

Where were we?

FREDERICTON (CUP) — Student leaders were criticized here by labor representatives for failing to participate in the Oct. 14 day of protest.

Only a handful of the approximately 6,000 university students in Fredericton took part in labor's march to the Legislature Building.

New Brunswick Federation of Labor vice president Phil Booker called UNB student leaders "weak, lacking in organization and negative." Booker said students elsewhere are the most militant element of society, and cited student support for labor in nearby Moncton.

However, UNB student council president Jim Smith said students "have had enough with protest and marches" and are taking a "more mature" approach to solve problems such as student aid — without support from labor. Smith said he forgot about an organizational meeting for the day of protest and neglected to send a delegate.

NUS in Solidarity

OTTAWA (CUP) — Labor's action in the Canadian Labor Congress day of protest "will cause more students to use National Student Day as a means to further their self-education about students' interests and goals" according to a NUS statement Oct. 14.

The National student organization had encouraged student unions to get involved with local protest activities against the federal government's wage controls.

The statement said the "degree of success" achieved by the protest "is the degree to which students goals came closer to being realized on Oct. 14.

"Oct. 14 gave many students an opportunity to join with labor and other

WHAT WE CAN'T
DO ALONE
WE CAN DO
TOGETHER



groups who share our opposition to the anti-inflation program."

Pressure has been increased on Ottawa to adopt fair economic policies, the statement said, adding that "the on-campus discussions sparked by the protest" will mean that more students and their associations "will not be willing to work for such pro-student and pro-labor policies."

On Nov. 9 NUS has called for a national day of concern to focus on accessibility to post-secondary education and related financial issues of increased tuition fees and education funding cutbacks.

Both the day of protest and NSD have also been backed by the Ontario Federation of Students and the British Columbia Federation of Students.

Morris says

Stop Controls

TORONTO (CUP) — The Canadian Labor Congress will continue its political protest against the controls program and for an increased voice in deciding national policies, CLC president Joe Morris told 10,000 unionists here Oct. 14.

The federal government committed a fundamental error when it invoked wage controls, said Morris, because it ignored warnings from the 2.2 million members congress that it would oppose the program.

"The lesson for this government and those which follow, is that never again will they feel free to attack workers and their organizations with impunity."

He emphasized the rights of citizens to "dissent against arbitrary governments and unjust laws" and attacked those who are critical of labor's protest actions.

"Those who argue that the employers should use their power to coerce and penalize their employees who participate in the day of protest ... are actually arguing that the private economic power of employers should be put at the disposal of the State to shield it from the workers whom the State has wronged."

"Were such an alliance to come about, then Canada will indeed have descended into the depths of a new authoritarianism," said Morris.

The government underestimated the abilities of labor to plan and conduct a nation-wide work stoppage, he said.

"When government sets one part of society off from the mainstream of the economic, social and political life of the nation by demanding sacrifices which are not borne equally by all sectors; and when government turns a deaf ear to logic and reason," said Morris, "then the only recourse remaining against such a government is dissent on a massive scale."

Morris has repeatedly refused to rule out further protest action if the government fails to budge on controls, and the CLC convention last May mandated the executive to call a general work stoppage "or stoppages", to eliminate controls.

Day of Protest: the Rationale

OTTAWA (CUP) — The federal government's Anti-Inflation Program does nothing to solve economic programs, is anti-labor and can only be opposed effectively by a national protest action, says Canada's national labor organization.

In a detailed leaflet outlining the reasons for opposing wage and price controls, the 2.2 million member Canadian Labor Congress (CLC) says that after a year the AI program has done nothing but control wages while falsely claiming credit for reduced inflation.

Points made in the leaflet, the rationale for the day of protest most widely published by the 2.2 million-member Congress include:

The controls were introduced when a reduction in consumer price increases was expected anyway, most are now increasing at a rate of more than 9 percent.

The government is "making a lot" out of a 3.7 percent increase in real wages since April 1975, but:

- the period from April '75 to April '76 includes six months when there were no controls;

- the purchasing power of workers was lower in the last three months of 1975 than it was the same period in 1972;

- the AIB allowances of wage increases above the 8 percent guidelines for reasons of "historical relationship", accounting for

some of the increase in workers' buying power, has now ended;

- the allowable increases in wages have been reduced by 2 percent in the second year, and will go down another 2 percent the third year of the program.

The wage and price controls program appears to protect rather than control industrial profits. Controls were introduced at a time when wages were catching up to profits. No controls were in effect during the 1971-74 period, when profits rose 111 percent while wages only rose 27 percent.

Now the Anti-Inflation Board has told 41 percent of the companies it has reviewed that they will be "better off" under the AI program, which "certainly doesn't convince us that all sections of the community are being asked to make the same sacrifice."

Contrary to government and media claims, Canada's organized workers are not violating their collective agreements. Instead it is the government which by rolling back wages and benefits has undermined collective bargaining, the CLC charges.

The labor congress maintains there is nothing "undemocratic" about their protest against government, especially one which imposed controls after running on an anti-controls platform.