



Police patrol in the streets of Quebec City.



Demonstrators wear tear gas protection.

PHOTOS BY D. DURING

(continued)

about the document. Along the parade route we came across the radical cheerleaders, the black bloc, signers in protest, magnificent street puppets with a message, and interesting street drama depicting the exploitation of women, indigenous people and the poor by the big, powerful and greedy corporate giants of the world.

The long march took us away from the barricades and into a stadium where representatives from the various nations spoke to us about globalization and the impact of free trade on their countries, so different from Canada but now joined together to achieve fair, not free, trade.

From others who did venture to the Upper Town, where the barricades had been erected and the thousands of guards were stationed to protect the dignitaries, we heard stories like the following:

Guards were entering city transit buses and stopping cars to ask for identification. A radio reporter received a rubber bullet in the leg while conducting an interview with an activist. One of our national reps was tackled by police to prevent him from taking photos of someone being arrested. The tear gas was so strong on Friday night, it not only seeped into residents' homes, but still hung thick in the air the following morning.

Although the Upper Town remained well-protected by fences and guards, the guards continued to lob tear gas into the Lower Town where protesters and residents continued to sing and demonstrate.



Clouds of tear gas hovered over the Quebec capital during the Summit.



The infamous stormed fence.

Lea Baturin was to be joined by Paul McKie from Local 191 in Quebec City. Paul was unable to attend due to a family emergency.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

AT LAST, NOW WE REALLY KNOW WHAT THEY MEAN BY CONVERGENCE

That awful C word, the buzzword of the last several years, has hit our members at the Winnipeg Sun — hit being the operative word here.

Two of our members have lost their jobs because of convergence, although you wouldn't know that from news reports. Another three members at our sister local, Graphics Communications International Union, Local 900M, were also laid off. Two layoffs were non-union.

The Sun Media chain recently announced the permanent layoff of 302 employees across the country, both union and non-union. The company announced that poor performance in the chain, rising newsprint costs, competition (despite media mogul efforts, some competition still exists) and dropping ad revenue were the culprits.

There were also ominous reports that Quebecor, Sun Media's parent company, had posted a first quarter loss in excess of \$24 million, compared to a huge profit a year ago at this time. This is supposed to justify the layoffs.

The real reason for that first quarter loss is convergence. Quebecor has been on a buying spree lately.

The largest printing company in the world has been consolidating its position as a major media player, especially in Quebec. Recently, Quebecor acquired the Quebec cable TV giant Videotron.

Once the profits start rolling in from the acquisitions, no one will remember the first quarter loss except the people who lost their jobs.

Media mogul CEOs can crow all they like about convergence and how it brings together different technologies into new synergies. Look through the baffle-gab and what they really mean is that they can save a whole lot of money by combining these media companies, centralizing operations and cutting costs. Which means cutting jobs.



by Paul McKie

And even before they can get to that part they have to finance their acquisitions. Shareholders can't be expected to take a lower return just because the company has some restructuring costs. No: The deal is financed by cutting costs. Which means cutting jobs.

Look at the BCE deal to acquire the Globe and Mail (in partnership with Thomson) and CTV. The Globe has already issued buyouts to employees.

Whether layoffs take place will be determined by how many workers decide to take buyouts. Rumours of layoffs at CTV stations (including the recently acquired CKY in Winnipeg) abound.

CanWest Global acquired Southam newspapers and work has begun on examining where "efficiencies" can be found. Somehow these companies always determine that it becomes more efficient when it has fewer workers. The ideal company must have no employees at all — just a CEO with stock options and happy shareholders.

All this explains why Canada's Fastest Growing Daily Newspaper, The Winnipeg Sun, is laying off people.

Convergence has not delivered a brave new world of converging technologies and exciting media opportunities. It has delivered the same old story to working people — we need to lay off workers to keep profits high.

So working people must fight back using the same method: convergence. We must pull together and work hard in larger units to fight back against increasing larger employers.

Already signs of this strategy are emerging. Global TV's CEP locals have banded together and applied to the Canadian Industrial Relations Board to bargain with the company for one giant contract, not 14 separate contracts coast to coast.

That's the kind of convergence I want to see. That's the kind of convergence that keeps jobs instead of destroying them.

IN MEMORIAM DELORES PAHKALA

Local 191 wishes to express sincere condolences to the family of Delores Pahkala, who passed away suddenly last month on her way home from work. A diligent worker, her ready smile will be greatly missed by her co-workers. Delores was a proofreader at Naylor Publications.

FOUR LAID OFF IN THUNDER BAY

Four members of Local 191 were laid off at the Thunder Bay Chronicle-Journal on May 11, just three and a half months after the newspaper was purchased by Horizon Operations (Canada) Ltd.

"Morale is really down right now," says Jamey Rosdobutko, a Local 191 executive member who works in the newspaper's circulation department.

Two of the members laid off worked in the circulation department while the other two worked in accounting, one part

time. One of the laid off workers was filling in for an employee who was on maternity leave.

Rosdobutko said the layoffs come at a time when union members were beginning to recover from tensions relating to the ownership change, and the pink slips have rekindled their worries.

"We were lean to begin with," he said of staffing levels at the newspaper. Rosdobutko said the layoffs appear to be a result of a head office directive.

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