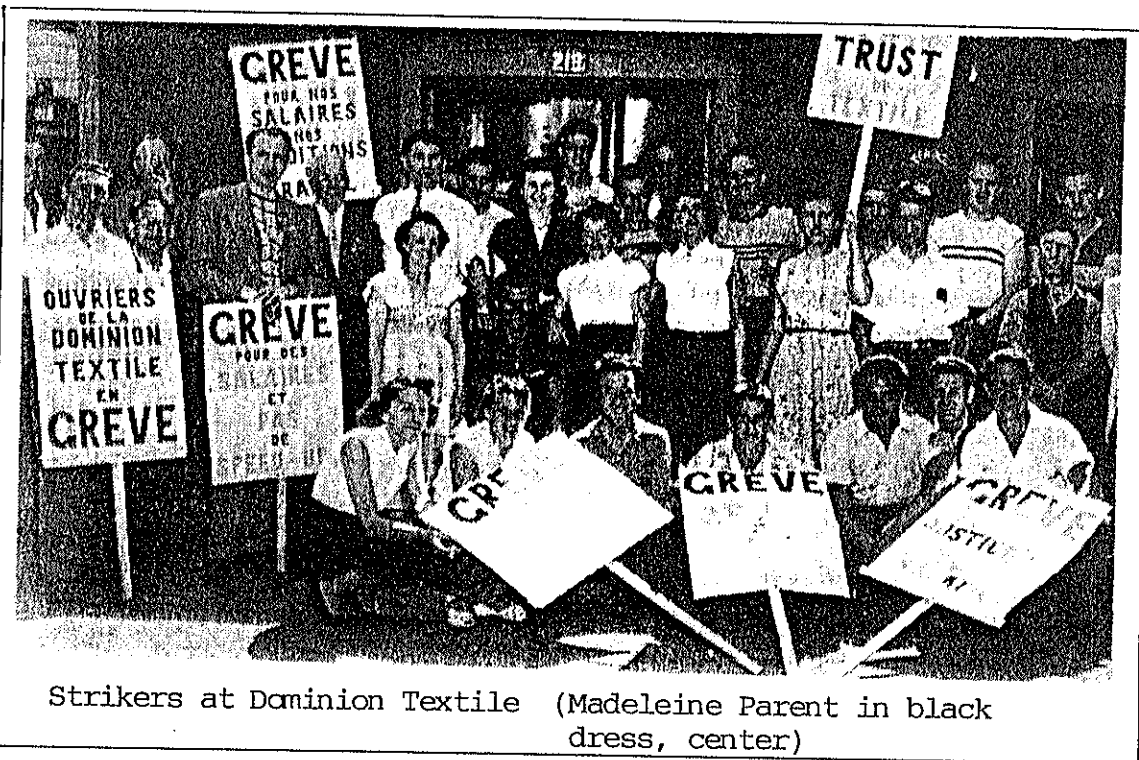


MAY IS THE MOST APPROPRIATE MONTH FOR OUR CONVENTION THIS YEAR. IN MAY, 1952 - EXACTLY 40 YEARS AGO - THE FOUNDERS OF OUR UNION MADE A DIFFICULT DECISION, ONE THAT HELPED TO CHANGE THE FUTURE OF THE LABOUR MOVEMENT IN CANADA.

AT THE TIME, THEY WERE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED TEXTILE WORKERS OF AMERICA. IT WAS A TIME WHEN ALMOST ALL UNIONS IN CANADA WERE AMERICAN ONES. MANY OF THEM WERE ALSO VERY UNDEMOCRATIC. THERE WERE MANY TENSIONS BETWEEN THE CANADIAN DIVISION AND THE U.S. HEAD OFFICE OF THE U.T.W.A.

IN APRIL, 1952, A STRIKE AGAINST THE GIANT DOMINION TEXTILE COMPANY STARTED IN MONTREAL AND VALLEYFIELD, QUEBEC. 6,000 TEXTILE MILL WORKERS WALKED THE PICKET LINES.



Strikers at Dominion Textile (Madeleine Parent in black dress, center)

ON MAY 25, 1952, IT HAPPENED. WE WILL LET THE LATE KENT ROWLEY, A FOUNDER OF OUR UNION, TELL IT IN HIS OWN WORDS:

"In the middle of the strike, the International Secretary-Treasurer, Lloyd Klenert, came to Montreal and against our strict injunction, met secretly with the heads of Dominion Textile.

Klenert called me to meet at his hotel, showed me a contract and told me to sign it to settle the strike.

It was a Company-written contract, including the very "bonus plan" we were striking against. No consultation whatever with the members, or even the Strike Committee, had been held. It was a sell-out, a backdoor deal.

When I refused, the Klenert crowd, along with the Montreal police, smashed into our National Office in the dark of the night, stole records and money and mutilated our files. The next morning, headlines in the newspapers announced that the entire staff in Canada (12 in total) were summarily fired.

No vote. No trial. Nothing."

One of many smash-ups of the Canadian office of the UTWA.



THE ACTIONS OF THE AMERICAN HEAD OFFICE WERE GREETED BY A SIGH OF RELIEF FROM CANADIAN BUSINESSES, GOVERNMENT AND SOME VERY CONSERVATIVE UNION LEADERS. THEY THOUGHT IT WAS ALL OVER. BUT THEY THOUGHT WRONG.

WITH THE HARDING CARPET LOCAL LEADING THE WAY,
A NEW CANADIAN UNION WAS FORGED, THE CANADIAN
TEXTILE COUNCIL (LATER RE-NAMED THE CANADIAN
TEXTILE & CHEMICAL UNION).

MOST OF US WILL NEVER COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND HOW
DIFFICULT IT WAS TO DO THIS IN THE 1950s. IT WAS
A TIME OF EXTREME RIGHT-WING POLITICS. IT WAS HARD
ENOUGH TO ORGANIZE A UNION OF ANY KIND THEN, NEVER
MIND AN HONEST ONE OR A CANADIAN ONE. WORKERS HAD
TO RISK THEIR PERSONAL SAFETY. THEIR FAMILIES WERE
INTIMIDATED AND DRIVEN APART. ANYONE WHO DARED TO
STAND UP FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR CO-WORKERS WAS
AUTOMATICALLY DISMISSED AS A "COMMUNIST".

WE OWE THESE PEOPLE A DEBT OF GRATITUDE - AND OUR
OWN COMMITMENT TO CARRY ON, NO MATTER WHAT
DIFFICULTIES WE CONFRONT.



NOV • 56

1956 strike at Harding Carpets. (First photo: Ed Holota,
Cliff Gallant, Roy Williams, Kent Rowley)

OVER THE 40 YEARS SINCE, OUR UNION HAS BEEN IN THE
FOREFRONT OF MANY STRUGGLES ON BEHALF OF ITS MEMBERS

AS WELL AS WORKERS ACROSS CANADA.

WE HAVE LED IMPORTANT STRIKES, SUCH AS THE ONES AT:

- * TEXPACK, Brantford - when the Company was on the verge of turning this U.S. branch plant into a warehouse
- * ARTISTIC WOODWORK, Toronto - when the Company refused to recognize the right of immigrant workers to get a first contract with even basic union rights
- * PURETEX KNITTING, Toronto - when the Company installed electronic cameras to watch the every move of the women working in the plant
- * MCGREGOR HOSIERY, Toronto - when the Company refused to offer a living wage to the immigrant women and men who made McGregor's profits
- * CHILDREN'S BOOKSTORE, Toronto - when the Company argued that low wages for young women are the "norm"



Texpack workers struggle against American Hospital Supply

1971

THERE WERE, OF COURSE, MANY OTHER STRIKES. THERE WERE ALSO STRUGGLES OF OTHER KINDS, LIKE THE FACTORY OCCUPATION AT PURETEX AND WEEKS-LONG 24 HOUR WATCH ON WOODS BAG, WHEN BOTH THESE COMPANIES WERE PUT INTO BANKRUPTCY.

IN 1990, WE WENT THROUGH THE SAME THING AT OUR FOUNDING LOCAL, HARDING CARPETS. WE PULLED EVERY STRING WE COULD, SUCCESSFULLY, TO RESCUE THE FIRM FROM THE HANDS OF AMERICAN BUYERS AND THE BANKS. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE WOODS AND HARDING PLANTS ARE STILL IN OPERATION TODAY BECAUSE THE WORKERS HAD THE COURAGE TO FIGHT FOR THEIR JOBS - SOMETHING MORE AND MORE WORKERS MUST BE PREPARED TO DO THESE DAYS.



Workers at Woods demonstrate in 1984 to save the firm from closure

OUR UNION HAS ALSO WORKED QUIETLY BEHIND THE SCENES TO IMPROVE LEGISLATION, TO THE BENEFIT OF ALL WORKERS.

WE WERE, FOR EXAMPLE, ONE OF THE FOUNDING MEMBERS OF THE EQUAL PAY COALITION AND THE COALITION AGAINST FREE TRADE. OUR MEMBERS HAVE TRAVELLED TO OTTAWA AND TO QUEEN'S PARK OVER THE YEARS TO MAKE THE CASE FOR BETTER LAWS FOR WORKING PEOPLE.

EARLIER GENERATIONS OF CTCU MEMBERS CAN TAKE PRIDE IN THE SUCCESS OF MANY OF THEIR STRUGGLES. MOST IMPORTANTLY, THE TABLES HAVE TURNED AND NOW A MAJORITY OF WORKERS BELONG TO CANADIAN UNIONS. NONETHELESS, THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES TODAY TO WIN BACK CONTROL IN OTHER ASPECTS OF OUR LIVES.

OUR PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES

TODAY, OUR MEMBERS LIVE IN AN UNEASY WORLD - ONE THAT CONFUSES SOME, AND ANGERS OTHERS.

WE, AND WORKING PEOPLE ACROSS THIS LAND, CONFRONT A RADICAL RE-STRUCTURING OF OUR ECONOMY AT THE HANDS OF THE MULRONEY CONSERVATIVES AND BIG BUSINESS GROUPS LIKE THE "BUSINESS COUNCIL ON NATIONAL ISSUES."

AT THE TIME OF HIS FIRST ELECTION, PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY SAID "GIVE ME 20 YEARS AND YOU WON'T RECOGNIZE THIS COUNTRY!" THE MAN NEVER COULD TELL THE TRUTH. HE SHOULD HAVE SAID 20 MONTHS, NOT 20 YEARS.

THE CONSERVATIVE AND CORPORATE AGENDA HAS PUSHED THIS COUNTRY TO THE EDGE OF RUIN:

- * UNEMPLOYMENT now over 11%, with manufacturing job losses close to the levels of the Great Depression in the 1930s. Some sectors, like textiles, clothing, printing and publishing, food and beverage production and others have already surpassed the job losses of the 1930s Depression. A large number of these manufacturing losses came after the Free Trade Agreement and before the official recession began in April, 1990.
- * BANKRUPTCIES are at record highs. In March were 1,291 businesses across Canada that went into bankruptcy. Combined with personal bankruptcies, this represents an all-time high in Canadian history.
- * POVERTY GROWS at an alarming rate. In Ontario alone there are a million people on welfare, many of them turning to welfare and food banks for the first time in their lives as the result of closures and layoffs. There are also many new "working poor" whose work schedules and pay rates have been cut.

THESE RUINOUS CONDITIONS SHOULD NOT CONFUSE ANYONE.
WE SHOULD ALL BE ANGRY. OUR CIRCUMSTANCES ARE THE RESULT
OF VERY DELIBERATE POLICIES. THEY INCLUDE:

- * FREE TRADE WITH THE UNITED STATES, now to be extended to Mexico in negotiations where Canada is compounding the existing problems with new concessions to Washington. The Canadian government is even proposing that the completed North American Free Trade Agreement pull in other Central and South American countries, as well as Caribbean nations. This will only play into the hands of Washington, yet again. George Bush passed his "Enterprise of the Americas Initiative" law in June, 1990; he has used that law to sign 16 preliminary free trade agreements with these southern nations.

- * A HIGH INTEREST RATE AND HIGH CANADIAN DOLLAR followed on the Free Trade Agreement. A high interest rate and high Canadian dollar have hurt the economy badly and increased Canada's debt load. High interest payments end up in the pockets of the banks and wealthy foreign investors. The high dollar harms our ability to sell exported products and services. Yet the Conservatives continue with the policies.

- * LOWER TAXATION OF CORPORATIONS AND WEALTHY CANADIANS. The federal government has moved to American style taxes for the rich, robbing our public purse of money that is needed to maintain our social services and Medicare, among other good uses of tax dollars.

- * G.S.T. (GOODS & SERVICES TAX) was been used to replace progressive income taxes. When you tax consumer goods and services, instead of taxing high incomes, you shift the burden onto those who have to spend every penny of their paycheque to survive. Many service areas, (hotels, restaurants, etc.) have closed, in part because of the GST taxation on services which discourages people from eating out or staying at a hotel).

THE LIST GOES ON. PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ENTERPRISES.
DEREGULATION OF MANY SECTORS. ABANDONMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT
ENERGY POLICY. ABANDONMENT OF CONDITIONS ON MOST FOREIGN
BUYOUTS OF CANADIAN INDUSTRY. FAILURE TO INTEGRATE
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTIONS WITH OVERALL ECONOMIC PLANNING.
ETC. ETC.

WE WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEBATE AND DISCUSS THESE MATTERS FURTHER THIS AFTERNOON WHEN WE VOTE UPON THE RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED BY LOCALS.

WE WANT TO ALERT MEMBERS TO FOUR SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC DEBATES THAT WILL EMERGE THIS YEAR, IN ADDITION TO THE CONSTITUTIONAL DEBATE INVOLVING SELF-DETERMINATION FOR QUEBEC AND FOR THE NATIVE PEOPLES OF THIS LAND:

1. A new North American Free Trade Agreement which would replace the existing U.S./Canada Agreement.
2. A Conservative Government proposal for a minimum guaranteed income for Canadians, a real Trojan Horse if there ever was one since it would replace universal programs.
3. Training, training and more training. But for what jobs?
4. A renewed corporate attack on Unemployment Insurance, already harmonized significantly with the much poorer one in the U.S.

AS ALWAYS, WE MUST BE READY TO ADD OUR VOICES TO THE PUBLIC DEBATE ON THESE CRITICAL MATTERS.

UNION ACTIVITIES

YOUR NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD DEALS WITH LOCAL REPORTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. WE THANK THOSE NEB MEMBERS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS, INBETWEEN CONVENTIONS.

A FEW REPORTS OF NOTE. LAST YEAR, OUR NEW MARIETTA LOCAL NEGOTIATED THEIR FIRST CONTRACT. WELCOME TO THEIR DELEGATE, LEVI BRISTOL.

THE BATTLE OVER PROVINCIAL REFORM OF THE LONG-TERM CARE PROGRAM HAS BEEN OF CONCERN TO OUR NUCLEUS HOUSING AND PARTICIPATION APARTMENTS UNITS. SUE O'BRIEN AND LEO ROBINSON HAVE BOTH HELPED OUT IN PRESENTATIONS IN PUBLIC MEETINGS.

WE RECENTLY HOSTED A TEXTILE UNION REPRESENTATIVE FROM ROMANIA WHO TOURED SOME OF OUR WORKPLACES. WHILE IMPRESSED WITH SOME OF THE TECHNOLOGIES USED (EXCEPT FOR ONE SHE THOUGHT WAS NO BETTER THAN ITS ROMANIAN EQUIVALENT!) IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT THERE IS STILL A GREAT DEAL THAT OUR EASTERN EUROPE BROTHERS AND SISTERS STILL HAVE TO LEARN ABOUT THE REALITIES OF A CAPITALIST "FREE MARKET" SYSTEM AND ITS IMPACTS ON WORKERS.

GINA MARTINS HAS BEEN ACTIVE RECENTLY IN SPEAKING DIRECTLY TO THE WIDER PORTUGUESE COMMUNITY ON T.V. AND PUBLIC FORUMS. LAST NIGHT SHE ADDRESSED A CROWD OF OVER 200 ON THE SUBJECT OF MAY DAY AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE FOR IMMIGRANT WORKERS.

LAURELL RITCHIE HAS CONTINUED HER REPRESENTATION OF OUR UNION IN ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS COMMON FRONTIERS, ACTION CANADA NETWORK AND THE NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN. SHE HAS TAKEN A NUMBER OF WEEKENDS TO SPEAK AT MEETINGS BOTH IN CANADA AND THE U.S., AS WELL AS COLOMBIA LAST YEAR, ON THE SUBJECT OF FREE TRADE.

GINA MARTINS, LAURELL RITCHIE AND NORMA BALICKI ALSO REPRESENTED THIS UNION AT THE CCU AND CCU ONTARIO COUNCIL MEETINGS. LAURELL WAS AN OFFICER OF THE CCU AND GINA WAS AN OFFICER OF THE ONTARIO COUNCIL.

NEGOTIATIONS AND OTHER WORK OF THE CTCU HAVE GENERALLY FARED WELL, IN SPITE OF THE TOUGHT TIMES WE CONFRONT. THANKS TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE WORKED SO HARD AS MEMBERS OF LOCAL BARGAINING COMMITTEES.

THIS MORNING WE WILL TURN OUR ATTENTION TO A MOST IMPORTANT MATTER INVOLVING THE FUTURE OF OUR UNION.

OVER 16 MONTHS AGO, YOUR NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD AUTHORIZED THE UNION'S OFFICERS TO EXPLORE A POSSIBLE MERGER WITH THE C.A.W.

THERE WERE A NUMBER OF REASONS FOR CONSIDERING SUCH A MOVE.

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN THE ONLY EFFECTIVE WAY TO FIGHT FOR AN HONEST CANADIAN UNION WAS TO GO IT ALONE. TIMES HAVE CHANGED AND THAT IS NO LONGER THE ONLY CHOICE. YOUR LEADERSHIP HAS WATCHED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE C.A.W. AFTER THEY BECAME A CANADIAN UNION IN THE MID-1980s AND BEEN IMPRESSED BY THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE WORKERS' CAUSE AND THE FUTURE OF CANADA AS A WHOLE. THEY WERE ONE OF THE MOST ACTIVE UNIONS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST FREE TRADE.

ONE OF THE STRENGTHS OF OUR UNION HAS BEEN OUR RESILIENCE AND ABILITY TO DEAL WITH NEW REALITIES. WE HAVE NOT BEEN AFRAID TO DO SO, HOWEVER MUCH WE TOOK PRIDE IN THE WAY WE HAD DONE THINGS BEFORE.

THERE HAS NOT BEEN A TIME IN CANADA'S RECENT HISTORY WHEN NEW ALLIANCES WERE MORE NEEDED. THE PROJECT OF THE CORPORATIONS AND CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT IS A MASSIVE ONE. IF THERE ARE NEW ALLIANCES THAT WILL STRENGTHEN OUR COLLECTIVE HAND, THEN WE ARE OBLIGED TO CONSIDER THEM SERIOUSLY.

AT THE SAME TIME, WE MUST ALSO BE HONEST ABOUT OUR DIMINISHED CAPACITY AS A UNION TO DO MANY OF THE THINGS THAT HAVE MATTERED SO MUCH TO US OVER THE YEARS, THINGS LIKE MEMBERSHIP EDUCATION AND NEW ORGANIZATION.

LIKE OTHERS, THE ECONOMIC CRISIS IN CANADA HAS HURT OUR UNION. CLOSURES, LAYOFFS AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE HAVE CUT OUR NUMBERS. MEANWHILE, EMPLOYERS HAVE TURNED UP THE HEAT ON OUR MEMBERSHIP WHICH LEAVES YOUR TWO FULL-TIME OFFICERS WITH LITTLE TIME TO WORK ON NEW ORGANIZATION AND WHICH DRAINS OUR FINANCIAL RESOURCES FIGHTING ARBITRATIONS AND LABOUR BOARD CASES.

THERE ARE NO EASY ANSWERS AND NO MIRACLE SOLUTIONS. BUT YOUR EXECUTIVE BOARD FELT THAT THE C.A.W. OPTION WOULD ALLOW US TO POSITION OURSELVES TO CARRY ON THE STRUGGLE.

THE MERGER DOCUMENT THAT WE WILL DEBATE AND VOTE UPON THIS MORNING DETAILS SOME OF THE NEB DECISIONS THAT LED US TO THE POINT WE ARE AT TODAY.

IT ALSO REPRESENTS THE RESULTS OF A NUMBER OF NEGOTIATING MEETINGS BETWEEN OURSELVES AND CAW REPRESENTATIVES. THE CTCU COMMITTEE INCLUDED GINA MARTINS, WAYNE THELWELL, SUE O'BRIEN, BILL IRWIN AND LAURELL RITCHIE. BUZZ HARGROVE, JANE ARMSTRONG AND JIM O'NEIL REPRESENTED THE CAW IN THE MERGER NEGOTIATIONS. WE FOUND THEM TO BE STRAIGHTFORWARD, HONEST PEOPLE WHO WERE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT A CREATIVE APPROACH TO MERGER, ONE THAT WOULD ALLOW US SOME ROOM TO STAY TOGETHER AND HOPEFULLY GROW.

A FEW WEEKS AGO, GINA MARTINS, BILL IRWIN, SUE O'BRIEN AND LAURELL RITCHIE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO ATTEND A CAW COUNCIL MEETING IN PORT ELGIN. WE WERE "WOWED" BY THE PORT ELGIN EDUCATION FACILITY ITSELF. IT'S THE KIND OF PLACE YOU'D EXPECT TO SEE IN EUROPE, WHERE WORKERS TEND TO HAVE MORE RESPECT THAN THEY DO NOW IN NORTH AMERICA. WE FELT VERY COMFORTABLE WITH THE PEOPLE WE MET (INCLUDING OUR OLD FRIENDS IN CAIMAW WHO NOW BELONG TO THE CAW). WE FELT COMFORTABLE TOO WITH THE POLICY DIRECTIONS OF THE UNION. IN ANY EVENT, WE WERE MADE TO FEEL VERY WELCOME.

AT ITS MEETING OF MARCH 21, THE CTCU NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD PASSED THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION TODAY:

UNDER AUTHORITY OF ARTICLE 3(4) OF THE CTCU CONSTITUTION, THIS CTCU NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD, AT ITS MEETING OF MARCH 21, 1992, ACCEPTS THE MERGER AGREEMENT WITH THE C.A.W., AS PRESENTED AT THE MEETING, SUBJECT TO NOTED AMENDMENTS, INCLUDING ARTICLE 5, AND SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE CTCU CONVENTION.

THIS CTCU NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD, AT ITS MEETING OF MARCH 21, 1992, AGREES TO PRESENT THE MERGER AGREEMENT TO THE NEXT CTCU CONVENTION AND FURTHER, TO RECOMMEND IF THE MERGER AGREEMENT IS APPROVED BY THE CONVENTION THAT THE MATTER ALSO BE PUT TO THE CTCU MEMBERSHIP FOR A REFERENDUM VOTE AT SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS.

THE MOTIONS WE WILL DEBATE TODAY ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- 1) RESOLVED THAT THIS CTCU CONVENTION APPROVE THE NEGOTIATED MERGER AGREEMENT WITH THE C.A.W. AS PRESENTED TO THE CONVENTION.
- 2) RESOLVED THAT THE MATTER OF A MERGER WITH THE CAW BE PLACED IN FRONT OF CTCU MEMBERS FOR A REFERENDUM VOTE IN SPECIAL MEETINGS TO BE CONVENED IN THE MONTH OF MAY, 1992.

YOUR NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD BELIEVES THAT A MERGER WITH THE CAW WOULD BE A GOOD DECISION - FOR US, AND FOR THE CAW MEMBERSHIP. WE WOULD CERTAINLY INTEND TO MAKE A DISTINCTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THAT UNION.

WE WANT TO CLOSE THIS REPORT BY RECOGNIZING THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE MADE THIS A GREAT UNION, ONE THAT ALWAYS MADE A BIGGER IMPRESSION ON THE LABOUR MOVEMENT THAN ITS SIZE WOULD SUGGEST. IN PARTICULAR, OUR SENIOR MEMBERSHIP, AND NOW LIFE-TIME MEMBERS - MADELEINE PARENT, ROY WILLIAMS, ED HOLOTA, IDA KNELLER AND NORMA BALICKI. BILL IRWIN IS COUNTED AMONG THEIR NUMBERS BUT HE'S TOO YOUNG TO RETIRE YET. THESE PEOPLE WERE FIGHTING FOR THE CAUSE BEFORE SOME OF US WERE EVEN BORN.

WE ALSO WANT TO RECOGNIZE TWO OTHER PEOPLE WHO ARE HERE WITH US TODAY - JOHN LANG, AN OFFICER OF THE CCU, AND ANNE BURGESS, WHO HAS PUT UP WITH US THROUGH THICK AND THIN AS THE TORONTO CCU OFFICE SUPPORT PERSON.

JOHN WILL ADDRESS US TODAY, AS HE HAS MANY TIMES IN THE PAST. WE KNOW HIM AS A DEAR FRIEND AND AS A SUPPORTER ON EVERY PICKETLINE WE EVER HAD IN THE LAST 20 YEARS.

THANKS TO ONE AND ALL FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS AND COMMITMENT.

In solidarity, Gina Martins, Bill Irwin and Laurell Ritchie