

# ICBC staff at work behind closed doors



URSULA RESPONDEK  
... coder at work

Employees of the Insurance Corporation of B.C. went back to work today behind closed doors.

Claims centres will not be open until Friday to start dealing with the backlog of work which built up during the 15-week strike by members of the Office and Technical Employees Union.

ICBC spokesman Bev Penhall said all employees were called back for today and are "picking up the pieces that were left undone when they went on strike."

He said it is not yet known how many employees got other jobs during the strike and will not be returning.

Under the new first contract, ICBC employees have seven days to return to work as well as a 40-per-cent pay hike over 28 months and a number of fringe benefits.

Another provision is that they cannot be forced to work more than five hours overtime a week.

Penhall said there are no plans to keep the claims centres open longer than the pre-strike hours of 8:15 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays to Fridays.

Motorists with claims are being given appointment application forms at motor vehicle branch offices, ICBC offices, independent agents' offices and through newspaper ads.

The form asks for basic details and promises motorists will be phoned with a time to go to the centre to which they have mailed the application.

Meanwhile, ICBC estimators have started to make the rounds of towing company storage yards, checking on damaged vehicles.

While Penhall said the estimators are "getting a general picture," reports from the yards said that wherever possible damaged vehicles are being written off.

This cuts down on the claim processing time for ICBC and will reduce pressure on bodyshops.

Len Macht, a vice-chairman of the body shop division of the Automotive Retailers Association, said the rush on the shops is not expected to start until Monday.

"ICBC will not start estimating repair costs until Friday. At the moment they are just counting noses and moving staff around," he said.

Motor vehicle branches throughout the province, which stopped issuing original drivers licences during the ICBC strike, found line-ups for them today.

Motor vehicle superintendent Bob Whitlock said a lot of those applying today are students who do not return to school until Wednesday.

He said the branch also expects a backup of people needing to renew their driver's certificates but most of this is expected to be done by mail.

During the strike, the attorney-general's department announced drivers whose certificates have expired would be given two weeks to get them once the ICBC strike ended.

# IWA BID TO REOPEN TALKS WITH FOREST FIRMS SEEN

The International Woodworkers of America will likely decide Wednesday to seek further talks with the forest companies to end their long labor dispute.

The union's coast negotiating committee has been convened to decide its next action since the membership rejected the settlement recommendations of special mediator Mr. Justice Henry Hutcheon by a slim 51.2-per-cent majority.

Jack Munro, western regional IWA president, said today that since the membership has rejected the Hutcheon settlement "the only party that can improve it is the employers."

Syd Thompson, president of Vancouver Local 1-217, said the negotiating committee "could well decide" to seek further talks with the industry.

Meanwhile, Munro said he still could not make any sense of the continuing threat of the striking pulp unions to picket IWA certifications in the forest industry.

"The remaining 22,000 are laid off, unemployed," Munro added. "That doesn't

leave much left for the pulp unions to picket."

The pulp unions meet with the B.C. Federation of Labor on Wednesday on the picketing issue but Reg Ginn of the Pulp, Paper and Woodworkers of Canada said the two unions have already decided they are going to shut down all of the forest industry.

"The meeting Wednesday will map out the whole procedure for picketing," Ginn said in an interview. "But we're definitely going to picket the mills of our employers. We'll put everything down we possibly can throughout the province."

The Hutcheon report recommends a \$1.55-an-hour wage boost over two years, plus a folding-in of the 24-cent-an-hour cost-of-living adjustment the workers had been receiving under their previous contracts. The report recommends a cost-of-living increase in the second year of the contract. The employers say they are willing to talk but will "not build on top" of the report.

# BCR's Squamish yard struck

The third in a series of rotating strikes on the B.C. Railway hit the yards at Squamish today.

B.C. Railway spokesman Hugh Armstrong said a freight train between Squamish and Lillooet was cancelled because of the walkout of members of the United Transportation Union and the Canadian Union of Transportation Employees.

They represent trainmen, yard crews and enginemen.

Armstrong said that in addition to the freight, a northbound freight scheduled to

leave North Vancouver at 10 p.m. would have to be delayed.

Today's rotating strike also calls for a walkout by members of the same two unions from the North Vancouver yards at noon.

Armstrong said southbound trains would not be affected.

The UTU and the CUTE are among 11 unions negotiating with B.C. Railway to renew contracts that expired last July 31.

The rotating strikes are a result of a deadlock in negotiations on one issue — overtime.

# Farm freeze removal asked

The Greater Vancouver Regional District's planning committee will consider Wednesday an appeal to remove more than 128 acres of Richmond land from the agricultural freeze.

Vendev Enterprises Ltd. have applied for the exclusion of the pasture land south of Finn Road and east of No. 3 Road, to allow industrial development.

Richmond council and the GVRD's planning staff have recommended against approval of the appeal.

Other applications to be considered include Meadow Creek Farms Ltd.'s appeal to use its property east of 184th Street and north of 8th Avenue in Surrey as a temporary quarter-horse racing track.

The B.C. Land Commission has already given its approval to the application.

# Parkade to be guarded

A uniformed guard will patrol the Pacific Centre's underground parkade during the hours it is open to the public, Mayor Art Phillips said today.

He said decision by the Downtown Parking Corp. which operates the parkade, to increase security was taken as a result of the June 24 slaying of Frieda Buxbaum in the parkade.

Glen Wayne Jansen, 24, has been charged with the murder.

# Rankin warns of losses from rental law amendment

Failure to enforce a recent amendment to the Landlord and Tenant Act could indirectly cost taxpayers millions of dollars, Vancouver Ald. Harry Rankin charged today.

At a press conference, Rankin termed the amendment, which allows the human resources minister to designate certain hotel and motel rooms as falling under the terms of the Act, a "ponderous, bloody piece of legislation."

Bruce Eriksen, spokesman for the Downtown Eastside Residents Association, explained to a joint press conference that tax monies being paid to some 25,000 people on social assistance in B.C. are going toward large rent increases in lodging not currently covered by the Landlord and Tenant Act.

Since the amendment is not being enforced, Eriksen said, these large rent in-

creases are not being officially opposed, and could amount to a cost to the taxpayers of millions of dollars.

The amendment is not being enforced because the rentalsman says 50 extra staff would have to be hired to do the processing, Eriksen said.

He said research done on behalf of the DERA indicates that 1,369 out of B.C.'s 25,000 social assistance recipients are living in 125 Vancouver-area hotels or motels.

As the amendment currently states, each room must individually be investigated by a Rentalsman officer and subsequently designated if the investigator finds the room is occupied continuously by the person or not intended for use by transients.

"It's an imbecilic amendment," Rankin said. "A guy can still be kicked out on 10 minutes notice. He said the solution is to "designate all the rooms."

# Immigrant doctors sent north

Most immigrant doctors will have to practice in remote areas of the province for at least five years, before they can settle in the area of their choice, the registrar of the B.C. College of Physicians and Surgeons said today.

Dr. William McClure said that new Canadian immigrants who wished to practice in B.C. were being granted temporary registrations restricting them to practice in areas north of Ashcroft.

Only when the immigrants were granted Canadian citizenship, after a minimum of five years, would they be able to apply for full registration, he said in an interview.

The new regulations, adopted by the col-

lege in May, will cover all immigrants except a few specialists and researchers. They are in line with federal government policy to restrict the immigration of foreign doctors.

But the federal government left it up to the provinces to send doctors to areas that needed them.

Dr. McClure said that as far as he knew B.C. was the only province that had acted on this.

Since the new rules apply only to doctors who have applied to the college since May, the policy is only beginning to take effect. But Dr. McClure said so far reaction seemed to be positive.

"People applying don't seem to think that it's unfair or asking too much," he said.

The B.C. target area is a cross-shaped region extending from Ashcroft through Prince George to the Yukon and from Prince Rupert east to Alberta.

Dr. McClure said that this area had only one-third as many doctors per capita as the densely populated southern centres and that there was a particular shortage of some specialties like psychiatry.

# Church arson suspected

Surrey RCMP said arson is suspected in a fire early today in the Evangelical Covenant Church of Green Timbers at 14219 — 88th Ave. in Surrey.

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# Stanley Park cyclist raped

Police said a 22-year-old woman was pulled off her bicycle while riding around Beaver Lake in Stanley Park Monday and raped.

The victim was riding alone about 4:30 p.m. when two men stopped her. One threatened her with a knife

and held her down while the other man assaulted her.

## Attacks rise

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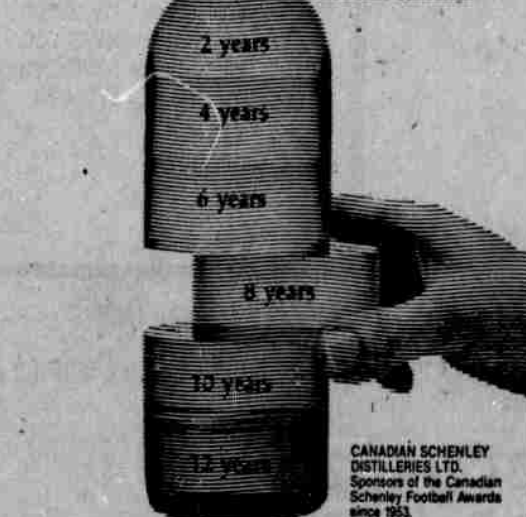
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