takes to negotiate a contract. That’s why your union put forward sensible reforms to the bargaining process that will save both sides valuable time, effort and money.

You’d think that a government committed to “restraint” would leap at the offer; especially in the run-up to an election.

To understand Treasury Board’s reaction, you have to appreciate that the rules gov-



erning federal public service bargaining are very much different from those found in the private sector.

Let's look at just a few major differences...

Unlike the private sector, our employer is both the opponent and the referee. The federal government makes the rules for bargaining; then it sits down to negotiate under them.

Private sector unions bargain under either the Canada Labour Code or provincial Labour Relations Acts. The Alliance negotiates with the government's representative, Treasury Board, under the terms of the Public Service Staff Relations Act — a cumbersome, bureaucratic, rigid and outdated law.

And, as we've seen with the "six and five" wage restraint program, the employer doesn't mind changing the rules of the game and using its own workers as convenient political scapegoats when it sees some advantage to be gained.

When the PSAC sits down to negotiate with Treasury Board, we're negotiating for 160,000 members. By contrast, the largest private sector collective agreements cover only a tenth as many workers.

Albert Burke, Alliance Vice-President responsible for collective bargaining, sums up the dilemma facing your union:

"The sheer size and scope of federal public service negotiations inevitably creates needless complexity, delay and frustration.

"Since the PSAC first gained the right to negotiate for our Treasury Board members, we've attempted to amend the bargaining system to make it work better

for our members.

"As the employer holds most of the trump cards, that process hasn't been easy. Still, important progress has been made."

To understand that progress, you have to examine the events that have led up to the current fight with Treasury Board over the shape of this year's negotiations.

The PSAC is the bargaining agent for 39 federal government bargaining units. Over a number of years, negotiations for these groups were reduced to 31 "unit table" negotiations.

That meant that a separate contract had to be negotiated for each unit table, forcing the two sides to reinvent the wheel over and over again.

In the last round of negotiations, the PSAC and Treasury Board agreed to experiment with a new form of negotiations. Some 80 per cent of the articles of the individual unit collective agreements were negotiated at one time at one "Master Agreement" bargaining table.

The remaining 20 per cent — dealing with matters not common to all groups — was negotiated at the 31 unit tables.

The Master Agreement was something long sought by the Alliance. It was an important breakthrough in streamlining bargaining.

However, in order to obtain Treasury Board's agreement, the PSAC itself had to agree, on a one-time basis, to a new form of dispute settlement for the Master





Agreement — binding conciliation.

“Our members told us they liked the idea of the Master Agreement,” Burke says. “What they didn’t like was the binding conciliation that went along with it.

“Binding conciliation meant the surrender of our most powerful negotiating weapon — the right to strike on those items contained in the Master Agreement.

“It meant putting our future contract on these matters in the hands of so-called neutral third parties who may or may not understand the concerns of federal government workers.

“And it meant that our members lost their right to vote on the items contained in the Master Agreement.

“Our members,” Burke adds, “also told us that they didn’t like the delay it took to negotiate the 31 unit agreements.”

Bearing all this in mind, your union approached Treasury Board with a plan to further streamline the current round of negotiations.

The PSAC proposed reducing the 31 unit negotiations to seven “coalition tables” by grouping together different bargaining units with common interests and objectives (see box accompanying this article).

As well, we proposed that the Master Contract now be negotiated on the basis of conciliation with the right to strike.

“We thought there was something for everybody in our proposals,” Burke notes. “The government saved money; Treasury Board saved staff time; and our members got their contracts sooner.

“It seemed like an offer no sensible employer would refuse.”

The employer did more than refuse. In late December, it charged Burke and the Alliance with failure to bargain in good faith.

Treasury Board rejected your union’s offer out of hand. They would consider some reduction in the number of unit tables (but nowhere near seven) only if the Master Contract remained under binding conciliation.

Last autumn, the PSAC held extensive meetings with Local and Regional leadership across the country. More than a thousand members attended these meetings and made it clear that they were not prepared to accept binding conciliation.

In the face of the bad faith bargaining charge, the PSAC Regional Action Committees mounted a lobby of Members of Parliament to explain the logic of your union’s position.

The M.P.s were informed that the last round of Treasury Board negotiations had cost taxpayers an estimated \$2,140,000 and that the Alliance’s proposals would see those costs fall to an estimated \$576,000.

The lobby also attacked Treasury Board’s contention that the PSAC’s proposals would place too much bargaining power in the hands of union members.

Treasury Board, in support of its charge of bad faith bargaining, had claimed that “the PSAC’s actions are more oriented towards potential concerted strike activities than towards meaningful negotiations to arrive at a collective agreement.”

A look at the composition of the seven coalition tables puts the lie to this argument. The grouping of bargaining units being proposed by the Alliance will not make a significant difference in strike clout.

#### TABLE 1

Programme Administration (PM)  
Information Services (IS)  
Library Science (LS)

#### TABLE 2

Administrative Services (AS)  
Welfare Programmes (WP)  
Purchasing and Supply (PG)

#### TABLE 3

Clerical and Regulatory (CR)  
Office Equipment (OE)  
Social Science Support (SI)

#### TABLE 4

Data Processing (DA)  
Secretarial, Stenographic and  
Typing (ST)  
Communications (CM)

#### TABLE 5

Drafting and Illustration (DD)  
Engineering and Scientific Support  
(EG)  
Photography (PY)  
General Technical (GT)  
Technical Inspection (TI)  
Primary Products Inspection (PI)  
Educational Support (EU)

#### TABLE 6

General Labour and Trades (GLT)  
General Services (GS)  
Hospital Services (HS)  
Ships’ Crews (SC)  
Firefighters (FR)

#### TABLE 7

Correctional Services (CX)  
Lightkeepers (LI)  
Heating, Power  
and Stationary Plant Operation  
(HP)





▶ *One of 23 regional seminars on bargaining strategy for our members employed by Treasury Board held the first weekend in February.*

For example, the Alliance has proposed that the Clerical and Regulatory (CR), Office Equipment (OE) and Social Science Support (SI) groups bargain together.

The number of CRs total 48,443; the three groups together total 50,983.

"Treasury Board's argument is simply a smokescreen for its desire to maintain the upper hand in negotiations," Burke says.

"They have historically been able to play one group off against another, offering a choice between quick and dirty settlements or interminable stalling.

"The employer's tactics are designed to turn the membership against the union," Burke points out, "to build the pressure for a speedy settlement on Treasury Board's terms.

"This strategy has led many of our members to blame the union for lengthy contract negotiations. Treasury Board wants to continue its tactics of 'delay and divide!'"

The PSAC argued successfully against the charge of bad faith bargaining with the result that the Public Service Staff Relations Board (PSSRB) ruled against Treasury Board. The PSSRB urged the parties to meet

and commence bargaining as soon as possible.

The first weekend in February saw members of the PSAC National Board of Directors fan out across the country to attend 23 regional seminars on bargaining strategy.

Albert Burke says the Alliance has a simple goal:

"Our aim has been, is and will be a collective agreement achieved at the table and ratified in a democratic vote.

"And, with the support of our members, there's no reason to think we can't get that."

*(Alan Pryde is Director of the PSAC Communications Branch.)*





# Tories continue assault on pension rights

**I**n April 1985, just six months into its mandate, the current government announced its intention to enact substantial revisions to the pension entitlements of federal public sector workers.

On December 16, 1986, following a 20-month gestation period, then Treasury Board President Robert de Cotret tabled legislation aimed, in his words, at making federal public service pension arrangements "better reflect accepted practices of major employers in the private sector."

What de Cotret failed to mention was that the legislative proposals aimed at ending automatic pension indexation formed part of his government's ideological position that Canadians, particularly pensioners and the recipients of social services, must become more self-reliant and must fend for themselves under the Tory vision of Corporate Canada.

Immediately following its December 16, 1986 introduction, Bill C-33 — The Statute Law (Superannuation) Amendment Act, 1986 — became the focus of a concerted PSAC campaign to prevent its passage.

Our campaign to kill Bill C-33 was an initial success, showing the government once again that the majority of Canadians are resolutely opposed to the concept of de-indexation in any of its guises.

Unfortunately, as this issue of *Alliance* goes to press, it appears that a letter-writing and lobbying campaign undertaken by the Federal Superannuates National Association (FSNA) in support of early passage of Bill C-33 may have persuaded the government that it can proceed with the Bill, notwithstanding union opposition.

In what can only be regarded as a short-sighted and misguided approach, the FSNA has lent its support to Bill C-33 because automatic indexation will remain for all pension benefits accumulated prior to promulgation of the Bill.

In addition, the FSNA has been bought off by promises that once Bill C-33 is adopted, amendments improving other pension benefits will be forthcoming.

The primary motivation behind the government's proposed amendments to our pensions is a

desire to end automatic indexation of all future pension benefits for PSAC members and other federal public sector retirees.

Since 1970, when pension indexation became a reality, the purchasing power of a federal public service pension has been protected by annual increases calculated in accordance with changes to the Consumer Price Index.

In stark and simple terms, an average federal public service pension of \$10,900 (as of March 31, 1987) would have amounted to only \$7,000 if indexation had not been provided.

Similarly, an indexed surviving spousal pension would have been a paltry \$2,000, instead of \$4,600.

These average pension figures belie the perception fostered by successive governments and the National Citizens' Coalition, the extreme right-wing lobby group, that federal public sector retirees are privileged with pensions that are supposedly overly generous.

Of equal importance, indexation of federal public service pensions is not now, and never has been, a free ride.



In reality, PSAC members and all other contributors to the Public Service Superannuation Plan contribute one per cent of salary to a supplementary retirement benefit account for the express purpose of providing full and automatic indexation of their current and future benefits.

Through Bill C-33 the government proposes to fundamentally alter this fair and equitable arrangement.

In place of full and automatic indexation, the government has proposed to continue full and automatic indexation in respect of all services credited under the superannuation plan until Bill C-33 is promulgated. All superannuation benefits based on subsequent service would be increased according to the financial performance of the Superannuation Account.

Pursuant to provisions of Bill C-33, interest credited to future assets of the Superannuation Account will equal the average rate of return earned on investments made by 10 pension plans selected by the Pension Management Board.

This provision is supportable by the PSAC because it will arrest a longstanding complaint that interest credited to the Superannuation Account has historically been inferior when compared to large pension plans outside the federal public service.

Indexation of pension benefits based on future service will be determined on the basis of the financial condition of the Superannuation Account.

In other words, if the interest credited to the Account is sufficient, full inflation protection will be provided. If, on the other hand, the interest pay-

ments are not sufficient, full inflation protection will not be provided.

In and of itself, this provision would be unacceptable to the PSAC because, as the Ontario Government has concluded in its own research into the pension issue:

*“even at low rates of inflation, the value of fixed pensions will decline significantly. Over 10 years, a three per cent annual rate will erode the value of a pension by 25.6 per cent.”*

**‘For its part, the Alliance has resolved to fight the draft legislation’**

When coupled with the provisions of Bill C-33 which allow the government final authority with regard to the determination of contributions to the plan, the proposed indexation structure becomes totally unacceptable.

Which brings us back to the FSNA. On more than one occasion, PSAC President Daryl Bean has raised the Alliance’s deeply held frustration with the FSNA’s position with its leadership. All of which has been to no avail.

As a result, the PSAC is now forced to reconsider its support of the independent FSNA, and determine whether it is the best

vehicle for the representation of retired Alliance members.

At the upcoming Alliance Convention, delegates will be asked to vote on a constitutional amendment proposed by the Union of Public Works Employees that provides for Emeritus PSAC membership and Retiree Chapters.

Should this constitutional amendment be adopted, Alliance retirees will be provided with an internal mechanism that they will be able to direct in promotion of their interests.

In addition, former active PSAC members who are retired will be provided with an opportunity to continue to assist the Alliance in achieving its goals by contributing their time and efforts to various union campaigns.

Meanwhile, as this is written, members of both opposition parties have assured the PSAC of their full support and appear ready to delay the passage of Bill C-33 if it resurfaces.

For its part, the Alliance has resolved to fight the draft legislation.

Should Bill C-33 be adopted at second reading — agreement in principle — despite opposition pressure, the Alliance will present a strong and actuarially sound critique of the Bill to the Legislative Committee mandated to study C-33.

Given the Conservative majority in the House of Commons, such a campaign will, in effect, be a pro-forma exercise unless, and only unless, PSAC members from coast to coast participate in the concerted campaign against Bill C-33 to be conducted by Alliance Regional Action Committees.



# WRATH of GRAPES

## Pesticide danger spurs Farm Workers' boycott

by Alan Pryde

**L**ast summer, the United Farm Workers celebrated its twenty-fifth year of fighting for the dignity of California's largely Hispanic-American agricultural workers.

And Johnny Rodriguez died.

The son of UFW workers, Johnny didn't get to see the celebration. Or his sixth birthday.

The only son of Delano, California farm workers, the little boy died after a painful two-year battle with cancer.

Juan and Elia Rodriguez are convinced their son was one of a growing number of victims of the massive and uncontrolled use of pesticides by American agribusiness.

There has been a frightening increase in birth defects and cancer deaths among children living in communities surrounded by pesticide-laden crops.

Delano is one such community. It has twice the rate of expected childhood cancer.

Another is McFarland, 10 kilometres south of Delano. Johnny's parents often took him there to visit relatives or be babysat.

Both parents worked the fields for over a decade, exposed



*Johnny Rodriguez, four days before he died of cancer.*

to pesticides and other agricultural chemicals. Elia worked in the grape fields up to her eighth month of pregnancy.

Six months after his only son's death, Juan is still looking for answers.

"Once your son has cancer, it's pretty hard to take. You hope it's a mistake; you pray.

"The cancers in McFarland scare us. We want someone else to investigate the problem because we aren't getting any answers now from those doing it and we don't trust them.

"We don't know for sure if pesticides caused Johnny's cancer, but they are always in the fields and around the town.



Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, many Canadians supported successful UFW boycotts of California lettuce, carrots, raisins and grapes.

The boycotts were led by the charismatic UFW leader, Cesar Chavez. Public support of those boycotts led the California government to enact laws giving farm workers the right to organize.

In over 400 secret votes, thousands of farm workers voted to join the UFW. Newly negotiated collective agreements forced the growers to provide minimum standards of working and living conditions.

By the early 1980s, however, the UFW and its supporters began pointing to the apparent link between pesticide use and serious illness and death.

Their concerns fell on deaf ears. A new state Governor, elected in 1982 with the backing of Californian agribusiness, began gutting the laws protecting farm workers.

Two years later, Chavez launched yet another table grape boycott, centred around the pesticide issue.

In keeping with the times, one of the boycott's strongest weapons has been "The Wrath of Grapes", a professionally-produced 15-minute video on the dangers of pesticides to farm workers, their children and the public.

This powerful video is available at no cost from the UFW. (See page two for an order form.)

Contrary to the growers' charges, the UFW is not scare-mongering. Its concerns on the link between pesticide use and human cancer are shared by the U.S. National Research Council,



**UFW leader Cesar Chavez (centre) has taken his union's concerns over the use of pesticides on food products to the general public.**

an arm of the prestigious National Academy of Sciences.

Last May, the Council urged the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to focus its regulatory efforts on 28 pesticides found in 15 commonly-eaten foods, from tomatoes to grapes.

However, the American EPA has already shown its willingness to bow to California agribusiness.

In July 1986, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration removed sulfites from its list of chemicals generally recognized as safe.

As this did not apply to the use of sulfur dioxide gas sprayed on table grapes as a preservative, the EPA in December 1976 ordered grape growers to certify that 75 per cent of their grapes contained sulfite residues of less than 10 parts per million.

When growers complained that certifying even this weak standard would be too costly, the EPA settled for the tagging of 40 per cent of grape bunches with the words "grapes treated with sulfites to ensure freshness and quality"!

Meanwhile, farm workers continue to be poisoned by the unregulated use of pesticides.

Last September, 45 workers on a citrus and table grape ranch

became sick after working in fields sprayed with methomyl, a pesticide sold under the brand name Lannate.

The same month, harvesting of nearly 3,000 acres of grapes at 50 vineyards in 12 counties in central and northern California was halted.

Some 80 workers in three separate areas suffered nausea, vomiting, stomach cramps, headaches and lowered levels of a blood enzyme called cholinesterase. The poisonings were caused by Zolone, the brand name for the insecticide phosalone.

While the plight of the farm workers and their families alone justifies the support of Alliance members for the UFW grape boycott, the fact is that consumers could be exposing themselves to unwarranted danger by eating fruits with pesticide residue.

As Cesar Chavez notes: "Chemical companies, growers and pesticide sprayers are making a killing, financially and literally."

The PSAC calls on its members to join this latest boycott of "the wrath of grapes"!

*(Alan Pryde is Director of the PSAC Communications Branch.)*



# Out of Africa

## A better world through union support

by Nancy Mitchell

**“Very rewarding.”**

That’s how Alliance Regional Representative Jean Ouellette described his recent experience of working with trade unionists in francophone Africa.

“And,” he continued, “I consider myself very fortunate in being able to help improve the living conditions of workers and peasants in those countries.” Ouellette’s efforts were made possible through the efforts of the Canadian Labour Congress, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the African trade unions. His 22-month experience will always stay with him.

“To see human suffering, on such a vast scale and on a daily basis, has left me convinced that Canadians, and in particular, the Canadian labour movement, must continue to generously provide assistance to the third world, he says.

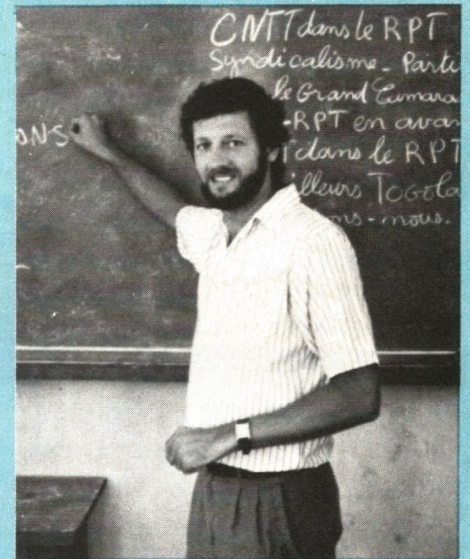
“As trade unionists, we have a responsibility in helping achieve a better world through our support of free trade unions in the third world.”

Ouellette’s first assignment was as a project co-ordinator in Chad. The project, baptized ‘Solidarity-Shahel’, was run by the Chad Trade Union Confederation with the assistance of the ICFTU. It was set up to help 300 families — about 3,500 people — to relocate after having left the north during the severe drought of 1984-85.

The peasants were organized and provided with food through the United Nations’ ‘PAM’ program of food for work. They cleared plots of land given by the government and made bricks to build irrigation canals.

The ICFTU provided all the required materials, along with moto-pumps and two trucks. The project has helped these peasants to become self sufficient in food production and to produce sufficient food for marketing in N’Djamena, the capital of Chad.

Ouellette’s next stop was Lome, Togo. From there, he visited trade unions in 12 different countries in western Africa to



*From January 1986 to October 1987, Jean Ouellette, a PSAC Regional Representative on leave from the Alliance, worked as the Canadian Labour Congress’ project planner in francophone Africa. The CLC has four project planners overseas: in anglophone and francophone Africa, in Central America and in Asia.*

coordinate assistance from the Canadian labour movement to the African labour movement.

The projects were as varied as they were interesting: fishing co-ops in Gambia and the Ivory Coast; digging a well for refugees in northern Mali; a pig farm for women in Burkina Faso; a feasibility study for a fish processing co-op to be run by women in M’Bour, Senegal; a feasibility study for a cold storage facility for women who sell produce in Togo; and the training program for peasants in Chad.

In spite of these impressive accomplishments, the needs are



*Female trade unionists of Togo take part in a seminar workshop sponsored by the CLC and CNTT.*

*Mrs. Diop, a member of the coop, weighs dried fish. The coop was formed because the women were being exploited by the middleman.*



far greater than the budgets available to the CLC to assist our fellow trade unionists in the third world.

Besides these humanitarian projects, the CLC is also very much involved in helping African trade unions through their education programs. In Francophone Africa, the CLC has funded, or will be funding and providing assistance, to trade union organizations in 10 countries.

As in Canada, the trade union movement needs education programs to help it become better organized and efficient. Also, because salaried workers represent only about 15 per cent of the population, trade unions in many countries have set up literacy centers and organized training for peasants.

This is only one of the many challenges that faces the African trade union movement.

Trade unions in Africa participated in the long struggle to liberate their countries from foreign colonialism. Now, because of the debt burden and because of natural catastrophes such as drought, "desertifica-





***Brick construction under way at Am-Nabak so that the peasants can build irrigation canals. Prior to building the canals they cleared the lots of land given by the government. This project has helped the peasants become self-sufficient in food production.***

tion” and war, the priorities of the trade union movement reflect the socio-economic problems of Africa.

“The real victims of the politics of international loans and financing, of war and military coups and, worst of all, drought and desertification are the millions of peasants and workers who are so vulnerable”, Ouellette notes. “Human rights and the rights of trade unions are often systematically attacked and reduced. Often, the trade union organizations are the only organized opposition that must represent all layers of the population-workers, peasants, women or the handicapped. “African trade unions have no choice but to be involved in working socially and economically in trying to improve the lot of the workers

and peasants of the third world.”

The CLC’s international free trade union solidarity helps workers in other countries to build authentic trade union organizations that can function as autonomous and independent organizations.

The Congress believes that international solidarity is important because:

a) Workers in many parts of the world need help to organize and negotiate freely. They are often refused the fundamental right of free association. At worst, they are harassed, arrested, tortured and killed. At best, they are forced to accept starvation wages by multinational companies seeking quick profits and by third world governments who collaborate with those companies.

b) It is only through direct contact that Canadian workers will come to understand the needs and aspirations of their fellow workers in other countries. Once they are organized in strong trade unions and earn a decent living, we can all control better the movements of multinational companies and engage in more equitable international trade relations.

c) We can more effectively engage in international information campaigns and boycotts, support socio-economic development projects and back education programs when assistance is provided on the basis of projects prepared by the recipient organization itself.

*(Nancy Mitchell is a PSAC Communications Officer.)*





## OFFICER CUSTEDDY

by Nancy Mitchell

**T**hanks to corrections officer Mike Rogiani at the Edmonton Institution, 'Officer Custeddy' is winning the hearts of the children of Correctional Service Canada staff across the country. And, at the same time, raising funds for the Correctional Officers of Canada Bereavement and Scholarship Fund.

The bereavement and scholarship fund was set up in October 1985 to aid the families of correctional officers who are critically injured or killed in the line of duty.

Officer Custeddy is a teddy bear in the guise of a correctional officer. It is outfitted in regulation-type cap and shoulder flashes, green tie, brass coloured buttons and black belt — the complete correctional officer's uniform. The bear also wears a

black belt with holster and miniature handcuffs that actually work.

"When I produced Custeddy, I wanted it to serve a dual purpose — to be a fundraiser and a morale booster for the CSC staff," Rogiani says. "It certainly has worked".

"Everyone who sees Custeddy falls in love with it and orders one. They make good Christmas or birthday gifts. Or they're just nice to have around the office or the house".

The 'Made in Canada' bear comes in two different heights — 16 inches and 36 inches. The smaller, more popular one, can be bought for \$23 including shipping and handling. The larger one sells for \$60.

Rogiani says he has sold approximately 4,000 bears so far and raised more than \$10,000. The interest from the trust fund will be used for a scholarship to be offered to children of CSC employees.

And how did Custeddy get its name? When the bear was first introduced, a "name the bear" contest was held. More than 150 suggestions were received with Ann Holmans' suggestion of "Officer Custeddy" being selected as the winner. Ann won herself a three-foot bear.

Rogiani also came up a winner. For the creation of Custeddy, he was selected as Officer-of-the-month at the Institution. His prizes consisted of a CSC mug, a parking space beside the warden's for the month, and, ironically enough — a Custeddy bear.

The bear's appeal would seem to transcend the generations. Commenting on Officer Custeddy's popularity, Rogiani says that from the time the first sample bear was made at Edmonton's "Teddy Bear Factory," the response has been fantastic.

"I showed the sample bear to 10 officers at the institution and they each wanted one."

Rogiani says it took him a year to make up his mind whether to go ahead with this project, "but I am happy that I did!"

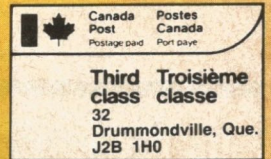
Rogiani's component, the Union of Solicitor General Employees (USGE) is also very supportive of Custeddy. USGE ordered 12 bears to be used as officer-of-the-month awards. And, an institution in the Pacific Region placed an order that will be put to the same use.

Anyone wishing to order an 'Officer Custeddy' can write Mike Rogiani, in care of the Edmonton Institution Admissions and Discharge Office, Box 2290, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3H7. Or, they can call (403) 973-9211, ext. 251.

*(Nancy Mitchell is a PSAC Communications Officer.)*



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## Editorial

# Call to arms on pension de-indexing

In 1987, the move to indexation of pension benefits finally took hold in the private sector. Last autumn, the Canadian Auto Workers successfully negotiated pension indexation, at the "Big Three" auto makers. Subsequently, following a strike at Air Canada, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers negotiated similar indexation provisions.

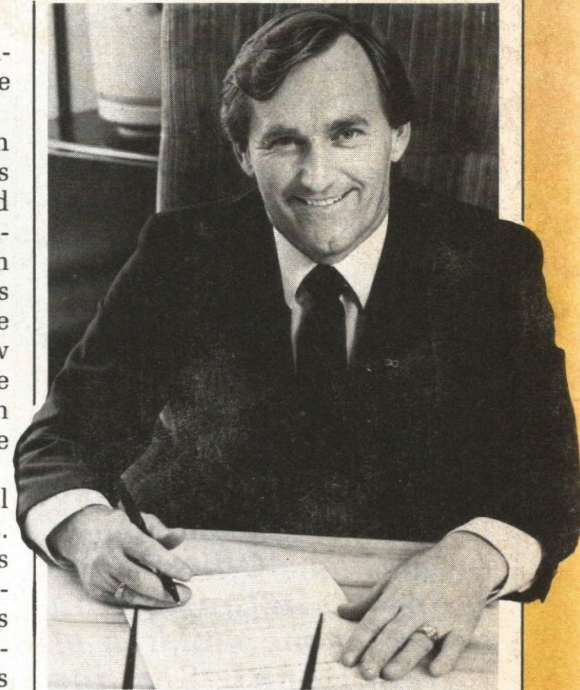
At the same time that pension indexation has come to the fore during collective bargaining, it has gained further momentum in legislation recently adopted in Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

Predictably, the federal Conservative government is running against this tide, and is pondering whether or not to introduce federal superannuation de-indexing leg-

islation (Bill C-33) for second reading debate and early passage through the House of Commons.

Through our Regional Action Committees, Alliance members from coast to coast have been asked to participate in a massive campaign to stop the government from adopting Bill C-33 and its insidious de-indexing provisions. Since federal public sector workers by law do not enjoy the right to negotiate pension provisions, our campaign must be aimed at members of the House of Commons.

This political campaign will test the resolve of each one of us. Yet, it is absolutely essential unless we are prepared to live out our retirement years on deferred wages that steadily decline, thus subjecting many of our brothers and sisters to a post-retirement life of poverty and despair.



Daryl T. Bean  
National President

## Child care today determines Canada's tomorrow

The most important resource in Canada is not oil or gas, gold or silver; it is not mined, refined or manufactured.

Our most important resource is our children. They will shape the future of Canada. How we treat them, and how we care for them, will determine the Canada of tomorrow.

We have a responsibility to ensure that our children are healthy, safe and secure. And yet, during the ages that experts agree are their formative years — from one to five — barely a trickle of government funding flows down to assist parents in this task.

It is left up to individuals to ensure that the well-being and needs of their children are met.

What your union would like to see as a first step by the federal government is the introduction of a fully subsidized, fully supervised, workplace child care program for its employees.

You will recall that not long after the birth of young Nicholas, Mila Mulroney stated that she was returning to work — with young Nicholas. We publicly agreed with her decision and commended her for becoming a spokesperson for workplace child care.

Too many parents in Canada

simply do not have the financial resources to obtain high quality child care. In an age when both parents are working to make ends meet, and when single parents often live below the poverty line, the case for government intervention is crystal clear.

We said to the Prime Minister then, and I repeat today: "Mr. Mulroney, your employees deserve workplace child care, as do all Canadian workers. Your government must lead the way for the rest of the employers in Canada."

The future of Canada literally depends on it!