

The Gateway

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editorial

What do you do when the federal government slaps you in the face? You slap right back. And that's what concerned Canadians will be doing on Oct. 14 — they'll be slapping back at the Trudeau government's hypocrisy and arrogance, using the only method the government will respond to.

People who are shocked by the "questionable legality" of the day of protest are either naive to an extreme or blind to the past year's actions of the federal government. Certainly Thursday's protest is not legal. Neither has it been or is it now legal for the federal government's Anti-Inflation Board (AIB) to break thousands upon thousands of legally-negotiated salary agreements. The argument is that the government is breaking laws for the good of the country — but what good is it if the government breaks the laws to freeze the wages and then allows corporate profits to go up in order to "stimulate" the economy (with the consequent rise in prices)? Who in the country benefits from that law breaking?

There are three questions involved with the entire aspect of the anti-inflation controls — 1) was the Trudeau government justified in instituting a major economic policy when he specifically campaigned on a platform against such a policy? 2) have the controls instituted by the Trudeau government done the job they were supposed to do? and 3) if there has been a serious infraction upon civil liberties of Canadians, are the people justified in responding in a manner that will force the government to acknowledge public feeling?

The answer to #1 is obvious, I think. Pierre Trudeau told the Canadian people in 1974 during his election campaign that he was against wage and price controls, that the Conservatives (who advocated controls) were out to screw the common man and would only allow the rich to get richer. Less than a year later Trudeau instituted the controls. Blatant hypocrisy — and I don't think that's the responsible government we need in our "Just Society."

The answer to #2 is no, the controls have not done the job they were supposed to do. Wages have been controlled to a large extent, it's true, but prices have not. The cost of living has not increased by the same amount it did in pre-control times but that is largely a result of declines in the cost of food, a commodity the controls does not even touch. But prices on materials supposedly under the control of the AIB have not been held down to the controlled wage levels, which means someone, somewhere is taking a slice in the pie they don't deserve. You tell me who that might be.

The answer to #3, in my opinion, is yes, we do have a right to show the federal government they are not free to dictate policy to the Canadian people especially when people have collectively voted not to adopt the policy. The only way to do that is to march off jobs, stop normal activities from occurring Oct. 14 and slap the government back with the only weapon we have.

Kevin Gillese

Poor student gives 2-bits

I'd just like to say my "2 bits" worth about the Oct. 14 day of protest and all the people who are planning to organize demonstrations or whatever.

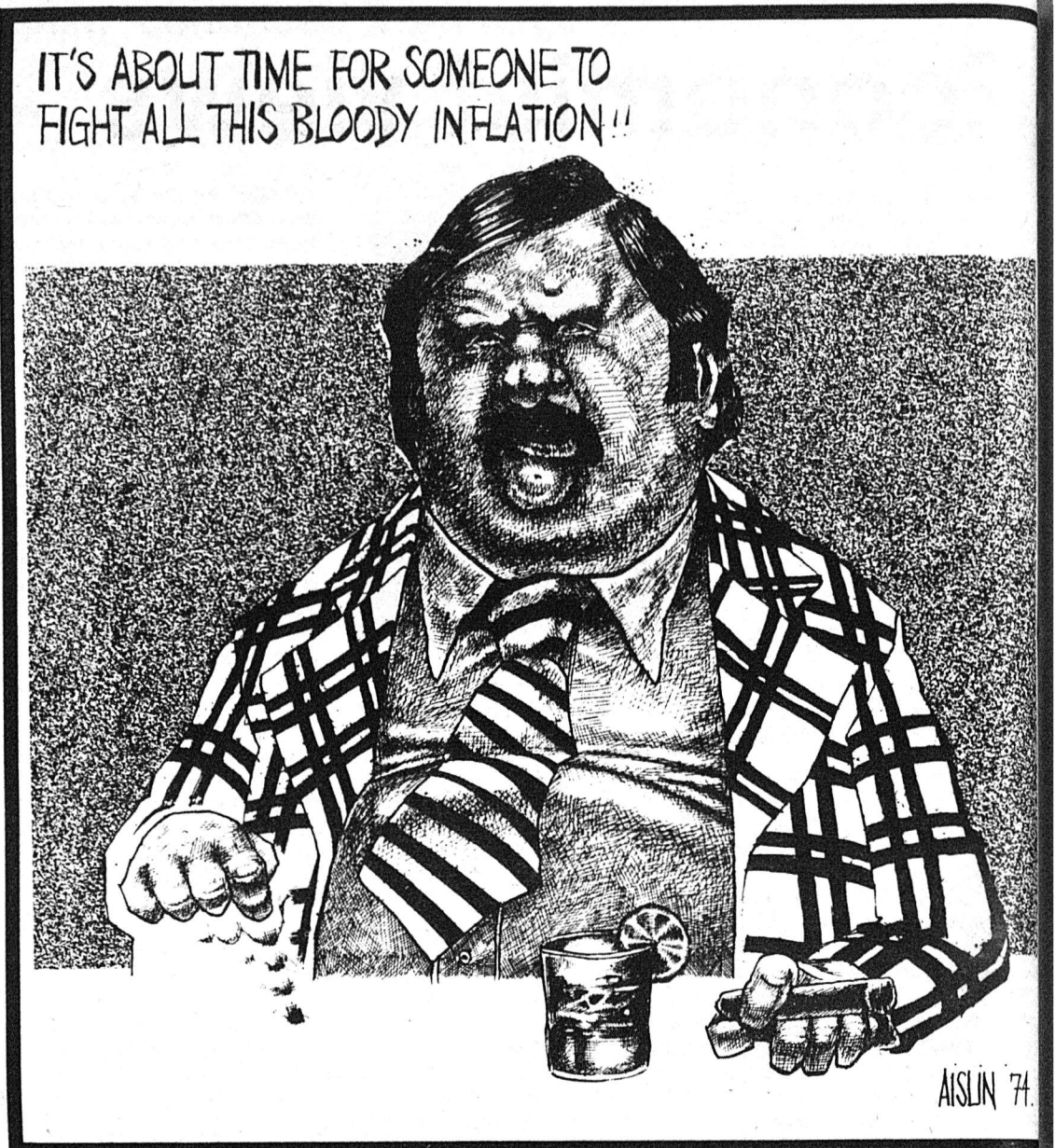
Listen; who's worried? I'm not and my friends certainly aren't. Ah, school is going okay and the summer job is over and the car I'm planning on looks financially possible.

Poor? — I'm scratching every penny I can get every summer, cutting down on beer,

snacks, movies and clothes. People don't need to tell me how tough it is to make ends meet — I know.

Everyone's poor at one time or another but we all manage. Some manage better than others, that's all. Nothing more. I'm at university now so I can manage better in the future, just like anybody who strives towards self-improvement. It's all a matter of perseverance, isn't it?

Wage and price controls were set for a purpose — to fight



Lear basks in wanton sport

As flies to wanton boys, are we to th' Gods;

They kill us for their sport. (Lear, IV, i, 36-37)

So we lament with Gloucester and Reg Baskin. Let us not ask who are the boys and who are the flies! We know the sport is this new game called "wage and price controls"; but who is to decide which of the shepherds in white we are to flock after?

Walt Tyler would be ashamed of us all. We have taken his cherished implement to help the working person, the David to slay the entrepreneur Goliath, and instead turned this, our servant into our master.

We have allowed the CLC to drag into our midst their Trojan Horse, the Oct. 14th day of protest, and now, with mamma in her kerchief and I in my cap we all are expected to settle down for a long winter's nap. If we allow the biggest of big business, the CLC, to break out from our gift horse this shall surely be the winter of our discontent.

No one will dispute the fact that last winter was one of the mildest in our memory. Strikes and man hours lost were at a minimum, in this country which, in 1974, ranked among the top in the world in illegal union holidays. Why did this occur? Because we had no reason to strike. When your labour union settled for a contract giving you a 10.2% increase and you watched the rate of increase of the cost of living drop continuously to nearly a 6% increase per year, the average worker had no difficulty at all in discovering that he was better off than before.

Before; what is this Before? Yes, I do remember the days when unions settled after months of striking for 16% but then the cost of living increase was 12 and 13%.

The City chortled with delight when the bus drivers stayed off the roads for so long that cold winter of 73. They had it all figured out that after so many cold weeks of saving dollar after

dollar on this losing proposition (the ETS) they could finally give the union what they wanted and still have surplus left over from profitable venture.

The standard anti-control complaining has been that wages have been rolled back while the prices have not. Good union members will show in union that the government should keep its nose out of economics as much as possible. While many economic factors have kept prices down, including fewer man hours lost to strikes, the general pressure of the controls program, only the AIB has been able to control wages. We attack the AIB.

Both factors must be controlled to beat inflation.

I suggest that we do our part by taking our pennicillens to prevent the dreaded "clap" and all try to contribute in some worthwhile way to our country. Go to work, go to school on Oct. 14th, and thank God we haven't soft-spined PM. K. Feehan Law

No value for current wages

With October 14th just around the corner, many thoughts have been going through my mind. Here I am at University, paying hard earned money for attending the biggest classes I have ever attended with less chances than ever for getting a job when I'm finished.

Bus drivers, who don't need grade 12, get paid for a two month training program and start off at about \$11,000.00 a year. It'll take me four years to get through my Bachelor of Education degree, paying my own tuition and room and board on top of "lost wages" I could have earned while I could have been working. Some how, I feel like I'm a fool.

The arguments go that "I'll be doing something relevant and getting enjoyment from my work, etc.", so I should "expect" to make less money. So, if I'm expected to teach people to read, write, think, etc. or if I was going to be a Social Worker and deal with human suffering, I'm worth less than a janitor or a bus driver who are paid more.

Another argument goes that "I'll have an education." Ha! What the fuck good does discussing the tragedies in Shakespeare over tea do me when I'm collec-

ting welfare because there's not enough work to go around?

Well, I'm halfway through my degree so I reckon I'd better finish it off. But it makes me sad to think that I'm being penalized for my education. The rich in this country have held control of status quo for too long. Unions want to catapult their members and file out of the working class and into the middle class. The people in the "helping professions" are being squeezed out in the process.

While I'm basically in agreement for a fair shake for a working person, I think the greediness that we've been witnessing right now has to stop. If people are to be paid good wages, it should be for the social significance of their work. It shouldn't be because one union has more muscle than another.

Richard Desjardins
 Education