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HERE IS NUMBER SEVEN AND WE EXTEND A LONG LIFE SALUTATION TO OUR COMPANION PUBLICATION, "Travail de tous les jours."

Le Travail - volume 50, number seven - is published by the CNTU with 30,000 copies circulated throughout all CNTU affiliations by special regional and local teams which, we hope, will soon have a new co-ordinator. It is sold in main kiosques and all libraries in the province of Quebec.

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Le Travail is produced by the CNTU's information service with Director Guy Ferland; editors Romeo Bouchard, Jacques Gauthier, Pierre Capiello and Pierre Graveline; photography with Jean-Claude Champagne, Michel Giroux, Guy Turcot, a group of workers from Thetford and others from La Pocatiere; Jean Gladu is layout co-ordinator. The secretariat is located at 1001 St. Denis, Montreal. Tel.: (514) 842-3181, local 408. Lithography at Journal Offset, 254 Benjamin-Hudon, St. Laurent.

In this edition, particular emphasis has been placed on industrial diseases. There is Work That Kills, page 10, where the thought of whether we should give up our lives for our work is discussed - particularly discussions on stress, industrial illnesses, job accidents, etc.

Then there is a report on the mines in the Thetford Mines region (page 16), where the all-important question of Increasing Profits and Deteriorating Health is presented.

On page 26 is our Portrait of a Worker where we meet Roger Latendresse, a welder for Davie Shipbuilding, in Lauzon, who had to go the East Germany for care of a work-place disease because no such care is given here.

There also is a report on the upcoming negotiations in the public and para-government sectors, where the questions Are You Keen About a Common Front is asked. (Page 32).

In the Bits and Pieces column, we discuss American unions and their role in South America, as well as Canadian Celanese in Drummondville, about March 8,

and women ICWS - the International Conference for Worker Solidarity.

The column on That's What We Do this time comes from the Quebec City region where some citizens are fighting against mayor Lamontagne. The Real Thing discusses certain aspects of the Beauce. The Vermine of the Month is George Springate, the former place-kicker who switched from fancy footwork to that of the language, or the tongue.

PAGE 2**THE ICWS IS NOT GOING TO BE A SHOW**

The forthcoming conference of the International Conference of Worker Solidarity (ICWS) - Conference Internationale de Solidarite ouvriere (CISO) - will not a revolutionary show, as some circles may seem to think. It won't be a parade of international figures like Fidel Castro or Yasser Arafat, but rather something with an entirely different dimension and orientation.

The ICWS was founded to "appraise the various fights workers were involved in all over the world in an effort to become liberated

and free of the systematic crush felt by the dominance and exploitation of monopolists of imperialism."

However, the heads of the ICWS have - without losing the initial attitudes - have outlined more definitive approaches of achieving these proposals.

OBJECTIVES: 1) Recognition of the imperialistic phenomena by all its victims, whether in Quebec or Africa, in South America or the Carribean.

2) A reinforcement of ties between these struggling countries and their Quebec worker counterparts.

3) Joint elaboration on the of outlining the concrete and active means of solidarity.

To meet these aims, there are three stages being pursued, including awareness, the conference itself and the follow-up.

Awareness - This part of the campaign has already begun on a national level, moving into all regions where workers and others want to learn how to utilise the ICWS for the political awareness of workers.

There will be the presentation of works on imperialism and its effects, such as on industries, development, municipal politics and other areas. Regional meetings have already been hold and groups of workers are actively collaborating by centering on the international aspects of local and regional working problems. Two prime examples are the textile industry in the Valleyfield and the asbestos problems in Thetford Mines.

The Conference - It will be held next June 12-14 in Montreal which will have an emphasis on the work done by Quebec workers who participated in the awareness campaign, and the conference will give them a chance to meet other Quebec workers and some from other parts of the world. The

success of the conference will depend greatly on the success of the participation of those involved in the awareness campagne. The intensified work shops will discuss the problems of the Quebec workers in relation to others on all continents - with solidarity prospects for all workers a key factor. The findings of these work shops will determine the follow-up aspects of this conference.

The Follow-up - By the end of the summer, the fruits of the follow-up campaign should become evident, determining the extent of the works in the conference. The mass media will be utilized to get the messages to the workers, as well as the regional structures of information determined in the conference. This second campaign will enable the Quebec work force to extend the continuity of the aims of the ICWS.

Already, the regions of Chicoutimi, Quebec, Rimouski, Trois-Rivieres, Rouyn, Hull, Joliette, St. Jean, Ste. Hyacinthe and Thetford have been in contact with the information officers of the ICWS campaign. For example, a document on Alcan is available and has circulated among these people. Anyone interested in obtaining this document can get one from the CNTU secretariat of the ICWS at 1001 St. Denis, Montreal, Quebec. Tel.: (514) 842-3181, local 216.

PAGE 3 THE FALL SHOW ON RECORD

The Fall Show of the workers at United Aircraft, a unique event in the labor history of the province, is still quite popular, denoting proof of the importance of this struggle by workers facing a multinational power.

Following the show itself, a recording has been made on the more memorable moments of the solidarity event. Some of the great names which were at the show include Pauline Julien, Jacques Michel, Raymond Lévesque, Denise

Filiatrault and Louise Forestier. And, we can't forget the great speech by Michel Chartrand, comparing the extent of worker solidarity and the masses in the show hall.

The Fall Show recording now is a must for any workers' collecting on the poems and songs of resistance. Half of the \$4 for the record goes to the guys still out on the street. To get your copy, contact Ginette Dubois, the Montreal Central Council (CNTU), 1001 St. Denis, 2nd floor, (514) 842-3181.

WOMEN GET INVOLVED

"We women no longer want to see our husbands, brothers or fathers with stuffed lungs. We want to fight with the workers and make other women understand that if their husbands work less, make less overtime, this means more work and less dust. It's time for women to become involved in the affairs of men and therefore not become strike breakers because they complain of the lack of money coming into the home."

These are the words from the women's committee supporting the striking workers at Thetford Mines. This group was formed during the works of the Mont-Sinai clinic where they were called on to fill in certain forms. It was here that they finally realized the horrible extent of the damages caused by industrial dust - forcing them to ask what role they must now play. The women asked to have the working contract explained to them, and learned about the rights of the miners and their families. They undertook a boycott campaign against overtime and protested against seven-day work conditions that the Asbestos Corp. had been trying to enforce ever since the fire which destroyed the King Beaver mill.

AMERICAN UNIONS WANT TO SAVE SOUTH AMERICA

The Quebec-South American secretariat of the ICWS has recently published a brochure prepared by American workers following the recent coup in Chili. The revelations on the co-operation between AFL-CIO with multinational firms, the state department and the CIA in the U.S. imperialistic aggression in South America is unbelievable and revolting. More than \$45 million were invested in 1973, with the cover of these unions, to split the leftist unions and plant a more americanized type of unionism – using the clichés of anti-communism and sabotage the popular powers being built in South America.

The cover was the American Institute for the Development of Free Unionism in Latin America (AFL-CIO). Under George Meany, president of that labor organization and in the CIA's Who's Who, the organization is funded by up to 92 per cent by government funds and by 95 major companies who have interests in Latin America, including Kennecott, Anaconda, IBM, as well as several Rockefeller enterprises. The institute officially carries out union education programs. In Columbia and Peru, more than five per cent of unionized workers have been affected by these courses, a far greater number than was ever offered to any American working group, as far as union education programs is concerned. South American workers are regularly brought into the institute's headquarters at Fort Royal, Va., and they benefit from one year's wage. The formation is axed on the theme: "Workers shall settle all their problems through free collective bargaining... and by fighting Communism in hand with companies and government." In 1966, the institute received \$645,000 from the state department to "develop a union attitude capable of organizing a democratic labor

movement in Chili... and while favoring certain minor projects but with certain impact to answer the problems of workers – generally in conflict with leftist movements – and favor an entente of friendship with the U.S."

In reality, the actions of the institute have played a major role in the overthrow of popular governments in Guatamala, Guynne, the Dominican Republic, Chili and others. The document also notes certain actions which are similar to those taken in Europe after the Second World War, notably to forment, with CIA funds, a division of the CGT (CGT-FO), which is not unsimilar with the scission by the CSD from the CNTU two years ago.

Need we remind anyone that several thousands of Quebec workers are affiliated with U.S.-based unions, members of the AFL-CIO?

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The CNTU's confederal council took a closer look at some of its structural aspects of its member federations during meeting last February – a move born out of the problems which have cropped up during such major programs such as common fronts and the problems in the asbestos struggle. There are such problems to be ironed out as those involving the Alliance des infirmieres (nurses) de Montreal and the federation of social affairs, as well as the involvement of professional social workers in these ranks; and the problems which cropped up between the federation of paper workers and the federation of building trades for representation of sawmill workers. The long dragging out of these cases – which also create unnecessary tensions between member groups – brought to light some of the difficulties of creating viable common fronts and made people aware of the need for major adjustments between unions, federations, central councils and the CNTU, particularly for the need to establish a greater

equilibrium between the respect of natural units and the organization of more encompassing structures designed to maintain solidarity to confront the existing powers. Immediate solutions were proposed, but a reflection process now is underway with plans to bring the matter to a full head at the CNTU's next convention. However, the February meetings did come to grips with the Defence Fund which had been given a boost during the subscription campaign. Thoughts were also given on the political orientation of the CNTU with the organization of regional conferences on capitalism at home. Several measures were also taken to assure the participation of all workers during public service contract talks.

MEANS TO FIGHT

Operation Million, launched by the CNTU to refurbish the defence fund is over and here are some of the major results as presented to the last confederal council:

The project attained 83.6 per cent of its objective of \$836,341.94. Two federations overshot their objectives, the forestry and paper workers' federation which hit \$110,858 (or 113.7 per cent), while the textile, clothing and footwear federation hit 10,281 (or 111.6 per cent). However, the largest amount was gained by the social affairs federation with \$229,220 (or about 56.3 per cent).

On a regional basis, nine regions went over their objective, including Beauharnois-Valleyfield, the North Shore, Granby, Joliette, the Northwest, Rimouski, Saguenay-Lac St. Jean, Shawinigan and Sorel. Two other regions hit at least 95 per cent, Sherbrooke and Trois-Rivières. Montreal picked up the largest sum with \$150,245 (or 29.8 per cent of objective).

This is not to hand out medals or make criticisms, but the CNTU had made a plea to all its members to gather enough funds

to do battle against major employers and the government. Everyone pitched in and the workers of tomorrow will surely thank those who worked with such dedication.

PAGE 6 ABORTION AND CONTRACEPTIVES

It's international women's year and to the horror of governments, some women are not simply content to pick up badges and subsidies. On March 8, International Women's Day, a group of Quebecers, members of Battle Committee for Abortion and Free Contraceptives, and the Women's Centre, published documents on these much neglected subjects. This is how they explained their documents:

"The tides have shifted after many years of practical slavery which began with our grandmothers having their dozen children, over-moralizing priests forcing - under pain of sin - women to satisfy their husbands and do nothing to prevent birth, and after the catechisms of our youth which threatened Hell for all "impure" thoughts or touchings. Much to the horror of Gilberte Cote-Mercier, the word sex came into the classroom, it was sold in sex shops, drapped on pages of tabloids, and with the advent of the pill, people thought that sex liberation was here. We attempt to present the real facts on abortion with examples of women who have gone through the Women's Centre services. A second text outlines the essential technical information for those seeking an abortion. We also attempt to argue against the major objections to abortion. We shall look at the various impacts of abortion, while looking at the false premises presented on economic and political grounds designed to take away this fundamental right. We also look at the updated factors about the abortion clinic at the Women's Centre. These documents are mainly to give the

woman's point of view and serve as a guide for others."

These documents will soon be on sale at various outlets and the Women's Centre will accept mail orders at: Women's Centre, 4319 St. Denis, Montreal. Quebec. Tel: 288-4325.

MARCH 8: WOMEN'S DAY

Like Mayday, March 8 now will be among those dates to remember for battles for the rights of the working people. March 8, 1857: Women textile and clothing workers in New York demonstrate against the 12-hour day, poor wages and unacceptable working conditions. They were badly treated by police but continued their resistance. Three years later they formed their own union. March 8, 1908: Again in New York, thousands of women in the darning industry demonstrate. Their main concerns were better wages, a reduction in hours of work, better working conditions, abolition of child labor and the right to vote. March 8, 1911: Germany, Denmark, Sweden and the United States now are celebrating on this date which has been proclaimed International Woman's Day. March 8, 1975: A group from Montreal's Women's Centre from the Committee for free abortions and contraceptives organize a day dedicated solely to the woman, so doing in collaboration with La Ligue des Femmes du Quebec, CEGEP groups, university students, day care groups, the CNTU and teacher union affiliates and other interested groups. All fighting for the right to selective maternity and special day care centres run by the people, the women were united in a cry for action where a system of legal and economic denominators would allow people to have the right to decide on child bearing. The fight is on to give the individual the right to his or her own body, for the elimination of discrimination against women on the work place, for improved ma-

ternity leaves, for popular nurseries open 24 hours a day. Work shops were organized on sexuality, work and unionism, education and popular child care centres. A supper was followed by a theatrical presentation and a popular party. March 8 must now be celebrated with the enthusiasm of other dates where the liberation of the worker the main theme, and International Women's Day must be celebrated by a front of men and women.

PAGE 7 A FIGHT AGAINST CELANESE:

Drummondville still looks like a company town. Canadian Celanese employs about 1,300 workers, making it the largest industry in the region, and the company being responsible for the low wages in the area.

The workers are affiliated with American unions who are in bed with the big bosses. About 1,200 of the Celanese employees had been with the International Union of Textile Workers in America (AFL-CIO) since 1959, while about 100 office workers have been in that union since 1968. Since July, 1974, things have been changing in this pattern. Through the Drummondville central council, five pro-CNTU members of the American union are elected to the executive, but the international parent organization decides to place the union under trusteeship. But, the CNTU did not give up and organized information shops in all departments. On Jan. 12, 1975, a general meeting launched the CNTU with 400 employees at the founding meeting. By March 3, 879 employees withdraw from the American union. Meanwhile, 78 office workers decide to join the CNTU. The accreditation request was made March 4. However, this victory against an American union is only one small step in the fight against multinationals. One aspect of the organizing drive is that since there are so many people working at Celanese and each one has a

cousin or uncle or other relative in other operations, other people have seen what the CNTU can do in a region and many of those not in a union or part of a house organ have expressed a desire to adhere to the CNTU.

PAGE 8 UNEMPLOYMENT:

For some time now the Montreal central council have maintained a staff of unemployed persons whose responsibilities are to help others in dealing with the Unemployment Insurance Commission, as well as the Workmen's Compensation Commission. This group's main objective is not to spoon feed seeking help, but to explain to them how to effectively deal with these government agencies by themselves. "We teach them about the law but we also teach how to ask the right questions and never to trust a civil servant. We also tell them not to be shy about using the appeal opportunities which are at their disposal". The team is also conducting a massive radio, television and newspaper campaign to have the law altered so that it can better be understood, as well as educating citizens to take matters into their own hands and not accept all decisions by civil servants as final and binding". The head of this dynamic team is Michel Dansereau.

THE WASTE CANS OF RADIO-CANADA

Once again the CBC - paid for with our taxes - is showing its colors. By firing the entire reporting staff of A Tout Prix - a consumer assistance program - it has shown it is defending the interests of the large monopolies - the very people who control political and economic power. Last year, the CBC cut "C'est pas tous les jours, dimanche" which was a program where workers talked about their battles and everyday problems. Not satisfied with this, the CBC has fired one maintenance em-

ployee and suspended another for the union - representing about 60 caretakers - requesting wage adjustments to the cost of living. For now, the garbage pails are full and it smells like hell.

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There were some interesting letters sent to us following the last edition of Le Travail, where even an unemployed person congratulated us for the articles. In a letter, Marcel Bergeron of Montreal wrote: "I always buy your review at the nearby kiosk. The article on the future of our planet really interested me. I would hope that optimistic persons with fur-lined pockets would read what I'd call a pessimistic article, but sadly enough a realistic one."

The information review of the QFL, the Monde Ouvrier, mentioned us in their last review. It wasn't too impressed with our caricature of a QFL steward, nor of the crisis within labor bodies in Quebec today.

Guy Brouillette, of the Quebec Teachers' Corporation (CEQ), suggested that our remarks on the CEQ strike fund would tend to make one think that the teachers' organization paid strike cheques only in rare cases. "Striking members of the CEQ receive strike benefits three weeks after going on strike or being hit by a lockout, much the same as the CNTU. Although our strikes are usually short, one must recall that we did indeed have very large sums to pay for legal fees during the last common front encounter, for instance." We accept all these points brought to our attention, but we still maintain that the CNTU has greater need for strike funds than other organizations.

The ladies of the AFEAS, of whom we wrote, also wrote some additional details: "The AFEAS has as its goal the evolution of the woman through education programs and social

action, and the 'artisanat' is but one form of education. We have 33,000 members, with 577 groups united under 14 federations, including the St. Jean federation to which belongs the St. Antoine de Longueuil group to which article referred. The president of the AFEAS is Mrs. Azilla Marchand." It's no easy task to start a revolution.

Certain people also felt that the Portrait of a Worker was somewhat too individualist. Our intention is simply to give people a chance to and know some of the average workers, since the television cameras are always on the union leaders. The portrait tries to form a unifying force among the exploited workers. We expect to be receiving many more letters in the future.

It's Got To Be
We aren't heartless
We aren't lazy
We've got to earn a living
Around here there are other things
Where we've all got to die of something
Me, I'm afraid of nothing
One's got to be healthy
Because there are some who can't digest dust
Me, I inhale through my nose
It takes a lot to do those jobs
The guys better pay attention
It'll cost the companies too much
To apply the laws
It would cut production in half
The company would shut down and go elsewhere
It's hard but it pays well
Don't talk to me about a guy
Whose looking for reasons not to work

TO WORK SOME WHERE

PAGE 12 WORK IS KILLING US

Our health is directly related with the kind of work we do. Noise, a fast pace, heat, cold, humidity, the lack of space, strain, overtime, split shifts, toxic material, odors, accidents, competition, fatigue and orders all destroy us little by little and prevent us from living like human beings. We are killing ourselves for others.

We scream high scandal when a fish dies in a polluted river. There are hundreds of game wardens to ascertain that wild beast are not slaughtered. But there are less than a handful of inspectors to check employers from ruining our health. These inspectors are as incompetent and as without real powers as are their own bosses. There are groups designed to protect animals against cruelty, but all the worker has in a workmen's compensation commission which is nothing more than an insurance scheme to protect employers.

People are horrified about fish dying in polluted waters but they tolerate the operations of a plant where dust is choking workers everyday. Universities teach all kinds of special courses, but in the medical faculties there is almost no education on the health and safety of the man in the plant. We accept that men are slaves.

It is acceptable that capitalist organizations have the right to speed up production as fast as possible and at the lowest possible cost, to assure the highest possible profits, even if people are dying because of it.

We accept without protest the laws of the land which protect this capitalism.

It seems that the only way to earn a living on this planet is to die working for someone else. We've even coined phrases stating that we aren't lazy nor afraid of work to back up theory. Just like the miners who were proud of being able to spit black saliva.

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On Jan. 19, 1974, Claude Allard, an employee at Chromasco in Beauharnois, suffers severe burns from a moving bridge on which he is working, following an explosion. Nov. 6, 1974 at the same place, a furnace blows up, with three dead and five injured.

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On Aug. 24, 1974, employees at Marine Industries in Sorel are hit with toxic material while using Trichloroethane without proper ventilation. One of them dies. The coroner finds no criminal negligence.

In June, 1971, Serge Fafard, 24, working at Great Lakes, is electrocuted between two furnaces, and again the coroner absolves the company. In July, 1973, a government inquiry finds that the concentration of dust and carbon monoxide are 90 times higher than the permissible levels. No charges are over laid.

At Thetford Mines, more than 61 per cent of all workers with at least 20 years experience have abnormal lungs. The concentration of dust fibers in the air is 10 times higher than the permissible levels in the United States. In 1972, the workmen's compensation commission rejected 50 per cent of the claims for benefits by workers.

More than 100 cases of silicosis were discovered at Canadian Steel Foundries following an investigation by the union.

At Canadian Copper, last January, 30 employees were hospitalized because of a arsenic, while two of them died.

Every welder at Davie Shipbuilding in Lauzon and from Marine Industries in Sorel suffer from abnormal respiratory troubles.

Last year, at Carter White Lead, many cases of lead poisoning were discovered, and 18 employees were fired because they refused to work in places where lead dust levels were too high.

According to statistics from the Workmen's Compensation Commission, there was one accident with every 27 seconds of work performed in 1973. The conclusions of a study in Ontario suggests that the real costs of accidents is six times higher than what employers are paying into benefit funds. Using the same criteria in Quebec, we note that the costs of accidents rose above \$1 billion, which is higher than the annual costs of constructing the James Bay hydroelectric power project. Also, a study in the United States says that the actual number of work accidents is 10 times higher than the actual number registered. Draw your own conclusions.

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WE CAN'T EXPECT THE GOVERNMENT TO DO ANYTHING

"There are about 150 safety inspectors attached to the provincial department of labor," Paul Belanger, the head of the safety services tells us, "but they do not have the experience nor the practical equipment to evaluate the problems of industrial hygiene." "We usually have to call in technicians from the environmental branch which only has about 20 of them and they don't even have special training in this area. There are perhaps two engineers who understand the matter and they'll soon be promoted out of that branch. No one has any real idea (here) of the magnitude of industrial disease in Quebec."

Any government taking the side of capitalist enterprises cannot be expected to worry about the health and safety of workers. Any laws in this direction only come after great pressures from the workers. This is because all changes which benefit workers affect profits and productivity.

THE PRESENT LAWS

The present laws now are under the Commercial and Industrial Buildings Act, and its amend-

ments, brought on through orders-in-council. The norms for construction are in the industry Decree, as well as in a few amendments.

There are also laws within the Workmen's Compensation Commission. But we all know that the commission is nothing more than an insurance fund for the employers, where they make all the contributions, making sure that the workers get the minimum benefits, while taking away the right the legal action and allow employers to hide accidents and sicknesses. Environment Minister Goldbloom published a set of legislative proposals last February. They appear very interesting, but we can expect them to be eventually watered down.

INSPECTORS AND PENALTIES

Inspectors are too few and don't have the necessary training. As far as medical training for the work site, only McGill University has any kind of a program in this area. There are very few medical people in this field in Quebec, probably because there is little to gain by doctors, being cornered between the unions and the employers.

Fines for those who violate the laws are badly insufficient, with the courts always favoring the employers.

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One good step in recent months has been by the determination of unions and their members.

Accident victims on the North-West part of Quebec and those in Montreal have gotten together to form an association to fight the commission. Many unions are opening the battle fronts to these serious issues of health and safety. Biltreite and other such companies are feeling the new puch. A & P at Laurier Station refuse to work unless their equipment is fully safe. Canadian Steel Foundries,

Carter White Lead, Canadian Copper and Marine Industries are also on the list. Others are coming on strong, such as at Great Lakes, Quebec Poultry Ltd., Union Carbide, from Valleyfield, CIL at Beauharnois, Chromasco, at Beauharnois, Davie Shipbuilding at Lauzon, as well as the miners at Thetford Mines.

Now even the QFL has joined the CNTU in discussing this problem. The industrial engineering branch of the CNTU has prepared a contract-type clause for insertion in all future contracts, which includes the call for a fully union safety team.

The best documents on the subject can be found at the INRS-SANTE, with Dr. Leon Tetreault and Paul Rohan, from IRAT, from Drs. Edouard and Rene Bastarache at the Hotel Dieu in Sorel, the CNTU industrial engineering branch and the community health department at Maisonneuve Hospital, under Dr. Paul Landry.

Now more than ever, we must count on our own means, make our own investigations, initiate battles in the work place and get after politicians through every means possible.

ROLAND LEBOEUF, CIL employee at CIL in Valleyfield:

"We took an investigation with our own security committee on three points: skin diseases, the effects of nitroglycerine and the damages to the spinal cord. We discovered than over the last 10 years, the majority of employees had had an accident. They got skin diseases, were victims of poisoning or suffered back injuries. This is without considering the multitude of headaches and the fits of vomiting. We sought an investigation. We got our own medical tests done. We demand that the company participate in health and safety parity committees as outlined in the law. The company must warn employees of impending dangers and cease camouflaging accidents by not reporting them to the WCC."

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Those who grew up in the eastern townships over the last 50 years know that the region is the world's largest supplier of asbestos. These days that news is not so loudly proclaimed - perhaps because of the accompanying diseases - although in 1971 Canada's output was 1,634,000 tons, a bit ahead of the Soviet Union which had a level of 1,450,000 tons. Eighty-two per cent of Canadian production was in Quebec, at 1,342,000 tons. Canada and the Soviet Union make up 76 per cent of world production.

This means that asbestos is among one of our key natural resources, supplying 40 per cent of world demand.

IN ASBESTOS PROFITS ARE RISING AND HEALTH IS DETERIORATING

The Real Kings: The multinationals

The Tribune, in Sherbrooke, once proclaimed that Quebec dominates the asbestos market, while the Eastern Townships control the American operations.

This is a gross misconception, since Quebec controls nothing, even less do the Eastern Townships. We still aren't the Arabs of asbestos. The real kings of this White Gold, are five multinational companies, four Americans and one Englishperson. The General Dynamics Corp, a very large American company specializing in aviation and weapons, as well as controlling Canadair in St. Laurent and the Asbestos Corp. of Thetford Mines. There is also the Jim Walter Corp., another American multinational dealing mainly in construction and with controlling interests of Carey Canadian Mines at East-Broughton; the Johns-Manville Corp., the largest asbestos producer in the Eastern Townships having the

Jeffrey Asbestos mine where the 2,000 CSD workers signed a bargain basement contract recently; the American Smelting and Refining Co. Ltd., a multinational firm which controls Lake Asbestos and National Asbestos, respectively at Black Lake and Thetford Mines; and finally Turner and Newall Ltd., the British multinational which controls the Bell Asbestos mine at Thetford Mines. It is estimated that these five companies received profits of more than \$250 million between 1961 and 1966 and sent at least 70 per cent of it back to the U.S.

PAGE 17 THE CONSEQUENCES OF THIS SITUATION:

These companies are here because there is money to be made. They take a primary material and transform only five per cent of it here, with the rest going to the U.S. or England. And all asbestos products here cost us, in 1972, for example, \$9 million more than the price we shipped it out for.

In 1944, there were 6,000 asbestos miners in the Thetford region. There are still 6,000 today.

There is a normal unemployment rate of 22 per cent in Thetford. If we only processed 20 per cent of the prime product at the original sites in Thetford, it would create another 6,000 jobs.

To make things even more ludicrous, these American and British companies export the materials to their own subsidiaries at a reduced price so they can beat the tax margins in Quebec.

THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR ASBESTOS IN THE U.S.

In the U.S., which consumes 20 per cent of the world's asbestos, our product is considered among the 25 essential products for the economy and is stockpiled by

the government - up to 128,000 tons in 1968. Other essential products include uranium, copper and oil.

The asbestos material is used in the manufacture of some 3,000 different products, mainly in construction material, the automobile industry, aeronautics and plastics.

It's no wonder that the Johns-Manville firm in on the Dow Jones index on the New York Stock Exchange.

PAGE 18 TONNAGE: THE BASIS OF PRODUCTION

Only one underground mine is worked in the Thetford region, with the others being open-air strip mining.

In underground work - where it's done mainly with dynamite - the workers are paid by the amount of rock they handle.

This "tonnage" philosophy, as the lads call it, where quantity and speed are vital (for the companies), is used for the entire excavation and treatment processes of the asbestos.

As far as the open pit operations go, the lads first clear the dead ground - where there are no actual veins - and shunt it to the dumps, also where the rock separated from the asbestos is hauled. These dumps are full of wasted materials because the companies are in a mad rush to gnash out our resources. In the pits, the companies have a little game of competition going where a little boss who can't get his team working fast enough doesn't last too long. When the large rocks containing the asbestos fibres are carried away in massive mechanical shovels, it is brought to a breaking process and smashed into pieces of about five inches in diameter. However, all the rocks with minerals are not brought to the crushing machine. If a driver gets to the chewer and there are a few other

guys ahead of him, he's likely sent to the dump because while he waits, he wastes time - and that's not goof for our big capitalist neighbours.

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From the crusher, the rocks are placed on a conveyer and sent to a cone crusher, which breaks the rock into smaller pieces of about 1 ¼ to 1 ½ inches in diameter.

At each crusher, there are workers who have to put up with horrendous noises of up to 100 decibels, as well as blistering humidity and heat in summer, and biting cold all winter. This doesn't even include the heavy dust coming from the crushers. The dust is related to the tonnage, the speed and, of course, the profits.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF OUR MINES:

Geographically, the Quebec production of asbestos is extracted from a rectangle 70 miles long and 15 miles wide, situated between Tring Junction- St. Frederic and Asbestos. At its centre is Thetford.

TONNAGE, continued:

From the crushers, the rocks containing the asbestos mineral go to a drier, both horizontal and vertical. These oil generated driers heat up to temperatures of 1,600 degrees to 1,700 degrees, fahrenheit. The noise near the driers is excruciating and the dust particles are among the most deadly.

From the driers, the materials are placed in storage for between 24 and 48 hours. The dust here is so bad that it's like handing yourself a death sentence by just being there. It's mainly the older guys who work there - they don't care, it's their last task.

PAGE 20 THE MINERAL THEN GOES TO THE MILL

In the mills, the fibres are extracted from the rocks and are

classified. The fibres are in their natural state, so to speak. It's placed in bags and sent to the U.S. The Americans say it would be too costly to do the final stages of the separation process in their own country because it would be too costly, such as the original crushing and mill extraction. We think it's a matter of profits and dust.

There is dust everywhere, and some clandestine samples taken by the workers for the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York prove it well.

At the Carey Canadian Mine - just an average operation - five samples taken in October, 1973, showed dust concentration of 70.4 fibres of asbestos dust per cubic centimetre of air. In September, 1974, nine samples showed the level was at 32.8.

In 1973, the King Beaver mine was at an average 16.2 fibres, and last summer it was 20.9 fibres per cubic centimetre of air. We can certainly justify worrying about these levels when the accepted level in the United Kingdom is a mere two fibres per cubic centimetres of air, and it's about the same in the U.S.

However, few seem to think it's a hazard because we don't have laws to control the levels. It isn't a hazard either because it's so profitable and the Asbestos Association of Quebec has always been on excellent terms with the provincial government.

In general, an asbestos mill is a mass of equipment to separate the asbestos from the rock. The fibres are simply extracted here to be placed in sacks for U.S. delivery.

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No one seems to be able to stop the companies from operating at a speed they want to. Any worker who tries to slow down or stop production because of high concentrations of air is surely asking

to be fired. Lake Asbestos estimates that any work stoppage cost it \$8,000 an hour - and at that price there aren't too many work stoppages. The workers haven't yet got it into their heads that operations should stop when dust levels are dangerously high, which is most of the time. Dust particles are supposed to be picked up by special air conditioners, but most often they are broken or in poor condition. Production is the key word for the companies. Repair teams are always on the go and their jobs are classified according to priorities dictated by the bosses. One pound of production is far more important than the life of a human being. The top priority concerns production, not dust and any production stop is repaired immediately. Dust repairs could take up to a year to get the okay. For instance, holes in the ventilation system are seldom fixed in any speedy time, while holes in the floor of the separation rooms are fixed right away because the different classifications could be mixed up. Any mix-up is, of course, bad for the company's reputation.

PAGE 22 DUST, HEALTH AND NEGOTIATIONS

For the worker, tonnage means dust and noise, but particularly dust. Up to now the workers knew they could become victims of asbestosis. Many huffed and puffed climbing stairs, but never assumed that they would be victims - it was something someone else caught.

This is understandable when one realizes the companies have full control of hirings and more complete control of the medical services. The cards have always been stacked against the worker. The companies didn't give a damn, as long as production was uninterrupted. The companies knew they could always depend on the Workmen's Compensation Commission, the local clinic and the MacDonald report.

The Workmen's Compensation Commission:

The commission is a low rate insurance company that the employers wrangled out of the government in 1931. Before that, workers could go into civil courts to get action against the employers but after formation of the commission it's been nothing but detours and delays. The workers have been harassed with lost files, delays and the under-evaluation of sickness. And, above all that, the commission is like an old folks home for old politicians - being either rewarded or pushed out of the way, whichever is the case.

As far as asbestosis goes, the commission has filed for 529 cases since 1938 among the thousands upon thousands of workers who have gone through the mines. And, more than half of the compensations are below 15 per cent of disability.

The Industrial Clinic:

The industrial clinic, the second invention of the bosses, is there not for health reasons, but to knock out the guys who are too ill to work anymore.

One Dead "In Good Health":

Only one example is needed to demonstrate the crassness of these two bodies.

A worker was examined at the clinic on Jan. 12, 1973, and was given a class A status on his health - meaning perfect health. On Feb. 18, 1974, he is examined by the commission and is given a 15 per cent incapacity status. He could thus receive \$82.33 a month. Six months later, on August 20, he died of asbestosis.

The MacDonald Inquiry:

The government and the companies - in an attempt to give another feeble try at covering - finance the MacDonald Inquiry, with two doctors at the head, both from McGill University.

The inquiry gave only reassuring results for the workers, even going to the point of distinguishing between long and short fibres.

The CSN and Mount-Sinai

The CSN asbestos mine workers wanted to hear another tune: in

1973 they contacted a medical group at the Mount-Sinai school of medicine which specializes itself in illness related to working conditions and which became interested in diseases provoked to asbestos in american mines.

The researchers examined more than 1,200 men who had been working in the asbestos mines for over 20 years the reason being that it takes more than 20 years for diseases related to asbestos dust to develop.

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Alarming and tragic results

The following results of the above-mentioned analysis should be retained: 61% of the mine workers showed anomalies in the lungs related to asbestos dust (52.3% suffer from asbestosis - changes in cellular tissues at the base of the lungs - 21% showed changes on the pleura - layer of tissue surrounding the lungs - and 11% suffered from calcification of the pleura. Many workers suffered from more than one illness at a time.

The percentage of anomalies runs from 40% for miners having worked for the first time 20 years ago to 75% for those having worked more than 40 years.

On the other hand, the survey showed no difference from one mine or mill to another but discovered that mill and underground miners were the most affected.

Dust and negotiations

The results have been known since March 3rd, just 2 weeks before a vote to strike was to be taken by workers of the common front of the Metallos and the CSN. This common front groups all asbestos workers of the Thetford region except for the 2,000 employees of Canadian Johns Manville in Asbestos, members of the CSD. Recently, the company offered them a contract which does not discuss means of dust

control. The heads of the CSD are relying on the government for this and said they have no proof that asbestos can kill.

Demands on dust

But workers are now quite aware of the fact that companies will have to made to open their eyes to the problem of dust.

Therefore, their agreement requires that the norm be fixed at 5 fibers per cubic centimeter and it be reduced to 2 fibers in July 1976. That this norm be constantly checked by an employee chosen by the union and that the workers are able to stop working as soon as the norm is not respected. Also, the workers ask that those affected by asbestosis do not lose out on their salary.

The companies and the negotiations

Seeing the offensive coming, the companies hurriedly told workers that they have a lot of money this year... if this is what they want. Apparently we can reassure them on the following item: the workers also want money. A basic salary of \$3.73 is not enough. They are therefore asking for a \$1.20 an hour increase as of January 1st 1975 due to rising cost of living and a 15% increase for the first year of the collective agreement.

For the second year, they are asking for \$1.00 an hour increase.

Without forgetting the price index clause: 1 cent hourly increase per .3 increase of price index.

In any case, on the last item, the workers do not seem to be too worried: they know who their bosses are and know they will pay.

PAGES 24-25 THE WOLVERING OF THE MONTH

GEORGES SPRINGATE

Our wolvering of the month is a great person: standing 6 feet tall, weighing more than 200

pounds, he rarely goes by unnoticed. And if at any time, one does not see him, he always has a trick up his sleeve to surprise one with.

He spent eleven years on the Montreal police force. Simultaneously or by turns, a lawyer, field goal kicker for the Allouettes, M.P. for Ste. Anne in the National Assembly, animator, lecturer, business agent for sports athletes, sports analyst.

These few jobs do not stop this activ man. He campaigns for a reduction in transportation fares for Montreal senior citizens. He fights the language bill of the liberal government (of which he is a member). He is also against the idea for an I.D. card for Quebecers (Jérôme Choquette's idea). He organises educational tours for young people in his county... to the Quebec National Assembly.

He is trying to solve trafic and road control problems in his district. He organises day visits to a farm for the children of his voters. He is fighting for the preservation of the Shaughnessy manor, a national and historical inheritance. During the electoral campaign, he was opposed to the Department of Social Affairs. He created an aid center known as the Foundation of the Friends of Ste. Anne. He distributes scholarships to his future electors. He voted against Bill 22 and is surprised by the liberal caucus. After rejoining them, he busies himself with regrouping anglo-phone organizations devoted to a struggle against the Boubou and Cloutier language bill. And ha organized a radiothon on an english station to help raise necessary funds to fight the bill.

What, if anything, can stop this force of nature (!?) Bourassa does not seem capable even with the pressure coming from other members of the caucus. Our premier is to have said to the wolvering: "If it were not for

the Olympic Games, you would be the major cause of my headaches." Why? Why was Georges Springate (to call him by his name) was he invited by Bourassa to become a member of the liberal party and to participate in the 1970 elections, two weeks before these elections. In 1971, why did Georges Springate admit that staying in Quebec was waste of time and that he had no desire to represent himself did he do it anyway in 1973? Why was he nor kicked out of the liberal party when he publicly spoke against it? Why was Georges Springate only suspended and then reinstated in the caucus after going against an order of its chief and voting against Bill 22? Why is Robert "Bob" Bourassa resisting all pressures from other members of the party wishing to turn Georges Springate out?

There is only one answer to all these questions...

Georges Springate, this good sugar-daddy, so devoted to the children to his voters, is but a vulgar puppet in the hands of the premier. This grand naive person is being manipulated with the best conscience of the world and gives the party, supposedly governing us, a beautiful liberal image. In point of fact, Bourassa profits from this. As long as Georges Springate makes the headlines and attracts the blows from the francophones, Bourassa, himself, will be less bothered by everybody.

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PORTRAIT OF A WORKER

Roger Latendresse, 42 years old, three children. Militant in the union at the Lauzon ship-yard, and, for a few months, vice-president of the central committee of Quebec. His battle in life, to breathe each minute. He suffers from siderosis and chronic bronchitis. His hope, that laborers no longer have to work themselves to death.

* under the photo - We had to rely on ourselves -

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Roger Latendresse started to work at the age of 15 on the Rapide-Blanc dam, just north of La Tuque. Unskilled, he returned to Jonquière after seven months to join the tough construction-yard and lumber camps carrying mysterious names, such as the James Bay: the dams of the Diable falls and the falls of the Savane, the Price, Murdoch lumber camps.

"When we work with men that age, we want to do a man's job. I've gone to bed without eating because I was too tired. But I was proud because I could hold my own."

But he did not always work in remote areas and took evening classes in welding. At the age of 18, he starts at Alcan, without any job security. Lay-offs are quite frequent. In 1956, he lead a group of unemployed, protesting at the Jonquière city hall against the fact that construction contractors hired outside help to the detriment of the local people.

The newspaper of that time quotes Roger Latendresse's words to the municipal council: "Our children are hungry, we do not want help, we want to work."

Upon returning to work at Alcan, he participates in the 1957 four and a half month long strike. He remembers that at that time strike pay was in the amount of \$13.00 a week for married persons. In 1959 he is again layed-off. Once again he pulls through by working in construction until Alcan hires him. But this time he must wait for two years. This time is dramatic as the collective agreement stipulates that an employee layed-off for more than 24 months, loses all seniority rights.

Instead of beginning from scratch, he leaves once again to search for stable employment and ends up at the Davie Shipbuilding yard

in Lauzon. In the meantime his wife and children remained in Jonquière. He works the night shift because it pays more and cooks with three co-workers, but when the week-end comes around, there is no snow storm to prevent him from going home.

But there is not much security at the ship yard. Here again lay-offs are frequent and long lasting. Once again, three months after his family joined him, he must return to work in Arvida leaving behind his wife and children.

"We had to rely on ourselves to find work while waiting to be recalled. When 700 to 800 workers are layed-off at one time, don't even try to find a local job. Leave as fast as you can before the others if you can. We are layed-off during the Holidays. We lived in constant insecurity. You become roused but what can you do? That is the life of the laborer."

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The yard in Lauzon was at once frightening and fascinating. It is fascinating to see the enormous ships take shape under the fire of 900 welders and by the arms of 1,000 other workers. But it is terrifying to be buried under the deafening noise and compact pollution of the workshops. It is terrifying to walk on the numerous temporary foot-bridges hooked to the sides of the boys say it is suitable for monkeys to work. Formely, the foot-bridges were only 2 boards wide and we had to fight for a third.

The small daily battles, the small daily oppositions, it is almost a question of survival for the yard laborers. When 15 or 20 men have been welding for two hours in an enclosed hold, breathing smoke produced by welding instruments and you go up on the bridge for five minutes for some air, you must be able to resist the foreman.

"Today, things are much easier, explains Roger Latendresse, because we have a strong union. But before, the foreman told us: if you don't like it, you can go. That meant we were kicked out."

With daily battles which often became local walk-outs and during which the foremen would leave, the laborers succeeded in obtaining a few improvements, such as air pipes for each welder working in the holds, sheds for clothes and tools, an ambulance, after one of them was burned to death and transported in a truck.

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They helped a company to decide to invest 1,300,000. in a better ventilation system for the workshops and on the ships. But supposing that that solves the dust and gas problems, there remains the problem of noise: every one in the yard is hard of hearing.

Working in the yard is not such a bad thing. It is like handicraft made by the laborers in the sense that they are not chained; they work each ship with their tools fully knowing that each welding is extremely important. But as years go by, breathing becomes more difficult, the ladders are not as easy to climb, tools are heavier to handle, backs get sore, you vomit. Worry starts to gnaw moral. Who will be the next victim of lung of heart disease? Not even the physically strong can escape. This was the case of 32 years old Roger Latendresse, suffering from siderosis and chronic bronchitis.

"You always think you're stronger than you actually are. You would never think that this could happen to you. Until the first signs appear. You should see the men's faces when a ship is launched. We are proud; our baby is leaving. But as the same time we ask ourselves how much longer we can work in the yard".

He is one of the six Davie Ship-building employees for whom the

Quebec Workmen's Compensation Commission officially diagnosed siderosis, this lung disease caused by iron dust and which has just about the same effects as asbestosis. Another sixty cases are under study besides those who "feel ill" but who hope to get by and besides those with "heart conditions". We now know that lung diseases such as siderosis, asbestosis, silicosis are often causes of cardiac problems.

After spending some time at the hospital in Laval where he was told to be watched by a heart specialist, Roger Latendresse never "gouged" again. It is an operation performed with a torch and which pays 25 cents more.

"To hell with the 25 cents. My health is more important. I'm still very nervous. I thought of my family, I thought that I could not leave the yard because no other company would hire me with my condition. I was discouraged at first. But afterwards, I took things more easily. I have no other choice. Since then, I've lost a little time during the winter because of the flew, I become very weak; I peel, my nails fall out."

This kind of flew is very common in ship-yards.

*** under photo p. 39 - If it's good for the English, it's good for me -**

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Last summer, with the same will power he had at the age of 15 Roger Latendresse decided to get medical help in East Germany. He had heard about two Ontario miners who had gone there to a state clinic, specialised in treating industrial diseases. If it's good for the English, he said, it's good for me. Within one week with the help of the Federation of Metallurgy, of the central council of Quebec and its union, everything was set.

"Neither the company nor the CAT helped me. My co-workers

paid my salary and the CSF (federation) paid my way. The expenses over there were covered by the clinic."

He spent five weeks in the clinic with a miner from Thetford and others from France and England. The treatment involved strengthening heart muscles to better blood circulation and help breathing. It was more a physical conditioning than the traditional medical treatment.

"In the Laval hospital, I had spent 11 days lying in bed. I came out with legs and work was more difficult. But, after leaving the clinic, I hadn't breathed so well for a very long time. I was physically in good shape. The clinic was on a hill and often when returning from the village I would have to stop to rest. After two weeks I could climb the hill without stopping. It was psychologically encouraging. Medically I felt much more secure. It wasn't because the clinic was better equipped than our hospitals. It is just the opposite. But because I felt much better, not at all what I felt when I was in bed at the hospital in Laval."

He explains that the clinic was founded by a miner suffering from a disease similar to his and that those being treated there received 90% of their salary, and that they could there before the disease is too far advanced. One feels that he thinks a lot about his co-workers for whom it would also be possible to live in relatively good health.

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*** under photo p. 31 - If it's good for me, it's good for my co-workers -**

While listening to Roger Latendresse, one realizes that those who buy boats, buy them with calcified lungs, weak hearts, fractured limbs, burned eyes, plugged ears. But, at the same time, one realizes that the fight against pollution which causes in-

dustrial diseases and certainly other conditions must begin within the factories, with the initiative of the workers themselves by multiplying the areas of resistance.

When he says that men are now much more aware than before, it means that the fatalist feeling of a "job that kills" is changing. For example, when a welder in a hold does not want to be bothered with a ventilation pipe, his co-workers force him to use it. This is a new phenomenon. When he says that the union is standing it means that it has gotten the laborers, suffering from diseases similar to his, to work on the bridges instead of inside closed holds. This means that the security commission is more demanding and that every one is more attentive to tracking down diseases.

In the yards and also in the Quebec area, Roger Latendresse has become a symbol in the new resistance. His experience, which he happily relates to you, proves that it is possible to treat industrial diseases and that it is possible to track them down sooner. When he thinks of all the health equipment available, he finds it most unacceptable that we are not better organized socially to track down these illnesses. As an example, the annual check-up for all workers at the health clinic revealed that in 1966 that he showed signs of siderosis but, in 1967 he received a letter from the same governmental organizations saying that his lungs are normal...

"What I do, he says, I do for the others because my case is settled. If the treatment I got was good for me, it is also good for my co-workers. I don't see why we couldn't have a sanatorium to treat industrial disease and where we would receive part of our pay. We wouldn't have to wait until we are invalids before we go. We could really do some tracking down. When I think of all there is to be done to better working conditions I don't sleep much. It is a fight in which the worker must

participate every day; the same goes for job security in the construction industry."

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ARE YOU ANXIOUS FOR THE COMMON FRONT?

1975 will be a year of negotiations in the public sector. And even though it is not quite definite (the different instances of the 3 headquarters recommended the creation of the Common Front, The workers must now speak out) it seems that more than 185,000 members of the CSN, the CEQ and the FTQ will again form a common front to face the power of the government. These negotiations will not doubt be the major events of the year. Their importance must be recognized by all.

185,000 workers who have decided to relive the great experience of solidarity of the Common Front and who will collectively negotiate their working conditions is a great step forward for unions. Even more so with the problems in the construction industry and the Cliche commission the problems of regrouping being even greater this year.

185,000 workers get together, talk, demonstrate together, speak out their "ordinary people ideas" this is a cultural event more important than St-Jean Baptiste day.

185,000 workers who will tell their intentions to the government along with the kind of life and working conditions that they want is a political gesture much more important than a vote during an election every four years.

185,000 workers fighting for decent wages in the midst of ever increasing cost of living is an economic event of the highest interest to all the "ordinary people" in Quebec.

It will not be easy. The workers united in the Common Front will face a government which, with its

100 M.P.s is considered by the public as a weak government. Attacked on all sides because of the numerous scandals in which it was involved compromised by its evident relations with the financial powers and the mafia, the liberal government needs a new look of strength and purity. One will expect to see this face-lift performed on the backs of the laborers and the naughty unions as it present itself as the protector of public welfare and the defender of the "poor patients" in the hospitals and of the "poor little children" in the schools. Moreover, incapable of handling price increases, 10% unemployment, the economic crisis, the government, as before, runs the risk of putting the blame on the "Unreasonable demands" of the workers, the problems of Quebec that its incompetence has not been able to handle. The Common Front will have to face employers in private industry who will gamble with their power and influence in order to stop the workers from getting an increase in wages. Since the last Common Front, much is known about the repercussions of the negotiations in the public and private sectors. We know that the \$100.00 a week gain provoked an increase in the minimum wage from \$1.50 to \$2.30 an hour. We know that acquiring \$165.00 a week would increase it to \$4.00 an hour. Private employers do not want to have to pay these wages which would decrease the profits margin. The government and private employers have already started their campaign. The declarations of the associations of bosses, of the chambers of commerce, the editorialists and ministers are multiplying. Once again there is talk of taking the right to strike away from employees of the state.

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TO BE BETTER ORGANIZED THAN IN 1972

It is not going to be easy. That is why all workers must make themselves ready for a long and difficult fight. The idea of a Com-

mon Front is well rooted everywhere. The Common Front disposes of precious experience acquired during the 1972 negotiations. It must learn its lesson from this experience, correct the mistakes and move ahead. The creation of regional common fronts and better coordination will increase tenfold its strength. The workers in the public sector must engineer new means of fighting, new means of communication which will allow them to face the power of their employers. These workers must prepare for a strike but also for the possibility of a law that will force them back to work. The fight in 1972 proved that the government did not hesitate, under the coming pretext, to take away the right to strike. We must get ready now. For those in the private sectors, they must understand the importance of the negotiations and ready themselves to join forces with workers in the public sectors. The up-coming negotiations will have repercussions on all workers in Quebec. The private employers and the government on one hand, the workers and their unions on the other, these are the fighters. The right of the workers to decent wages and human working conditions on the one hand, the possibility for private employers and the government continue to distribute collective wealth to a sole class of the society and the power to make laws to accommodate themselves on the other hand is what is at stake. Workers of Quebec "Us, the common people" can not allow ourselves to lose this fight.

THE ORDINARY PEOPLE TAKE THE FLOOR

**Claude BUFFONIE (CNTU)
Inhalo-therapy service, Notre
Dame Hospital, Montreal.**

"The big complaint I have in connection with the last Common Front is that everything was worked out by the leadership; we weren't left with anything much to say, except vote for or against.

"The next time there will have to be decentralization to the point where the members will be able to decide what action they will take, when they will take it, and with whom. Everybody should have a say. The Common Front strategy should be determined by the grass roots at the regional level. Then the higher levels, upon receiving the reports from all the regions, could coordinate the strategy. I think that if we operated on that basis we would have a better chance of motivating people and getting what we want.

"This is important, because \$165 is a necessity for everyone. Everyone has felt the effects of the increase in cost of living. And this time, even if there's an injunction or a decree, the people will refuse to return to work."

**Claudette CARBONNEAU
(CNTU)**

Kitchen staff, Notre Dame Hospital, Montreal

"The first thing to do is explain to people what happened following the return to work of the last Common Front; to explain why we were obliged to return to the job. It's all very well to say that what happened in 1972 won't happen again; but that isn't enough. What with the economic crisis we're in, and the government we have, everybody figures that it will be more difficult than the first time; that it won't be just two weeks on strike.

"That's why a big information job has to be done. I don't believe you can ask people to fight without explanations.

"That's also why new methods of combat must be found. For instance, here at Notre Dame we survived a conflict last year. We used the method of quitting work while staying on the inside, which hurts much more than a walkout.

"At first glance, the demand for \$165 seems a lot. But you do some talking to people and they get around to realizing that it takes this much to live these days. However, that is not the only

objective we must insist upon. There are other big problems, like the work overload and the staff shortage."

**Nicole PONTBRIAND (CNTU)
Medical secretary, Notre Dame
Hospital, Montreal**

"The last Common Front has its weak points, especially at the end. In the first place, I think we played the government's game. We kept quiet for 18 months and then, all of a sudden one fine morning, out we went. We got our knuckles rapped for that. We should have started some action long before. At Notre Dame, we were ready to ignore the decree, but our understanding was that the teachers and the personnel in many hospitals were in favor of respecting the decree. So we went back to work. Yet we were convinced that we would have gained a lot more by staying out an additional day.

"The most important thing in the next Common Front will be the dispensing of information. At the last one, there were 210,000 of us. On the picket lines, however, we were only about 800. What goes on in the other unions? What were they doing on their picket lines? We knew what was happening during the first couple of days, but as soon as news was reduced to what come over the radio and television, the picket line started to get thinner."

The foregoing remarks are by three of the six persons asked to speak out on Common Front action, which is a topic of considerable interest among the employees of the public sector these days. The comments of the other three persons follow. Even though negotiations had not yet begun at the time of this writing, the 1975 Common Front was already on the map. Preparations for a major battle have been underway since last summer. While the government and private companies plan their strategy and sharpen their weapons, the 185,000 public sector employees groupés in the CNTU, the CEQ (Quebec Teachers

Corporation) and the QFL are busy too. Numerous meetings are being held to decide on the course and demeanor of the Common Front, its main priorities, and so on. The news media have started giving some attention to the matter, and the general public is aware of the importance of the impending confrontation.

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René BEAUCHAMP (CEQ) French teacher, Polyvalente de Lignery, Laprairie.

"Here during the last Common Front you had the teachers who blocked various exists and in a corner where there was only a small exit, you had the janitors from the QFL. No one dared to go and talk to them.

"By fighting for the \$100 a week we were seeking for others, we were party to an issue that didn't involve us very much. But we wondered among ourselves whether these others bore in mind that they were fighting for us as well as themselves. There was a feeling that they were making use of our strength, but regarded us as privileged people without any problems. They were unaware of things like job security and postings. We felt we were being taken for a ride.

"During the next Common Front I would like to find a feeling for the human side of other workers. It is one thing to know that other workers are demanding \$165, but I'd rather this was told to me by a worker personally. This would do a lot more to bring me to his side than a piece of paper. I would also like other workers to know why there is a fight, and that they are fighting for us just the same as we are fighting for them."

Alain CHARRON (CEQ) Special class teacher, Polyvalente de Lignery, Laprairie.

"When there is a Common Front made up of many people, one group should know about the demands of others as well as its own. If picketing is done here, there should be hospital workers with us, and for our part we should be ready to go and picket hospitals.

"How many hours of work do they put in at a hospital? We don't know. We organize a Common Front, I wouldn't have known those people were with us. When the decree hit us, we had separate meetings. Each wrestled with his own problem, when in fact it was a common problem.

"The main requisite for Common Front success is union. But there cannot be union without information. We have to know one another and know the demands of others."

Pierre CLAUDE (CEQ) French teacher, Polyvalente de Lignery, Laprairie.

"During the last Common Front the government, by using a decree to halt the course of legal strikes, failed to respect the rules of trade unionism. This is something I will never be able to swallow.

"Confronted as we are by a government which is both judge and party, we too must have striking power. And the best way to assure that power is to unite so that our demands will be agreed to.

"If the Common Front is to become a genuine reality, steps must be taken to educate every trade unionist. There are some people who don't even know why they participate in the Common Front. If each had trade union awareness, if each were convinced of what he wants, the Common Front would be a going concern."

PAGE 36 THE 1972

COMMON FRONT

Is there anyone who cannot remember the Common Front of 1972? Can anyone have forgotten the battle cry "We, the ordinary people?" Or the difficulties of assembling 210,000 public employees in the same force; or final victory achieved after long periods of bargaining, general strikes, the law dictating return to work, the fines, the imprisonments, the May days, the desertions and the treasons of all kinds? The 1972 Common Front was undeniably a significant chapter in the annals of Quebec workers.

At a time when state-employed workers of the CNTU, the CEQ and the QFL are to be asked for their views about a new Common Front and its course, it is fitting to recall the weaknesses and imperfections of the 1972 operation. In this way every step can be taken to guard against a repeat of 1972's deficiencies.

The main criticism to arise from the 1972 Common Front was the absence of regrouping and decision-making structures at the regional level. This led to an undue concentration of authority and a certain amount of suspicion about a central table considered to be "too far from the people."

Another weakness was lack of organization for work-stoppage days, with the result that union forces quickly ran out of steam, and some confusion hampered actions that were undertaken.

There was absence of preparation against the possibility of a law ordering return to work. The outcome was that consultation of workers about obeying the law, and the return to work itself, occurred in an atmosphere of uncertainty.

There was a lack of information generally and a lack of communication between the various groups of workers. Result: a sense of isolation and uncertainty during decisive moments of the battle.

There was insufficient importance given to the non-salary clauses being negotiated at the sectorial tables.

But in spite of all these flaws, the 1972 Common Front was still a mighty triumph; a fact that also should be recalled. Even without going into the wide-ranging improvements in working conditions, the Common Front of 1972 recorded some impressive achievements:

Salary increases of at least \$1,000 for everyone, and a cost of living bonus that would yield a total \$692 million above and beyond wage hikes:

A narrowing of the margin between salary, levels, intersectorial job security, life insurance provided

by the government, and more.

In addition to these immediate gains in working conditions, the rapprochement of the three union centrals (CNTU-CEQ-QFL) enabled a development of ideas along the Common Front. For instance, it led to the creation of regional common fronts (Joliette comes to mind) permitting more trade union victories. In the definitive, the 1972 Common Front was a giant step forward for Quebec workers. It was a signal triumph for solidarity.

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THE 1975 COMMON FRONT IS ON THE WAY!

The New Common Front, version 1975, is in the works. Although it has only attained the consultation and preparation stages, a certain number of details can already be predicted and announced with regard to the general look of the campaign by the public sector workers.

Who will take part?

If everything follows a normal course, the Common Front will bring together 185,000 workers affiliated with one of the three centrals. Of this number, 85,000 are members of the CNTU. The breakdown: 5,000 from the Federation of salaried professionals and cadres of Quebec professionals of the government, the social agencies, the CEGEPS); 14,000 from the Federation of public service employees (legal aid offices, the liquor corporation, etc.); 6,000 from the National Federation of Quebec teachers (CEGEP professors); and 60,000 are from the social affairs Federation (mainly hospital employees). To these CNTU workers will be added 75,000 teachers and staff members from the Centrale des Enseignants du Québec (CEQ); and some 25,000 members of the Quebec Federation of Labor (QFL).

The total of 185,000 is fewer than the 210,000 who comprised the 1972 Common Front. Does this mean that this year's Common Front will be weaker? No. Better to have fewer, but with each pre-

pared to fight all the way. During the 1972 Common Front, it will be recalled, nearly 50,000 workers dropped out along the way (Quebec Hydro employees and the clerical workers), which means that this year there will be more than 100,000 negotiating with the government outside the Common Front. Nevertheless, the strength of the Common Front remains very considerable.

When will it happen?

Preparations began last summer. While the economists were doing research work on the government's wage policy and the various unions were preparing contract proposals, representatives of the three centrals were meeting to search for agreement on the method of operation and the objectives of the Common Front. Scheduled for an April start was the consultation of all public sector employees, to obtain their opinions about the operation of the Common Front, about structures, function and strategy. By May, negotiations should have begun, at least at the sectorial level. The big battle, however, is expected to take place in the autumn, when salary negotiations are at the central table level. By that time, everything will have to be ready; our strength fully mobilized to face the government.

With regard to salaries, there is a recommendation from the CNTUPS, the negotiation coordinating committee for the employees of the public sector. The committee comprises representatives of the various CNTU federations participating in the Common Front.

The committee recommends these demands: a 25.9 per cent makeup increase in salary to compensate for the loss of purchasing power; a minimum salary of \$165 weekly as of June 1st; increases of 5 per cent annually, starting July 1st and calculated on the average salary; and automatic, quarterly indexation.

It probably won't be easy. The government has given its MPPs \$120 a week additional, and its judges \$150 a week additional, to compensate for the increase in cost of living, but it isn't likely to admit that a salary of \$165 a week is a necessity for everyone. Bourassa's argument will be that people have to live within their means, overlooking for the moment the \$20 billion earmarked for James Bay. It will require a determined struggle to make him understand that if we can afford the James Bay development, we can afford decent salaries.

Among other non-salary demands, special attention will have to be paid to job security for teachers, and the shortage of staff in the hospitals.

The Common Front coordinators include Jacques Desmarais for the CNTU, Robert Gaulin for the CEQ, and Michel Grant for the QFL.

How do we prepare?

In anticipation of hard struggles that the Common Front will have to face, there is major preparatory work to be done. Among the tasks to be completed, the most important is undoubtedly the setting up of regional common fronts. Why regional common fronts? First, so that the workers, can meet, associate, discuss their problems and explain their needs. Second, to enable the workers to decide themselves as to the action that should be taken by the Common Front. And third, to have this action conducted locally and regionally, depending on circumstances, without the need to await directives from the three centrals before doing anything. This is not to say that there is no need for coordination at the central level. The sinews of the battle, however, must be found in the regional common fronts.

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HERE'S WHAT WE'RE DOING

IN THE QUEBEC REGION

At the CNTU, the Quebec Region includes the big City of Quebec proper, and five sub-regions that are quite different from one another: the South Shore, the Beauce, the South Coastal area, Portneuf and Charlevoix. In the immense territory with a total population that is considerable, there are battles without number to be fought. While worker solidarity is being organized in the outlying or sub-regional areas, the job in the city is to try and save property as much as possible from the destructive machine of a mayor who considers himself somewhat of a sculptor. Grouped together in the CNTU, in citizens' committees or tenant associations, in consumer or housing co-operatives, the working people wage war on all fronts.

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SEEK SALVATION OF POPULAR WARDS

Mayor Lamontagne has quite a record of achievement. He chased out the residents of lower town Place Royale so it could be renovated and handed over to the American Hilton hotel chain. He uprooted a good number of St-Jean-Baptiste ward residents to make way for big government buildings and banks. He demolished 1,000 dwelling units in Notre-Dame-de-la-Paix so the Dufferin Expressway could go through. He expropriated 500 dwelling units to enlarge the St-Roch commercial area. Now the mayor, ringed by a pack of technocrats, speculators and entrepreneurs, has announced the next stage in his urban renewal and development plan.

Within the next five years, 2,000 dwelling units will be demolished in St-Roch and St-Sauveur for the construction of an expressway. This means the dislocation of nearly 8,000 people, or about 20 per cent of the total population of the two wards.

There is also a proposal to rehabilitate 10,000 dwelling units in the lower town. The result would be an increase of 50 per cent in rents. And there is a plan to push 261 businesses or stores from the shores of the St-Charles River, so the sites can be taken over by big real estate promoters who are interested in the low price of land, the attractiveness of the river shoreline and the proximity of the city core.

Whether Lamontagne's sculpturing job is completed or not, the eventual result can readily be imagined. The people of Quebec are headed towards the same tragic experience as those of Montreal and other major North American cities. Working people, the unemployed and the socially assisted are chased out of their homes and their neighborhoods. The places they called home are being taken over by expressways, shopping centres, office towers, hotels, and luxury residential blocks. Slowly but surely, concrete it taking the place of people.

THE CITIZENS ARE RESISTING

Faced by this campaign of destruction in the popular wards, citizens have banded together in committees. For some years now, they have been establishing pockets of resistance. They have the support of the people living in the threatened districts.

One example that the resistance is there, and working:

When the city called a meeting in St-Sauveur to submit its development plan, 150 people turned up. But when the citizens' committee convened a meeting to denounce the project, the attendance was more than 500.

Citizens' committees are opposed to the development scheme for the city because its realization, while it may mean profit for a few, means to most people the loss of their housing, and the loss of jobs or the prospect of considerably higher rents. In St-

Sauveur ward, for example, 37 per cent of the population live on unemployment insurance or social welfare. They occupy dwellings that are in need of renovation. Such improvements increase the rent by about 50 per cent, however. Announcement of renovation is often a fine strategy to oust people from their neighborhoods.

The citizens' committees are opposed to street widening and the construction of expressways. In addition to destroying the districts through which they pass, these thoroughfares are built to the detriment of public transportation.

In the short term therefore, the aim is to slow down the apparatus of destruction.

In the long term the citizens will have to organize to the point where they can control the image and lifestyle of their neighborhoods. One way to achieve this is through collective ownership of dwelling units. The establishment of housing cooperatives is a step in that direction. Another recourse is for the citizens to acquire power of decisions at the municipal level.

The election victories of the Montreal Citizens' Movement are proof of what can be done through effort and determination.

In Quebec, the municipal elections are three years away. Already, however, they are being talked about, and preparations are being made for them. Which is a good thing, because you have to get up early to cope with a mayor who has the nerve to consider himself a sculptor, when in fact he is not sculpting but destroying.

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HOUSING COOPERATIVE OFFERS PROTECTION

"The housing cooperative is the means by which we can face up to city hall. It is the way to defend our interests and our neighborhood."

The words are those of Paul-Henri Drapeau, housing cooperative president. Representatives of Labour met him, plus other founding members of the "Chez Nous" Cooperative, and Michel Desrochers, president of the St-Sauveur Citizens' Committee.

Safeguard for the ward

Since July 1974, the City of Quebec and the Quebec (provincial) Housing Corporation have offered 25 per cent of the cost of restoration work by property owners in St-Sauveur. If certain experiences are to be relied upon, this kind of work leads to rents being increased by anywhere from 25 to 200 per cent. In other words, restoration projects of this kind are of no benefit to the people who currently occupy the dwellings. The only ones served are those who are financially able to absorb the cost of restoration, which is passed on to them. Restoration or rehabilitation is a way to get low-income families out of a neighborhood.

The only way to fight back, therefore, seems to be grouping of ward residents into housing cooperatives; thereby enabling them to acquire ownership of a series of dwelling units. As owners, they can have units rehabilitated to their taste, and at prices they decide.

In March 1974, a group of St-Sauveur citizens got down to the difficult business of establishing a "first" in housing cooperatives.

Apply for subsidies

There were a number of things to do. The cooperative as such had to be established. Its bylaws had to be drafted. A charter had to be obtained. Then came the task of seeking out and inspecting various properties that might be acquired. Most important of all, the members had to verify what subsidies were available from government so that units could be obtained at the best possible cost.

It was learned that Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the

federal housing agency, provides funds for citizens wishing to institute a housing cooperative. CMHC can provide up to \$10,000 as a start-up subsidy. Early in December 1974, the "Chez Nous" Cooperative received an initial portion of \$500.

Furthermore, when a housing cooperative wishes to buy a building, CMHC makes a grant of 10 per cent of the purchase price, and lends the balance of the money needed under attractive conditions: the interest rate is around eight per cent, and the amortization period can be up to 40 years.

It was also learned that subsidies are available from CMHC, from the Quebec Housing Corporation and from the City of Quebec to rehabilitate housing. Slowly but surely, the realization came that the formation of a housing cooperative can be successfully undertaken.

Try one property for a start

The "Chez Nous" Cooperative had a clear primary objective. This was to acquire ownership of one house. It would encourage the desire of other citizens to obtain suitable quarters at reasonable prices, to achieve housing security, to provide themselves with the means to bring influence to bear in the development of their neighborhood, to be party to the collective ownership of property.

To respond only to the immediate needs of the people in St-Sauveur ward, the "Chez Nous" Cooperative would have had to acquire more than 3,000 dwelling units. The idea, however, was to avoid making a "great big deal" out of one cooperative. Instead, the aim was to spread the kind of interest that would lead to the formation of dozens of housing cooperatives.

For Quebec City itself, and for other communities, the "Chez Nous" Cooperative proposes a solution to housing problems: the collective home ownership method. The leader has set an example that is worth following.

Anyone wishing further information is invited to communicate with:

**"Chez Nous" Cooperative,
554 Boisseau Street, Quebec,
525-4983.**

PAGE 41 THE POCKETS OF RESISTANCE

Over recent years, the workers of Quebec City have provided themselves with a considerable number of organizations designed to protect them on all fronts. Following are facts about some of them.

The citizens' committees

In two wards, Area 10 and St-Sauveur, working people, the jobless and the socially assisted have banded together in citizens' committees to wage combat on the housing front.

The Area 10 committee is located at 570 Du Roi Street, telephone 522-1140.

The address of the St-Sauveur committee is 554 Boisseau Street, 525-4983.

Tenants are united

In Quebec, 75 per cent of the people are tenants. As a means of safeguarding their rights and interests, they have joined hands in the Groupement des locataires du Québec Métropolitain. The address is 865 Second Street, 523-6177.

In 1974, five groups of tenants succeeded in negotiating their housing conditions with their landlords.

The A.C.E.F.

L'Association Coopérative d'Economie Familiale (household management cooperative association) helps people who have credit problems, debts and difficulty managing the family budget. It also devotes itself to the protection and education of consumers. It is located at 570 Du Roi, 522-1568.

Women offer counsel

A group of housewives have undertaken to inform people about their rights and help them to exercise these rights. They can be reached at 554 Boisseau Street, 525-4983.

Workers' cooperative centre

These are unemployed persons who have joined together in a self-managed cooperative. They work at reasonable rates. One of their initiatives has been to establish an upholstering cooperative. The address: 194 St-Vallier Street West, 524-1330.

Solidarity Fund

Because they have increasing difficulty in obtaining subsidies, and because they aspire to financial independence, the six groups mentioned above have instituted a fund called Fonds de Solidarité des Groupes Populaires. Since last September they have collected \$9,000. For anyone wishing to contribute, the address is 554 Boisseau Street.

The right to speak

Since last autumn, the representative groups have been publishing a monthly newspaper which serves as a forum for the citizens of Lower Town Quebec. The paper's circulation is 10,000, distributed free of charge. It is located at 435 Du Roi, 523-7117. In the same location is the organization Action-Chômage (action-unemployment). It informs the unemployed and helps them to find jobs.

Operation S.C.R.A.P.

For those who are sick and tired of being exploited by garage operators and concession holders, help and advice is available to do their own repairs and maintenance.

It is called Service Coopératif de réparation d'automobile populaire. It offers working space, tools and the counsel of an automobile mechanic. Address: 291 de L'Espinau, 529-1560.

Funeral expense cooperative

"There's no need to put up with exploitation, even if we're dead."

That's one way of explaining the existence of the cooperative. It already has a membership of 4,000. Funeral costs are half of what survivors are usually charged. The cooperative is located at 440 St-François Street, 525-4637.

Nurseries

Two day nurseries have managed to survive. The Garderie coopérative de St-Jean-Baptiste is at 550 St-Amable Street, 522-3648, and the Garderie Rayon de Soleil is at 13 Couillard Street, 694-0694.

Food cooperatives

Coopérative de St-Sauveur, 302b Marie de l'Incarnation Street. CRAC Aliments naturels (natural foods) 684 Ste-Geneviève Hill. Coopérative Fruits et Légumes: 288 Lavigueur Street.

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THE QUEBEC CENTRAL COUNCIL

BACK TO GRASS ROOTS AND DECENTRALIZATION

A young people's team has taken over since the last convention. The accent these days is on the return to the grass roots and on decentralization. Marc Ferland, president of the Quebec Central Council, says that the recent subscription campaign provided the opportunity for a visit to all the before. As a result of the tour, membership participation in activities of the central council has tripled."

Down to the rank-and-file

This means a continuing effort to consolidate and educate at the level of the work environment. For example, says the council president, a file has been prepared on industrial sicknesses. At Davieship in Lauzon, more than 600 welders are combatting siderosis. At Quebec Poultry, the work assignments are so bad that over a period of one year 350 jobs have been performed by 1,800 people.

"It is on the basis of such information that workers can be drawn

into training and educational efforts."

Marc Ferland adds that with an eye to the international conference on solidarity, the Quebec council is preparing a dossier on multinational company subsidiaries in the region. The objective is the same: to get workers involved in the job of researching the enterprises for which they work.

Decentralization

The Quebec Central Council has always been at grips with the problem of covering its territory. This comprises 17,500 square miles, in which there are 30 towns with a total population of 500,000. More than 27,000 workers in the region are members of the CNTU. It is obvious, says Marc Ferland, that under these conditions it is impossible to provide full services or to assure effective combined action. Moreover, the central council has consistently tried to achieve decentralization. This year again, the decision has been to provide the CNTU regional councils with increased means. On this basis, President Ferland says there is a directive which amounts to an entire program: "Let the local solidarities have their say."

Portneuf

During recent months, action has centred on an old people's home. A dossier was published, drawing attention to staff shortage, poor household and hygienic maintenance and bad management. The union succeeded in its bid for the resignation of the chairman of the board of directors at Foyer St-Marc. At the time of this writing, the resignation of the other directors was awaited.

Charlevoix

There are problems with the arenas. Since the construction of two of them with the help of a subsidy from the Donahue Company, participation in union activities has fallen off. Union leaders warn that people can't involve themselves in recreational and union activities at the

same time. In spite of the difficulty, or thanks to it, efforts are being made in the information sector. A paper called "Travailleurs de Charlevoix" is being published, and unionists participate in community television.

Beauce

Current efforts are being applied to closer relationships between the union centrals. Thanks to the work of two permanent staff members with the Company of Young Canadians, and that of the information centre of the Jeunes Travailleurs, a committee called the Travailleurs Réunis de la Beauce has been established.

The Common Front is awaited, and in the meantime a paper is being published. Its name is "Au Boutte" (All the way).

PAGE 43 AT LAPOCATIERE A THIRST FOR SOLIDARITY

For some months now, there has been plenty of action in the south coastal area, and in particular at Ste-Anne-de-Lapocatière. In this region, which is becoming increasingly industrialized, the workers are organizing, and at the same time learning what "solidarity" means to them.

Since the summer of 1974, five new unions have been organized. Negotiations are going on at the present time with the P.E. Boucher tannery in St-Pascal de Kamouraska. The company employs 135 people. Therefore the CNTU has 23 unions so far, with total membership of nearly 2,000, in the region.

During various conflicts that have taken place, unionists have learned that there are a good many ways to assure victory. Take the case of Notre Dame de Fatima Hospital. The 180 unionized workers were able to bring settlement of 14 long-standing grievances last December by staging a one-day strike.

At the Lapocatière CEGEP in February, a unified effort brought

results. A common front of teachers, maintenance workers, professionals, cadres and students organized a parallel CEGEP to apply pressure on the board of directors to dismiss the director general and the director of professional services. Both had been branded incompetent. The parallel CEGEP functioned so well that absenteeism, which had been at 10 per cent, declined to 2 per cent.

The 28 employees of the Peoples Store in Lapocatière have been on strike since December 16th.

The struggle conducted by this new union for its first negotiation has led to a display of solidarity by all the workers in the region. There have been demonstrations in front of the store and messages of encouragement for the strikers have been placed in the local paper. By their contributions to a fund in aid of the strikers, other CNTU members, the CEQ teachers, the Centre Diocesain (diocesan centre), and several groups of non-unionized workers have made themselves parties to the conflict.

This is a real example of solidarity.

PAGE 44 A 47 QUEBECERS THROUGH AND THROUGH LES BEAUCERONS BRACE FOR THE BIG BATH

For something like 200 years, springtime has been a time of watching and waiting with bated breath in Beauce County.

When the ice of the Chaudière River breaks up, and melting snow along the hillsides adds torrents of water, it is the hour of the flood rampage. It can be a little bit of a rampage, or a debacle of rampage.

Months in advance, the flood is a major conversation piece.

Right now it is a time of waiting, and Beauce folk have no need of Bourassa, Lévesque, the Cliche Commission or Radio-Canada as topics around which discussion or dispute can swirl. The flood's the thing.

History records that in the early days the waiting was done with mighty anxiety. The passing of decades and generations has had its effects, however. Anxiety there still is, of course, but the pre-flood days have become a time of festivity. If the Beaucerons had been unable to take the activities of fickle Mother Nature in their stride, they would have pulled out long ago.

Several times the Chaudière has turned truly devilish. It ran amok in 1957, climbing until the bottom halves of houses were awash and automobiles disappeared from sight. Beaucerons brought chairs to the roofs of their garages so they could sit and observe the relentless power of water.

Earlier years, going back nearly a century, had already produced floods that became legend: 1885, 1886, 1913, 1917 and 1928.

Oddly enough, the 1957 flood wasn't a springtime disaster at all. It came during a sudden December thaw.

Yves Mathieu, a pressman with Journal Offset, was a first-hand witness of that one and has vivid recollections of how the Beaucerons took it.

Up, up the water

"It strikes all of a sudden. It is about midnight, and the evening has been warm. The impact makes you figure this has to be the end of the world, and there's no chance to do much of anything.

"In 1957, it took no time at all for the ice and water to surge up level with the roof of our garage.

"During the days before the flood is expected, people gaze along the

river shores, get things out of their basements, making their guns ready for the invasion of the muskrat. The army picks out strategic spots and prepares to dynamite the ice jams obstructing the river flow.

"Just about everyone has something to say in the form of predictions, or reviewing the river's past flood record."

Not very amusing

"When the flood waters take over, everything else stops. People watch, team up to help one another, and that's some job. Muskrats are everywhere, and the Beaucerons try to frighten them away with shotgun blasts.

"At our house in '57, the water rose half way to the roof line. I saw a muskrat swim inside by a back door and come out the front. If you wanted to sleep, you rowed to the homes of friends and neighbors who were spared such distress. Otherwise, groups assembled in places safely above the water and stayed awake through the night.

"It isn't at all funny for those whose property lies in the water. For others, it's something of a party, and even some of those being damaged are able to take things in their stride. They knock back a drink or two, waiting for the whole thing to be over. Later, government help will come, and the army will lend a hand to the distressed.

"That's the way it goes. It's rough time alright, but not fatal."

Less severe now, but don't count on it

"Today there is a tendency to build further away from the river. Many like to build close to it, though, and they continue to hope that the necessary installations will be made to avert flooding. Meantime, aid is forthcoming for those who sustain losses.

"It isn't quite as bad a situation today. A dam has been built to hold back the ice, although that doesn't do much to check ice portions and the water itself, which tend to accumulate further down, near Ste-Marie.

"The Chaudière is a peculiar kind of river. It runs south to north, which means that the thaw is inclined to come to its source before its mouth.

"That's why it floods so suddenly. And there's great strength in water."

PAGE 48 ON STRIKE (A LIST OF CONFLICTS WHICH PREVAILED AS OF MARCH 17th 1975)

Following is a list of conflicts which have lasted since at least December 15th 1974 and which have been mentioned in previous issues of Labour:

Le Foyer des Hauteurs, St-Jérôme: 13 CNTU workers locked out since December 2nd 1971.

Le Pavillon St-Dominique, Québec: 30 CNTU workers on strike since March 19th 1972.

United Aircraft, Longueuil: 1,800 CNTU workers on strike since January 9th 1974.

Les Tricots Penmans (Knitting), St-Hyacinthe: 375 CNTU workers on strike since June 10th 1974.

Welding Engineering, Montreal: 50 CNTU workers locked out since July 3rd 1974.

Sonoco, Terrebonne: 120 CNTU workers locked out since August 19th 1974.

Aero Club, Montreal: 10 CNTU workers on strike since September 3rd 1974.

Cook Printing, Montreal: seven QFL workers on strike since September 6th 1974.

Patino Mines, Chibougamau: 450 QFL workers on strike since December 4th 1974.

Atlantic, Rimouski: 15 CNTU workers locked out since December 4th 1974.

Peoples Store, La Pocatière: 26 CNTU workers on strike since December 16th 1974. These are first negotiations, with a complete job to be done. Hourly rate: \$2.30.

Quebec Wire, Three Rivers: 125 QFL workers locked out since December 16th 1974. Three negotiations and three walkouts in dealings with the multinational Sivaco organization. Enough said.

Woolworth, Chicoutimi: 85 CNTU workers locked out since January 11th. First negotiations. Campaign to boycott Woolworth stores in progress.

Union Carbide, Beauharnois: 425 QFL workers on strike since January 13th. A strike for job security.

John Millen, Chicoutimi: 12 CNTU workers on strike since January 13th. First negotiations. Basic hourly wage: \$2.30.

Marcel Rochette, Chicoutimi: 20 CNTU workers on strike since January 13th. First negotiations. Basic wage: \$2.30.

Keuffel and Esser, Granby: 12 CNTU workers on strike since January 17th. First negotiations. Basic rate: \$2.33.

Cyanamid of Canada, St. Johns: 274 QFL workers on strike since January 21st. Fifty-four workers before the courts on charges of contempt.

Autobus Gaudreault, Joliette: 110 CNTU workers on strike since January 30th. First negotiations. Involved are buses or urban, interurban and school transport.

James Bay: 28 QFL workers on strike since February 15th. Involved: security guards.

Leviton Mfg., Montreal: 538 QFL workers on strike since February 17th.

Atlantic Metallurgy, Rimouski: 25 CNTU workers on strike since February 19th. Salaries and indexation.

Autobus Matane, Matane: 14 CNTU workers on strike since February 19th. With the help of a judge, the company has hired scabs and is operating at 100 per cent capacity.

City of Grand'Mère: 40 QFL workers on strike since February 24th.

Dubois Transport, La Tuque: 12 QFL workers on strike since February 24th.

Consumers Glass, Candiac: 450 QFL workers on strike since February 24th.

Trudeau, Royal and Lafleur Ambulance, Montreal: 38 QFL workers on strike since February 25th.

Hopkins Specialties, Montreal: 16 QFL workers on strike since February 26th.

Cadorette Canots, Shawinigan: 20 CNTU workers on strike since February 27th. Issue: contract reopening for indexation.

Montmorency Diesel, St-Hubert: one QFL worker locked out since March 11th. Yes, that's right. One.

Asbestos Common Front, Thetford, Black Lake, east Broughton: 3,500 workers (CNTU 2,700, QFL 800) on strike since March 17th. Issues: elimination of dust, and better wages.

