

company offer and reaffirmed their drive to abolish the bonus pay system.

After the Nov. 25 rejection of the company offer, the mayor and clergy of Cowansville in association with the Vilas management pressured the union to hold another vote. The clergy suspected that the first vote had been improperly managed. To rally their forces, and to prove to the clergy and mayor of Cowansville that their vote was a fair one and that this kind of political pressure was doomed to failure, the union held a second vote in which the clergy acted as scrutineers. The vote was a secret ballot affair. It took place in early February. The company's offers were again rejected.

This vote was a significant point in the short history of the Vilas strike. Throughout the Christmas holiday season, the company had used a journal of the Eastern Townships, "La Voix de L'Estrie", to publicize their case in full-page ads costing \$3000 each.

The ads aimed to generate dissension within the ranks and families of the strikers by emphasizing the generosity of the company offers and the cheerful spirit of the holiday season.

According to Mr. Jobin, the trade unionists have remained on strike and will continue to fight, not because they wish to become political martyrs or make trade union history, but

because they strongly feel that their demands are reasonable and justified. They are willing to return to work only for a reasonable hourly wage and their union security intact.

During the assembly of early January, the strikers demanded the services of a special mediator from the Ministry of Labour. On Jan.

**"In the woodcutting section of the plant, fifty per cent of all workers have lost a finger or a hand through amputation due to industrial accidents."**

25-26 the mediator, Roger Pilote, met with company and union officials for 36 consecutive hours. Pilote issued a series of recommendations which the union immediately rejected. Jobin claims that Pilote wrote his report without reading the full text of the union's position and offer.

At this time the parties again find themselves locked in a serious impasse. The company refuses to concede ground on any of the three major union demands, while the union refuses to concede on the issue of the abolition of the incentive time system.

The most recent chapter in the development of the Vilas strike was a major demonstration in Cowansville on the night of Monday, Feb. 9. Striking workers from Uni-

royal, Heatex plastics company, Greb shoes, and Plesville Hosiery plus trade unionists from the CNTU Central Councils of Sherbrooke and St. Hyacinthe, joined the strikers from Cowansville Vilas in a march through the streets of Cowansville and past the large Vilas plant which dominates the lower half of the town.

A rally was held in the St. Leon community hall of Cowansville immediately after the "manifestation". The speeches of Alderic Doucet, president of the Vilas trade union, Michel Bourdon, president of the "Federation des travailleurs de Batiments et Bois", and Michel Chartand, president of the Montreal Central Council of the CNTU, reaffirmed the union's drive to obtain safe working conditions and a fair working wage. The assembly of 900 workers chanted "On n'en boit plus de Molson—la bière des boss". The noise, applause, and activity in the hall boosted the militancy and solidarity of all those present—all workers presently involved in labour conflicts. The successful rally was symbolic of the

heightened awareness of the Vilas workers of the importance of their struggle and the need to persevere if they wish to emerge from what is already a very long and strenuous strike with their heads high and a decent collective agreement in their pockets.

The Vilas strike is naturally very important for all those participating in it or affected by its length and hardship. It is also extremely important for all other organized or non-organized workers in the Cowansville area. In the past, each collective agreement at Vilas has served as a measure by which most other companies in the Cowansville region calculate their own wage bill and rates. A victory for the Vilas strikers could well serve the entire Cowansville working class community, and give the trade union movement a much-needed boost to combat the intense attacks and opposition it encounters today, more than ever, at all levels of government and business circles.

The final outcome of the strike cannot be predicted. Even if one believes that the workers at Vilas have been treated unjustly, and that the union's demands are fair and right, it is important to realize that the concepts of justice and right have no part in the final, real resolution of the strike. In reality, industrial relations are power relations. Strikes are open battles in which either side,

management or labour, defends and seeks to strengthen their own material interests and their freedom to act and control as many aspects of the work process as possible. If you believe, however, that it is a basic and inalienable right for a worker to demand and obtain at least a reasonable and secure salary along with safe working conditions, then there is no reason for you not to support the cause of the 364 furniture workers at Vilas.

The families of the workers at Vilas, and the workers themselves need your support, if they are going to win their battle. Show your support by publicizing and joining in the boycott of Molson Export, Laurentide, Canadian, and Brador beers, all brands of the Molson Companies Limited.

#### What's happening now

*This story will be updated next week with more information from Canadian University Press. In a telephone interview with Lewis Gotthiel, the Gazette learned that nothing has happened in the negotiations since the union's rejection of the company offer January 26 [in the story].*

*Molsons has replied to the story with a veiled character reference to Lewis Gotthiel and threatened court action. Gotthiel nevertheless stands behind what he has written with more determination than ever.*

## Student charges RCMP with abuse

LONDON (CUP) --- A member of the RCMP has been disciplined after he and two other members of the drug squad here entered the apartment of an unclad University of Western Ontario student as she was getting ready for a shower last April.

The officers used a writ of assistance, a blanket search warrant, on a raid which both Solicitor General Allmand and the London RCMP term "a mistake".

But Dee Lewis, a 29 year old graduate student, won't be content with the disciplining of one officer, a rare practice in the RCMP.

She wants writs of assistance banned altogether.

The writs give RCMP officers the right to enter any residence where they have reasonable and probable grounds to suspect a crime has been or is being committed.

Lewis feels the writs give the RCMP too much discretionary power about who, where, and when to search.

But Sergeant Edward Crystal of the RCMP said the writs are "jealously guarded" by the RCMP and are not abused by officers because they are essential in apprehending hard drug pushers.

Only four of the 14 members of the London drug squad have writs of assistance, which are issued by the Exchequer Court in Ottawa.

To guard against abuse, members who use writs of assistance in searches where they don't find any kind of drugs must appear before a Justice of the Peace to explain the actions, Crystal said.

But Lewis believes there is too much secrecy around the writs of assistance. She still doesn't know what action was taken against the officer or even what the writ of assistance said.

"They just walked in with the writ and then didn't search the place. I was so upset I couldn't

remember what was on the writ, just that it said writ of assistance and had an officers name on it".

Lewis said she did not know why the officers were in her apartment and only later learned that they had mistaken her husband for another man by the same name who they suspected of trafficking.

Sgt. Crystal admitted no drugs were found in the apartment nor was a search undertaken.

"In this case, the writ was matter of experience, we were going to get a search warrant for the place anyways, the unfortunate part was the lady was naked".

After the raid, three RCMP

### Mock rape trial

LONDON (CUP) --- A mock rape trial, designed to show the merits of proposed new federal rape legislation, played to a capacity crowd at the University of Western Ontario.

The idea of a trial, co-sponsored by the Sexual Assault Crisis Centre and the UWO Women's Law Caucus, grew from bill C-71 presently before the Canadian parliament.

The jury for the mock trial was chosen from the audience and directed not to convict if there remained any doubt in their minds.

The mock judge concluded the session after refusing to allow the complainant's past history to be presented in court. The defense however, had raised reasonable doubt in some juror's minds resulting in a hung jury and no verdict.

The new bill stipulates that if the defence in a rape trial plans to introduce the victim's past sexual activity into the case they must first give written notice to the court and the prosecution in a reasonable length of time before the trial date. The judge must then decide whether the evidence is necessary to the

officers came over to apologize to the Lewis' for the embarrassment and tried to persuade Mrs. Lewis not to complain about their mistaken raid.

"They asked me if I was going to the papers and I hadn't really thought of that, but if they didn't want me to, I figured I'd better", she said.

"They wanted me to think it was an honest mistake but I don't think it was an honest mistake, without a writ they probably wouldn't have come".

Lewis asked Solicitor-General Allmand for an inquiry into the use of writs but in a letter informing her

case, before it is presented to the public or the jury.

Under current legislation the defence may bring the victim's past before the jury, although the judge may at any time strike it from the record and instruct the jury to disregard it.

The reasoning behind the new legislation is to protect the credibility and the reputation of the victim.

In the past, defence attorneys have often used past sexual history to raise questions in the juror's minds as to the validity of the victim's story.

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inability to achieve such standards. Our staff is comprised of university students, not paid professionals. The reality of the situation is that we can offer a reasonable alternative to the insult of AM Top 5 Charts and can do so only when given the means to fulfill a reasonable mandate—one that even the CBC with its millions is barely able to undertake.

An anti-report is in progress and will be published in May. Let's face the reality of the situation.

of the disciplinary action against the officer, the minister refused to grant an inquiry into the blanket search warrant.

The solicitor-general also rejected requests from Lewis for copies of the writ, policy statements on how the writs are to be used, and statistics on how many writs have led to drug convictions.

She is pleased with the disciplinary action, but is bothered by the secrecy of the federal government.

According to Lewis, writs mean "they can just walk in anywhere they want on the grounds of suspicion, and that's dangerous".

### Lying: a regular political practice

ROUYN (CPA-CUP)—The political world was stunned recently by the revelation that politicians "normally" tell lies during election campaigns, coming from practitioner and Sacred leader Real Caouette.

Caouette told a Quebec court recently his own election speeches were not always based on "exact truths", but said this was "a normal political act."

He was not referring to the "little lies" which, when put together, constitute Sacred economic theory, but to his attacks on a defeated Parti Quebecois candidate in the 1973 provincial election.

Antonio Flammand, the defeated Pequiste, charged that Caouette and a local journalist made untrue defamatory statements about him during the campaign.

The substance of Caouette's defense was to assert that this was "general in politics."