

*nouvelles*

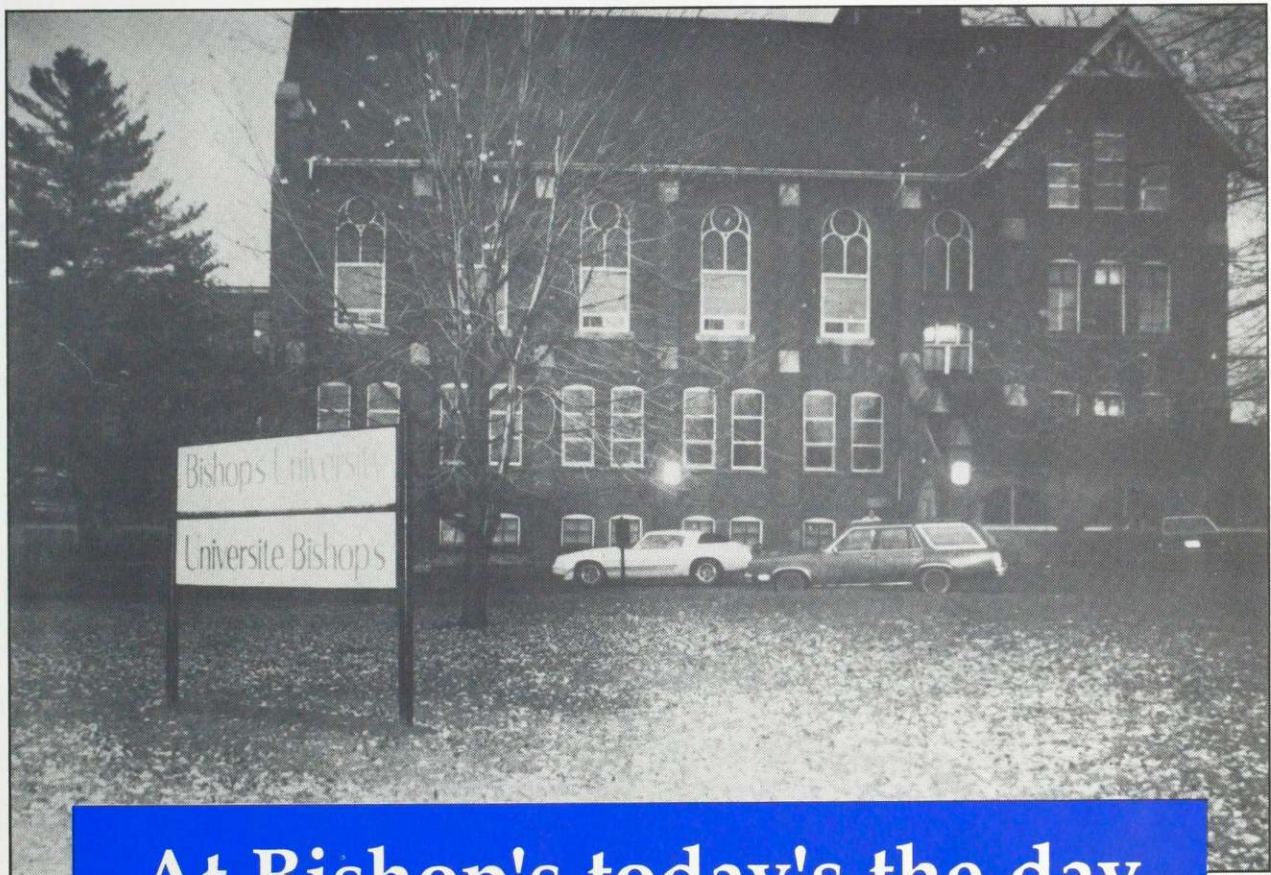
**CSN**



December 1988

Special edition

## A vote for a real union



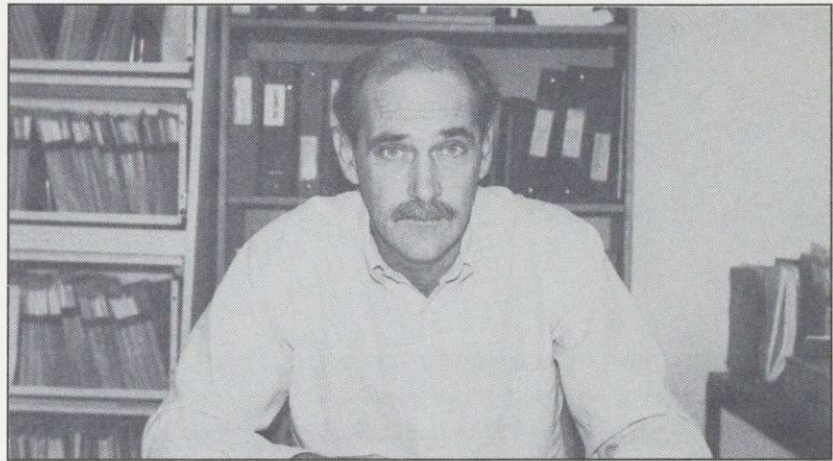
**At Bishop's today's the day**

- English-speaking members feel comfortable at the CSN
- Testimonies by Fritz Bastiensen, Paul Jones and Kai Lee

# ***"Bishop's uses same tactics as factory bosses"***

— Alain Ferland

If there is anyone who can attest to the stalling tactics used by the administration at Bishop's University to block support staff unionizing efforts, it's Alain Ferland. Alain has been a lawyer with the CSN for the past 15 years, and has followed all the legal episodes involved in the certification attempt since the beginning.



**Alain Ferland, has followed all the legal episodes involved in the certification attempt since the beginning.**

"Bishop's has used the same kinds of tricks as the most rabid anti-union employer to undermine the employees' will to organize," declared Alain Ferland.

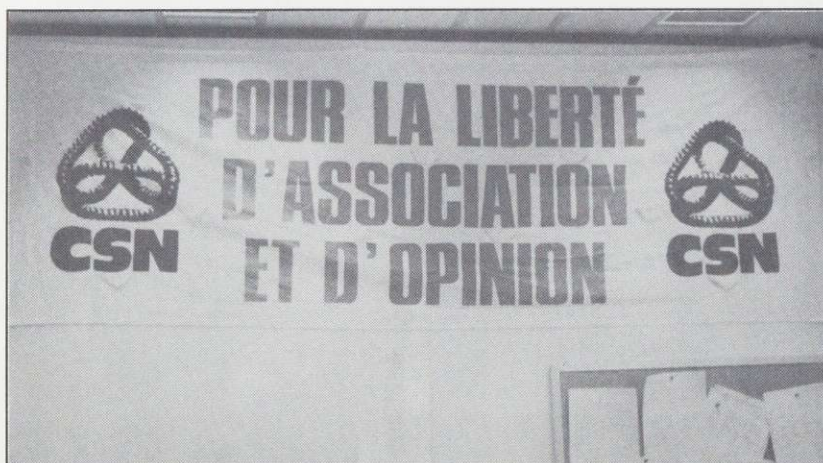
"The best example is Bishop's tactic of artificially hiking staff numbers registered on the employee list, so that the union wouldn't have a majority," added the

lawyer responsible for the unionization effort at Bishop's.

"Those in favour of a union won an important victory on August 12 when Judge Jean Girouard (from Quebec's labour tribunal)

ordered that a vote be held to determine whether a majority of Bishop employees wanted a union," stated the CSN lawyer.

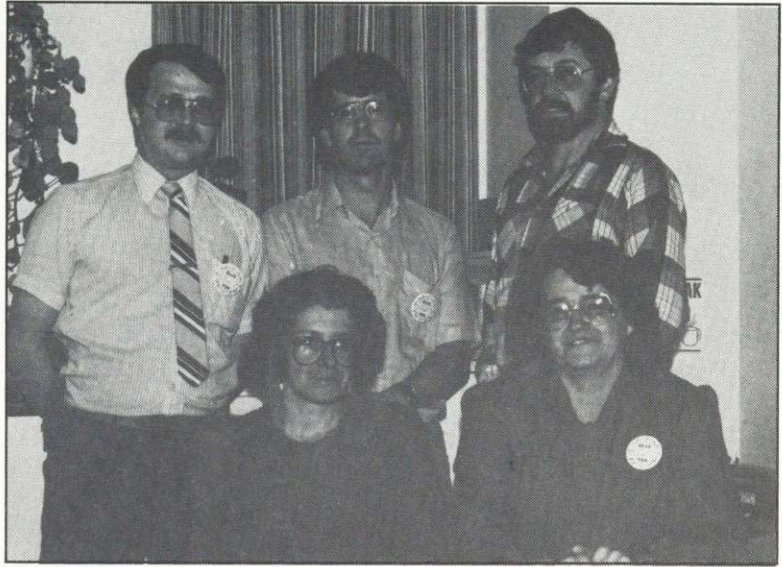
He reminded us that regardless of the lengthy delays imposed by Bishop's administration, the next vote would give the employees a chance to exercise their rights.



This Special Edition of **Nouvelles CSN** is published by the CSN and produced by the CSN's Information Service.

## The Bishop's University Support Staff Union (CSN) Executive committee:

From left to right:  
Daniel T. Sidaway, President,  
David O'Neill, Steven Thorneloe,  
Margaret Brand and Ann  
Crawford



***"Every one has the right to be treated equally"***

— Ann Crawford

During my working years at Bishop's I have never felt the need for a union before. But now things have changed. Personally, with regard to my job, I have no qualms. The work is very interesting, the people of our division are most pleasant to work for. Both myself and the other secretary are treated both as a secretary and as a friend.

Since the upset of March 1987 the feeling is that the people need to be more informed about things that affect them such as pensions, insurance coverages, maternity leave, job classification, probationary periods and any other information affecting us. We (Support Staff) seem to be hearing about the different rules there are for different people. One example is some of the secretaries are responsible for reporting their own holidays and sick leaves and others are kept track off by their boss.

This seems to be a sore spot with these employees and frankly I don't blame them. This was only one of the points discovered after the filing for certification of a union took place last March 1987.

As mentioned before, even though I personally have no complaints about my job, I joined this union (BUSSU) as I believe strongly that everyone has the right to be treated equally and a decision had to be made to support the correction of any inequities in the working place.

**Ann Crawford**

***"We have been made most welcome"***

—Margaret Brand

During my term at Bishop's I felt that the employees were not treated with the care and respect which they deserved. Part time employees are not compensated adequately for their efforts. As a part time myself I had no sick days, no insurance benefits or pension plan.

Many of the values that the University supposedly espoused did not seem to be applied to their support staff employees. At Bishop's there seemed to be no concept of equal work for equal value. Whom you worked for seemed to matter more than what work you performed.

Twice I did not receive retroactive pay when everyone else at the University did. My union filed a grievance and I received my retroactive pay. My union will back me in my grievance against the University for my firing.

The C.S.N. has always been supportive of our union. I attended the certification hearing and the appeal of the commissioner's decision in Montreal. Our C.S.N. advisors and our lawyer have been very generous in the effort they have expended for our cause. As an English union in a francophone union we have been made most welcome.

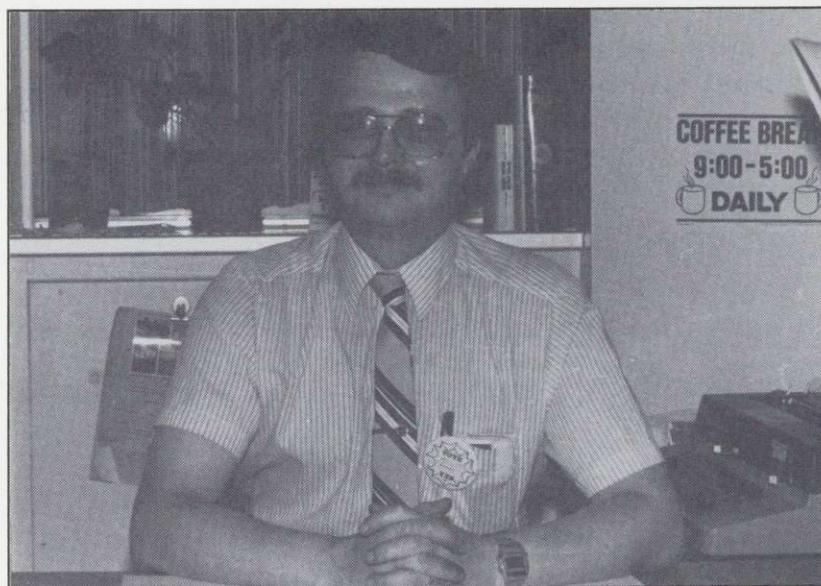
As a group of University Support Staff we are one of the few remaining in Quebec that are not unionized. We deserve the same respect and compensation as that those at the Francophone University are given.

**Margaret Brand**

# ***"BUSSU can stand out as a good and autonomous union"***

— Daniel T. Sidaway, President

In March of '87 I had the distasteful opportunity to witness first-hand, the complete dismissal of all the cleaning personnel as employees of Bishop's University; people with up to 22 years seniority were suddenly given the simple option of signing on with MODERN BUILDING CLEANING, the company contracted to take over the University's cleaning services, for less money and total disregard for their years of service.



**Daniel T. Sidaway**

The mood in that room was one of sullen disbelief; to think that our employer would even consider such an act since we were considered a part of «THE UNIVERSITY FAMILY», was hard to swallow.

*"My beliefs and convictions dictate that I must care for my fellow man and do whatever I can to help."*

Added to this was the realization that our SUP-

PORT STAFF ASSOCIATION lacked the gumption and legal muscle to convince our employer to even reconsider, made it clear in my mind that all the ASSOCIATION was good for was a Christmas dinner.

From that point on, I was convicted that if a Union was ever formed, I would join, to make myself an active member in whatever capacity, to work hard towards securing our jobs and creating a more equitable environment; to lobby our employer to uphold not only their legal obligations to it's employees, but also it's moral and ethical obligations to us.

The power of a legal and moral Union was made evident to me when I saw the members of the Professor's Union (A.P.B.U.) publicly protest this massive dismissal of our staff, and the rapid success of their efforts.

Many have asked why I got involved, afterall, my position was not affected.

Well, my reply is simple: I care about my fellow man, and the truth of the matter is that ALL OF US are affected; if it can happen to one group of people, it can happen to any group of people.

In essence, we are them,

they are us, we are one group - THE SUPPORT STAFF OF BISHOP'S UNIVERSITY!!! Moral values in our society are changing rapidly, and not for the better, in my opinion; society today says «LOOK OUT FOR NUMBER ONE», well I can't agree with that.

*"I am committed to lead our Union on the principles of : honesty, dignity, peace, harmony and credibility."*

My beliefs and convictions dictate that I must care for my fellow man and do whatever I can to help.

When I was elected President of B.U.S.S.U., I knew then what capacity I could serve my fellow employees. It's not easy, representing the membership, fulfilling the mandates given me which include our highest current priority: CERTIFICATION!!!

Given my religious convictions, I am committed to lead our Union on the principles of: honesty, dignity, peace, harmony and credibility.

I have to always be prepared to give an account of my actions to the people I

represent and the public in general. I can honestly say that B.U.S.S.U. has nothing to be sorry for; WE are a credible and dignified Union. As for me, I seek no reward for my work; our progress is my reward.

Amazingly enough, I have always considered myself to be ANTI-UNION, strike related violence and outrageous demands turned me off; but I have come to realize that it's all a matter of leadership, and I firmly believe that under proper leadership and a well informed membership, B.U.S.S.U. can stand out as a good Union.

I also firmly believe in being an autonomous Union; the right to run our own Union and make our own decisions be they good or bad is a must in my view and I will never accept anything different.

*"With the C.S.N., we are able to maintain our autonomy, but equally able to call on the resources available to all Unions affiliated with the C.S.N."*

With the C.S.N., we are able to maintain our auto-

nomy, free to make our own choices, but equally able to call on the resources available to all Unions affiliated with the C.S.N.

While I may not agree with some of the policies adopted by the C.S.N., they nevertheless respect one's opinion, and that, to me is a cornerstone of DEMOCRACY.

*"I strongly believe that together we can decide our destiny as employees of Bishop's."*

In conclusion, it has been my privilege to serve our Union, and I will continue to serve in whatever capacity so long as we maintain our high standards of moderation and tolerance. I strongly believe that together we can decide our destiny as employees of Bishop's; collectively, through democratic process, to protect our jobs, to negotiate an amicable collective agreement, and to gain back our dignity.

That's why I joined a Union; THAT'S WHY I JOINED B.U.S.S.U.

**Daniel T. Sidaway**  
President  
Bishop's University  
Support Staff Union (CSN)

# Fritz Bastiensen:

*An english-speaking member who has been actively involved in the CSN for 25 years*

Fritz Bastiensen, union advisor at the Fédération des affaires sociales (FAS), which represents 96,000 members, had his first contact with the CSN in 1964.

"Before then, we belonged to an American union. At the Jewish General Hospital in Montreal, the union didn't offer us anything in the way of services.

We were isolated. We shopped around and found that the CSN was the one offering the best services and ensuring the greatest autonomy," stated Fritz.

When we ask him why, in



Fritz Bastiensen

his opinion, the vast majority of employees in Montreal's English hospitals belong to unions affiliated with the CSN, he replies without hesitation, "It's the autonomy.

The CSN gives us all the room we need." He adds, "Look at how the QFL operates. In the public sector, they accepted a 4% increase for everyone. For us, that's not enough."

Fritz Bastiensen also points to the numerous CSN offices and federations in all regions of Quebec, which makes it possible for the CSN to have an on-going presence and adequate services for its members.

If English-speaking employees in the hospital sector have been with the CSN for 25 years, "It's because we feel like we're respected," he asserts. Fritz knows what he's talking about.



Not only does Fritz act as an advisor for a number of unions in Montreal's health services, he also provides services for CSN-affiliated unions in Northern Quebec, in Inuit communities.

## ***"The CSN respects its english-speaking members"***

— Paul Jones, John Abbott College

Paul Jones teaches Humanities at John Abbott College in Montreal. His union has been affiliated with the CSN since 1974. Paul was Vice President of the Quebec Teachers' Federation for five years.

"The CSN is well-represented in post-secondary education. In fact, it is the labour confederation with the strongest representation in this sector, among teachers, professionals, and support staff alike.. But what really made us choose the CSN was the fact that it represents workers from both the private and public sector," explains Paul Jones.

He stresses the "concrete autonomy" enjoyed by local unions affiliated with the CSN. The same goes for services, whether offered by the federation or the CSN as such. "English-speaking members



**At a CSN colloquium on ventilation in the workplace, held in Quebec City on September, Paul Jones was asked to chair the plenary debates. We see him in the middle.**

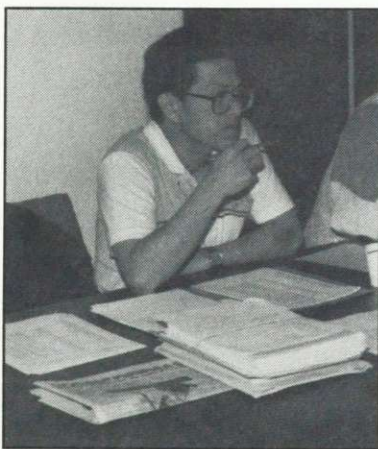
have all the room they need within the CSN. The CSN respects our values," he states.

What interests him more specifically, however, is the CSN's focus on the problem of university funding. "Two years ago I went to Quebec City with

our president, Gérald Larose, to defend the need for increased university funding.

Since then we have multiplied the number of activities aimed at Minister Claude Ryan," recalls the trade union militant.

### **A testimony by the president Concordia's Union**



**Kai Lee**

At his first encounter with the CSN, Kai Lee, president of his union, appreciated the CSN representative's frank attitude. "He didn't make us a lot of promises. He gave us a clear explanation of our rights under the Labour Code. We appreciated that," he recalls. They are on the verge of signing their first collective agreement. The union's leaders were able to take training sessions organized by the FEESP-CSN (the CSN federation of public service employees) to which they, like the BUSSU, are affiliated. These sessions covered the following topics: bargaining, grievance officers, and job analysis and evaluation.

Like the support staff at Bishop's, they had to wait several months before their democratic rights to belong to a union were recognized in practice. Today, they're not sorry they persevered.

# A vote is a victory!

It was on March 30, 1987 - more than 21 months ago - that an application for certification was made with the ministère du Travail on behalf of support staff at Bishop's University in Lennoxville, for a union affiliated with the CSN.

Four days of hearings took place with labour commissioner Jean Belisle, on October 17, 20, 21, and 22, 1987.

Five months later, on March 21, 1988, the commissioner turned down the union's request, on the pretext that the union didn't have a majority.

On March 29, the union obtained permission to appeal this decision before the labour courts. The ruling that a vote be taken was handed down last August.

*"Our highest current priority:  
certification"*

— Daniel T. Sidaway, President

**BUSSU-CSN**

