

# PRIORITIES.

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"Labour Minister Bill King Tuesday denied his department is preparing legislation that would make equal pay for equal work compulsory throughout B.C.

'This is not a priority at this moment,' he said."

(Quoted in the Vancouver Sun 18 April 73.)

A Publication of the N.D.P. Women's Committee

# PRIORITIES

Priorities is published monthly by the Standing Committee on Women's Rights of the B.C. New Democratic Party. Its intent is to provide a means of communication and discussion for NDP women, in order to further the interests of the women's movement and of democratic socialism.

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"The issues and demands raised by the Women's Liberation Movement are integral to the development of a democratic socialist society. The N.D.P. actively encourages and provides support for women organizing around the demands of women's liberation and commits an N.D.P. government to creating the legislation necessary to realizing these demands."

(From the B.C. NDP policy on Women's Rights.)

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# DENNY'S : THE PICKET STOPS

Denny's had their day in court, and nobody won. The court ruling, without prejudice, was that there was insufficient evidence to convict the four on a criminal charge. What this really means is that Denny's would be damned sure in future not only to identify specifically what actions occurred, but also to identify precisely those who committed them. In recognition of this, it was decided to stop picketing, since a continuation would only endanger the picketers and those who supported them. It was also clear by this time that the women who were originally fired were never going to get their jobs back, and this had been one of the main goals of the picket.

It's important to realize that the women who walked out were justified in their action, that although they were not unionized they were reacting together to poor working conditions. They weren't paid for time spent at compulsory staff meetings; their friends were prohibited from patronizing the restaurant; they were told to kick patrons out after 20 minutes unless they ordered more than just coffee.

It is also important to recognize that the boycott was extremely effective in reducing Denny's business. In many cases their take on prime evenings was reduced by more than 30%. This of course is why Denny's was so eager to pursue the matter of the injunctions. It's apparent also that at some point Denny's made a conscious decision not to issue injunctions against key picketers, such as prominent members of the NDP constituencies and recognized union leaders. To do so would only have made a "cause célèbre" of the boycott and greatly increased the support of unionists and other working people,

who for the most part probably knew little about the matter. There was very little publicity on the boycott in the established media.

Obviously, certain sections of the Trade Unions Act (which the NDP pledged to repeal and has not yet done so) worked in favour of Denny's in this whole dispute; the same thing applies to other current disputes, such as the Shoppers Drug Mart strike and the IWA strikes. At Denny's the picketing stopped after the court ruling, because of the very real threat of jail terms for anyone who picketed. Only a massive defense organization and campaign could have made such defiance of the injunctions possible. Given that no such defense existed, further picketing was too much of a sacrifice to ask, particularly since the women originally fired were never going to get their jobs back and in fact several of them had since found other jobs. Also, towards the end the original waitresses appeared to be little involved in the actions taken and decisions made on their behalf, and so continued picketing seemed not only dangerous but also somewhat hollow.

Gillian Campbell  
Vancouver East

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FIGHT UNEMPLOYMENT:  
HIRE A SEX OBJECT

"Hostesses for our juice bar. Must be attractive, have good figure and be over 25. Shift work." (Vancouver Sun, Wed. 2 May 1973)

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