

Negotiator blasts 'greedy' union leaders

By **GEORGE DOBIE**
Sun Labor Reporter

A group of blue-collar workers could be earning more than \$20,000 a year instead of being on strike if their union leaders were not "greedy and gouging," a management negotiator charged today.

In the strongest criticism levelled against a union in years, Jack Muirhead, chief negotiator for the Metal Industries Association, representing 10 struck equipment companies, said in an interview the union was "greedy and has gouged this industry to the extent they are driving business into non-union shops and backyard operators."

"And they are forcing forest and mining companies to put in their own shops," said Muirhead.

He was referring to the strike by some

300 members of the International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 115.

Muirhead said they turned down \$2.10 an hour over one year, or 33 per cent on a rate of \$6.40, not including a 34 cent an hour "fold-in" payment from a cost-of-living adjustment last July 1.

He also said the operating engineers were "devious and dishonest" regarding another issue over scheduling a Tuesday-to-Saturday shift.

"We have been informed our shift scheduling, when given to the employees, did not mention that it was voluntary and that a 35-cent-an-hour premium would be paid for all hours worked."

Muirhead said the operating engineers also referred in public statements to an issue over pensions but did not explain it.

"The issue is that the union has a pen-

sion plan with six union trustees and two management trustees that applies to construction and they are trying to thrust this plan onto the equipment companies."

Muirhead said if that happened the equipment companies would be subsidizing construction company workers by \$250 per man, per year, because of their hours of work and hence their contributions differ.

Muirhead said the equipment companies, including International Harvester, this week offered to have the pensions issue arbitrated on whether the equipment companies' plan or the construction industry plan would produce the best pension for the employees but the union turned them down.

The company negotiator also attacked statements that their offer was not good

enough in relation to rates in the forest companies which are bargaining again this year.

He said heavy duty mechanics of the International Woodworkers of America are receiving \$7.56 an hour, plus a 24-cent COLA, and 15-cent pension contributions, for a total of \$7.95.

In comparison, he said, the equipment strikers were offered \$8 an hour from May 1, \$8.50 an hour this Oct. 1, plus increased pension contributions to 50 cents from 30 cents an hour, increased "off-property" rate of 70 cents an hour from 55 cents, and 35 cents for all hours worked on the new shift schedule, for a total of \$10.05 an hour.

Muirhead said the industry already had the "richest shop agreement" in B.C.

Labor code changes widen unions' sphere

By **MIKE GRAHAM**
Sun Victoria Bureau

VICTORIA — Agricultural and domestic workers as well as professionals formerly excluded from the labor code, will be able to organize into trade unions under amendments to the Labor Code introduced today.

Labor Minister Bill King said doctors, lawyers, engineers and other professional groups for the first time will be able to organize.

The changes, for the first time in B.C. history, will allow farm and domestic workers to join a union to negotiate wages and working conditions.

"The definition of employment is quite significantly amended," King told reporters.

The amendments also stipulate that when a union is organizing, employers are forbidden to dismiss or discipline workers.

"It will be possible for a union to ask for a 30-day freeze when conducting an organizing drive," said King.

"The amendments will protect workers involved in organizing and ensure that their employment and security is not jeopardized."

The amendment also prohibits unions

that are raiding from conducting organizing drives in any but the seventh or eighth month in the second year of two-year contracts.

Previously unions were allowed to raid each other annually in the seventh or eighth month.

Another amendment allows the labor minister to recommend to cabinet a "cooling-off period" for firefighters, policemen and hospital unions facing strikes or lockout.

The 21-day period will also apply to other facilities or services designated by the Labor Relations Board or labor minister as essential to health, life or safety.

Employers are also forbidden under the proposed amendment to fire a worker if he was suspended or expelled from one trade union because he belongs to another.

A second bill introduced by King in the legislature today would set up an education centre for management and labor in the province to provide a wide range of courses.

A \$5 million fund would be established to finance the centre.

King said he foresees no separate institution for the centre and said its courses would likely be conducted in regional colleges and other educational facilities.

2 COLLEGES ANNOUNCED FOR NORTH

Sun Victoria Bureau
VICTORIA — Education Minister Eileen Daily today announced establishment of two new community colleges in northern B.C.

The announcement follows by a week the authorization of similar colleges in the East Kootenay and Northern Vancouver Island areas.

One of the two northern colleges will serve the school districts of Queen Charlotte, Prince Rupert, Kitimat, Terrace and Nishga and the other will serve Peace River South, Fort Nelson and Stikine.

Police seek clues to headless corpse

By **MICHAEL McCARDLELL**
The decomposed corpse found Thursday in a vacant lot on the fringe of Skid Road was dumped there by someone who never wanted the police to identify the victim.

"He went to a lot of trouble so we wouldn't be able to trace his victim," a homicide detective working on the case said today.

The headless body, with the lower half of its arms and legs severed, was found in a debris-strewn lot behind Able Moving and Storage Co., 801 Powell.

It was wrapped in plastic and stuffed in a cardboard box tied with string. The box was under a pile of boards and had been there three to six months.

Murderer escapes

A prisoner considered dangerous, escaped today from the Agassiz Mountain prison, 70 miles east of Vancouver, where he is serving a life sentence for murder.

Police said that Normand Blanchette, 27, was found to be absent at a head count at the medium security prison.

He was recently sent to B.C. from Montreal to serve his life sentence and a concurrent term for armed robbery.

Police said it is likely Blanchette will try to get to Vancouver.

Lancaster flies home

EDMONTON (CP) — What is believed to be north America's last airworthy Lancaster bomber thundered into the sky south of here early today, carrying more than a ton of fuel.

The aircraft, which had been sitting since 1969 in an overgrown airfield near St. Albert, just north of Edmonton, is en route to Scotland via Toronto, Gander and Ireland to take its place alongside other war planes in a private museum.

Environment report due soon on Roberts Bank expansion

By **JEFF CARRUTHERS**
Special to The Sun

An environmental study on the quintupling of the Roberts Bank superport is now hoped for by the end of summer, Vancouver port manager Fred Spoke said Thursday.

The report, on previously announced plans to increase the existing 50-acre artificial island off Tsawwassen to a 250-acre site, was due originally a year ago but Spoke said the last federal election and a cabinet change in Ottawa has delayed it.

"Environmental reports are always rather difficult in the sense they are complicated," he added.

He said the report is a crucial step and plans to start dredging later this year for the expansion depend upon it.

The federal government is proposing to spend \$23.6 million on adding four new integrated receiving, storage and automatic loading bays to the existing facility, used only for coal.

The new bays will be capable of handling coal, sulphur, potash and any other bulk commodity, including grain, exported from the West Coast.

A 65-foot deep channel and turn-around

space will be built to handle bulk cargo ships up to 150,000 deadweight tons.

The existing facilities consist of one bay capable of handling two ships on a 53-acre artificial island site.

The Roberts-bank expansion plans were outlined last week by National Harbors Board officials to a meeting of Delta municipal officials, Delta chamber of commerce members, provincial harbors board officials and B.C. government officials.

Another meeting is set for October.

Expansion is designed to accompany a planned B.C. government industrial park development of some 200 acres along the nearby Delta foreshore.

The foreshore development would also include loading and unloading facilities for ships up to 75,000 deadweight tons.

To date, West Shore Terminals which uses the existing Roberts Bank facilities for off-loading coal destined for Japan, has taken out an option on part of the planned expanded facilities, supposedly to handle more coal.

At least one other company, Trimac of Calgary, has an option for use of the proposed new facilities.

Wages cited in dollar drop

OTTAWA (CP) — Wage gains made during the last 12 months have been partly eroded by a drop in the value of the dollar.

About half the eight-per-cent decline in dollar value, measured against the U.S. dollar, has occurred in the last few weeks, prompting expressions of concern from government and business.

Finance Minister John Turner, in his latest statement on the exchange value, said "anyone who thinks we can rely indefinitely on a steadily eroding exchange rate to offset the adverse impact of continually soaring costs and prices in Canada while our major competitors move to bring their own inflation under control is living in a fool's paradise."

The dollar value now is down to about 96½ cents U.S. compared with a peak of more than \$1.03 U.S. a year ago.

The result has been that costs of things bought from abroad, from Japanese cars to Florida fruits, have increased.

But a government official said wage increase are only a part of the reason for the declining value of the dollar and it is difficult to assess how important this factor is.

The official, who asked not to be identified, said the dollar was over-valued a year ago. At that time, Turner was saying the prospects for the Canadian economy were the best in the industrialized world.

"One of the key things that was not esti-

mated at that point was the oil account," the official said.

Exports of Western Canadian oil were bringing in enough money to offset costs of foreign oil which had to be imported to serve eastern markets. Projections of domestic supplies have shown there is less than previously believed and exports to the U.S. are being cut back. The result is an oil debt which has developed sooner than anyone expected.

Manitoba miners ousts steelworkers union

THOMPSON, Man. (CP) — The Canadian Association of Industrial, Mechanical and Allied Workers has ousted the United Steelworkers as bargaining agents for 151 workers at the Manibridge mine near this northern Manitoba community.

The miners, surface workers and clerks voted 60 to 56 in favor of CAIMAW over the steelworkers union, which has represented the workers since the mine came into production in 1971 under Falconbridge Nickel Mines Ltd.

Unrest within the steelworkers' local came to a head last October when the ceiling on union dues was changed to \$22 a month from \$10. The old scale was based on two hours' wages while the new rate also included calculation of bonuses.

ICBC to burn cars in arson study

The Insurance Corporation of B.C. plans to burn eight derelict cars Wednesday to study the effects of various types of car fires.

The car burning session, a co-operative effort by the ICBC, the Vancouver fire warden's office and the provincial fire marshal's office, will help officials study

the difference between accidental and arson fires in motor vehicles.

Insp. Brian Brown of the provincial fire marshal's office said recently a crack-down is planned on vehicle arsonists.

"In 1974 motor vehicle arson cost an estimated \$1.2 million, and there has been a 32-per-cent rise in incendiary vehicle fires this year," he said.

ICBC STRIKE SET TUESDAY

A strike by some 1,800 employees of the Insurance Corporation of B.C. is planned for Tuesday "unless something happens in between now and then," union sources said today.

The date was set at a meeting Thursday night of shop stewards of Office and Technical Employees Union Local 15.

What could "happen in between" is some form of intervention by Labor Minister Bill King. That could be an extension of the term of mediator Gus Leonidas or

an industrial inquiry into the dispute.

A strike cannot legally occur when a mediator is still directly involved. Leonidas was asked by the union to withdraw and it was learned his letter is in the mail to the minister.

ICBC and the OTEU have not been able to resolve a major disagreement over reducing hours of work. Wage rates to be included in a first agreement and several related issues are also "up in the air."



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