

Waffle loses in OFL

By DAN SUNSTRUM

The labor caucus from the Waffle (the New Democratic Party's left wing) didn't expect any victories at the recent Ontario Federation of Labor convention. And they certainly didn't get any when faced with procedural restrictions and a well-oiled union establishment.

The Waffle came to confront the union brass with charges of non-militancy and non-response to the imminent tough times for Canadian people.

Unemployment may already be a household word, but with American imperialism running somewhat scared and trying to consolidate itself economically, the situation isn't getting any better.

And what is the Canadian labor movement doing?

Heading towards suicide, is the opinion of unionists in the Waffle Labor Caucus. When they're not whimpering denials of the myth that organized labor creates inflation and other social-economic diseases, the labor establishment is busy considering compromises on the question of wage (and maybe price) controls, while most of the Canadian working class remain unorganized and totally unprotected.

Harry Greenwood, delegate from Local 1005 Steelworkers (one of the large locals) and chairman of the Waffle Caucus was pleased enough that their booklet: "For an Independent Socialist Canada: A Socialist Program for Canadian Trade Unions" was distributed to all delegates at the convention.

The booklet hit the fan several days before the convention opened. This gave OFL President David Archer (grand old brother for 15 years and now member of York's board of governors) a chance to "cool out" a possible challenge from the left. He denounced the caucus as a bunch of intellectuals and professors trying to tell the unions how to run their affairs — but was cautious enough to spice his hour-long opening speech with enough pseudo-radical words and carefully planned the first morning's agenda to include "tough" issues designed to achieve unity. Much time was spent angrily denouncing strikebreaking companies like Annings and the Canadian Driver Pool, for their shady and often brutal wire-tapping and scabbing techniques (see Page 10).

The Waffle decided that something to polarize the convention right at the beginning was in order — they decided to move for a change in the agenda to allow for debate on a resolution condemning the Textile Workers Union of America for effectively strikebreaking at the now-famous Texpack struggle. The TWUA has tried to organize the scabs at that company — a successful attempt at raiding the Canadian Textile and Chemical Union, a union not affiliated to the Canadian Labor Congress. The agenda was not debatable and the move to challenge the procedure failed. Most other attempts to raise Waffle issues were aborted by cutting off the mikes. Since the heavily-

establishment stacked resolutions committee, which decided what resolutions hit the floor for consideration they naturally didn't recommend debate on any radical resolutions.

But the Waffle is not surprised that they were unable to break through the stultifying OFL Rules of Order at this point to test their strength — they saw this convention as an opportunity to introduce their statement in a big way.

As Harry Greenwood puts it, "We're only interested in building a militant labor movement at the rank and file level." The large left caucus at this Stelco local in Hamilton plans to begin building support for the action recommended in their program around the shop steward set-up in their plant. (A shop steward is a union position based on the physical lay-out of the plant, each steward representing 30 workers).

Their program which will likely become one of



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the most significant documents in the Canadian labor movement since unions lost their vibrancy and working class commitment after the successes of the 30s and 40s contains demands for:

- rank and file control of union organizations
- Canadian unionists to relate to the American labor movement on an equal basis and not the present subordination of Canadian organized labor to that south of the border
- a concerted drive to increase union membership among women and a much greater role for women in union organizations
- control by workers of their workplaces

The Waffle Caucus have also recommended that trade unionists should not support the right-wing establishment of the NDP, or the present union bureaucracy. They feel that soft-peddalling attempts during the recent provincial election cost working people a dear price for moderation.

NEWS BRIEFS

Carleton faculty refuse longer terms

OTTAWA (CUP) Carleton University faculty have refused to work a longer academic year. In Carleton's brief to the Committee on University Affairs last week, Carleton said many of their best faculty would leave if they faced a longer term. The report says the advantages in using Carleton's facilities a longer time are outweighed by students' loss in summer earnings. The report also says few subjects could be compressed without a drop in quality. "Carleton's experience leads to the opinion that the effects of a longer academic year would be detrimental in balance," the report concluded. Carleton said it got better building use with its summer school program under the present school year and that a longer one would restrict research opportunities and increase supplies and staff costs. In keeping with the national trend, Carleton's enrolment of 8,525 was 775 short of projections, making for a projected \$1,500,000 loss in revenue.

UBC students throw out Human Gov't

In a large turn-out last Wednesday, University of British Columbia students voted non-confidence in the Alma Mater Society Human Government executive. By 4,020 to 2,704, the students overturned plans for an alternate bookstore and food service which would offer lower prices to the administration. For the first time in UBC's history, the executive will honor its pledge to resign with its loss at the polls. "We're happy so many people voted, said AMS president Steve Garrod. It indicates that people on this apolitical campus are beginning to consider political issues." Garrod said the Human Government — a left wing coalition group elected last spring — will continue until a new executive is elected. The referendum sparked one of the roughest campaigns in UBC's history with Human Government posters being torn down by opposing forces. Twelve thousand copies of the student newspaper Ubessey were stolen 10 minutes after distribution. The

Laval law students strike for parity

QUEBEC (CUPI) — Students in the Faculty of Law at Laval University walked out on strike last Wednesday in support of demands for student parity on the faculty's governing council. The strikers are demanding parity for 900 law students with their 40 professors. The present ratio on the council is six students to 13 professors. They are also demanding that professors who also serve as administrators be obliged to choose one job or the other. The strikers also say that the law degree is more difficult to obtain at Laval than at other French-speaking universities. It takes three and a half years at Laval and three at universities in Montreal and Sherbrooke. Laval has an exceptional failure rate of 30 percent.

Winnipeg high schoolers strike

WINNIPEG (CUP) About 60 percent of West Kildonan Collegiate's students went on strike last week to support demands for non-compulsory classes. The strike followed unsuccessful negotiations between a seven member student committee and a seven member faculty committee to compromise student demands for non-compulsory attendance and responsible freedom and the administration's stand for compulsory attendance except for "special permission" cases. Principal Peter Isaac, "special permission" allows students time off for projects and other course activities.

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