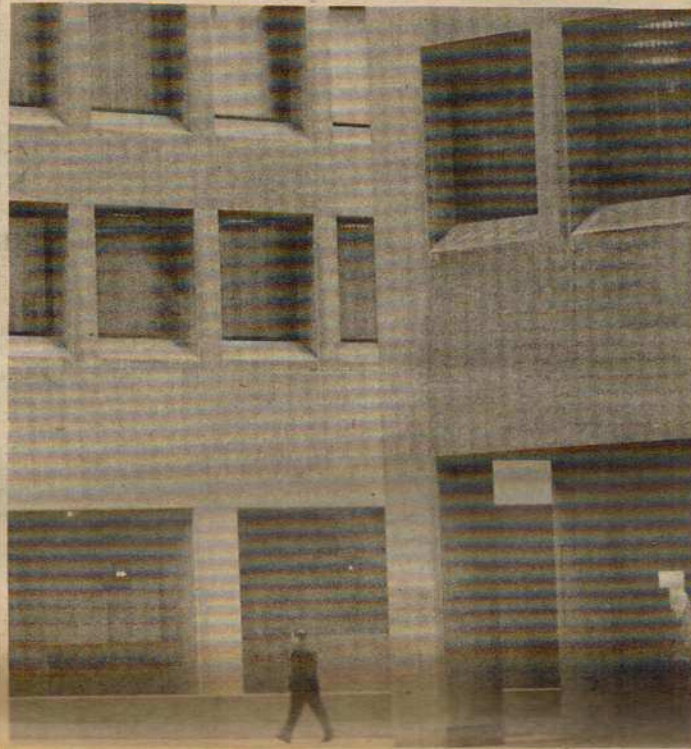


# toronto citizen

MIDTOWN'S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER 25¢

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and the  
Toronto Star:**  
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**Something  
is wrong  
at City Hall:**  
p. 6



**White  
collar  
blues:**  
p. 8

photo: Jack McLeod

## By-election race still in doubt

Reform issue moves to provincial politics

photos: Bill Lindsay

by P. M. Mullings

There's an old saying that "In an election campaign truth becomes the first victim." Because the major candidates in the St. George by-election have more to offer than in most campaigns the extent of the subterfuge, misconceptions and distortions has been lessened. Yet much remains to mislead the unwary voter.

Take Mayor David Crombie for example. The Mayor isn't running in the election but he's really been involved as the fastest endorser around, much to the confusion of the electorate. For various reasons the three major candidates have decided that the best campaign issue is to extend last autumn's municipal election theme of reform politics and community involvement in the decision making process. Accordingly, getting an endorsement from a prominent "reformer" such as Crombie is important.

And so in one of Conservative candidate Roy McMurtry's campaign leaflets is an endorsement from the mayor who, in part, says: "Toronto needs to be heard at the other levels of government. Roy McMurtry has been a friend of mine for many years so I know as a fact that his voice will be a powerful and effective one."

So Crombie is for McMurtry. Well, maybe not. For smack in the middle of Liberal Margaret Campbell's literature is a picture of her and Crombie. Meanwhile, back with the NDP, there's the ubiquitous Crombie and another endorsement: "For years Ellen Adams has been in the vanguard of the struggle for people to have more say in the way they are governed."

Then, there's the case of Ron Haggart, one of Toronto's most brilliant journalists who lost a job with the *Toronto Star* because it objected to his endorsement



Adams

of the NDP in the 1971 provincial election. Since then Haggart worked with McMurtry in gaining the release from prison of a man wrongfully sentenced to 15 years for robbery. When McMurtry was fighting for his party's nomination in St. George, Haggart bashed off an endorsement supporting him over his two Tory rivals. McMurtry is still using the endorsement although Haggart has now issued one saying that although all three party candidates in the by-election are good, his choice is definitely Ellen Adams.

Meanwhile, on a more substantive level there is the general misconception that opposition parties have a decided advantage in by-elections because the electorate can register a protest against the government without actually throwing it out of office. Although this is a widely held belief, even among veteran party workers, the facts show otherwise in provincial elections in Ontario.

In the 30 by-elections for Conservative held seats since the Tories took power in Ontario in 1943, the Conservatives have won 25, the Liberals three and the NDP only two. As Gerry Caplan, one



McMurtry

of Adams' chief strategists puts it: "People, particularly in the opposition, remember their spectacular by-election wins but tend to forget all the ones the Tories keep winning."

But both Caplan and Bob Reid, Campbell's campaign chairman, agree that by-elections give the opposition parties one big advantage — they allow them to concentrate their limited financial and human resources in one or two ridings instead of having to face the Conservative's well endowed "Big Blue Machine" in an uneven advertising battle across the province. Accordingly, Reid has, on paper, one of the best organized campaigns the Liberals have put together for a provincial riding election in the Metro area in recent years. His campaign charts list at least 35 people involved in strategy, organization, policy and publicity chores and hundreds of others in canvassing and election-day jobs. The NDP, meanwhile, has attracted campaign workers from Metro and from locations between Oshawa and Hamilton. During the first three weeks of the campaign the NDP has far outstripped the other two parties in intensive canvass-



Mossop



Campbell

ing throughout the riding.

### Fidnam Affair

Another much discussed and believed fallacy is that McMurtry would be severely hurt by his party's tarnished reputation. It was made public last year that the Conservatives got a \$50,000 campaign donation for the 1971 election from Fidnam Corporation, a Swiss Company it awarded a \$57 million contract to construct an office building where the Workmen's Compensation Board will be the main tenant. Equally damaging to the party's image have been the forced resignation of Treasury Secretary Darcy McKeough over a conflict of interest situation and the controversy surrounding a land speculation deal by Justice Minister Dalton Bales.

Political insiders figured that with all the publicity given these matters there would be a groundswell of anger against the Tories which would be reflected in the March 15 vote. But canvassing reports indicate this just isn't happening. It's not because the electorate is blasé about possible corruption; it's just that

(continued, page 11)

# North Jarvis tells province to abandon midtown office project

by Jack Solomon

After three months of secret negotiations with Queen's Park officials, the North Jarvis Community Association is calling for openness in discussion of provincial plans to construct a massive

office complex southeast of Bay and Wellesley Streets.

The association is widely circulating a 41-page brief which flatly opposes any further provincial office construction in midtown Toronto and which urges decentralization of the government's enormous administrative machinery to cities throughout the province. "The several million square feet of office space proposed for the East of Bay site," says the brief, "should be developed in Cedarwood, Thunder Bay, Cornwall and other localities throughout the province where the government has a policy of encouraging growth." Half of the two-square-block area which the province has assembled for the new development should be turned over to the City for a park, says the brief, and the other half "should be developed exclusively for residential and community services use." It says that the North Jarvis area lacks middle and low income housing, parks, community service and recreation facilities.

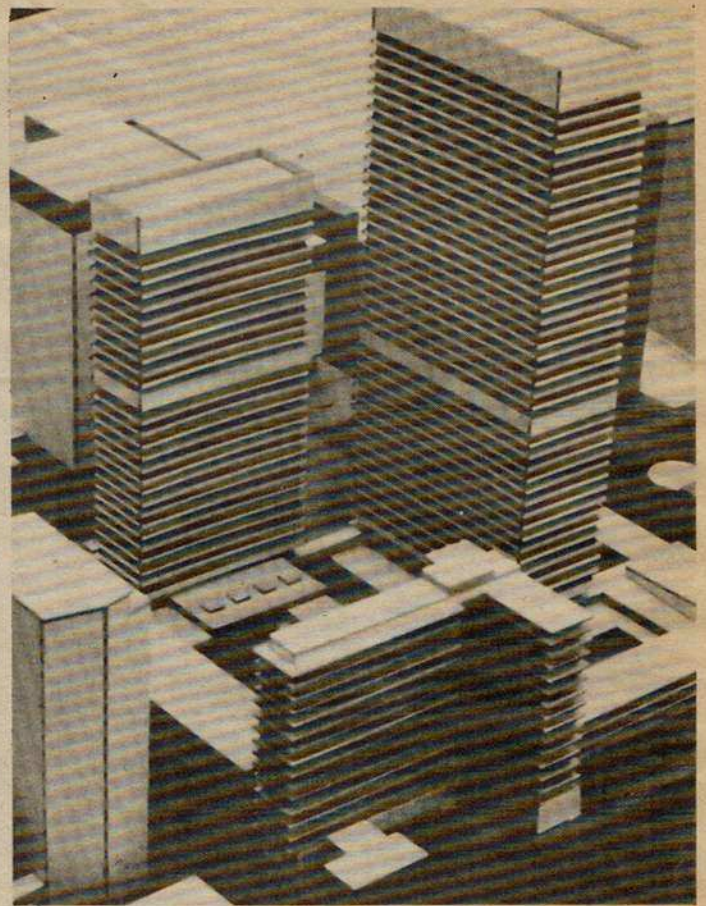
Known as the "Bay-Grosvenor-Wellesley Development", the province's plan, secret until it was revealed in the *Citizen* last October 19, is intended to centralize government operations near Queen's Park with the addition of two million square feet of office space. (According to A. E. LePage Realtor's latest survey, there is a surplus of over 4.1 million square feet of office space in Toronto at the present time.)

Three members of the North Jarvis Association — Allan Sparrow, Des Turner and Carmin Corneil — last month met with the Minister of Government Services, J. W. Snow, February 13. At the meeting, Snow agreed to send copies of the association brief to all appropriate departments and ministries for comment and to consult again with the association representatives in about two weeks. Association president Des Turner promised to go along with the minister's request for confidentiality. But a week later, without notifying the minister, the association began publicizing its brief.

When notified of this action by the *Citizen*, the minister's office expressed surprise. Snow, evidently piqued, said he had "no comment" to make on the North Jarvis brief other than to say it "is in complete conflict with the needs of the government and the criteria that have to be met."

"We have a study going on on decentralisation," the minister added. But Snow said he doubted if the government would be able to decentralize to the extent called for in the brief. At any rate, that decision would have to be made by the Premier's office in consultation with the entire cabinet, Snow said.

Roy McMurtry, Progressive-Conservative candidate in the upcoming by-election in the St. George riding in which the proposed development is located, said he had discussions with Premier Davis about scaling down the



Queen's Park's initial secret plans for the East-of-Bay development involved two 40 to 50 storey office buildings; this is a photo of the government's model of the project.

## Downtown Action Project refunded

The Downtown Action Project is operating under a new Local Initiatives Program grant this winter and spring and continues to assist Toronto community groups and individuals who want to learn about the real estate situation in their neighborhoods. The D.A.P. researches zoning, other City building and development by-laws, land ownership, and property industry activities and company structures. Its services are free. The project now has a backlog of information and experience gained working with over 100 community situations throughout the City's 11 wards.

In addition, the group plans to expand its activities into publishing studies of various developers and developments, and holding classes on how to do real estate and property industry research.

The D.A.P. is at 298-D Gerrard Street; it's phone is 924-8887.

## Bathurst-St. Clair citizen task force planned

A citizens' planning task force in the Bathurst-St. Clair area is currently in the formative phase. The task force will work with Toronto City planners in developing a plan for the future of the area bounded by St. Clair Avenue on the north, Spadina Road on the east, the C.P.R. line on the south, and Christie Street on the West.

The Bathurst-St. Clair area is the middle third of the Escarpment planning district for which the City's planning staff has prepared a preliminary report and hopes to begin a detailed plan pending Council appropriation of funds for additional staff. The Escarpment district extends, between St. Clair and the C.P.R. tracks, all the way from Yonge Street to Dufferin Street.

City Chief Planner Dennis Barker has recommended that the Bathurst-St. Clair area be planned in the context of the overall Escarpment district. Barker reported to City Council's Buildings and Development Committee, however, that "as it appears that community organizations in the central sector want priority given to this part of the study, it would be quite reasonable for the wider study to proceed, but with emphasis given to the central sector." Community groups in the eastern and western segments of the Escarpment district have not yet had an opportunity to comment on Barker's report which was submitted only last week. The B. & D. committee recommended that Barker include funds for the additional staff needed to complete the Escarpment district study in his 1973 budget estimates.

### Hope given credit

Credit for initiating discussion of the task force is generally given by Bathurst-

St. Clair spokesmen to Ward Five senior Alderman Ying Hope who brought the proposal forward at City Council in January. The task force was then temporarily deferred pending discussion by groups in the area concerned.

Ward Five junior Alderman Colin Vaughan explained why deferral might be a good idea in a letter to Hope in mid-January. "It has been suggested to me that there was some uneasiness about City Council setting up a structure for the task force and that it would be much better if the community groups in the area put forward their ideas regarding composition, structure and terms of reference."

Among the issues which people in the Bathurst-St. Clair area would like to see raised in a district planning study are:

- the impact of the northwest subway route, whether it follows a Spadina or Bathurst alignment, on the adjacent neighborhoods;

- the implications of the District Commerce Centre designation which the City's Official Plan gives the Bathurst-St. Clair intersection; District Commerce Centres are zoned for concentrated commercial development, and surrounding neighborhoods are concerned about the effects of this on their areas, particularly in respect to car traffic; one large new development is already underway at Bathurst-St. Clair, and nearby neighborhoods would like to know what else may be proposed for the intersection;

- the scarcity of parking to service the stores along St. Clair west of Bathurst; area merchants say their business suffers because of the almost total absence of parking for shoppers; they would

also like to work with the City on a beautification program for the St. Clair commercial strip west of Bathurst;

- the preservation and maintenance of undeveloped land along the Escarpment; area residents would like to see full use of potential parkland in the vicinity.

In addition, spokesmen for groups which will participate in the task force want to take a general look at City and Metro services. For example, they have heard that the T.T.C. may be planning a Christie Street bus and would like to take part in considering this decision.

The City's planners also have their own previous concerns in the Escarpment district which came to their attention during the preliminary appraisal study. For example, there is a general shortage of parkland throughout the district.

## New Karma

Another food co-op, Karma II, opened last month at 378 Queen Street near Parliament. For information call 869-0806, Fridays and Saturdays.

The Karma Co-op on Dupont Street has changed its system of membership and is offering the option to all associated members to become full members. Under the new system the co-op, which just entered its second year of operation, will have approximately 1,000 single members who will each be assessed an annual fee of \$2.00.

In order to increase its shopping budget, Karma has also set up a one-time loan fee from each member of \$5.00. Karma officials said that the co-op has just finished two very good months of operation, and with its increased shopping budget it will be able to provide additional selection for the membership.

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Chairman  
Ramsay Cook, Professor of History, York University

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CANADIAN UNITARIANISM  
—A PHOENIX?

Clayton Peterson,  
President, Canadian  
Unitarian Council

175 St. Clair Avenue West

## toronto citizen

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## HYDRO BLOCK WORKING COMMITTEE

# Grossman rejects local control, tells constituents he'll decide

by Virginia Smith

During the last provincial election campaign, Revenue Minister Allan Grossman billed himself as a friend of the little guy and told his constituents, "Communicating is what good government is all about. Communicating with people." Grossman is the sort of politician who seldom forgets a first name. He was born and raised in Cabbagetown, and, like Harry Truman, whom he quoted at a meeting last week, he is strongly flavoured with the salt of the earth.

But when members of the Hydro Block Working Committee came to Grossman's office last week, he made it clear that he was not interested in communicating with his public. He was simply listening to them before he makes critical decisions about the future of their neighborhood. The Committee was there because he is benevolent, not because it has a right to be heard and heeded. Repeating Truman's remark, he announced that "the buck stops here." Truman meant that he considered himself accountable for thorny decisions no one else wanted to make. Grossman was saying that even when citizens are eager to assume responsibility for their own community, he will not permit them to share any of his power.

The Committee, which is composed mostly of residents of the neighbourhood around the Hydro Block, came to Grossman's office February 23 to discuss the objectives they have established for redevelopment of the Southeast Spadina block bounded by Beverley, Cecil, Henry and Baldwin Streets. Grossman hedged about several of the Committee's aims and told the group that he, not a community organization, would determine the future of the block. A second advisory Committee on the block, which Grossman's office will set up within a few weeks, will include four bureaucrats, a planner, a politician, and only two members of the Hydro Block Working Committee.

The original Community Committee, which has been working on a plan for the site since last spring, drew up a policy statement in December, stressing that the redeveloped block should blend with the surrounding community — a low income, low density residential neighbourhood. Around the same time, Grossman issued a separate statement on the block which conformed in some respects with the Committee's objectives. The discussion at the meeting made it obvious that the agreement is only partial.

The Hydro Block has been a contentious issue in Southeast Spadina since 1970, when Ontario Hydro purchased all the houses on the block, intending to tear them down and construct a massive transformer station on the site. After strong local protest against the Hydro plan, Grossman, then the Minister of Trade and Development, announced right before the 1971 provincial election that Hydro could not build in the area and that the Ontario Housing Corporation would purchase the site. Grossman is the minister in charge of OHC and is the MPP for St. Andrew-St. Patrick riding, where the Hydro Block is located. OHC negotiated with Hydro for several months, and the sale was finally completed early this year.

After such an extended government delay, Grossman is now eager to end citizen discussions of the block and begin rebuilding as soon as possible. He has stated that final decisions on the future of the block must be made by May 31.

At the meeting, Grossman implied that local discussion, not the provincial bureaucracy, has been holding up action on the site. "There are some here who don't want to get anything done, but who want to keep up a perpetual debate," Grossman said. "Let's get the damn thing built; we're not going to build it on meetings."

Grossman also emphasized that citizen participation in neighborhood issues like the Hydro Block means citizen discussion, nothing more. All power still rests with the government. "No one has to tell me about citizen participation. I'm the guy who invented it," he said. But he warned that "you can only

go so far." Discussion is fine, but "someone has to make a decision after the discussion and the decision has to be made by OHC."

When Kay Parsons, vice-chairman of the Working Committee, complained that the Committee has found it difficult to communicate with Grossman for the past two years and that "since 1970, we've got no real answers to our questions," Grossman replied that "I've made public statements about what we had in mind." Wes Lore, Chairman of the Hydro Block Committee, maintained that there "simply hasn't been a flow of information."

Twice during the meeting, Grossman warned the Committee that OHC may give up on the block if local discussion delays quick implementation of the Corporation's plans. "It might be easier for the City to take the block," said Grossman. "If it goes on long enough, we may have to say that we can't satisfy the people here." Ward Six Alderman Dan Heap, who attended the meeting, said that he would be glad to bring up the subject at City Council, but Grossman hastily withdrew the suggestion.

Grossman could not assure the Committee that some of its most important aims would be fulfilled. The Committee's policy statement calls for housing "available at rents and prices within reach of people now living in the surrounding community, that is, people of low and moderate income." Grossman warned the Committee that if they

insist on low income housing for the whole block, "you'll have to be responsible for perpetrating a philosophy." The block "may end up a ghetto."

The price of future accommodation in the area is closely tied to the cost of land on the Hydro Block. An OHC representative told City Council's Urban Renewal Committee that the Corporation had paid in excess of \$2 million for the block. Grossman said that OHC paid Hydro about \$500,000 less than Hydro had paid for it. Frank French, an OHC official who sometimes attends Working Committee meetings, said that the Corporation will not write off the cost of the land, and that a unit on the block might cost as much as \$65,000. If rents on the block are kept down, he said it will be through direct subsidies. Lore said that the price of land on the Hydro Block is higher than it is in the rest of the area, while Grossman insisted that "the price of land has not been increased by the activities of OHC and Hydro." Lore offered to do an appraisal of the neighborhood to prove his point.

The Working Committee has also recommended that "housing on the Block should be available for sale to owner-occupants and for rent to both families and roomers." French said that he's not sure if units can be sold, and he said, "We won't be able to satisfy you now on this point."

The Committee has asked that the housing be available first to the block's present tenants and to residents of the

## Hospital expansion raises local health care issues

The fight about the expansion of Toronto Western Hospital, at Dundas and Bathurst Streets, has grown from an argument about enlarging the Hospital's physical plant to a discussion of medical services in the City as a whole. New construction on Toronto Western's present site raises questions which only the province, which funds health care services, can answer. City Council Executive February 28 approved a letter to Premier William Davis, drafted by Ward Six Alderman Dan Heap and Chief Planner Dennis Barker, requesting a municipal-provincial meeting about the City's medical facilities.

In 1971, Toronto Western applied to the City for permission to build a larger facility on its present site. Because the area surrounding the hospital is zoned low density residential in Toronto's Official Plan, the Planning Board asked its staff to do a detailed planning study of the Hospital before it judged the expansion plans.

The planning staff held a series of public meetings in the area last year, and it became clear that some residents were worried about much more than simply the hospital's physical expansion. Many were concerned about the scarcity of community health care services provided by Western and probed the Hospital's relationship with the surrounding neighborhood. If a hospital spends \$45 million on an expansion program, many concluded, the people living near it should at least be able to expect improved medical services. Hospital doctors and board members never dealt with these objections to the community's satisfaction and the planning staff found itself trying to cope with social questions beyond its competence. City planner Peter Marcelline says that he came away from each meeting "feeling more and more frustrated."

The planning staff will complete its final report on the expansion in about a month, and "it's going to be recommending that the necessary rezoning for the expansion should be approved," says Marcelline. "We have no arguments to say that it shouldn't be approved. The Hospital has bent over backwards" according to Marcelline, to comply with the planners' requests about the design of the physical plant. But the whole problem of community oriented facilities "is still an open question," and the report will "note the question of health care, which can only be resolved at the provincial level."

The planners have convinced the Hospital to come up with a more attractive, slightly less intrusive development than it had originally planned, but the expanded hospital, if it is built, will tower over the area and offer little in return for its damage to the surrounding community. Rose Smith of Sussex-Ulster calls the expansion "a massive assault on a neighborhood."

Toronto Western Hospital is a teaching and research hospital, and its representatives have said several times that it serves a wider community than downtown Toronto. But breakthroughs in medical science are little comfort to families living near the hospital, who look to it for medical treatment simply because of its proximity.

When pressed, Hospital representatives point out that the expanded Hospital will include a Family Practice Unit and a community dental care clinic. But the Family Practice Unit already operates outside the hospital, and many residents have attributed the Clinic's relative success to its remoteness from the forbidding institutional premises. These community facilities will account for a mere five percent of the expanded space in the new Hospital.

Downtown Toronto is already crowded with teaching hospitals — Toronto General, Mount Sinai, Wellesley, Sick Children's, Sunnybrook, St. Michael's, Women's College, while community hospitals tend to be located in Metro's outlying areas, according to Marcelline. Many critics of the expansion wonder if the downtown hospitals need an addition to their already handsome teaching and research facilities. One medical student says the research facilities at the University of Toronto's new medical science building are far from overburdened. They are especially curious about the justification for the expansion at a time when the province is drastically cutting back its grants to hospitals.

Only the province knows the answers, and the City Executive's letter asks for detailed information on provincial plans for medical care in Toronto. Davis is questioned, among other things, about his government's long term plans to coordinate hospital facilities and health care delivery services in the City, and he is asked for justification of expansion programs like Western's which are being carried out before a full assessment of Metro's needs has been completed.



Allan Grossman: "No one has to tell me about citizen participation. I'm the guy who invented it."

Southeast Spadina area. Grossman said that "keeping it in the neighborhood would be illegal discrimination" and that the OHC system is based on need. He would "love to set up an ideal little community with my own people, but OHC has got to think of all the people." The Committee, in his view, is hoping to "set up an exclusive little enclave and saying, in effect, 'we don't care how much it's going to cost the taxpayer'."

During the next few weeks a Hydro Block Technical Steering Committee will be set up, whose objectives, French told the Committee, will be "to distill what has happened over the past two years, identify the problems, and determine how to meet your and my objectives. We endorse your objectives," said French, "but not all can be achieved." The Steering Committee will be composed of three OHC representatives; a member of the City Planning Department; a representative of the federal government's Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation; William Archer, Ward Six's senior alderman;

and two members of the Hydro Block Working Committee. When Lore asked why Dan Heap, the Ward's junior alderman, could not sit on the Steering Committee, Grossman replied that "you'll have to leave that to our good judgment." French said that Steering Committee meetings, like other OHC committee meetings, will not be open to the public. When asked about the powers of the Technical Steering Committee, Grossman said that its function "will be to advise. It will only recommend. It has no legal power to put anything in force."

Grossman concluded his remarks with the statement that "I am looking forward to this project as a great tribute to OHC and myself as well as to the people."

During the past few weeks, several Toronto organizations including the Urban Renewal Committee, the Annex Ratepayers and the Sussex-Ulster Residents' Association have endorsed the Hydro Block Working Committee Policy Statement. Readers who are interested in endorsing the statement may contact Parsons at 364-9133.



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# Federation of Ward 5 groups founded

Citizen group participation entered a new phase in midtown last month when a plan to create a federation of organizations in Ward Five received approval in principle.

The action was taken February 22 at the second of a series of meetings to discuss ways of achieving more active resident involvement in the municipal political process. A near-unanimous vote of about 35 ward residents, including representatives from 20 ward groups, approved the federation plan. They also decided that, while their next meeting will again be opened to all ward residents, only delegates from groups which qualify to join the federation will have voting rights. Federation membership will be open to any residents' group, businessmen's associations, community groups, home and school associations and churches active in the ward.



Jack Granatstein, of the Avenue-Bay-Cottingham residents' group, one of the founders of the Ward Five federation.

The meeting proceeded with its business only after a motion to postpone indefinitely the evening's agenda had been defeated. A group of ward residents opposed to a federation urged that proper notice of the meeting had not been given to all eligible voters in the ward and, accordingly, the meeting could not call itself a Ward Five meeting and claim to be representing the ward. They said that the federation, as a coalition of groups, would discriminate against the democratic rights of people who are not members of groups and have

no wish to join them.

Those who favored going ahead with the evening's business replied that the federation steering committee had notified every organization in the ward it could find of the meeting — more than 30 community groups and about three dozen churches — and that if the various organizations in Ward Five wanted to federate it was their right to do so.

#### No formal power

The federation would have no formal political power, its proponents argued, and the people in the ward who do have formal power, the aldermen, are free to assess the political importance of a federation decision any way they choose. If they make the mistake of thinking the federation is far more or far less representative of ward opinion than it is, they will find out at election time.

The motion to postpone the agenda was defeated 27-14. Several of the losing side left the meeting shortly afterward and were not present for later votes. About ten of the 50 people present did not vote on the motion.

In other decisions the meeting supported the idea of ward forums at which aldermen and ward residents could exchange ideas and information; changed the term "Ward Council" to "Ward Organization" on its official papers because of some feeling that the word "council" defined the federation too closely at this stage; and defeated a motion that would have limited participation in the federation to ward residents — while voting will be limited to ward

groups, anyone who thinks they have something to say to the federation may speak at meetings on the same basis as voting delegates.

## DRAFT PROPOSALS FOR MARCH DEBATE

The Ward Five federation steering committee had prepared an eight-point agenda on the structure of the federation for discussion at the February 22 meeting. The meeting, however, debated and passed only one of these; the others were deferred until the next meeting, to be held in late March, pending discussion of them by ward groups and the selection of interim delegates from these groups to the next meeting. Members of the public may also speak at the March meeting.

The item which was passed February 22 was the first on the steering committee's agenda; the subsequent seven are those which the next meeting will debate:

- 1) Membership in the Organization is open to residents' groups, businessmen's associations, community groups, home and school associations and churches active in Ward Five.
- 2) All meetings will be open to the public and press, and any person present may speak on any matter.
- 3) Voting at the Organization will be by groups (i.e., the Vermont Square Residents' Association would have one vote, as would the Therafields community, the Unitarian Church and the Yonge-Bay-Bloor Businessmen's Association).
- 4) Meetings will be held on a regular date each month, the site for the meetings shifting to various parts of the ward.
- 5) There will be an executive, consisting of a chairman and four vice-chairmen. One vice-chairman will act as secretary and another as treasurer. The vice-chairmen shall be selected to be representative, as far as possible, of the different areas of the ward and the backgrounds of the people in it.
- 6) Dues to be fixed by the Organization will be assessed on member groups.
- 7) The Organization will create committees to examine and report on certain matters as it so chooses.
- 8) The aldermen and Board of Education trustees will be ex-officio members of the Organization but will have no vote on questions under discussion.

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## Vocational school class bias acknowledged at public meeting

by Ellen Murray

There was consensus among most speakers at last Monday's general public meeting about vocational schools on one point: vocational schools reflect and perpetuate a class system. That point hadn't been so clearly made or strongly supported at meetings which the City Board of Education's special Work Group on Vocational Schools had held previously. These meetings had been with vocational school administrators, teachers and students, and a handful of parents who turned out at a couple of evening sessions. The assertion of class bias in Toronto schools has also been hotly debated by Board officials, although it's reported as fact in the Board's own Research Report No. 102 on vocational schools.

The general public meeting was the midway point for the Work Group in its travels to the City's six vocational schools. The Group had been set up by the Board in February to assess the philosophy and performance of vocational schools and recommend changes (see the *Citizen*, February 23). Staffing the Work Group are trustees Vern Copeland (Ward Eleven), Dan Leckie (Ward Six), James Bonham (Ward Ten), Doug Barr and Gord Cressy (Ward Seven), and administrative officials Don Rutledge and J. L. Williams.

Most speakers at last week's meeting said that better training in basic skills — reading, writing, self-expression — was essential in vocational school change. Many also insisted that training in "marketable" work skills was necessary. The philosophy now guiding vocational schools stresses instead development of "proper work habits." There was considerable divergence over other steps which should be taken, and underlying this divergence was the question of what school should be helping working class students to do. Should it assist these students in moving up to the middle class? Or should it teach them to challenge the class system itself?

#### Lying to students

This latter view was put forth by George Martell and Bob Davis. Martell is editor of *This Magazine* is about Schools and has long worked with community/school groups in Ward Seven. Davis was involved with *This Magazine* and now teaches at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. They said that

programs with working class students which concentrated on making them feel better — which existed to improve their "self-image" or simply abolished vocational schools — were just lying to these students about their chance of a good life and were weakening their chances of ever getting one. Rather, they argued for a program which would make these students literate and skilled workers who have the ability to effectively challenge an economic system which makes unemployment necessary. "It's better to have a literate, highly trained mechanic who can't get a job," said Martell, "because he'll turn his anger outward, where it belongs . . . If a kid goes out on the streets without any skills and is jobless, he'll blame himself."

Martell made several specific suggestions:

- 1) development of standards of performance by teachers, parents and students at a school, standards which have a realistic base in the world outside school so a student would know what his job chances after school would be;
  - 2) smaller pupil-teacher ratios in schools, especially primary schools, with working class populations;
  - 3) Hiring teachers "who understand working class oppression and work to fight it";
  - 4) a curriculum relevant to these students — for example, study of neighborhood history or the history of Canadian trade unions.
- Other speakers didn't seem inclined to attack the class system so frontally. Many wanted to abolish vocational schools and integrate their students into other programs, or to offer those students a wider choice of courses. Some wanted better liaison between the schools and industry so that courses could be related more directly to jobs and students given better information to plan their courses. A special course was suggested to teach students to use leisure time and practical skills needed in everyday life as opposed to work. Another special course was suggested to teach self-confidence and skills in working with other people.

#### Protein content

Fiona Nelson, trustee from Ward Five, told the work group that her research reading had convinced her that development of intellectual potential was highly related to the protein content

of the mother's diet. She suggested that the Board might work with the Board of Health to provide protein supplements to pregnant women who couldn't afford them, and to identify other health problems related to school performance early.

Director of COSTI, an Italian social services organization, Bob Marino was especially disturbed at the large numbers of ethnic students in vocational schools. He proposed that the Board reconsider a plan put before them last year whereby students from non-English speaking homes would begin school with instruction in their native language. English instruction would begin in Grade Three, and by Grade Eight most classes would be in English.

Ralph Cook, who had been a citizen member of the defunct Advisory-Vocational Committee which was responsible for vocational schools, challenged the idea that vocational schools should be teaching work skills at all. "That training is the responsibility of the employer, a business cost which should be borne by him." He suggested that the Board should be pressuring business to accept more of this responsibility.

The students of vocational schools were not much in evidence at the meeting, but there was one instance in which students' and an administrator's views of their school emerged and clashed head-on. Jim Nolan, department head of English at Eastdale vocational, told the committee that students liked and felt loyalty to their school, and he described a reading program he had instituted which brought about dramatic improvement in reading scores. Later a *Community Schools* worker played a tape on which several Eastdale students talked about their school. "I'm a lot less stupid outside of school than I am in it . . . They make you think you're stupid," said one girl. Another said, "I've asked my teachers over and over to teach me some things, and they just won't . . . but I wouldn't leave . . . The girls that leave just get married and have babies, or get factory jobs that pay hardly anything."

The work group plans to have an interim report out on March 16 and have discussion of it at a special Board Meeting March 26.



**Thursday March 15 is election day in St. George**

Margaret Campbell has devoted all of her great energy and ability to this community for years. As Alderman, Controller and Family Court Judge she has brought honour to herself and to the community. She has been described as "the founder and spiritual leader of the reform movement in this city".

Margaret Campbell asks for your support in St. George because of her profound concern that the government at Queen's Park has divorced itself from the people. When she speaks they will listen.

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# Council struggles to become a government

Something is wrong at City Hall — something which is hard to grab hold of, something of which Council's blundering waste of time last Wednesday is a symptom, something that creates a situation in which a reform alderman, Colin Vaughan, comments in a speech at a reform-dominated Council, "This Council is making an ass of itself."

Vaughan's remarks came in the midst of a two-hour debate which shouldn't have happened. More or less, the debate was about how Council should process applicants for positions on the Hydro Commission — whether each alderman should be asked to name only one nominee or should be allowed to nominate as many candidates as the alderman chooses; and how Council will be able to adequately interview all the candidates if more than a dozen or a dozen and a half are nominated; and by what process Council ought to pick people for posts generally. Council did make an ass of itself, floundered apparently helplessly.

And the thing of it was that Council had writhed through the same morass earlier this year in relation to other

appointments. But they went at it again — some talked, others sat in patient, useless silence or went away to do a bit of paperwork. I recalled college days several years ago when, as student council reporter, I watched the mountains of undergraduate government labor to bring forth a mouse.

## Hither and yon

The question of how appointments should be made is a matter of Council policy which ought to be hashed out by a sub-committee of Council's standing committee that deals with legislation and Council procedure. But this wasn't done, and several members spent valuable time in verbal meanderings hither and yon while the public and the press waited for items on the agenda about Windlass, the widening of Dundas Street, development control and fighting the Spadina subway route.

If appointments were the only issue on which Council seemed rudderless, it would just be annoying, not disturbing. But since January, Council's regular meetings have frequently been confusing and dull, have diddled with trivia. With the exception of the debates about

Gothic-Quebec, it is difficult to recall an occasion when Council has sustained for more than a short while a discussion of major issues, policy, principles, ideology — the things we expect Council to talk about in formal meetings.

Too often, time has fluttered away by the hour while aldermen talk about things that should be resolved elsewhere. The situation has not been as it was last Council when the bulk of the debating time consisted of the opposition side hammering away at the government side. The opposition this time, which seems to be William Archer, George Ben, Fred Beavis, Joe Piccininni and Paul Pickett, has not been chewing up the bulk of discussion time in coherent attacks on the government side. Mostly what goes on, from left, right and middle, is scattergun and politically insignificant.

Readers will want me to name names, but it's not like that, not a problem of individuals. The problem with both sides of the house is that they haven't successfully articulated their working policy as groups and don't, with the passage of weeks, seem to be coming any

closer, don't seem to be maturing in their roles.

## Lame and muddled

The opposition side, Archer notwithstanding, has been lame and muddled, hasn't, to my mind, launched one successful major attack on the government. They snipe away blindly, and a critique of the principal institution on the government side, the Executive Committee, is carried out from issue to issue by government-side aldermen.

But it's the government side which is more disappointing because those of us who tend to support it as citizens expect, I think, more from it than we're getting. We expect a *government* — not a group of now-and-again, more-or-less, like-minded aldermen who somehow manage to hang onto the reins of the civic bureaucracy, who manage to get isolated "reform" jobs done by playing Ken Dryden to the slap-shots of Metro, the senior levels of government, the property industry and other villains of the piece.

Lots of good things are getting done at City Hall by the reform majority these days; we've been writing about them since January. But the fooling around

that has gone on in Council — while 15 or 20 \$25,000-a-year commissioners sit on the sidelines wanting to slit a few aldermanic throats and get back to their departments; while the daily paper reporters doodle in the gallery waiting for something, anything, to hang a headline on; while the public in the bleachers slowly drifts away, wanly disappointed with their shiny new Council — suggests something is jarringly out of tune.

## Clearing debris

More sensible use of the committee system and the option of referring items back to committee is one way to clear the debris from Council. Another would be to develop a caucusing system which would minimize misunderstanding and generate dependable lines of communication among aldermen. Making an effort to clarify the progress of policies and charging particular aldermen with responsibility for each policy area — an informal cabinet system, if you want — may be another.

The Council faces an enormous chore trying to stay on top of its job, trying to cope with the massive quantity of material with which it is supposed to deal, a mind-boggling flow of detail. As a new Council, we expect it to be a little bowled over at first, while it gets a feel for the thing. But as the "new" Council becomes just Council, it ought to grow in stature — more quickly than this Council seems to be, perhaps still flushed with December's electoral victory. What's wanted is a government, one which can go to the polls in 1974 and say, "This is the program we developed as an idea and have begun to accomplish as a politics."

## Something very right

Although something is wrong at City Hall in terms of Council's ability, to date, to get itself together, something is very right in terms of the direction in which a working majority's common instinct is leading the City's government. The 11 aldermen who supported the repeal of the Gothic-Quebec by-law — Elizabeth Eayrs, Archie Chisholm, Mike Goldrick, Ying Hope, Vaughan, Dan Heap, Karl Jaffary, John Sewell, Dorothy Thomas, William Kilbourn and Anne Johnston — illustrated with that vote they are not going to be intimidated by threats of the powerful economic interests which have dominated Toronto and will dominate Ontario until the PC's are sent packing — about as likely right now as baseball weather tomorrow. In their support of the Gothic-Quebec community, in the face of threats of outrageous lawsuits and heavy-handed legal machinations, these 11 simply and quietly defied the powers-that-be in our society. The price of this insubordination will be well-funded, skillfully organized campaigns to get them out of office in 1974, if nothing else.

These 11 plus one from among Mayor David Crombie, Ed Negridge, Art Eggleton, Reid Scott and David Smith, all of whom can often be counted on to support the gentler thrust of "reform", are a majority. And these sorts of odds are a shock to the interests which have run rampant in Toronto for more than 20 years, since the modern "boomtown" era began.

In an objection to Council's strict new by-law to control apartment-hotels, a developer wrote to Council, "It does not seem to me to be just . . . to now change the zoning designation to one which would drastically reduce the value of the Company's lands, at least not without adequate compensation. To inflict such a loss on a Company . . . without adequate compensation is not in character with democracy as we know it in this City, Province or Country. If this loss is allowed to happen, I fear that the stability that the City of Toronto enjoys will be forever shaken."

The developer is quite right. A majority of this Council is not prepared to accept the character of democracy as we have known it. The stability of Toronto's politics as it has been *may* be forever shaken. This is precisely what supporters of the incumbent majority hope will occur. Democracy as we have known it has meant that most of us carry our garbage to the curb while paying tax dollars so that residents of Rosedale can have theirs carried for them.

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### McMURTRY THE MAN

- born Toronto 1939, married, 6 children
- graduate of U of T, honour degree in history, Varsity Blues football captain, Student Administration Council Honour Award
- Frontier College labourer-teacher, working as railway labourer during day, teaching at night
- trial lawyer, Queen's Counsel
- former Crown Attorney, presently special counsel to Metro Police Department
- founding director of St. Leonard's halfway house Toronto, for rehabilitation of former inmates
- director of Committee for Compensation of Innocent
- member of County of York Legal Aid Committee
- member of Ontario Medical-Legal Council
- vice-chairman of Ontario College of Art
- president of Oriole Park Ratepayers Association
- chairman of policy committee for Premier William Davis in 1971 Ontario provincial election
- highly commended during last year for representation of Metro Police during inquiry into Kosygin visit riot and for establishing innocence of Ronald Shatford, wrongly convicted of armed robbery and serving 15 year prison sentence

"I believe it is the role of the Progressive Conservative to restore the dignity of the individual not only by encouraging individual initiative but by demanding that the bureaucratic structures at all levels involve the people who are going to be affected by their decisions.

"I therefore wish to make it abundantly clear that if I am to be the member for St. George, I will not simply be the representative of the government in St. George, but rather, the spokesman for the people of St. George."

From Nomination Speech, Feb. 15, 1973

#### Mayor David Crombie

"In the recent municipal elections, Conservatives, Liberals, New Democrats and Independents all united in a drive to improve the quality of life in this city.

"One of the issues which struck a responsive chord was that Toronto needs to be heard at the other levels of government.

"Roy McMurry has been a friend of mine for many years so I know as a fact that his voice will be a powerful and effective one."

#### Syd Brown, Pres., Police Association of Ontario

"I think Roy McMurry has always shown

good judgment in balancing the rights of the individual with the needs of the law enforcement agency. People need such fair and honest representation."

#### John Belanger, Broadcaster, journalist

"I'm endorsing Roy McMurry because... he is a man who understands people, who knows how to get things done, who knows how to sift through the tangle of bureaucracy to arrive at solutions—solutions for people. What really stands out about him is his compassion and concern for people caught in injustice. I'd support him no matter what party he belonged to."

#### Vera Bissett, Pres., Montreal Building, St. James Town Tenants Association

"Roy McMurry's record speaks for itself. We have many aims in common for the betterment of the community. And he has been instrumental in helping us obtain much needed health services in our OHC building."

#### Ron Haggart, Broadcaster, Journalist

"Roy is a man of action and, in the Shatford case, he fought long and hard to correct a serious miscarriage of justice. I believe a concerned person like Roy McMurry is needed in Queen's Park."

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**Fraser Kelly, Toronto Star:** "McMurry is a 40-year-old lawyer with bundles of ability. If he wins the nomination... he'll likely win the seat."

**Norman Webster, Globe and Mail:** "He (McMurry) would likely not warm the back-benches very long if he won the seat."

**Editorial, Toronto Sun:** "We think Roy McMurry is cabinet material, and for the province's sake we hope he gets his chance."

# He can do more for you.

## P.C.—ST. GEORGE · MARCH 15<sup>TH</sup>

White collar workers, the largest and most rapidly growing part of the Canadian labor force, will increasingly become involved in conflict with management in coming years as unions enter and organize in the white collar sector. Earlier this year the Canadian Labor Congress began an organizing campaign in Toronto in a major effort to develop a collective consciousness and the basis for unionization among white collar workers.

The article which follows is the first of a two-part **Citizen** series on white collar workers and unions. Written by two C.Y.C. workers who spent four months doing extensive research among and about white collar workers, it sets out the overall current situation of white collar worker-management relations. In the next issue a **Citizen** writer will report on the initial phase of the C.L.C.'s organizing campaign.

by J. Porter Perry  
and Lou Arling

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Life in a modern office is not what it appears to be. Under the thin veneer of lush carpets, colored furniture and soft muzak exists a wide range of alienating and oppressive conditions that make office workers one of the most disadvantaged groups in Canada's work force. Before the turn of the century, the job of the clerk or the secretary was no lucrative sinecure, but, by the standards of the day, their positions were economically and socially more comfortable than those of their contemporaries who toiled in factories or on the land. But since 1900, white collar workers have experienced a series of transformations in the nature of their work and in their overall social and economic positions. Today's office workers, now part of the largest and fastest growing group in the work force, don't have to look very far to find other workers getting a better deal than they are. And if present trends continue into the future, the conditions that the white collar worker now faces every day threaten to deteriorate even further.

Documentation of the life of the early Canadian office worker is scant, but it is possible to construct a general picture. By the time of confederation, only 12% of the people of British North America lived in urban centers with a population of 5,000 or more. In his book *Unequal Union*, Stanley Ryerson provides a rough breakdown of occupations in 1871: 51% of the population was engaged in farming, lumbering and fishing (the primary sectors); 13% in manufacturing and handicrafts; and 18% in trade and commerce, transportation, government, education, finance, professions, personal and all other services. Office industries, such as banking and insurance, were still in embryonic stages. For example, in 1868, there were only 123 branch banks in Canada, and by 1875 only 26 life insurance offices. By comparison, there were 38,898 manufacturing industries in 1870.

The small number of white collar workers in this early period considered themselves to be middle class, or at least a step or two above the manual workers. The late C. Wright Mills, in *White Collar*, his probing study of the American middle classes, notes that the relatively high economic and social status of American white collar occupation groups in 1890 was based on the fact that they earned about double that of wage or industrial workers.

#### Bob Cratchet

An experienced bookkeeper in Canada in the 1880's or 1890's was also able to command a fairly decent wage for he was indispensable to the functioning of any office. Dicken's Bob Cratchet, the timeless prototype of such men, may have enjoyed more status than his contemporaries ill-fated to mines or factories. He probably also had more personal contact with his employer, identifying with him more closely than the wage worker would with his employer. But Wright Mills makes it quite clear that the bookkeeper's life was no holiday. "His real pride was in his ability to add a column of figures accurately and rapidly. In spite of this accomplishment, however, he seldom, if ever, left his ledgers for a more promising position. His mind was atrophied by that destroying, hopeless influence of drudgery and routine work."

In 1889, a Canadian Royal Commission investigating the relationship of labor and capital tried to avoid sully-

ing the middle class morality surrounding the office worker, but it couldn't prevent office conditions from coming to light. Women, who around the time of the investigation held only 8% of the jobs in trade and finance, and only 14% of the clerical jobs, testified about the injustices they suffered. Female sales clerks in Montreal dressmaker's shops told of how they often worked from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 or 11:30 p.m., with little opportunity to sit and rest, to satisfy the fashion whims of the wealthy. And when a female clerk in a dry goods establishment told of her low wages, her employer explained that women workers "are of very little use when they begin work and consequently get very little pay; they have to be taught; I do not think any of them get more than \$2.00 or \$2.50 a week." Many of the same employers also engaged child labour in their offices under a training system that paid the child nothing the first year and 25c to 50c a week the second year.

#### 18 hour days

Testimonies from male office workers, also found in the Royal Commission's Report, leave one wondering how they ever got time to take advantage of their good pay and social position. One clerk, for example, in the office of a St. John ship chandlery business complained "The hours in our business are pretty long, sometimes. When we are required we have to turn out at four in the morning and sometimes we have to work until 10 and 11 at night."

One of the few penetrating descriptions of how Canadian office workers in the 1900 period actually spent their day is J. P. Buschlen's novel, *The Canadian Bankclerk*. Published in 1913, its characters give muckracking accounts of their ordeal in the banks of that time:

"There's no difference between one post and another — except in the amount of work done, and of energy wasted. It's all a matter of getting into a rut and plugging along there, like a ploughman. A fellow needs certain qualifications like accuracy, speed, and a rhinoceros' constitution, but what is there to it, from the standpoint of prospects? Nothing — except work. I began in this very office 25 years ago. I'm just where I started. I've been going around in a circle. That's banking!"

Buschlen describes the plight of a teller:

"The poor teller was short in cash. Bundles were piled almost to the top of the cage; he snatched them up one by one and ran through them. He had a sore hand, too; it had been poisoned by infectious money. Two weeks later, when the teller had returned from sick leave, head office refused to pay his doctor's bill, insinuating that the poison might be something else!"

#### Escaping drudgery

Clerks' attempts to try to escape the drudgery of banking are also recounted, giving us an idea of what their middle class world was actually like:

"The strain of daily work was severe; one could not think of spending the evenings with a book — that was too much like more work. What one needed was something with many laughs, a few cigarettes, and the company of other bank clerks. But where did bank clerks, on salaries varying from \$300 to \$800 congregate? At clubs? In the drawing rooms of society? Under the white lights of theatre facades? No — in a shabby, lonely room somewhere, where a nickle looked like two bits."

With the growth and centralization of "office industries", especially in finance and insurance, the office worker's world started undergoing major transformations around 1900. Leo Johnson, a Canadian economic historian, points out in his article "The Development of Class in Canada" that the white collar sector grew most rapidly from 1901 to 1921, expanding its portion of the non-primary work force from 29.3% to 43.6%. A parallel trend is the decline in the manual sector from 47.6% of the total non-primary work force in 1901 to 37.5% in 1921. These growth patterns were reversed slightly in the 1921 to 1941 period, but by 1961 the white collar sector had regained its 1921 level. In fact, by 1961 Canada had become a predominately white collar society.

The majority of these new white collar workers have been absorbed by the service sector of the economy. This sector has created 90% of the new jobs since World War II and is growing at a propor-

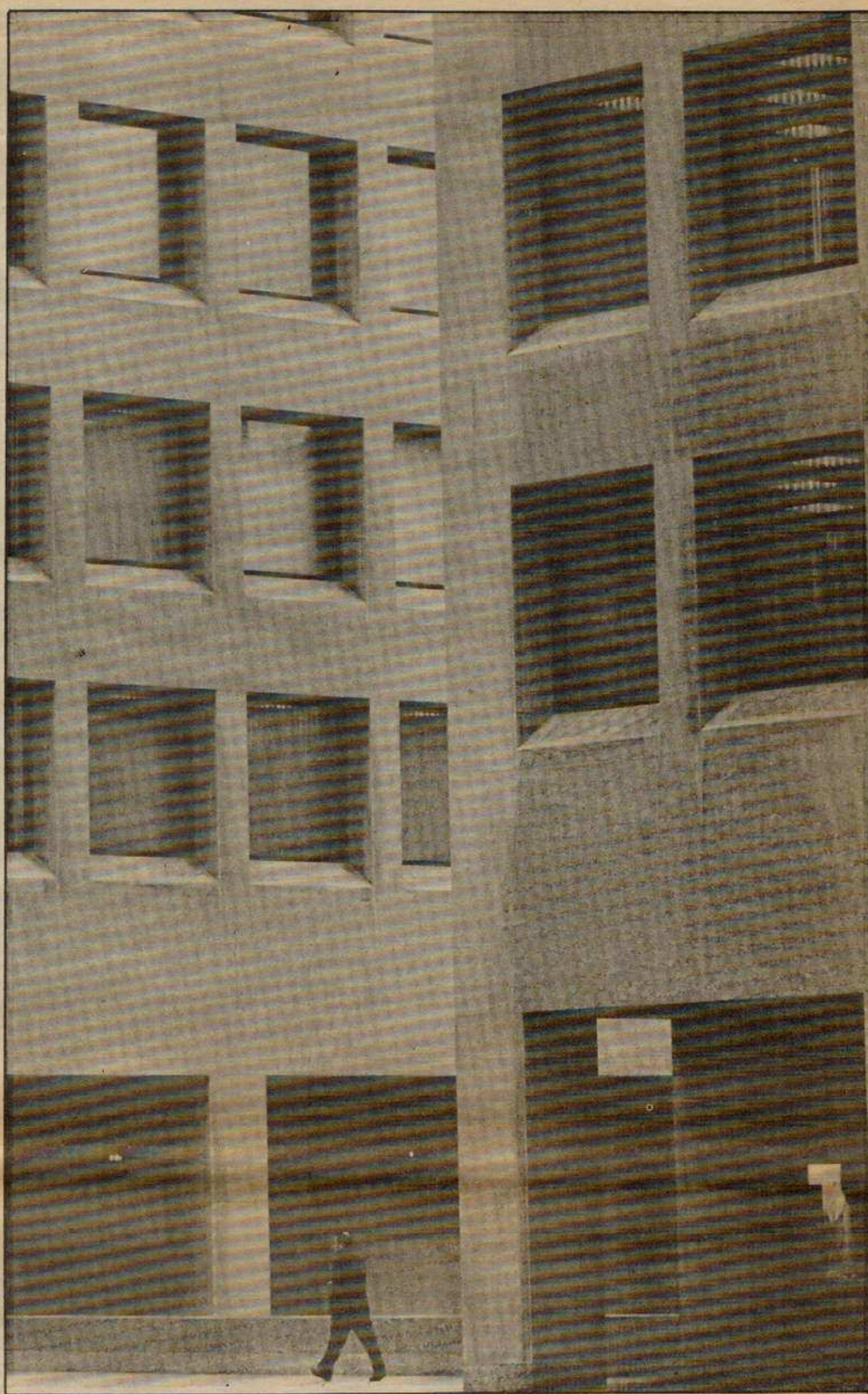


photo: Jack McLeod

tionally greater rate than the industrial and manufacturing sectors of our economy.

#### Little consolation

This offers little consolation, for in times of economic trouble, the service sector experiences severe unemployment. The Canadian Press, for example, reported on October 21, 1970, that unemployment had grown most rapidly that year among office, professional workers and those employed in the service and recreation industries.

Also contributing to the trend towards a service economy in Canada is the process of "deindustrialization" which has been documented by the Ontario Federation of Labour's 1971 Shutdown study and a follow-up study in 1972 by the Ontario Waffle. This process involves the loss of industrial jobs when American based multinational corporations move their Canadian branches back home to comply with their country's new economic policies.

The tremendous growth of the white collar work force needs an important qualifier placed on it, for this growth has not occurred across the board. What has actually happened, according to Leo Johnson, is that the only group of white collar workers to expand significantly since 1901 is the clerical workers. Other groups, such as proprietary, managerial, professional and technical, have experienced stability or average growth rates. In other words, there's ample opportunity for employment at the bottom of the pyramid, but little hope of getting anywhere near the top.

A closer scrutiny of the clerical jobs reveals the fact that, in 1969, 70% of them were held by women. So with their

rapid post-war entry into the labour force, women have provided white collar industries with an ever-ready army of workers to fill low-paying, unskilled and semi-skilled jobs. In just 20 years the participation of women in Ontario's labour force has increased 10%, from 23% in 1950 to 33% in 1970.

Probably the main reason for the growing numbers of working women is the steady economic squeeze experienced by the lower half of Canada's income earners. Married women often have little choice but to take a job to help make ends meet, as attested to when their participation in Canada's labour force grew from 11% in 1951 to 32% in 1970. And many other women, 38% of those employed in Ontario to be exact, are the sole supporters of their families.

#### Women and automation

Thus far, we have established that the white collar sector is expanding, but mostly in the area of clerical jobs which are filled by the swelling numbers of female workers. Most new jobs are unskilled and low paying, and regardless of a worker's experience his or her chances of breaking into management ranks get slimmer every day. Now when one further factor is added — that automation has been an ever-growing undercurrent since World War II — we can outline with a good degree of accuracy a future scenario for office workers.

But first, the process of automation in offices should be placed in a historical perspective. Typewriters started becoming common office equipment in the 1880's. In the 1920's, job specialization and centralization resulted in teams of clerks working row upon row, and the

emergence of the now ubiquitous office manager. Yet the use of machines other than typewriters was minimal. Then, in the forties, technology really got a foothold. "World War II," wrote Wright Mills, "gave the real impetus to office technology; the pre-war rate of office machines sales was about \$270 million; by 1948 it was grossing one billion dollars." This, of course, refers to the American experience but it also describes what happened in Canada.

In the 1960's white collar industries found that with the efficient application of computers they could automate most routine jobs, cutting payrolls in the process. A study prepared for the 1968 Woods' Task Force on Labour Relations states that automation will cause a rising unemployment rate as it eliminates office jobs among white collar workers. And now that companies are beginning to recruit for management positions exclusively among university graduates, lower level employees lose their last chances for mobility. The future of the white collar employee is best expressed by Leo Johnson, who concludes, "It would seem, therefore, that the process of proletarianization — through automation that destroyed the crafts workers in the 19th century may be repeated among the white collar worker in the 20th."

#### \$70 to \$75 weekly

Evidence of this process is most readily found in the wages of office workers today. Filing clerks and clerk-typists in Toronto life insurance companies, which, by the way, have the best wages and benefits in the industry, start at \$70 to \$75 a week and look forward to making a maximum of \$90 to \$95 a week,



# White collar blues

*"Under the thin veneer of lush carpets, colored furniture and soft muzak exists a wide range of alienating and oppressive conditions that make office workers one of the most disadvantaged groups in Canada's work force."*

barring promotions, which are not very likely to happen. There's been a complete about face from the wage situation in the 1890's; the present average salary of Canadian industrial workers is around \$150 a week.

Within the white collar sector there is a vast difference between the wages of unionized and non-unionized workers. The table below, drawn up by the Canadian Labour Congress, compares the salaries of Toronto City Hall office employees who are members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, and their non-unionized counterparts in Toronto life insurance companies. While only 15% of Canadian white collar workers belong to unions, two-thirds of this total are employed in the public sector. Union membership in the private sector is much lower, with industries like finance, insurance and real estate having only 6.6% of their workers organized in 1971.

### Kafka-like

Such has been the changing situation of the white collar worker historically; there are questions about the social and psychological impact of these many changes. Every day, the environment of large offices seem to become more Kafka-like. But how do office workers react to their changing situation? Do they perceive themselves any differently now than they did several decades ago? Judson Gooding, in his 1970 *Fortune* magazine article "The Fraying White Collar", one of the few attempts to document the effects of change on office workers, observes that "all too often the key punch operator spends the day feeling more like an automaton than a human being." But Gooding left it at

that, not attempting to carry out a critical evaluation of why such conditions exist and whether or not workers are concerned about changing them.

Under the auspices of the "White Collar Project", funded by a four-month grant from the Company of Young Canadians, we held a series of group interviews with about 50 Toronto office workers. The purpose of the interviews was to have office workers describe their work situations, and to discuss the problems they face at work, and how they solve them. We hoped that this kind of interview would spark a critical evaluation of work problems and how such problems might be solved through collective action. The project ended mid-February, but to extend the discussions into Toronto's office population, we are producing a mass-distribution pamphlet that gives a summary of some of the points that the workers we interviewed considered important. Several of the more concerned workers have organized a group that meets regularly to discuss collective strategies for changing their working conditions.

### ii

It is hard for people who have never worked in an office to imagine what occupies the working hours of clerks and keypunch operators. Only after long discussions with office workers can an outsider begin to understand the numbing effect of nonproductive, repetitive work in an environment of steady pressure, and get an inkling of what it feels like to spend years repeating the same seemingly important tasks which yield no tangible results.

We began our interviews by asking

workers to describe their typical day. Initial responses, of usually only a few sentences, were gradually enlarged upon as the interviews progressed. By the end of one interview, we had the following picture of the "wire room" in a large investment dealership in downtown Toronto. "The wire room is where I work — it's a madhouse. A white collar job? Not really, with the smell of armpits and sweaty socks all day long. The room is incredibly hot and is like a bowling alley. There's a noisy twelve channel aluminum track that shuttles orders back and forth to the rows of desks on either side of it. We sit facing the track and have to grab our orders out as they move by. You have to yell 70 feet down the room for someone to get the phone; sometimes we give up and use hand signs . . . ."

"The phones never stop ringing because all the company's trading on the market is handled by them. The room echos incredibly; there's no carpets or anything like that. Often it's so busy that we're lucky if we get time to eat lunch. And if you have to go to the washroom you usually end up holding it until after work. A 5,000 share order could come down the track and its price could jump 50 cents a share while you're in the washroom. Time is money, and the client won't pay so the company has to take the loss. It's crazy! Do you know how much time we spend parked behind a desk? Life is just passing us by; the world's going on outside and we're not seeing it."

"The pressure begins to show after awhile. After a few years of the wire room some guys develop drinking problems. As soon as the company finds out that a guy can't control it, he's out the door."

### Low-key environment

The computer section of a large insurance office offers quite a contrast to the pandemonium of the wire room. A programmer outlined his organized, low-key environment. "We don't really have an average day. There's two basic functions in our computer room and these are handled by three people. One guy is the console operator who controls what happens to the computer; the other two look after input and output. There are three shifts a day like this and everyone takes a turn at each job."

But the computer room also has its psychological costs. "There's not much training for the job of programmer, but you get frustrated because you never know what is happening inside the computer. Actually a lot of the work, such as feeding cards or setting up the printer is manual labour . . . . We deal with everything going through the insurance company. The company tells us that it can be frustrating and that when things go wrong it's not necessarily our fault; but it's really frustrating because no mistakes ever get past the computer without us having to look after them. You really feel the pressure, especially around payroll time. Sometimes it gets so bad that nobody can take a break, and I've often only taken a few minutes for lunch instead of the usual hour."

We were also told what it is like to spend your days in a department of a large insurance company. "Most days are typical in that you do pretty well the same things. My department occupies half of a floor. It's an enormous room with about 100 desks placed in tight rows. I might be wrong but I get the feeling that the whole idea of the place is to isolate people within a crowd. We're packed in so tight that I can reach out and touch the person next to me. You hardly ever say a word though, because your voice always sounds really loud . . . . We each do calculations for the various procedures of group insurance and pension policies. In the morning our supervisor gives us a pile of policies and we consult manuals to determine the annuities, etcetera. The completed policies are checked by the unit head and we make any corrections that are needed. Your pile of policies never gets smaller — the supervisor

always has someone putting new ones on our desks. After a few months the job gets pretty routine."

### Only a prelude

The visible impact of automation on some of today's offices is only a prelude to the changes office workers can expect in the next few years. Some of the workers we talked with, especially those working in computer rooms or systems departments, gave inside views on what their companies were planning. One programmer who considered his job to be secure gave this assessment: "I would say that 90% of the people will be affected by the computer programme in our company. Some a great deal, others very little. Jobs will be eliminated, but people will not. There will be a great shift in emphasis, it will mean hiring people to do simply coding and employees will not need the mathematical skills now required."

The general threat automation poses to office workers' jobs was plainly expressed by a secretary. "It's taken me a few years to understand this, but now it's clear to me that people who work in offices can only rely on themselves. My job is secure only as long as the company needs me. The day a machine can do my job and save the company money — after all, increased profit is the name of the game — I'll be out on the street or doing a different job that doesn't require my skills. In the companies I've worked for, human beings just aren't that important."

Yet many white collar workers still consider security to be the major asset of their job. "Sure, I knew the pay and benefits were only average in insurance companies, but I've got a family to support, and it's important for me to know that I'll still have my job in ten years time."

Even direct encounters with office technology haven't weakened the faith some workers have in their company's ability to protect their jobs. "My first job was eliminated 5 years ago," noted one secretary. "They just sent me to another department. I knew the company was a big enough place that I could move around."

Plans for a major overhaul of the heart of Toronto's finance district will have major implications for many white collar workers. "They're talking of eliminating the whole floor of the Toronto Stock Exchange," commented a stock and bond trader. "This will still require a few guys to monitor T.V. screens of the market and to operate consols, but we'll see a lot go."

### Cut staff two-thirds

Transformations in the content and quality of office jobs have been extensive in companies where automation has advanced beyond the blue-print stages. I.B.M.'s computerized typewriters enabled one company to centralize its typing facilities and reduce secretarial staff by two-thirds. The work of the remaining secretaries is now fragmented and routinized.

Clerical operations in insurance companies have also taken on new characteristics. Things became so unbearable for one clerk that she finally quit. "Just after computerizing the processing of insurance policies, the company did a time study using outside experts who timed each person's job. But they weren't fair to us in my department. The time needed to actually transfer the information from the policy to the computer form was noted; but the time necessary to use the information and code wheel, which we always have to use, was not."

"Each person is now required to transfer 125 policies per day. 75 to 100, depending on the complications required, is the human limit. It's just awful — we have to get what they call an 'Information Card' from our supervisor before we can consult with another employee about a policy. But the cards aren't given for washroom breaks; we're expected to make up time lost in this way. I've been in the business eight years; we've had our busy times but I've never had to work under such impossible

conditions before. The girls can't stand it, and I couldn't either. The turnover there has been about 200% in one and a half years."

Management recognizes the dehumanizing effects of what they sometimes candidly refer to as "white collar assembly line jobs". They are concerned that corporate efficiency might suffer as a result. Manufacturer's Life recently offered some consolation to its employees — "Each one of us," stated the ManuLife company newspaper, "at whatever level we are currently functioning in the corporation, has a responsibility that differs only in degree from the most highly placed executive." Their revamped personnel department, now called Human Resources Development, employs a team of psychologists, social workers and public relations experts to promote the feeling of "one big happy family".

Another managerial method of minimizing dissatisfaction is to encourage wage secrecy. From the comments of some workers, this appears to be an effective taboo. "My wages are nobody's business but the company's and the income tax department. The less anybody knows, the better, because if somebody posted up a list of everyone's wages, there would be a riot."

### Gripes about salaries

Not everybody interviewed kept their salaries secret. A female clerk from a large insurance company explained what happened when she told co-workers her wage. "Salaries are a big part of our lives. They are discussed at least three times a day; somebody always gripes about it. I talked to a friend of mine who has been with the company for four years. She is making 85 dollars per week, she started at 55 or 65 dollars. I have been there a little over a year. I started at 80 dollars and now I'm up to 110 dollars. I told her what I was getting; she asked for a raise up to my level but got only 92 dollars which is still not that good. I think that the women gripe more than the men, but they are also paid less, consistently less by management whenever possible."

She also provided some insight into the dynamics of this management policy. "I mentioned my salary to a few other people too, but I found out that I was again making more and that it made them very unhappy because they'd been with the company for several years. They directed their animosity to me because there are no channels through which they can direct it to the company except by going to the supervisor, which is really risky. If they don't like you, they make life miserable until you either quit or apply for a transfer. It becomes a matter of personal conflict between the employees."

"From this experience it seems to me that management is aware of a number of problems and that they deal with them on an ad hoc, personal basis. They don't want you to identify your problems with somebody else's. They tell us that secrecy means that we have a special relationship with management that no one else has. They don't want any group consciousness or action to develop among us. A lot of people really get sucked in by this."

Promotions were also discussed and mixed views were expressed about present opportunities for advancement. Some agreed with a trader from a brokerage house, who felt that getting a promotion was not difficult for employees with initiative and ability. "Take the kid in the stationary department. His job was to bring up pads and pencils. He always put a little bit extra into his work, got to know the ropes, and took the company course for something to do at night. Shortly after he completed the course he got a promotion and now he's on the way to the top. It could happen to anyone."

### Automatically excluded

Others, particularly employees from insurance companies, blamed automation and new hiring policies for their loss of promotion opportunities. "Two years ago," stated a computer programmer, "the company decided to fill management ranks with university graduates only. This probably had something to do with the changing make-up of the labour force; something to do with the fact that universities are now pouring out too many graduates. But whatever the reasons behind it, this decision disqualified all those guys in the company

(continued, page 10)

UNION AND NON-UNION AVERAGE WAGES  
— JAN. 1, 1973

	Life Insurance	Toronto City Hall (C.U.P.E.)
File Clerk	\$70-90 wk.	\$100-128 wk.
Clerk-typist	\$70-100 wk.	\$128-150 wk.
Computer operator	\$105-150 wk.	\$160-190 wk.
Private secretary	\$100-140 wk.	\$150-200 wk.

# White collar unions and management

(continued from page 9)

who are worthy of promotion; who know the business and how the company runs; but who don't have a degree . . . . We're automatically excluded from getting even a chance at the really challenging and well paying positions."

Another insurance worker described a similar road block he faces in his career. "Our systems division not only has the job of computerizing the company's operations but also has the task of training future managers. It's the only section where they hire just university grads, and few have been promoted there from other sections in the company. These systems guys are young and well educated; and because of their jobs, they are the only ones besides the men at the very top who know the company inside out. So, when a management position is open, they're the ones who fill it. The rest of us are going to be even farther away from the top than we are now."

Women workers were especially vocal in the discussions of wages and promotions. A secretary said that she went back to work after having a family, "because if I didn't my husband would have had to work 65 hours a week with a full and a part-time job to make ends meet. I really think that women have a right to work, and it bothers me to know that many employers think we're only 'temporary', and so use this as an excuse to pay us less than they'd pay a fellow. I've had my job for eight years; many men have come and gone in that time in my office. I'm a secretary but I've partially trained the new men who have a starting salary two or three times mine."

Convinced that "women have to be twice as smart to get ahead," another secretary talked about her lack of promotion prospects. "My pet beef as a secretary is that I get more and more responsibility, and I'm expected to work more independently, but I don't get anymore recognition or remuneration to go along

with it."

## Lively discussion

After an hour or two of relating their work experiences and grievances, the office workers interviewed usually started considering ways of solving work-related problems. Three basic approaches emerged, and inevitably a lively discussion about unions resulted.

There was the "like it or leave it" attitude which was aptly summarized by a young secretary. "If I was unhappy, say with my salary, I would just leave and get a better paying job."

Then there were those workers who maintained that a competent employee can get what he deserves by bargaining individually with his employer. These people were generally hostile towards unions, but as the following comment reveals, this hostility was more an expression of envy and frustration. "Why should some cement-head who works for a labour union make \$5.80 an hour, when all he does is stand there and throw nuts and bolts onto something moving down an assembly line, just because he belongs to a powerful labour union? I think a lot of office workers are getting really ripped-off these days, especially the women."

Collective bargaining seemed to make the most sense to several workers. "I remember," recalled one of the secretaries, "when I was first working in Toronto I was making more than a policeman and a streetcar driver; now I don't. The benefits that unionized workers have now have not caught up in the offices. I guess what we need is a union too."

One worker saw unions as a tool to help get better wages, but raised the following criticism. "Sure, the initial benefits would be okay, but pretty soon we'd find out just how big and grabby the union really is. Its really a third party that eventually would regiment us just the same as the company does now, and make us pay dues which we don't pay now."

Someone else in the same group interview, a librarian in a brokerage house, followed up this criticism by pointing out that this kind of situation is avoidable if members of the union get involved in it and make it their own. She observed that "office workers like us make up the majority of the labour force now, but we've got one of the weakest bargaining positions. Other workers, like industrial workers, are continually outpacing us in wages, benefits, and especially in other things like job security and having a say in what your own working conditions are like. It seems pretty obvious to me that we need to bargain together through some kind of a union."

## iii

If white collar workers want to deal effectively with the huge business complexes in which they find themselves, they will have to organize into unions. In the words of University of Toronto industrial relations pundit John Crispo, "anybody who isn't organized is at a disadvantage in the rat race." And now that the Canadian Labour Congress has launched its white collar organizing campaign, encouraging office workers to get into the A.C.T.E. — the Association of Clerical and Technical Employees — workers can start translating their grievances into collective demands.

The prospects of a union in their fold has management rallying its defenses. After years of ineffectively treating the symptoms of worker alienation and frustration, companies are re-thinking their personnel policies and practices. A former steel company official ends an article on the need for management to rekindle employees' loyalty with the warning, "It certainly seems likely that unless management acts now, clerical discontent will increase in the future . . . . By and large, management lost out to unions when the discontent of factory workers emerged in the 1930's . . . . We do know that this time individual com-

panies will not have the excuses that there was no way they could see the threat coming."

White collar workers lament their poor wages and benefits, and any union will naturally address itself to these problems first. However, the key issues today, and even moreso in the future, involve the control of the quality of work — which means bringing up crucial aspects of company policy, like automation, under employee control. The lack of these conditions produces the feelings of alienation and are at the root of many expressions of discontent. Many critics feel that, in the past, unions have been concerned primarily with quantitative aspects of work like wages and benefits.

For the white collar worker, whose future depends on how well unions can place the process of automation subservient to human needs, this means that the workers must become involved in running their own unions. Office workers are the ones who are most sensitive to the psychological effects of their jobs and to the threat automation poses to their job security, and so it is important that they guide unions in the direction of these problems and, with their fellow workers, map out long term strategies to solve them.

## Management tactics

The success of white collar unions depends to some extent on the reception management gives them. Management can adopt one of four basic tactics — organize directly against the union; try to forestall the union through subtler methods such as redesigning benefit programs or giving small wage boosts; set up a company run employee association to compete with the union for membership; or it can usher the union through the front door, work out a relationship and then get on with business. A few companies may opt for this latter tactic, concluding that it will cost them more to keep a union out than to live with it. But the more likely approach was expressed by James Lindores, a manager

at Canada Trust. He recently told a conference of the Personnel Association of Toronto, "If you can't beat a union, join them on the battlefield for the votes of the employees."

A more paternalistic approach, claiming to be "sensitive to the needs of our employees", was outlined by Manufacturer's Life President A. Jackson in a January edition of the company newspaper. "In my view, there really appears to be no need for a labour union in a well-run company which provides a full measure of opportunity for competent people and is responsive to their views." He continues, "Unions, by requiring written contracts covering a multitude of conditions greatly inhibit the flexibility necessary to adapt to rapid change we all face today." Jackson ends with an appeal to reason — "Isn't it logical that we can both work together toward common goals much more effectively without the limitations placed on both staff and management by a union agreement?"

Finally there are those managers who are shaking in rage at the thought of a union. "I'll do everything that I can to stop my office employees from unionizing. Whenever I hear of a union coming around here, I call all my employees in and tell them what I think of unions and why they don't need one. No union has ever got a toe in the door here. As long as I'm manager, no union ever will."

It appears that most companies in the white collar sector see the unions, and now especially the Canadian Labour Congress' A.C.T.E., as a threat to their authority and their profits, and they will undoubtedly put up a good fight. But with the C.L.C. spearheading the unionizing drive and providing white collar workers with organizers and resources, unions seem imminent. The deciding factor, however, are the white collar workers themselves. If they have the will, nothing will block the changes they are committed to.

**Ron Haggart says:  
"There are 3 excellent candidates running in the St. George  
by-election . . . . My vote will go to Ellen Adams."**

**Jack Granatstein**  
President  
ABC Ratepayers'  
Association

"That this area survives as a pleasant place to live, in fact, is because of Ellen and those who have worked with her. This is no exaggeration — ask anyone from Avenue-Bay-Cottingham, from CORRA or from Queen's Park."

**Jane Jacobs**  
Author and  
Sociologist

Ellen Adams is at the heart of the citizen movement for neighbourhoods, parks, transit and a city where human values take top priority. She is the advocate we need to carry the reform movement into Queen's Park. Furthermore, she is already so knowledgeable about the Provincial Parliament that she will be effective there on our behalf beginning the day she takes office.

**Jim Lemon**  
President CORRA

The future health of this city depends largely on decisions made by Queen's Park. We need Ellen Adams there to fight for the right kind of decisions.

**Mayor  
David Crombie**

"For years Ellen Adams has been in the vanguard of the struggle for people to have more say in the way they are governed. That's a principle I endorse heartily and Toronto has benefited from Ellen Adams' commitment to it."

**Karl Jaffary**  
Executive Alderman

"I don't know anyone at all who is better at solving the everyday problems of Ontario citizens. I support her candidacy wholeheartedly. We at City Hall need her fighting for us at Queen's Park."

**Morton Shulman,**  
MPP

"I want Ellen Adams at my side in the Provincial Legislature. She'll be my kind of MPP. The kind that fights for people."

**Fiona Nelson**  
School Trustee

"Ellen Adams has a better grasp of the preservation of neighbourhood issues than anyone else. She's everybody's guide-book in terms of where to go for what."

**David Freeman**  
Past President CORRA

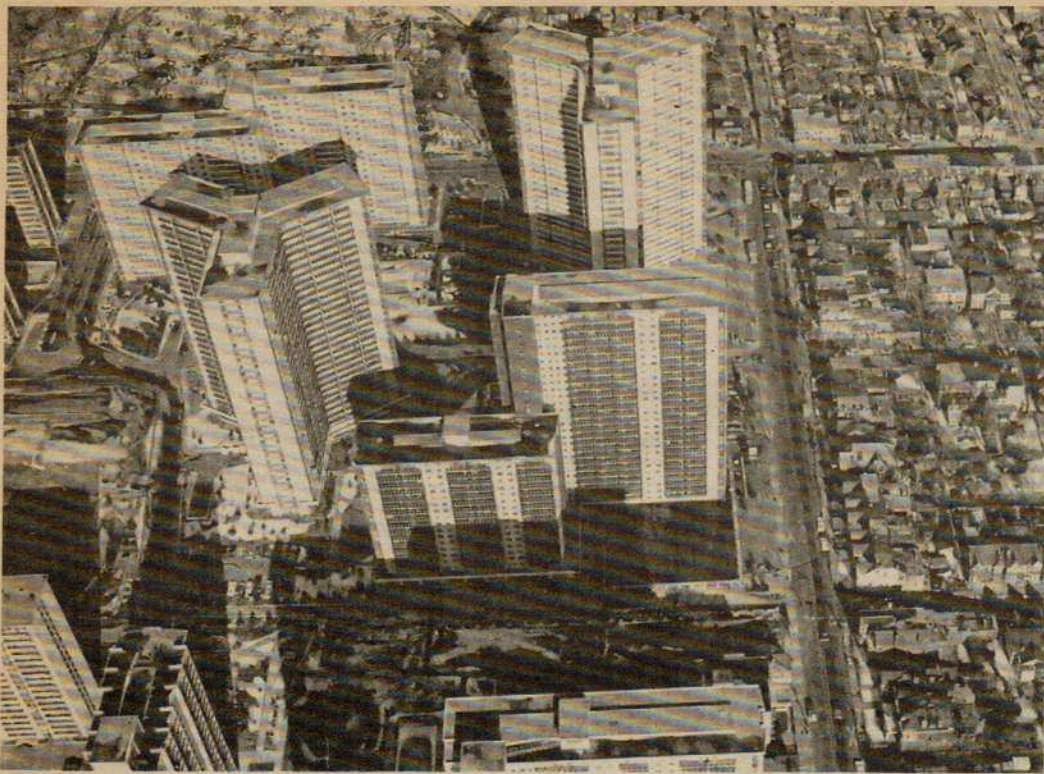
"The people who have worked to make this city better think of Ellen Adams as their 'early warning system.' She senses well in advance problems and understands how to find solutions. I'm voting for her with great enthusiasm."

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St. George is a riding of contrasts which includes lower income downtown neighborhoods and St. Jamestown, shown in the photo here, as well as middle class and upper income areas north of Bloor Street.

## Candidates jump on midtown's municipal reform bandwagon

(continued from page 1)

they don't seem to remember all those headlines of a few months ago. One canvasser reported that in a whole afternoon of questioning people on the Fidinam affair he found only one who knew what it was about.

Another thing which the electorate may not know anything about — and this worries the three parties — is exactly how important the St. George by-election is. The general impression is that because the Conservatives hold a 37 seat bulge over the combined opposition at Queen's Park, the results in St. George and another by-election in Huron riding the same day, don't really mean anything. But this is the first by-election test for the Conservatives under Premier William Davis and they want a re-affirmation from the voters about their policies, particularly the controversial ones such as regional government, cutbacks in education and social services and the ever-growing provincial government's restraints on the activities of locally elected bodies.

For the Liberals and the NDP the two by-elections are even more important. The Liberals have 21 seats in the Legislature to 20 for the NDP. The by-election results could possibly change the second place standings and decide which party is the "official opposition."

To win St. George, held by the Conservatives since 1943, is going to take an extreme effort by either of the opposition parties. In 1971, Allan Lawrence, the provincial Secretary of Justice, polled 16,916 votes while the Liberal candidate got 7,424 and the NDP only 5,801. Lawrence resigned last autumn to successfully run for federal office. What gives the opposition heart is that McMurtry is not as well known as Lawrence and Adams and Campbell are far stronger candidates than their party standard bearers in 1971. With a lower than normal voter turnout expected in the by-election none of the three parties regard the Conservative's historical grasp on the riding as insurmountable.

### Population turnover

About one half of St. George, too, is in a constant state of population turnover. Although the northern parts of the riding above Bloor Street are stably housed with the middle class and the affluent, the core of the riding lies in the vast apartment belt between Bloor and Carlton, where the population is very transient. The three parties all face the same problem of getting the apartment dwellers, notorious for their non-involvement, out to the polls.

The dominant theme in the campaign has not been provincial issues or the basic differences between the parties on matters such as support for separate school education, health care, economic

affairs, or expenditures for education and social service programs.

Instead the campaign has developed around two key points: which candidate will best support the concept of community involvement at Queen's Park, and the overall dominance of the Conservative Government and the Big Blue Machine throughout the province. Both issues are intermingled. McMurtry, for example, concerned that he will be too closely identified as just another cog, albeit an important one, in the government machinery has gone to great lengths to stress that he will be "a strong voice" for St. George, an independent thinker and doer within the Conservative ranks. He has even abandoned the parties normal colours and is using black and white campaign posters.

Both leading opposition candidates are also running double-edged campaigns which stress their involvement in the community reform movement and the importance of their election as a check on the Conservative's omnipotent power.

### Candidates' claims

Checking out the candidates' claims to their roles in the reform movement is difficult. Ellen Adams is the only one whose claim is indisputable. Even a cursory look at what she's done over the past five years proves this. She was a founding member of the Confederation of Residents and Ratepayers Associations and is currently its vice-president. Through CORRA and her involvement in other citizen groups, she was a leader in the fight against the Spadina Expressway, for better use of Metro Centre, for protection of Ramsden Park, and for proper planning of the Yorkville neighborhood to name just a few of her credits. Adams is well known throughout the city as a strategist who helped harangue the former City Council's old guard when it was necessary and who played a key role in moving the reformers towards last December's municipal election victory.

McMurtry, on the other hand, talks about community involvement with enough restraint to suggest that he's thinking about increasing communication with constituents, not their involvement in controlling what he may or may not do at Queen's Park. His most concrete links with the reform movement are his presidency of the Oriole Park Ratepayers, campaign work for Mayor Crombie, and a stand he has taken against hi-rise development in residential neighborhoods.

In his nomination speech McMurtry said that part of the way to restore the dignity of the individual could be achieved by "demanding that the bureaucratic structures at all levels involve the people who are going to be

affected by their decisions." But McMurtry's commitment must be seen in line with his support for the provincial government's increasing involvement in affairs at the local level. In an interview with *the Citizen*, for example, he said that Queen's Park should have even tougher guidelines on where money is spent by local school boards. He spoke of the community as a resource that can and should be used by the government in their programs.

### "Spiritual Leader"

Campbell is even more difficult to definitely typify as a reformer as the term is used in Toronto today. She can produce newspaper attestations that she is "the likely forerunner of citizen involvement" and "the founder and spiritual leader of the reform movement in this city." But the claims go back to when Campbell was a controller at City Hall in the late 1960's, when anyone who bothered to even listen to a community delegation was considered a reformer or a radical by the old guard. Because she bowed out of city politics with her defeat in the mayoralty race in 1969, her work on Council never came under the close scrutiny that members of the last Council were subjected to. It should be remembered that at the time when Campbell was being hailed as a reformer by newspaper reporters the mass media was also referring to the Council elected in 1969 and some of its members, like Tony O'Donohue, as reformers.

In this campaign Campbell hasn't defined what she really means by community involvement at Queen's Park but has let her old newspaper clippings speak for her. She has been much

more specific on how someone with her extensive background in municipal politics can stand up to the Tory machine. She says she resigned as a judge of the family court to "fight the government's arbitrary, indifferent attitude towards the concerns of people." She told an all-candidates' meeting last week that she is horrified by the way the provincial government has more and more intruded into the municipal field. In accordance with her desire to trim the Conservative's power one of her slogans reads: "One more Davis man and the Blue Machine won't make it any better!"

Campbell, 60, became an alderman in 1959 and a controller in 1965 with the most votes of all candidates. She was regarded through her municipal career as a Conservative and attended the party's 1971 provincial leadership convention as a delegate-at-large. On the night of her nomination in St. George she told newsmen she has been a Liberal since about 1958. But her campaign chairman, Bob Reid, told *the Citizen* she only joined the party quite recently.

Reid also said Campbell has no intention of running for the party's provincial leadership if she wins in St. George and he denied rumors in political circles that as an enticement to run in St. George, Campbell had been promised a judgeship by the federal Liberals if she loses the by-election. Reid said Campbell can win if potential NDP voters switch over to the Liberals.

### NDP view

From the NDP view the situation appears completely reversed. They believe they have the much stronger candidate in Adams who, because of her reform movement work, has very deep roots in the riding which have attracted a lot of support from Liberal and Conservative supporters. The NDP also believes it is making ground by stressing that it, rather than the Liberal caucus at Queen's Park, is the more effective and damaging opposition to the Conservatives.

The NDP campaign literature plays up Adams' 16 years experience at Queen's Park, as a special assistant to party leaders, as proof she would be an especially effective opposition member from her first day in the Legislature. Adams, 46, and the only candidate who lives in St. George, believes one of her main functions at Queen's Park has been as an unofficial Ombudsman, helping people throughout the province to redress wrongs committed by the provincial government bureaucracy. Like Campbell, she, too, is stressing the point that the last thing the province needs is another Tory member. One of her slogans says, "a voice, not an echo" and goes on to explain that although the same men will be in power after the election with "Ellen Adams at Queen's Park there will be a strong force toward a new direction." But Adams herself returns to her city roots when talking about the election. She says, "We've done it in the city, now we are going to do it in the province."

Although Adams refers to McMurtry as an echo, his literature calls him "a strong new voice." The 40-year-old lawyer is a close friend of Premier Davis (and is regarded as a potential high ranking cabinet minister if he gets elected in St. George.) McMurtry has been campaigning hard and in a special way. Convinced that the electorate might just be in a mood to turn on the Big Blue Machine this time, he constantly stresses that although he's of the ruling party he's his own man. "The people are electing me, not Premier Davis," he says.

### No sharpie

Maintaining his stance as anything but a representative of the Tory hierarchy, McMurtry dresses casually in campaign appearances and at times appears to go out of his way to be hesitant or stumble in his speech so that he won't look too much like a sharpie. He rarely exhibits the depth one associates with a capable trial lawyer, one who was paid \$32,000 last year by Metro for representing the police in the inquiry into the Kosygin visit disturbance in 1971.

From his days as captain of the football team at the University of Toronto until the present, McMurtry has been involved in countless organizations and he has a long list of achievements. Politically, he is considered one of Davis's closest advisors and was chairman of the party's policy committee during the 1971 election. Besides his community role, McMurtry has stressed his value

as a link between Toronto city politicians and Queen's Park.

As usual, the Conservatives are extremely well organized in St. George. Paul Kates, who managed Allan Lawrence's many election wins there, is also heading McMurtry's campaign with a lot of assistance and money. There is much controversy over how much money McMurtry spent to win the Tory nomination (one estimate is more than \$5,000) and it's no secret that the party will certainly spend more than the opposition. The Liberals will probably take second place in the spending derby while the NDP, so far, is the only party to disclose its campaign budget. It's a modest \$8,800.

### As the Citizen goes

to press about a week before the election, no strong trend has been established. Canvassing reports show the electorate is still vacillating about the candidates and parties. Among university students, and areas where ratepayer groups are active, the NDP appears to be pulling away from the Liberals as the logical and stronger alternative to the Conservatives. The Tories are expected to make their usual substantial last minute campaign drive and in the final analysis it may all come down to a battle between the resources of the Big Blue Machine and the power of last year's municipal election campaign.

### Other candidates

For those who are fed up with the major parties there are three other candidates in the field. The only credible one is Brian Mossop, a 26-year-old graduate student in Linguistics at the University of Toronto, who is running for the Communist Party of Canada. The main thrust of his campaign is against the government's cutbacks in education and social services. He believes that both services should be expanded rather than curtailed and that they can be paid for without increasing taxes on small homeowners and small and middle income earners. This, he says, can be done by taxing the province's source of wealth, "the mineral and raw materials industry, the manufacturing industry and the financial institutions."

The other candidates are Hardial Bains of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist/Leninist) and John Ross Taylor, the well known racist who is running for the rightwing Western Guard.

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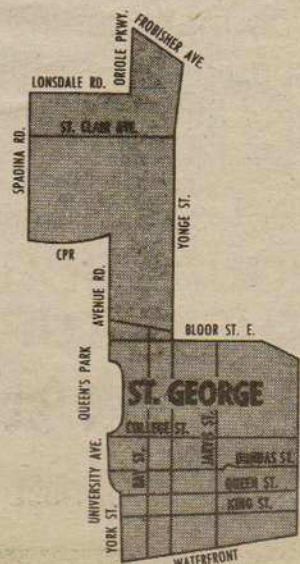
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# Fact, fiction and the Toronto Star

Newspeople at the Toronto *Star* like it to be known that what's published on the editorial page is no responsibility of theirs. And they will say that the paper's editorials about city politics aren't to be taken too seriously, that these are often muddled and factually misinformed, and are best ignored. Few readers more than glance at the editorial page anyway, one of them remarked once.

It's sometimes hard to ignore the *Star's* city editorials though. They're not just innocuous fluffs. They are the expression of opinion by an enormous newspaper, Canada's largest, and are difficult to simply dismiss — not because the views they express are disagreeable ones but because the editorials often blatantly misrepresent facts.

In one recent case (February 23), a *Star* editorial alleged that "the victims of the growing opposition by neighborhood groups against high density housing (are) the deserted mother left to raise four children on welfare, the elderly couple making ends meet on old-age pensions, the hard-working but poorly-paid father of seven."

The piece continued, "These are the people who have come to depend on the Ontario Housing Corporation to provide public housing . . . . But because of growing neighborhood opposition, O.H.C. can't help these people. E. E.

Clow, chairman of the board of directors (of O.H.C.) told Metro Social Services and Housing Committee . . . . 'A number of townhouse developments suitable for larger families were lost in the face of ratepayer opposition.' The campaign to preserve neighborhoods, which," according to the *Star*, "can be translated, 'We don't want anybody encroaching on our single detached houses.' . . . goes too far when it denies shelter to needy families . . . ."

The interesting thing about this line of argument is that it crumbles as soon as you fill out the generalities with facts. The major recent battles against high density housing have been about high rise tower developments, with apartments suitable almost entirely for well-to-do non-family households, which have been proposed by private developers for neighborhoods formerly composed of moderately priced houses — West St. Jamestown, South St. Jamestown, Gothic-Quebec, Windlass, the late Lionstar scheme. And much of the brunt of these battles has been carried, not by homeowners, as the *Star* editorial's headline — "Victims of the homeowner lobby" — suggests, but by tenants. Often, many homeowners in this situation have been people who invested in property in the area with the intention of later selling for a profit to a land assembler.

It is, in fact, true that public housing projects often meet resistance in middle class homeowning neighborhoods. Some people don't want low income neighbors; they're scared of "poor" people. But just what this has to do with the recent neighborhood group battles against high rise isn't very clear.

Many people aligned with the neighborhood group movement not only are not opposed to higher density development but have actively encouraged it. But they don't want *high rise* — which isn't the same thing as higher density, as the *Star* editorial pointed out. "The kind of medium-density buildings O.H.C. has increasingly concentrated on," said the piece, — duplex, triplex and four-plex buildings — "needn't be unattractive, needn't alter the character of existing neighborhoods." The writer might have culled this line from an interview with resident group alderman Colin Vaughan in a *Citizen* a few months ago. It seems to be the policy of the reform movement to encourage higher densities, increasing the City's housing stock by "infill" programs and by developing new housing consistent with surrounding neighborhoods wherever it's possible.

It's difficult to avoid thinking that the *Star's* editorial writer wasn't deliberately misrepresenting the facts, but this, of course, isn't true. It just means that

the *Star* city politics writers don't have much idea what they're talking about. They just don't take the trouble to think and probe a bit before shooting their mouths off. They fall back, in this case, on the easiest rhetorical gimmick — quoting someone to give the appearance of a factual basis for a viewpoint, E. E. Clow. If Clow's idea is that the neighborhood groups in the Gothic-Quebec or Windlass or St. Jamestown neighborhoods are obstructing housing for "needy" people, he's misinformed, and the *Star* is simply flexing his impressive title in an effort to lend their analysis credibility. If his idea is simply that some middle class people don't take keenly to public housing near them, he's right, has been quoted wholly out of context and is probably darned annoyed.

The most stunning little number in the editorial is the way in which the writer wheels in, in the first sentence, 11 unfortunate children, a harried father, one struggling mother and a pair of beleaguered old folks to rally some sympathy off the top. The establishment press has a way of hauling out such images from time to time in disputes with other segments of the establishment. Rather like the classical poet's invocation of the appropriate gods, the editorial writer often genuflects cursorily before the altar of the lower classes before engaging in fighting

with another upper class faction.

On February 27, the *Star* ran an editorial titled "Politics: a job for politicians" which proves little more than that the paper's editorial writers are incapable of listening. The piece was commenting on the proposal of Aldermen John Sewell and Dorothy Thomas that the City fund three community organizers in each of the City's 11 wards. The editorial interprets the program as a system by which aldermen will be able to have reliable neighborhood communications channels so that they will be better able to vote the way their constituents want them to.

Maybe it's just as well that the *Star*, like various other important elite institutions, seems unable to understand what a community organizer is and what community participation means. As has been repeated in these pages time and again, as various reform politics spokesmen and writers have said over and over, participation does not mean communication, it means *power*. It means that people have an active role to play in decisions which affect them and their communities, that people's role in government does not begin and end when they cast their ballot, once every two years in the case of City politics. If the *Star* did understand this, it might understand the threat citizen participation presents to the kind of government and kind of Toronto which the paper consistently supports editorially.

But one would expect a big newspaper to know what it's talking about, a *Star* to be listening, to know that a community organizer's job is — gosh and golly — organizing communities. Organized communities like the Sussex-Ulster neighborhood in Ward Six can strike out to work on their problems — for example, traffic problems, for which Sussex-Ulster has suggested a traffic maze in its area. Another neighborhood organization may find another solution for its problems; Boswell Avenue in Ward Five, for example, has suggested a street-closing as the remedy for its traffic situation. The point is that people govern themselves as they can. It's a whole different way of doing things than what Toronto has been used to, and has nothing to do with getting better communication lines opened between segments of an area and an alderman.

Again, it almost seems as though the *Star* is trying to misrepresent. And, again, this isn't true. The paper's editorial writers simply don't understand, don't try to understand and habitually write blither that isn't relevant to the real issues. A real issue, for example, is whether community organization should be institutionalized out of City Hall on a regular-salary, three-per-ward basis. Some would argue that community organization only really works when it arises from a genuinely indigenous movement. To this, Sewell or Thomas might reply, "Yes, that's true, but once it's underway, there's a lot of work, and ordinary family-raising people are excluded from taking much part because they have to spend their time and energy earning a living. This is a way to get this kind of person involved, not just the young person who's willing to get along on peanuts, or the federally sponsored C.Y.C. worker." Still, the critic might reply, you're structuring something that's best left to flourish spontaneously. There's an issue here. It's one to which people like the *Star's* editorial writer are oblivious.

Maybe the *Star's* editorials should be ignored. Maybe few people do read them and most of those who do are aware what they're reading is baloney. But it's hard to believe some people aren't being misled badly by the *Star* editorial page's version of the facts. The address of the Ontario Press Council, which is supposed to provide a self-monitoring system among the province's newspapers, is 151 Slater Street, Suite 708, Ottawa K1P 5H3. Next time the *Star* burns you off, you might drop them a line. One letter wouldn't do much, but several thousand over the course of a few months might help clean up the *Star's* act. Or maybe newspapers can get away with bald misrepresentation.

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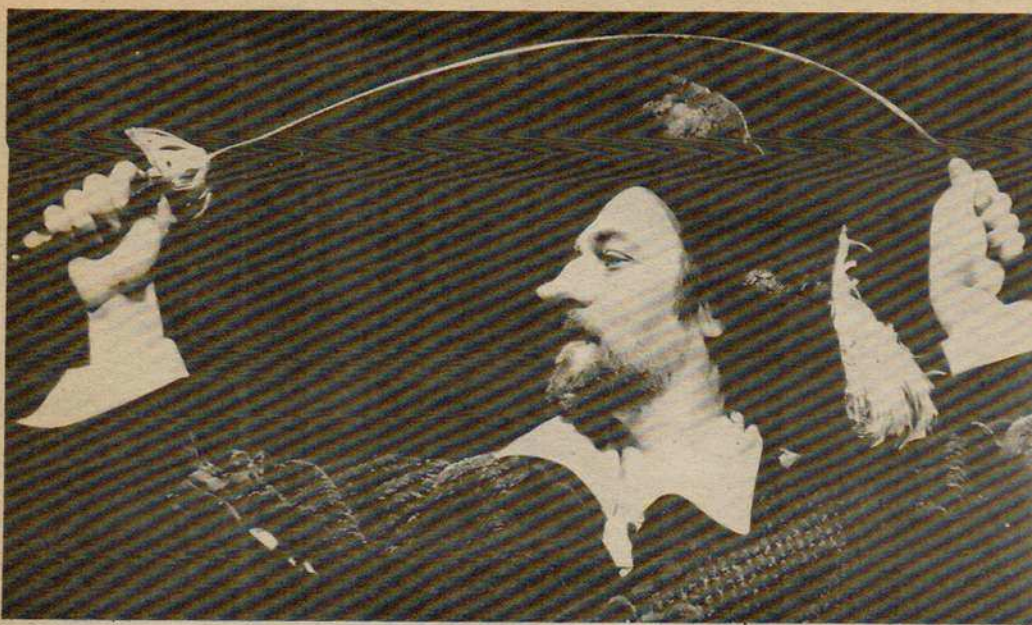
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Christopher Plummer: "Cyrano"

## THEATRE

# Cyrano

by Philip Marchand

Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac* is, above all, a celebration of the man of eloquence, the poet. Rostand's hero is the last, and one of the finest, of that line of literary protagonists who could feel their world well lost for such eloquence. They are poets who die with a cavalier's grace and a few parting words to drive home ineffable contempt for an enemy, or undying, and hopeless, love for a woman. Such a hero is pure theatre — he cannot exist without a complete banishment of the common-place and the creation of a world where high conventions of honour are at least recognized, and recognizable.

The author and company of *Cyrano*, the musical adapted from Rostand's play, are faced with the problem of treating the play with respect without turning it into a museum piece, of giving it life in full awareness that the world it depicts is fragile and easily broken, vulnerable to every sensibility of the contemporary audience. It succeeds because the author of the book and lyrics, Anthony Burgess, is himself a supremely eloquent writer, and the star, Christopher Plummer, is nearly as eloquent in his mastery of voice and gesture.

Both recognize that the style here is everything — the hero lives by a style and it must demand respect. So in Burgess's lines and lyrics there is never a lapse in intelligence or taste, and the wit comes through. You can believe he enjoyed writing them.

Plummer himself is the soul of the production, as he must be if the play is to work, since the character of Cyrano is everything. Plummer plays his character with an energy that is finely controlled and expressed in movements which are continually graceful and exuberant. Even in moments of anguish, his character is alive with that energy. It is an acting feat which looks easier than it is. A mime scene, for example, in which Plummer pours imaginary wine and mixes an imaginary salad for his starving regiment is carried out with utmost flair, and is a joy to watch, but its success depends on a most concentrated and coordinated physical effort which ends in escaping the eye like a sleight of hand.

Plummer's success here is worth emphasizing. It can be detected even in something as simple and crucial as his use of his hands, a part of the actor's craft which most often betrays the actor. Plummer's hands are always in harmony with the expressions of his voice, the intent of his body. They flutter with agitation when he suppresses annoyance, they move through the air, when he reaches out to another person on the stage, as if they truly meant to cuff or caress or grip that person. They never suggest weakness or holding back.

### Crude, defiant and courtly

Above all, Plummer believes in his character, believes that such a man as Cyrano can yet compel sympathy and admiration from an audience — a tough Gascon who is, by turns, crude and defiant, and courtly beyond all expectations. His Cyrano is a gallant with no trace of foppery, a lover free of narcissism, a swordsman with the athleticism,

but not the boyishness, of Douglas Fairbanks.

With such a lead, the supporting cast must necessarily be overshadowed, but they do what they are supposed to do, which is to support Cyrano in his drama. Leigh Beery, as Roxana, is a lovely lady and avoids, mercifully, any suggestion that her character is affected or artificial, though it is doubtless silly. Louis Turenne is oily and self-important as the chief villain, the Comte De Guiche. Mark Lamos has perhaps the most thankless role in the history of the theatre as the young baron who woos Roxana with Cyrano's lines. He does not succeed, it must be said, in defying all the odds here in making his character likeable or even sympathetic, but he is appropriately restless and bouncy, and just this side of abject stupidity.

Whether Rostand's play has really suffered in any way from being turned into a musical is difficult to say. The idea is certainly not a bad one. The plot itself of Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac* is fixed firmly within the compass of the traditions of the musical, with its swift and varied action, and its twist on the classic comedic device of the mistaken identity. Its sentimentality also fixes it comfortably within these traditions.

Basically, though, *Cyrano* is Rostand's play overlaid with, but not transfigured by, Michael Lewis's score. There are two bits, one a half-sung number by Cyrano demolishing an opponent with his wit before puncturing him with his rapier, the other a song and dance routine in the bakery shop, which work very well as musical routines, and are fully integrated into the body of the play. Most of the songs, however, could conceivably be dropped and the mood of the play remain unchanged. That is the worst that can be said of the score. It is both lyrical and high spirited, and, at the least, keeps pace with the feelings generated by the play.

## Electra

by David McCaughna

One hopes that the current production of Euripides' *Electra* marks a turn in the fortunes of the Theatre Company at the St. Lawrence Centre. So far this season their record has been dismal, three forgotten plays that are best forgotten, an especially unfortunate beginning after last year's much better and promising season. But this production of an important Greek classic which, while not completely successful, does go some way towards redeeming the artistic reputation of a company about which everyone seemed nearly ready to give up.

The Greek classics are difficult to translate to the modern stage and are, therefore, rarely performed. Kurt Reis has succeeded with *Electra*. The production is often bold and has a strength and focus of mind that has been noticeably lacking in the previous efforts this year. There are faults — some rather heavy-handed production touches, a bit too

Cecil B. DeMilleish, as though the play were jazzed up to make it more entertaining to Twentieth Century audiences — and an ending that drags on and loses its way; but other than these nit-picking problems, *Electra* fares remarkably well.

The play is popular; dramatic versions were written by a couple of the ancient playwrights, but Euripides' is the most widely consulted today. It's a harrowing, bloody play that tells the story of the brother and sister, Orestes and Electra, who revenge the murder of their father, King Agamemnon, committed by their mother and her lover. When the king was murdered, the royal siblings were parted, but during the play, they encounter one another; the recognition scene in which it is revealed to Electra that the inquisitive stranger is her brother is quite moving in this production. They take their wrath against the usurper and his wife, their mother. The play is charged with emotional and sexual undertones, and Reis has given these elements full emphasis.

*Electra* would have worked on the stark, barren planks that the Company seemed to favour for their sets earlier in the year, but Murray Laufer has created a den-like atmosphere, full of uneven surfaces and overlooked by rough crags that almost seem the stern faces of the gods watching the mortals act out their angers. The muted, orange and green lights give the scene an even more eerie and oppressive feeling.

Monique Mercure, a Quebec actress, plays *Electra*. In an extremely difficult part, she performs adequately. The feeling of anguish and passion we are looking for in the part may come with time. The performance often lacked variation, but Mercure does have some charming moments. Her brother is played by Richard Monette. His is a shrewd performance, almost non-emotional, compared with that of *Electra*, that expands the character subtly and grows in strength from a bland beginning.

The Chorus, "the heart of Greek Drama", the director tells us, is excellent. Led by Marilyn Lightstone, it expresses the inner working of the play, and the group of roughly clothed women, moving in formation around the stage, is one of the most successful aspects of this production.

*Electra* is a night at the St. Lawrence Centre that is rewarding.

## Gabe

by Steven Sokoloff

*Gabe*, now playing at the Toronto Free Theatre, is an excellent production in all respects, and it's difficult to describe very good theatre without just adding meaningless superlatives to everything — direction, acting, set design.

But what is remembered? Visual things, like the effective lighting, the simple staging? Audio things, like the flat prairie voices? Or feelings, like the sense of small town desolation?

And is this another Canadian myth — the loner caught between his Indian past and his white present, who dreams of greatness, and whose dreams will never materialize, but who has the temporary alternative of escaping into the bush?

(continued, page 14)

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(continued from page 13)

Gabe, strongly played by Peter Jobin, is a Meti living in modern Saskatchewan. He wants to preach Meti rights, which have been neglected since the death of another Gabe, another Meti, Louis Riel.

While serving time in the penitentiary, he meets his modern day Louis, well played by Saul Rubenick. But when they are released from prison, Gabe discovers that this Louis is all talk. He wants to drink. He wants women. Louis is too much of a realist to think that the cause of Meti rights has a chance to succeed, while Gabe wants to go out into the world and to act with the knowledge of Meti past glory that Louis has given him.

There are three other characters in the play — Henry, the white man, played by Don MacQuarrie, weak and stupid, caricatured here as the Indian has been before him; and two Meti women, Vonne, played by Chapelle Jaffe, a low priced whore who wants to have a good time and a little romance, and Rosie, played by Brenda Donohue, a dishwasher who dreams of teaching school and hopes that Gabe will settle down.

There is no solution to the problems the play sets out. We know that Gabe won't escape from the town or from the white man's definition of him, irresponsible, drunken, only half human.

But this is not a play of despair. It is a very personal statement of the way in which four people deal with one another. Because it lays no claims to universality, it doesn't leave you, as Absurd theatre does, without hope. It leaves you with a little more understanding, perhaps, or maybe it touches you more than makes you think. In any case, you remember it.

*Gabe*, by Carol Bolt, is playing at the Free Theatre until March 18.

## J. M. Synge

by David McCaughna

W. B. Yeats urged J. M. Synge to go to the rural backwaters of Ireland and "express a life which has never found expression." Synge followed the advice; he left his comfortable Dublin life and travelled to the obscure corners of the island, living among the Irish speaking people, going to the wild Aran islands, and always closely listening and observing these "real" Irishmen. Synge translated the rich language he heard into his plays; and his subject became the peasant Irish with their tales, superstitions, their often narrow, pathetic lives, and their just as frequent moments of joy. Three of the best of these plays are on view in the final event in the Irish Arts Drama series. *An Evening With John Millington Synge*, directed by actress Siobhan McKenna, does partial justice to the three plays.

Synge's brand of tragi-comedy, full of irony, and resting on the fine balance between raw wit, vigorous language and the overpowering whims of nature, small-mindedness and prejudice, is a delicate commodity. McKenna has not always been completely successful in preserving this balance, in bringing out the wit and humour in the plays, while keeping their core intact. The all-Canadian cast, with a mostly valiant stab at the Irish accents, are largely too stiff and couched to bring the needed degree of passion to the roles.

The opening play, *The Tinker's Wedding*, is about the desire of a headstrong tinker gypsy girl to wed her reluctant boyfriend in spite of enormous obstacles put in her way by his cantankerous old mother and the booze-loving local parish priest. Of the evening's plays, this stands as the weakest; with a fake donkey nodding over the fence, it is turned into a camp rendition of tinker life. Tinker life in Ireland, for all its romantic implications, is bleak, and in this production the picturesque touches are untrue. Ita D'Arcy is overly-glamorous and civil as Sarah who wants so badly to nab her man. Worse is Frances Hyland as the old mother. Her performance is hollow and boring. She never suggest an old woman frightened by the prospect of being left alone once her son is gone.

*The Shadow of the Glen* is the most successful play of the programme. Set in a lonely cottage at the end of a glen, the play deals with a shrewd old man who plays dead in order to discover his



photo: Robert Ragsdale

### Ita D'Arcy and Tom Alway: "The Tinker's Wedding"

young wife's feelings about him. It's a cleverly done piece; McKenna has handled the play with understatement and given a touch of suspense. When Nora is forced out of the cottage by her irate husband, who has just discovered his cuckoldry, we realize the desperation and spiritual impoverishment that has resulted in such a mis-marriage in the first place. The cast of four is excellent. Diana Barrington, as Nora, the flirtatious wife, is relieved at the supposed death of her husband and is justly bewildered when turned out into the world. One can't blame her for being pleased at the old boy's "demise". Dominic Hogan is adequately dumb and lanky as thick-skulled Michael who watches the proceedings; and James B. Douglas, as the tramp who wanders in and ends up escorting Nora into the world, is a pleasure to watch. Dennis Thatcher, the cranky husband, is very good in his outrage.

*Riders to the Sea* is Synge's best known one-act play, and is also one of the greatest short plays of all time. Brief and lyrical, it portrays the tragic life of the Aran islanders, a hardy bunch huddled on a string of forbidding islands off the west coast of Ireland. The islanders' lives are dictated by tradition and the cruel whims of the Atlantic. In *Riders to the Sea*, Maurya, mother of a large family, sees the last of her sons taken by the Atlantic. Her grief is deep but laced with relief, for now the sea can claim no more of her sons. Perhaps we were spoiled by Siobhan McKenna's excerpt from the play in her one-woman show earlier in the season, but in any event, Frances Hyland's Maurya is dim. She is unable to bring to the role the emotional impact, the depth of expression, that is necessary to suggest the universal grief of *Riders to the Sea*.

## The Women

by Clifton Spires

One of the most valuable additions to Toronto theatre in recent years has been the Firehall Theatre, also known as the University Alumnae Dramatic Theatre. Located at Adelaide and Berkeley Streets, the renovated firehall offers a luxurious lounge, superb acoustics and seating, and a high calibre of performance.

The current production is Clare Boothe's comedy of society ladies, *The Women*.

The audience walks in to find a flexible set designed entirely in black and white. Through loudspeakers is heard the warbling tones of Gloria Swanson singing a forgettable song from one of her early musicals. Then we hear Wini Shaw's "Lullaby of Broadway", and selections by Frances Faye, Kate Smith and other thirties women.

The lights dim and the play begins. The story is simple. Saintry housewife Mary (Judy Darragh) has husband; unscrupulous golddigger Crystal (Sheila MacDonald) meets Mary's husband; Mary's husband divorces Mary and becomes Crystal's husband; sadder but wiser Mary plays Crystal's own game and wins Crystal's, that is, her own husband back. All of this action is accom-

panied by the opinions and wisecracks of the two ladies' rather dubious friends, who vocalize with a bitchery reminiscent of *The Boys In the Band*.

Among these friends are naive newlywed Peggy (Mary Vaughn); vicious gossip Sylvia (Dianne Polley); perennially pregnant Edith (Jacqueline White), who gaily flicks cigarette ashes about while nursing her fifth child; the multi-married demigoddess of decadence, Countess DeLage (Razie Brownstone); and good-natured golddigger Miriam (Sandra Shuman). All of these women, except Crystal and Edith, show up in Reno in Act II, Scene 9, for the sole purpose of getting a divorce.

The action takes place in powder rooms, bridge clubs, exercise rooms — anyplace that is off-limits to men. One of the best-executed scenes takes place in two separate fitting rooms, with Mary in one and Crystal occupying the other. The difference between them is clearly shown here — Mary's underwear is white and Crystal's is black.

To praise all the performances individually would take too long, for down to the supporting players who double up on the walk-ons, each performance is excellent. However, special mention must be made of Polley, Darragh and Brownstone who all fit their parts as if they were poured into them. A scene-stealing award also goes to Robin Beckwith, as Mary's Irish maid, who recited Mary's marital battles with bloodcurdling realism.

Ron Gilmore's sets are among the most lavish in Toronto outside of the O'Keefe and the Royal Alex. The most ingenious creation in this production is Crystal's bathroom, complete with telephone and working tub and shower. A fortune in sequins and bows has been spent on the costumes, all of which are authentic recreations of a 1936 copy of *Photoplay*.

*The Women* is about totally unliberated females, and unfortunately provided a comic stereotype for two decades afterwards. It's hardly relevant to today's age of Germaine Greer and Shirley Chisholm, but its humour still can bring a laugh. If Mary, Sylvia, Crystal, and company were among the members of the audience today, they would probably laugh with us, and raise a gloved fist, saying, "Right on, dearie."

### Factory Lab in \$ trouble

Factory Theatre Lab announced last week that it will have to close because of lack of funds unless a major new source of money is found immediately. The Theatre's application for a Local Initiatives Program grant was turned down this year because the theatre was involved in a dispute with Actors' Equity. By the time the quarrel with Equity was resolved, Local Initiatives funds were exhausted.

The Factory is attempting to raise money with its current production of *Brussel Sprouts* at the Central Library Theatre. If you can help, call 921-5989.

# Jack the Ripper-offer

by Brian Cranley

My first contact with John occurred about a year ago when he moved into my block and rented a house. The front yard of the house had been well worn from dog fights and was covered in a layer of doggie-turf — a legacy of fenceless relations — leaving an obstacle course to the front door. Rather than posting a mine field map at the front gate, Jack decided to “do it over” in a lush carpet of sod, accented with shrubs and wrought iron fence, and spotted with flowers and ground ivy.

The facelift happened in the course of a day, a little bit of Versailles had come to Chinatown — well, a funky Versailles anyway — and duly impressed this resident of longstanding, accustomed more to climbing cabbage than creeping Scandinavian. John had class — if not high, a home and gardens “tasteful” — in a neighborhood that prided itself more on its Chinese red brick facade than its concessions to William Morris.

“Mmmnnn. This guy must have some bucks,” I thought, not an altogether remarkable insight considering the materials involved.

As he put on the finishing touches, I decided John looked like he might be worth knowing, not for the apparent newly acquired “position” in the neighborhood but his untiring industry and follow-through.

“Hey, watac tryin’ to do, win a landscapin’ award or somethin’? Tryin’ to make us look bad?” Always a winning line.

“Yeh, yer lawn does look kinda scruffy, doesn’t it.” An instant rapport.

“Musta cost ya a real bundle for all

that sod and stuff. Where’d ya get it?”

“Oh, there was a big pile of it near a field that nobody was usin’.”

“Field? Where exactly is this place.”

“Well, you drive out to Bloor and Keele and right on the corner of the field . . . .”

“Field!”

“Yeh, or a park or somethin’. It’s all just lyin’ there all rolled up and everything’. Nobody’s usin’ it.”

“Hey, you can get in trouble for doin’ that, ya know.”

“Well, if you’re interested, there’s still lots left there. Nobody’ll notice if you just rip off a little. It’s just goin’ to waste.”

Rip off! RIPOFF! Holy Cow, this guy’s a real weirdo. Rip off. We’ve gotta criminal type in the neighborhood.

“Well, uh, see ya, John.”

“Hey, if you want to get some, I’ll drive out there with ya in my van. Just pay for gas an’ stuff.”

“Ah, thanks. Yeh, maybe. Well, see ya, John.”

### Marshmallow bunny

Not that I’m a coward or a saint or anything, but that line of business I usually leave to others. I don’t have the nerves of steel and calm collected mein of a thief. Fear is what I have, and besides my palms sweat a lot when I ever think of getting caught, like the time me and my buddy Tommy got caught stealing chocolate covered marshmallow Easter bunnies as kids. I’m reformed now, and the thought of it — well, I still get sweaty palms.

A couple of weeks went by before I encountered John again, this time in the alley behind his house, unloading timber from his truck, a reconverted Bell

Telephone van — reconverted by spraying over the lettering with a can of Canadian Tire touch-up paint.

“Hey, that’s some nice looking wood ya got there, John. Whatca plannin’ to do?”

“Oh, I’ve got some shelves to make. I’m settin’ up a studio and all the stuff’s still in boxes.”

“All that for shelves?” He had enough to build a new CNE Stadium.

“Well, I like to have some around for repairs and that kinda thing.”

“Where’d ya get it? Was it cheap?”

“Oh, I ripped it off from this construction site. It was just sittin’ there not bein’ used.”

“Not bein’ used! Well, see ya, John.”

This guy was incorrigible — didn’t even bat an eye. My palms were sweating just thinking about it.

Some time later, well after John had moved in and settled himself in the community, he could be seen moving in wood and old barrels and all sorts of things at all hours of the day and night. I usually paid little attention other than a wave or a hello. Not that I’m unfriendly but I just thought, for prudence’ sake, I’d give myself a little distance — about ten miles — to be on the safe side.

One night, not too much later, John appeared at the front door. He had blown some fuses in his house and every light went out, simultaneously, as a puff of smoke and a flash of sparks shot across the room where he was putting in a light fixture. Could I come over and give him a hand trying to figure it out.

“Whatca do?”

“I was fixin’ this light fixture, see, so I could put on another one when somebody suggested I tie the two wires together like ya’ know on Christmas tree lights. Jesus, ya shoulda seen it go! It was better than the light show at the Planetarium.”

He led me downstairs to the fuse box where we tested and tried every circuit and finally, after working every possible permutation, shot a jolt of electricity through the overloaded system, enough to make his basement blaze in 60 watt splendor, bathing his packrat chamber in horror-house chiaroscuro. And there it all was — the fruits of his wandering-rip off labors. Pile upon pile of old wood, louvered windows, iron pipes, light globes, boxes of hinges and handles, milk cans, marble slabs, bed boards — one of everything Noah left out of the ark.

“Jez, John, where’d you get this stuff?”

“Oh, heh-heh, the marble came from some abandoned houses and the milk cans were leanin’ against an old farm shed and . . . .”

“Whatca ever gonna do with it all?”

“Oh, ya can never tell when it might come in handy.”

“Well, see ya, John.”

“Thanks, man, I really appreciate it and all.”

“Uh, oh, . . . ya, sure. Uh . . . . anytime.”

Despite his eccentricities there is something lovable about John, his calculated dishable, his Yosemite Sam moustache, his kind and gentle manner. No, you couldn’t dislike a guy like him, always filled with enthusiasm, always picking something up or starting a new project. So when I encountered him last week and he looked so obviously depressed — the tail-dragging kind — I figured I’d cheer him up a little with some lively conversation.

“Hiya, John.”

“Uh, hi.”

“You look like you just ate at Fran’s or somethin’. Need a bromo?”

“Naw, nothin’ like that. I just can’t get my van to start. What a bummer.”

“Auh, too bad.”

Pause.

“Say, John, I just saw a whole pile of lumber down at the corner where they’re ripping up the street.”

“Yah,” his eyes bulging through his glass frames.

“Yah, a huge pile of stuff — a little bit of everything.”

His demonic grin approached ecstasy.

“Hey, do ya think anybody’s usin’ it?”

## citizen classified

532-4456 / jobs / goods / digs / etc.

### FOR SALE

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### ARTICLES WANTED

Would like to buy wood toilet set for 1½ year old baby 635-1611.

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### WANTED TO RENT

**University Professor** seeks house to rent, Hillcrest vicinity 3-4 bedrooms garage & garden. Walking distance to shops and transportation. May occupancy or before 763-6353.

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### SERVICES AVAILABLE

**Bloor Bathurst Information Centre,** 896 Bathurst St. Information and Referral Services — Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. Housing registry; free legal clinic. Saturdays 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Phone 531-5613.

**Interior Painting, Pre-Spring Cleaning, Gardening.** \$2.50 hr. Phone after six. 869-0872 — Mr. Sloan.

**Piano and Music theory** instruction all levels. Reasonable rates call Arnold 366-3278.

### HELP WANTED

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### HOUSING OFFERED

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### BOOKS

## The Strikebreakers

*The Strikebreakers: The Report of the Strikebreaking Committee of the Ontario Federation of Labour and the Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto* by Marc Zwelling. New Press, 1973. \$2.95.

There are two interesting things about Richard Grange’s strikebreaking business. The first is that it exists. “Canada occupies a unique place in the world of nations,” writes Marc Zwelling. “Nowhere else in the world is professional strikebreaking tolerated.”

It’s clear that many Canadians don’t have much understanding in their daily lives of the model of labour-management relations which their political parties and governments formally espouse. Much of the public and the media have little grasp of the principles of collective bargaining for which labor unions have been fighting for a 100 years or more. Some companies continue to try to beat, cheat and break unions, to hire thugs and spies to do their dirty work and get away with it.

In *The Strikebreakers*, Zwelling documents the activities of Richard Grange’s strikebreakers, known best as Canadian Driver Pool — their penchant for weapons and vicious dogs, the kinds of things they do when they move into a company, the attitudes of the com-

panies they serve toward labour and unions. Zwelling discusses Grange, what he does and recent strikebreaking in Ontario in the context of the history of North American labour-management relations and the current situation in Canada. Grange is nothing new. It’s just that other civilized countries don’t any longer permit people to do legally what he does.

### Grange’s allies

The second interesting thing about Grange are some of his allies. His legal concerns are handled by the firm of Gardiner and Roberts. Gardiner is Fred Gardiner, former Metro chairman, and patron saint of Toronto’s modern “boomtown” era. Among the company owners for whom Grange has worked is J. Douglas Crashley, former chairman of the Toronto City Planning Board and chairman of the Toronto Citizens Redevelopment Advisory Council. The Toronto Progressive Conservative government has aided and abetted some of Grange’s illegal activity. Local police departments have, for all practical purposes, supported Grange’s strikebreakers while oppressing strikers. The *Toronto Star*, which has rented trucks from Grange, has flattered him in news stories and killed at least one story that dealt with the real nature of Grange’s strikebreaking business.

And what this points up is one of the interesting things about society — it fits together. Crashley, who, on the one hand, came to Toronto City Hall last summer to present a brief to City Council supporting the Eaton-Fairview scheme for a huge downtown development, on the other hand hires strikebreakers. These two activities have in common an effort to consolidate and expand the power and privilege enjoyed by one sector of society at the expense of another. Zwelling’s book helps us learn that an attempt to view society’s problems, and solve them without probing for relationships between these problems, will ultimately fail. The deceptively simple model of a powerful, privileged class in conflict with a less powerful, less privileged class is supported time and again.

*The Strikebreakers*, a story of greed and duplicity, isn’t a happy book. It is worth the attention of readers interested in understanding labor troubles and political power relationships in Ontario.

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FRIDAY, MARCH 9

8 p.m. — The School of Experimental Education presents a benefit for OXFAM of Canada. Program includes Luis Bunuel's "Chien Andalou," Simon of the Desert, several short films and featuring Milton Acorn. At the school, 28 High Street. Suggested contribution: \$1.50 for students and \$2.00 for adults.

8:30 p.m. — Le Theatre du P'tit Bonheur presents Les Precieuses Ridicules at 95 Danforth (near Broadview subway). Again on March 10, 14-17 and 21-24. call 466-8400 for information.

8:30 p.m. Toronto Dance Theatre completes a series of concerts by the company in universities and colleges with a program at Hart House on the University of Toronto campus. Also runs tomorrow. Tickets \$3, students \$2.

8:30 p.m. — Edward Albee's Box & Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung is presented at Stage Two-Upstairs at the Firehall Theatre, 70 Berkeley Street. Runs agins March 10, 11, 16, 17, 18. Reservations 364-4170.

9 p.m. — The Jest Society and Dave Broadfoot, a new comedy coupling, are back at the Poor Alex. It's running indefinitely. On Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturdays. Check 920-8373 for times. Admission \$3 and \$4.

SUNDAY, MARCH 11

11 a.m. — The Invisible Minority, a panel on the Gay Caucus. At the First Unitarian Congregation, 175 St. Clair Avenue West near Avenue Road. All welcome.

2:30 p.m. — The Royal Ontario Museum presents its free Sunday film offering. Today: Across The Great Salt Desert, The Way Of The Chinese Brush, Primer Of The Universe. Free with admission to the Museum, Avenue Road and Bloor.

7 p.m. — The Toronto Waffle Education Committee continues its course on the Political Economy of Canada with John Hucheson on The Canadian Government and the Economy. Discussion follows. \$1.50 admission. Room N201, O.I.S.E., 252 Bloor Street West at St. George Subway. Information 651-6709.

8 p.m. — All-Candidates Meeting for the St. George By-Election. Chaired by Ramsey Cook, the candidates meet the public. Question and answer, coffee hour to follow. At the First Unitarian Congregation, 175 St. Clair Avenue at Avenue Road.

TUESDAY, MARCH 13

7:30 p.m. — Lecture on Women in the Penal System. Part of the University of Toronto's interdisciplinary lectures in Women's Studies. In auditorium, College of Education, S.E. corner Spadina and Huron. Free.

7:30 p.m. — The last all-candidates meeting for the St. George riding by-election. Come out and hear the candidates speak. It's at Sacred Heart School, 460 Sherbourne Street, north of Carlton. All welcome.

# the citizen calendar

## culture/politics/community events

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14

7 p.m. — The Royal Ontario Museum presents the best of the National Film Board. Tonight: Catuar, Cosmic Zoom and Wet Earth and Warm People. Free in the ROM Theatre, Avenue Road and Bloor.

8 p.m. — Ron Atkey, M.P. for St. Pauls, will host a Citizens Forum to discuss Trends in Food Prices. On the panel with Atkey will be Helen Morningstar, the research Chairman of the Consumer Association of Canada, Shelia Kieran of City T.V., and Sam Shopsowitz, president of Shopsy. At Huron Street Public School, 541 Huron, north of Bloor. All welcome.

8 p.m. — Toronto Public Libraries presents the debut of a monthly series of Public Affairs programs. The topic tonight: Welfare. Panelists: John Anderson, Commissioner of Social Services, a representative of the Civil Liberties Association, a welfare mother, and other speakers. Moderator: Jack Heighton. Admission free. At the Parliament Street Library, 406 Parliament Street.

THURSDAY, MARCH 15

5:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. — The Art Gallery of Ontario presents Underground Film Classics. Tonight: Oh Dem Eatermelons, Vinyl, Color Me Shameless. Panels for the Walls of the World. Admission free. Seating limited and on first come basis. At Dundas and Beverley Streets.

8:30 p.m. — The Royal Ontario Museum presents a lecture series designed to illustrate how culture plays a role in all aspects of society. Tonight: The Church and Culture by the Most Reverend E. W. Scott. Free in the Museum Theatre, Avenue Road and Bloor.

SATURDAY, MARCH 17

1:30 p.m. — Global Village Theatre presents Nuts & Bolts & Rusty Things, a musical song-story which children of all ages will love. Tuesday to Saturday until April 21. All seats: \$1.00. Reservations 964-0035.

SUNDAY, MARCH 18

11 a.m. — Canadian Unitarianism — A Phoenix? with Clayton Peterson, President, Canadian Unitarian Council. At First Unitarian Congregation, 175 St. Clair Avenue West, near Avenue Road. All welcome.

2:30 p.m. — The Royal Ontario Museum presents its free Sunday film offering. Today: Fragile: Handle With Care, The God Within. Free with admission to the Museum, Avenue Road and Bloor.

7 p.m. — The Toronto Waffle Educa-

tion Committee continues its course on the Political Economy of Canada with Mel Watkins on Canadian Resources & Underdevelopment. Discussion follows. \$1.50 admission. Room N201, O.I.S.E., 252 Bloor Street West at St. George Subway. Information 651-6709.

8:30 p.m. — Sunday Concerts at Actors' Theatre continue with Crawford and Wickham, Ron Baumber, folk artists. Admission \$1.50 students; \$2.00 adults. at 390 Dupont Street at Brunswick.

MONDAY, MARCH 19

8 p.m. — The Leonard Beaton Memorial Lectures continue with an address by Major General (ret.) Indar Jit Rikhe

of the Indian Army and former military adviser to the U.N. Secretary-General of the U.N. Room 2172 of the Medical Science Building at the University of Toronto. Free.

TUESDAY, MARCH 20

7:30 p.m. — Lecture on Communal Living and Day Care. Part of the University of Toronto's interdisciplinary lectures in Women's Studies. In auditorium, College of Education, Free.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21

7 p.m. — The Royal Ontario Museum presents the best of the National Film Board. Tonight: Modulations, End of a Summer Day, and Wrestling. Free in the ROM Theatre, Avenue Road and Bloor.

8:30 p.m. — Concertante Canada presents Trinity Square Concerts. Tonight: Margaret Carmichael, contralto in a Lieder Recital. At Holy Trinity Church, two blocks south of Dundas, west of Yonge. \$2.50 admission.

8:30 p.m. — The Backdoor Theatre Workshop presents two Canadian plays: And At Night We Dream and Yo Yo at the theatre, 474 Ontario Street. Wednesdays and Sundays free. Fridays through Sundays — pay what you can. 961-1505.

THURSDAY, MARCH 22

8:30 p.m. — Theatre Q Company presents The Beau's Stratagem. At Palmerston Library Theatre, Palmerston north of Bloor. Again March 23, 24, 29, 30, 31. Tickets \$1.50 and \$2.50. 789-4841.

8:30 p.m. — The Royal Ontario Museum presents a lecture series designed to illustrate how culture plays a role in all aspects of society. Free in the Museum Theatre, Avenue Road and Bloor.

## Society and Culture

A lecture series designed to illustrate how culture plays a role in all aspects of society.

Thursdays at 8:30 p.m. ROM Theatre, Free


Royal Ontario Museum Avenue Road at Bloor Information: 928-3690

March 1 Government and Culture by the Honourable Robert Welch

March 8 Communications and Culture by Ran Ide

March 15 The Church and Culture by the Most Reverend E. W. Scott

March 22 Publishing and Culture by David Godfrey  
March 29 Youth and Culture by Sir John Wolfenden  
April 5 Universities and Culture by David P. Silcox

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