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Hospital demonstrators oppose two-tier health care system in Canada

By **FANNIE SUNSHINE**
The Champion

The health care system must remain accessible to all Canadians, not just those who can afford coverage.

That was the message delivered by a handful of demonstrators outside Milton District Hospital Wednesday afternoon.

"We're asking the health care system to remain publicly funded, administered and delivered," said Carla Biasutti, a volunteer with the Ontario Health Coalition, which declared May 15 National Health Care Day. "We don't want our health care system to become two-tiered. We need to tell the government the medicare system needs to be publicly funded."

Rallies were held across the nation Wednesday in support of the coalition to raise awareness about the future of health care in Canada if the system became privatized.

If the health care system was privatized, she said, the best health care would only go to those who could afford it.

The coalition is a network of more than 300 grassroots community organizations across the province seeking to become actively involved in the making of public policy on matters related to health care.

Ms Biasutti is currently collecting signatures for a petition asking for the health care system to remain public. She said she plans to send the petition to Roy Romanow, chair of the Commission of the Future of Health Care in Canada, by next week.

"I'll be at the Farmer's Market Saturday so if anyone wants to sign the petition they can do so then." Prime Minister Jean Chrétien appointed Mr.

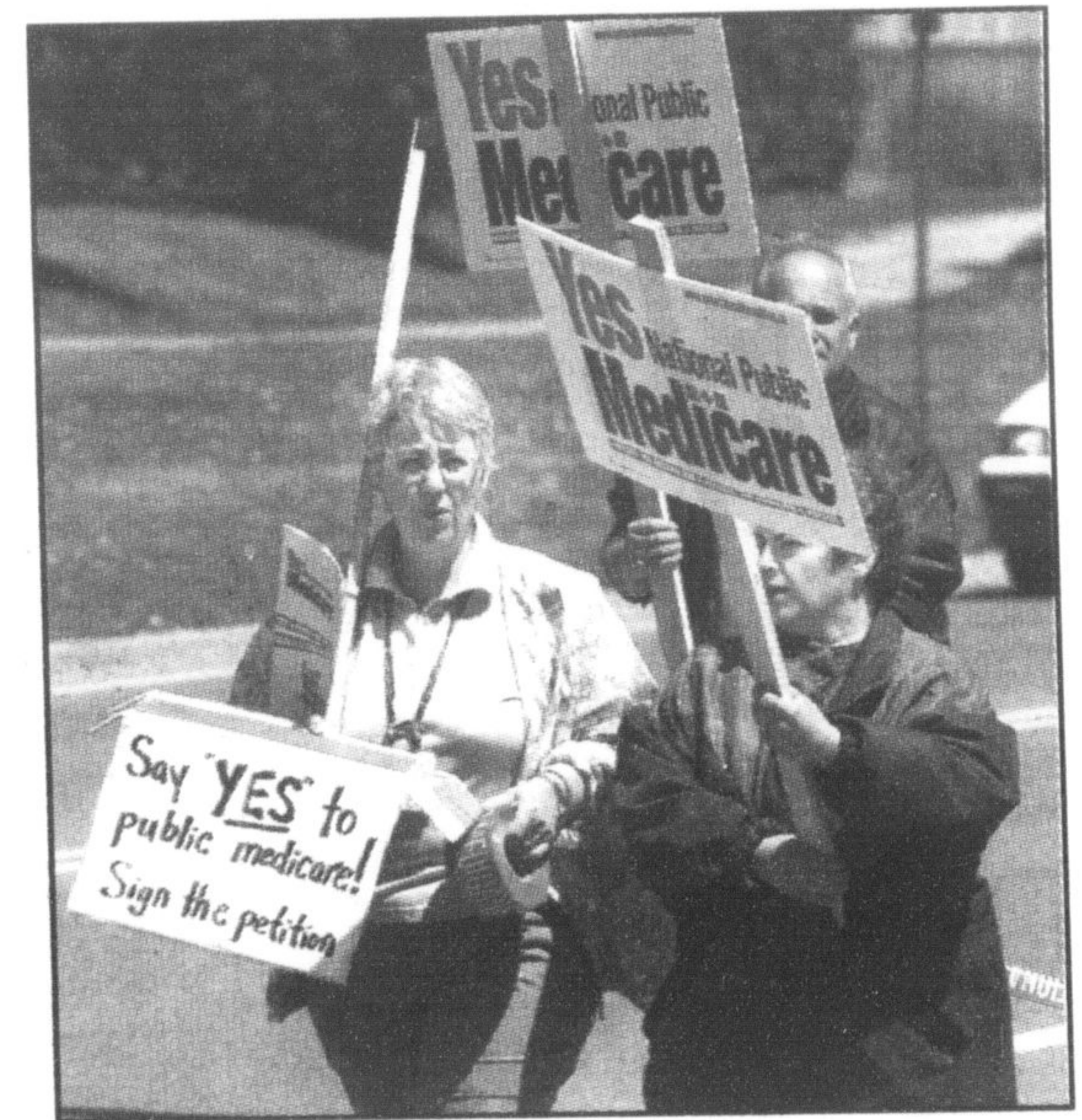


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Ontario Health Coalition members stage an information picket outside Milton hospital.

Romanow as the chair of the Commission of the Future of Health Care in Canada April 4, 2001. The commission's mandate is to recommend policies and measures to ensure the long term sustainability of a universally accessible, publicly administered health care system.

"Mr. Romanow said he wanted public input so that's why we're doing the petition," Ms Biasutti explained, adding she's collected about 100 names to date. "It's important Mr. Romanow realizes how critical it is to keep our health care system public."

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Events for the entire family!

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- Hourly Prize Draws
- Free Seniors' Day Friday
- Free Daycare Saturday and Sunday (Courtesy of Safe & Sound)
- \$2 Charity Hot Air Balloon Rides (Courtesy of McCuaig Insurance)
- Y108 Special Events Cruiser

• **BBQ Chicken Dinner (\$6/person) Saturday 5pm-7pm**
 (Courtesy of The Meat Terminal and Sargent Farms)

(Tickets must be pre-purchased from the Milton Chamber of Commerce Office)

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Canadian Champion

