

LAW STUDENTS IN SUPPORT OF C.U.P.E.

FROM CUPE LOCAL 2950: STILL NO MOVEMENT ON THE FRONT

On Monday, March 16, Vince Reddy was in touch with both the University administration and CUPE. Both sides were asked to meet at the Hotel Georgia for an "exploratory" session to see if they were inclined to settle.

At this point, no new offer has been made by the university. The university is not willing to make any changes to its offer of March 9, 1992. With regards to general wage increases and pay equity, these are the specific details of that offer:

- April/91 to March/92 - 3.85% general wage increase
- 1% pay equity (note that this money will be coming from the government). The university has stated that this money will come "no sooner than the 31st of the month in which the contract is ratified"
- April 1, 1992 - 2% general wage increase
- Jan. 1, 1993 - 0.5% pay equity
- April 1, 1993 - 2% general wage increase
- 1% pay equity
- Jan. 1, 1994 - 1% pay equity (note that this one per cent does not kick in until the last day of the contract).

Overall, this package constitutes a 12.5% increase over three years but it is really only 11.5% since the last 1% does not kick in until the last day of the contract. If you break this number down further, the university is offering a 7.85% general wage increase over three years and 4.5% pay equity over three years. It is interesting to note that in a letter dated March 9, 1992 from Strangway to CUPE he mentioned that the provincial government had committed itself to a pay equity rise of 5% over three years. This begs the question: how did the last 1/2 % of this provincially allotted money get waylaid in the university's offer?

Other union concerns:

- contractual language re: medical and extended medical benefits for part time workers (Local 2950 has language in the contract that covers part-timers. The university has violated the contract regularly but the union was not vigilant about this. Now the university is trying to get the language taken out of the contract so that they can legally exploit part-time workers).
- paid personal leave (many members of this local are single parents who have to deal with the reality of sick children, etc. - the university has suggested that they can use up to five sick days to cover this leave)
- pension plan - they want language in the contract that will allow them to negotiate for more control over their pension moneys which are presently administered and invested by the university.
- expedited arbitration
- job evaluation plan (call for a joint committee to evaluate the skills, responsibilities, and working conditions of different jobs with view to restructuring wages - gender neutrality is a key issue here)

The Law Students Supporting C.U.P.E. (LSSC) recently reviewed the University of British Columbia's Guidelines with regard to the current strike. It has come to our attention that certain members of the media have been misled with regard to University policy. We are hoping to provide more accurate information as to what this policy actually states.

Most students honoring the picket line are under the mistaken impression that the University Guidelines protect them from penalty. A careful review of the guidelines reveal that this is not the case. In fact, the University Guidelines with regard to the evaluation of students not crossing picket lines simply states "they will be responsible for fulfilling course requirements and, insofar as possible, they will be evaluated on the basis of the work they are able to do under the circumstances."

This leaves what is reasonable under the circumstances entirely up to the individual professor's discretion. Since some professors do not think it is reasonable to honour picket lines in the first place, we question whether evaluation policy should be left to their individual judgment.

Beyond this the guidelines only address the evaluation of student performance when classes or examinations are not held because of the strike (see Section II of said Guidelines). Where lectures and examinations do take place, students may be responsible for all readings and lecture material if a professor decides this is encompassed by work students "are able to do under the circumstances."

To guarantee that law students who have respected picket lines are protected from penalty, the LSSC has provided the Dean of the law school with an evaluation policy which we consider to be fair. We are asking that this policy be implemented throughout the Faculty of Law.

We are hoping that the media will alert other U.B.C. students of the need to protect themselves by demanding that their faculties do the same.