

Motherhood and Apple Pie policy

by Brian P. Duggan

Nova Scotia Labour leaders J.K. Bell and Sinclair Allen, along with Professor Greg Kealey of the Dalhousie History Department took part in a discussion on Trade Unionism in Nova Scotia. The discussion was sponsored by the Dal N.D.P. Association as one of its fortnightly seminars on problems in Canadian society.

From the opening comments by these men it could be seen that Nova Scotia Labour has had and will continue to have its problems. Both Bell and Kealey agreed that the distinct problem that separates Nova Scotia labour from Canadian labour is that of the underdevelopment in the Atlantic region. The lack of development resulting from Federal government policies of centralization and the pull out tactics of some developers is, indeed, a real problem in this region. However, the point was also expressed that all capitalist countries have underdeveloped regions. Thus Canada is no different from many other countries. We, of course, take the sour grapes view because our region has the short end of the stick.

Another problem that was tabled, affects all of Canada not just the Atlantic Region, is the problem of political support. Allen pointed out that the labour movement has had very little support in the political realm. He felt that the N.D.P. must step into line and help the labour movement in its fight against wage and price controls. How can the N.D.P. expect to be supported by the Unions if N.D.P. governments voice their support for Trudeau's pro-business wage controls? Kealey agreed when he said that labour had to put more pressure on the N.D.P. provincial governments.

Kealey and Bell noted the infighting on the left with the red-baiting tactics (during the Cold War years) of the C.C.F.-N.D.P., which has been blown out of proportion by the media thus harming the credibility of the left. Bell noted that thousands of Canadian Trade Union Brothers belong to the old line parties and he felt that this was fine if only they would stand up and "raise hell" within the party. In saying this he seemed to imply that the Labour movement would take whatever political support that it could get.

Trade Union ideology, or the lack of it, was another problem discussed. Bell said that the "rags to riches" philosophy is prevalent in the North American labour movement. He also said that union militancy in Canada has no base except the "get me more" philosophy, which is not enough in the face of social injustices of the governments and big businesses. Kealey felt that lack of ideology is inherent in the whole idea of liberal industrial relations (confrontation) which has not been successful for labour.

Bell presented another problem by saying that Canada needs a strong trade union center--in having

this they could have a better vehicle for International Union relations.

Organization has always been a weakness in the Unions, they cannot get down to the small groups that need their help. Both Bell and Allen blamed this on the lack of people qualified enough to get into the factories and help organize the workers. They said that if more university people could get into the factories and organize the small groups they would be doing valuable work. Kealey expressed the view that study was needed by university people to find out the problems before they could be solved. (Personally, I feel that both positions are valid and both must be fulfilled.)

Trudeau's Price and Wage Controls policy is considered by Bell as a "Motherhood and Apple Pie" policy. He gave examples of how the government has been heaping

more of the tax burden on the working class.

He said that the multi-national corporations, who so diligently dominate our economy have to do two things in order to maintain their profit levels. Firstly, they must decrease the demands of the workers who they see as the reason for inflation and secondly, they must knock off the class of corporations that only make up to \$50 million/year profits (the small ones). Bell believes that these wishes have been fulfilled by our government and the controls policy. The whole idea that we must have controls because labour is driving out business.

Kealey in response to Bell asked why hasn't there been any concentrated campaign against the controls by labour. Bell's reply was that the C.L.C was not a unifying force thus could not concentrate action.

The issue of Price and Wage Controls is one that is very helpful when discussing Trade Unions. Most of the discussion revolved around the problems of the Unions. These problems are very significant, the lack of a political voice, the

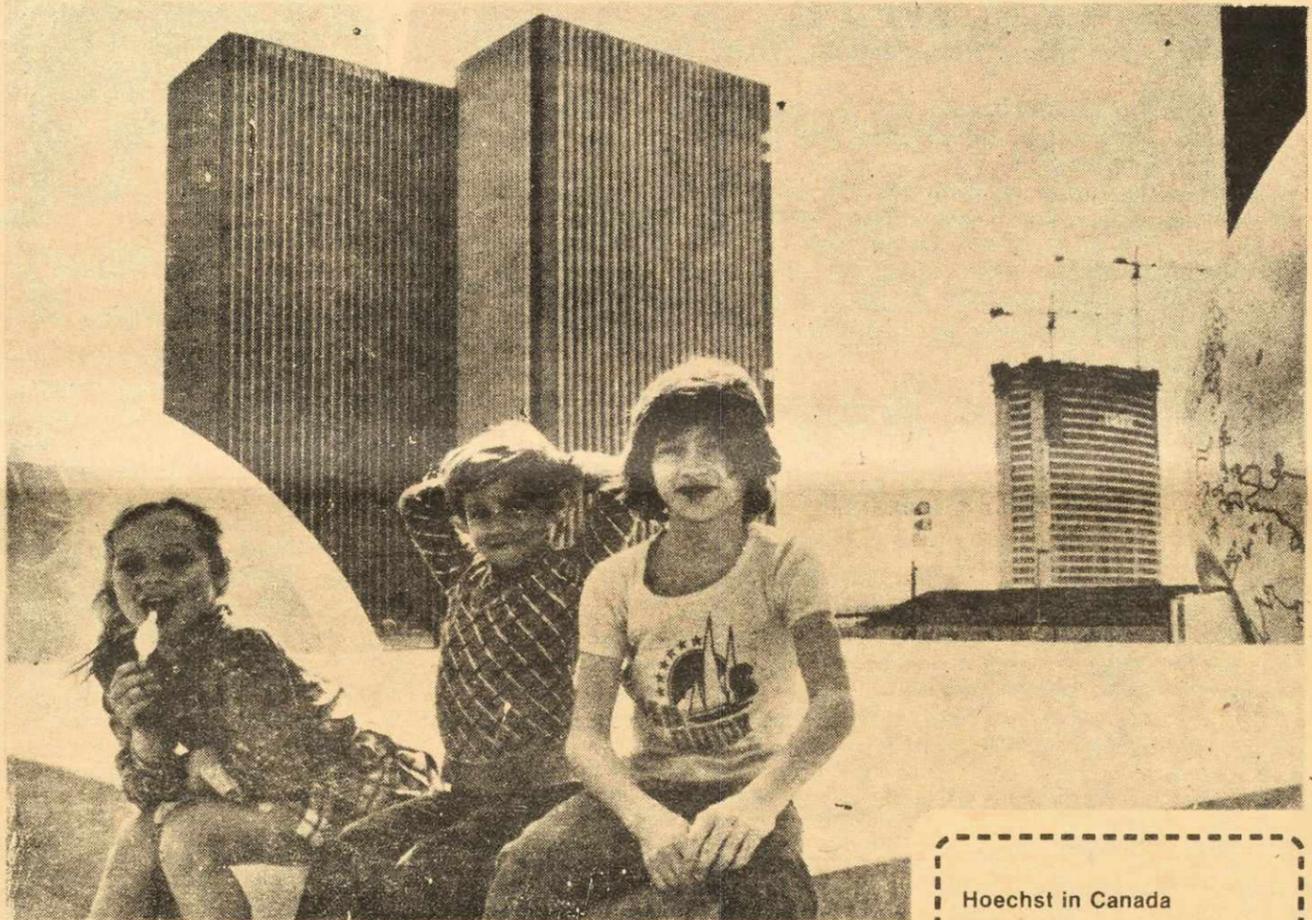
lack of a workers ideology, decentralization at the top levels of the Unions. The significance can be seen in the lack of a unified voice against the Controls policy. Bell felt that capitalism must be attacked by a united force, no one group will be able to predominate in the struggle, a struggle which must unite all interested people.

Changing weather

by Cate Young

On the evening of Monday, March 22, Dr. John G. Ogden presented a lecture on environmental change in the Maritimes, entitled "There's A Chill in the Air." This is an area of great interest for Dr. Ogden, who is a Biology professor at Dalhousie and a member of the Executive Committee of the Nova Scotia Environmental Council.

Using various maps and slide presentations, Ogden indicated the changes which have happened with
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