

UPDATE ON THE METRO BUDGET

On Tuesday, October 12, the Community Services and Housing (CSH) Committee of Metro Council voted to reduce its budget by 8.5%. Roger Hollander and Olivia Chow were the only Councillors who opposed this. They both supported "flattening", or 0% cuts. Many of the Councillors referred to the public meeting of October 5, at which more than 70 organizations and individuals deputed or submitted written statements opposing any cuts to the CSH budget. They all expressed "regrets" about the cuts.

Members of the MNSJ who were present at the October 12 meeting were outraged and disappointed at the lack of any real debate about the cuts, or about how they could be reduced or avoided. The Councillors accepted the staff report supporting -8.5%, and our deputations certainly helped seal that decision. However, there was no debate about the merits of further challenging the Management Committee budget directives. In talking to the Toronto Star, MNSJ spokespersons denounced the Councillors for their shameful failure before the Management Committee without a whimper.

The -8.5% decision at the CSH committee is certainly a setback. However, we were very instrumental in reducing the cuts from 11.9% and that is a significant achievement. The next stage of the fight will take place at the Management Committee where we have to ensure that they do not overturn the CSH decision and revert to -11.9% as well as continue to argue for zero cuts to community services.

Between now and November 2, all department of Metro will be submitting their budgets to the Chief Administrative Officer's (CAO) department where they will be compiled into the "Blue Book". We expect this will be tabled at Management Committee on November 2-3. We do not know yet whether there will be any debate or if it will be immediately referred to the Budget Committee. The Budget Committee will study the Blue Book, formulate recommendations and return to management committee in January. At that point, we expect that there will be public meetings and opportunities to depute on the entire Metro budget.

Between now and January, our priority is to lobby all Metro Councillors. We strongly urge you, as individuals and organizations, to go see your Councillors and express your support for community services and your opposition to any cuts. We have produced a lobby kit with step-by-step instructions and lots of information to help you formulate your arguments.

We are also looking for "Ward Captains": persons who would be willing to co-ordinate lobbying by the community service agencies in their area.

Finally, we have established a working group to co-ordinate the Metro budget campaign and would welcome any volunteers. For a lobby kit, further information, or to volunteer as a Ward Captain or on the campaign working group, call Janet Conway at 351-0095 or Zeenat Janmohamed at 538-7630.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO DEPUTED ON OCTOBER 5.
KEEP UP THE PRESSURE BY VISITING YOUR
COUNCILLORS SOON.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

Listed below are meetings & events of interest to activists in the Metro area. If you have additions for the calendar, please fax information to Bill Howes at fax 445-8405.

Oct 30	Affordable Home Ownership Seminar
Oct 30	Industrial Heritage Workshop
Oct 30	Fed. of Metro Tenants' Assoc. AGM
Nov 1	Senior Women's Leadership Forum
Nov 10-13	Training Intensive in Systemic Advocacy
Nov 11	Remembrance Day
Nov 11	Hearing on Old Growth Forests
Nov 13	LCMT & YR Conference on EMF Radiation
Nov 13	Drug Awareness Week - Seminar
Nov 15	Deadline for MNSJ Newsletter
Nov 19-21	"Working Heritage" Organizing Conference
Nov 21-26	OFL Convention - Toronto

DEFICIT EXPOSED

Debt and the deficit - the pre-occupation of politicians of all stripes - are the topics confronted in a pamphlet written and produced by the Metro Network for Social Justice. The material for the pamphlet was drawn from a one-day seminar conducted by the MNSJ following its successful "Creating a Just Economy" conference last spring. The pamphlet accepts that the debt is a problem, but shows that it's not the problem that governments would have us believe. It addresses alternatives and recommends a course of action that individuals can follow. It also suggests further reading and lays out a "they say", "we say" analysis of the issue. For copies of the pamphlet call the Social Planning Council at 351-0095.

CHILD POVERTY REPORT CARD '93

The Social Planning Council in conjunction with the Metro Campaign 2000 has published a Child Poverty Report Card for 1993. Campaign 2000 seeks to end child poverty in Canada by the year 2000. The report card is packed with useful graphs, charts and statistics which confirm that we've a long distance to go if we're to achieve the goal by the year 2000. The chart links child poverty to unemployment and other socio-economic problems of our society. It also lists the voting record of all Metro-area MP's on issues which impact on children's well-being. Copies of the report card are available from the SPC by calling 351-0095.

"GLIB & STALE"

"Glib & Stale" was the banner of the parody of Canada's "national" newspaper that hit the newspaper boxes last week. This four-page, look-alike mock-up of the Globe was inserted in the thousands in Globe & Mail boxes in major cities across Canada on October 14th. Originating from Vancouver, the paper found its way into Globe boxes in the downtown core of Toronto. The paper criticized the mainstream media in Canada for failing to safeguard the public interest, by neglecting to expose the severe consequences to Canada presented by NAFTA. Although the boys' club in the mainstream media clearly got together to impose a news blackout on the stunt, thousands of Canadians were confronted with NAFTA with

their morning paper. Their refusal to cover the parody and the issue has resulted in a major reprint, and will no doubt ensure that thousands of other Canadians actually receive a copy. Our thanks to the small band of volunteers who struggled out of their beds in the early hours of the morning to help with this project.

MNSJ EYES MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

The Metro Network for Social Justice is establishing a working group to plan MNSJ participation in the 1994 municipal election process. Anyone interested in joining this working group is invited to call Bill Howes at 441-3663.

FORUM FOR SENIOR WOMEN

The Ontario Coalition of Senior Citizens' Organizations is organizing a Leadership Development Forum for Senior Women. The all-day forum was to have been held on election day, October 25th, but has been re-scheduled to **November 1st**. It will feature workshops to provide women with the opportunity to share experiences and to examine issues that affect senior women in particular. It is hoped that participants will end the day with new skills and confidence to use in their own organizations and groups.

For more information or to register, call Natalie Pawlenko at 635-2860, ext. 438.

WORKERS' HERITAGE CONFERENCE

Workers in Ontario have a rich heritage which must be preserved or lost. It's the purpose of the Workers' Heritage Conference to bring together people who want to ensure that our heritage is preserved. The November 19-21 week-end conference will include unionists, historians, educators, museum staff and others for a series of workshops. These include Workers & Museums, Workers & the Arts, and Workers History in the Classroom as well as workshops on oral history, archives, photography, video and music. For further information write to the Ontario Workers' Arts and Heritage Centre, c/o 201 Burrell St, Hamilton, Ont, L8M 2J5.

"TROUBLED WATERS" IN EAST COAST FISHERY

"Troubled Waters" is the title of the film (available on video) produced by film-maker Lazlo Barna for the CAW on the crisis in the east coast cod fishery. A hard-hitting documentary which premiered in Toronto recently, the film lays the blame for this economic and ecological disaster at the feet of the federal Tory government, whose responsibility it has been to monitor and safeguard Canada's fisheries. For more information or to obtain a copy of the video, call Jane Armstrong at 495-6548.

REBELLION IN CANADA?

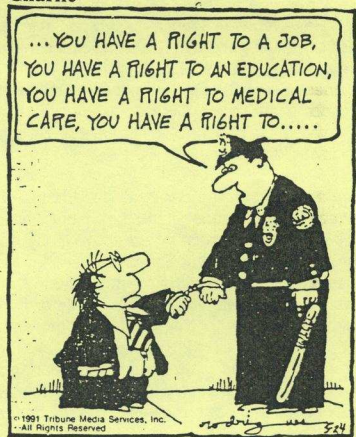
"1837 Rebellion - A Tour of Toronto & nearby Places" is the title of a fascinating book by retired printer and unionist, Mark Frank.

The book seeks to correct the history-book view that the 1837 Rebellion was simply a pressing for responsible government. Mark Frank cites official sources to prove that the rebellion was really a broad-based rising up

against British colonial rule and was a genuine attempt to achieve economic and social justice. The book offers seven tours of Toronto and environs sites that played a role in the rebellion. The book is published by Red Robin Press in Toronto, and the author can be reached at 487-0625.

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