UBC Archives Serial

AMS president bashes pickets

Alma Mater Society president Mitch Hetman personally supervised the unloading of two rented trucks that crossed picket lines to deliver goods to SUB Monday night.

Hetman then quickly locked the door by the loading dock after reporters from the Ubyssey attempted to question him.

Jan Linnen, an Office and Technical Employees Union picketer, said five people, including AMS shipper-receiver Menno de Vries, employee Kim Phillips and Pit manager Patrick Chapman, helped with the unloading.

De Vries, who said he drove one of the trucks through picketers trying to bar the way, refused to say who had authorized the delivery.

"I don't feel I should be talking about this. I don't want to get myself in trouble," he said.

Chapman, after accusing the reporters of "intimidating" de Vries, said he had no comment and told The Ubyssey it should contact Hetman or AMS general manager Charles Redden.

Hetman later also refused comment, saying Redden should be questioned. Redden hung up on a Ubyssey reporter after saying Hetman should be contacted.

After being approached at his home in West Vancouver, Redden said deliveries had been arriving at SUB all day Monday, with some getting through the lines and some not.

But the AMS general manager did not know what had arrived. "I have no idea what did and did not come into SUB today."

He explained the refusal of others to comment: "There are people who don't want to say anything that will not reflect a positive attitude."

UBC students have in the meantime been abusing or ignoring the OTEU picket line around SUB.

AMS office worker Marnie Craft said five men surrounded her Friday night and told her, "Go back to work. You unions have too much power."

Craft said students have been confusing the OTEU strike over a contract dispute with the walkout of B.C. Government Employees Union protesting government legislation.

The 11 OTEU members, who work for the AMS business office, have been largely replaced by some of the 16 managers and supervisors employed by the AMS.

"Most of the work is being done by managerial staff. It is essentially as usual," said AMS finance director James Hollis.

Union truck drivers have been respecting the lines, but OTEU members say de Vries has been using his own truck to get goods into SUB.

CITR continues to broadcast, claiming to be an essential service. "Within the accords of our license we're supposed to be on the air," said station manager Sonia Mysko, who added that two station members are honoring the picket lines.

THE UBYSSEY

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GANG OF FOUR members walk through legal picket line staffed by Office and Technical Employees Union members and supporters. Formerly progressive band, now gone disco and drummerless is pursued by two reporters questioning band on reasons for disrespenting strikers. Ramones bodyguard looks on to ensure Gang is not put on trial.

Gang of Four takes turn to right

The British band Gang of Four quashed efforts to cancel its concert by crossing picket lines outside SUB Monday.

The band, known for its Marxist political leanings, was met by Office and Technical Employee Union picketers as they entered a side door. An OTEU member told the band, who are British Musicians Union members, that a legal picket line was being conducted.

One band member said he was "vaguely" aware of the details of the OTEU strike. "I've heard there's some disagreement with management," he said.

Another member said the band had no intention of cancelling their show. "It's too late. We're here now," she said.

Union members picketed all SUB entrances when told the band might not cross picket lines if aware of the strike.

The band's road crew crossed lines earlier in the day to set up equipment. Gang of Four production manager, Kevin Harvey, said he was against crossing picket lines, adding the band should have been informed ahead of time that a strike was occurring.

"We had no prior warning that this was happening and consequently we know very few of the details. We can't just turn up with all this equipment and disappoint 600 kids."

But Harvey and most of the other roadies signed a statement indicating they acknowledged the pickets and were crossing "in protest."

UBC library worker Steve Harris set up his own picket as concert goers entered SUB. "Gang of Scabs/The Gang of Four crossed this line, will you?" read his sign.

Graduate student Joe Martin said he and others out in support of the OTEU were repeatedly harassed by Bruce Paisley, Alma Mater Society programs coordinator, one of the concert's promoters.

He said Paisley physically threatened several picketers. Martin and other witnesses said a female member of the pipefitters union was verbally abused by Paisley. "Why don't you go and find a baseball team and a baseball bat and stick it up your cunt?" Paisley told her.

Picketers had no more success with the David Raven band who managed to sneak past picket lines Friday to play a nursing undergraduate society dance. Bob Burroughs of Radioactive, the band's promotion agency, said the show could not be cancelled because "the contract was signed and deposit spent."

Campus unions out in protest

The entire UBC campus is expected to be behind picket lines today as support staff and some faculty join Operation Solidarity's escalating public sector job action.

Local 116 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, whose members are responsible for maintenance, custodial and food services, planned to join the picket lines at UBC's gates just after midnight this morning.

Members of local 1 of the Association of University and College Employees were scheduled to start picketing at 7 a.m. today. They include librarian assistants, clerical and hospital clerical staff.

The Office and Technical Employees Union and the B.C. Government Employees Union are currently on strike against the Alma Mater Society and the provincial government respectively. Because they are in a legal position to strike, it is believed they will force the other unions to help shutdown the campus by picketing UBC's gates.

The administration applied for an injunction against an illegal strike on campus Monday, but the Labor Relations Board denied it because UBC did not have "firm evidence" that campus unions will stage illegal job action.

Administration president George Pedersen said the administration will reapply today.

The teaching assistants union, which voted overwhelmingly in favor of supporting the job action, will help staff picket lines, along with some students volunteering their time. UBC's operating engineers will honor the lines, according to the union's business manager Bill Kadey.

Bus drivers will also respect the union lines, dropping students off at UBC's main gates. The buses will turn in front of the health sciences centre on Wesbrook. Little change in service is expected, said Colin Kelly, Independent Canadian Transit Union president.

"This is a political strike, not a labor one," said TAU president Horacio de la Cueva.

"We're not picketing the university, but protesting against the government and its legislation — legislation which is inhuman and immoral," he said.

"There were demonstrations of 70,000 people, but the government didn't pay any attention."

Other union leaders echoed his concerns, emphasizing the Public Sector Restraint Act will dramatically threaten their right to bargain collectively and will upset seniority.

Administration strikes against pickets

Picket lines surrounding campus may soon be declared illegal, but campus unions vow to continue job action, The Ubyssey learned Monday.

The administration filed for an injunction Monday calling for the removal of campus picket lines.

Members of local 1 of the Association of University and College Employees, local 116 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, teaching assistants union and the faculty association began picketing all 21 gates on campus today.

The administration will apply for an injunction against striking campus unions today after Monday's initial attempt failed, administration president George Pedersen said.

"The problem was that we did not have firm evidence of the threat of picket action," he said.

Pedersen had no sympathy for those taking job action.

"There is no question of its illegality. The direct target is the university, not the government. Our first priority is to provide services to the students," he said.

A withdrawal of services as a form of political protest is not considered a strike, and therefore pickets will be declared illegal, Pedersen warned in a second memo Friday concerning campus action against government legislation.

But campus unions disagree.

"I believe this picket line is the result of a labor dispute, and our form of action is a political protest," AUCE union coordinator Ted Byrne said.

"We are using political protest to defend our rights as unionists," he said.

"Pedersen is just saying what he thinks. Nothing is cast in stone until the Labor Relations Board has arrived at a decision," he said. Byrne pointed out the LRB decided that an Operation Solidarity rally held in September was a legitimate political protest.

"If there is an injunction, we would still ask our members to remain at the picket lines," said Byrne.

Keith Graham of the B.C. Federation of Labor and a member of Operation Solidarity added ominously, "If anyone is victimized by the Bennett government or by local school boards, then there will be an immediate call for escalation by all public sector employees."

SPECIAL STRIKE EDITION

UBC faculty honor picket lines

At least 100 faculty members will honor picket lines set up on campus for varying lengths of time, a spokesperson for the committee of concerned academics said Monday.

Faculty who withdraw their services will lose pay, but not their jobs, said political science professor Philip Resnick.

A provision for honoring picket lines as a matter of conscience is included in faculty members' contracts, said Resnick.

"We would feel very uncomfortable seeing all the teaching assistants and support staff put their jobs on the line for something we all believe in."

Resnick stressed the committee was not a splinter group from the faculty association, but a group of concerned faculty who oppose the "regressive" legislation of the provincial government.

Removal of academic freedom, centralization of government power over education, cutbacks in funding for education, student loans and social services, as well as the general attack on human rights prompted the formation of the group, Resnick said.

The committee members, which also include librarians and program directors, will be "prodding, urging and wooing" their colleagues to respect picket lines, he said.

"We are not engaged in some kind of civil war with our colleagues. We are trying to act a little as a conscience for the rest of the faculty."

In particular, they are urging faculty not to penalize students who refuse to cross picket lines, he said.

"We're given our freedom of choice. Students should have the same."

Some faculty who choose not to withdraw their services will be donating their salaries to a strike fund, Resnick added.

The committee will be distributing leaflets and other information near the picket lines, he said.

Meanwhile, a Simon Fraser University faculty association meeting voted 74 to 36 to stage a one week class boycott to protest government legislation Monday.

Kevin Russel Simon Fraser Student Society external affairs officer made the announcement to 600 cheering students at a noon hour information meeting.

Simon Fraser, with the Canadian Federation of Students and several lower mainland college student unions have opened an off campus information office on Commerical

"We can't stand by and let others fight for our rights and hope they win," Russel said. "We have to help each other fight and be willing to take the risk that we might win."

Negotiations rejected

The AMS executive and striking office employees are not meeting to negotiate a new contract, and pickets continue to surround SUB.

The Office and Technical Employees Union contract expired May 31, and negotiations over wage increases have since broken down. The union has been in a legal position to strike since Sept. 26.

"We would have gone out in September, but we didn't want to hurt the students," OTEU member Marnie Craft said while picketing.

Union negotiator Jan Linnen said the union rejected the AMS' last wage offer because it was not enough considering a substantial increase in SUB revenue and corresponding increases in management salaries.

"We don't want to be treated differently than the others working in the same place," Linnen said.

Although the OTEU strike is over wages, an AMS action precipitated the strike on Nov. 3. Council defeated a motion that would have prevented the AMS from hiring workers to replace any striking employees.

James Hollis, AMS director of finance, said the motion referred to the replacing of any employees who would leave the AMS for any reason.

"There was no thought of replacing OTEU strikers, nor will we replace them."

But Lisa Hebert, AMS external affairs officer, disagreed with Hollis' interpretation of the motion. Hebert proposed the motion which read: "Be it resolved that no additional persons be hired to perform the duties of striking persons."

Neither Hollis nor AMS business manager Charles Redden were available for comment on the OTEU negotiations. OTEU picketers said that Redden appeared unwilling to negotiate at all.

ONE OF SEVERAL OTEU picketters settles down to coffee after long day confronting herds of inconsiderate students stampeding in and out of SUB, crashing legal picket lines for past few days.

UBC animals get picket passes

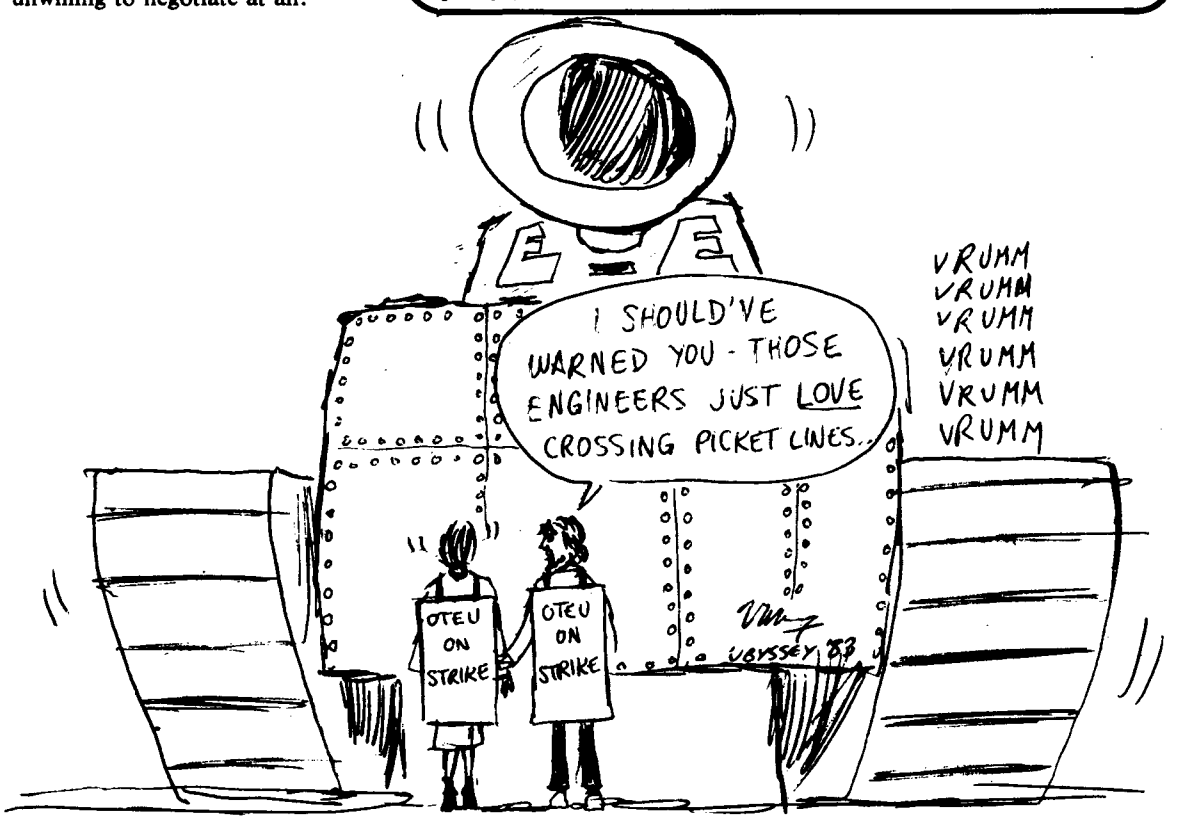
Operation Solidarity's flood of protest will not leave UBC's animal population stranded.

Campus unions have decided to issue picket passes for faculty members, graduate students and researchers who must cross the line to keep their animals and plants alive.

"It's only right because animals are not taking sides in the dispute and should not be allowed to suffer," said John Gregg, coordinator of the animal care centre.

The unions have deemed feeding of animals and tending of plants to be essential services and thus will exempt a select group of animal and plant care workers in zoology, botany and other animal and plant research intensive departments from crossing the line..

"There would be a real problem if no one looks after the animals," said zoology department head G. Scudder. "There are limits to what one can do to protest — starving animals would be a pretty grim way."



Students 'coerced' by administration

Coercion and fear are being used to force students to attend classes during the strike, a student representative said Monday.

The administration would make clear that crossing a picket line is a moral issue, said Lisa Hebert, Alma Mater Society external affairs coordinator.

UBC president George Pedersen told students who met with him Monday they would "pay the price" for honouring picket lines, said Hebert.

Hebert said she told Pedersen "The right to hold political beliefs is clearly outlined in both the federal Human Rights Code and the B.C. Human Rights Act."

Although faculty and staff options during the strike are clear, student options are not, said Hebert. "There has been no administration statement that students' academic standing will be ensured," she said.

A strikingly different story emerged from a Nov. 1 meeting between law dean Peter Burns and law students against the budget. Burns told students that alternate arrangements could be made to ensure law students could continue their studies without having to cross picket lines.

Burns said the law faculty wants to enable students to pass and graduate while following their consciences.

This contradicts a letter Pedersen sent to UBC deans which stated that students boycotting classes should be closely monitored and the situation reassessed later.

LSAB has urged law students to honor picket lines. This will convey a strong message of opposition to the government's program, they say. "By crossing, for whatever reason, the protest is undermined," said their leaflet.

Andre Sobolewski, Campus Community Alliance chair, said students should approach the administration with concerns about strike-breaking policies.

EDITORIAL

Out Of Focus?

Do not adjust your eyes or wet your fingers. This newspaper does not open up.

Your beloved student paper, like human rights in B.C., has been cutback. But we'll spare you a diatribe about Billy's boys, because for once there is a problem that isn't entirely their fault.

Last week your (i.e. the Alma Mater Society's) employees went on strike to demand fair negotiations from the AMS management. Members of the Office and Technical Employees Union set up picket lines outside SUB, which were respected by The Ubyssey staff.

Since the AMS in its wisdom decided to keep functioning as if nothing was wrong in its little empire, Ubyssey advertising is considered "hot", and will not be handled by the Ubyssey's unionized printers. Thus the thinness of the tabloid you are now reading.

With that explained, we must address the issue of scabs. No, not the ones you'll get if you ignore the above and insist on trying to turn to page three.

AMS president Mitch Hetman is one scab that hurts more than scratched fingers. AMS programs co-ordinator Bruce Paisley is another. At a time when hundreds of UBC students, staff and faculty are organizing in opposition to the provincial government's repressive measures, Hetman and Paisley are actively undermining their efforts.

While crossing picket lines on your way to class, you may get some dirty looks and perhaps a few comments, but it is unlikely that a large aggressive man will wave his fist in your face and threaten you with violence. That happened Monday to three SUB picketers. And the man who did it is one of your AMS managers — Bruce Paisley.

While big brave Bruce is threatening striking office workers, Hetman is ensuring that deliveries flow across the picket line.

These two men have no respect for your employees. Student council obviously doesn't care. After all, they voted to hire scab labor to keep their businesses functioning full steam. But the student body should not accept or tolerate strike-breaking and threats of physical violence.

There are two other things that can be done with scabs other than picking at them. Fire them or impeach them.

THE UBYSSEY

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The Ubyssey is published Tuesday and Friday throughout the academic year by the Alma Mater Society of the University of British Columbia. Editorial opinions are those of the staff and are probably not those of the university administration and are, nine times out of ten, not those of the AMS. Member, Canadian University Press. The Ubyssey's editorial and advertising department is currently located in the Lutheran Campus centre, at the corner of University Boulevard and Wesbrook Mall. Phone 224-5599. Things will return to their SUB normal after the current strike(s).

Chriswongmurieldraaismasarahcoxelbanypattiflatherrobertbeynonsarahmillinvictor wonghollynathandougschmidtbrianjonesalaroliljumgordonclarkjoelpecchiollineillucenttepeterberlinmontestewarthyaymondduke: a noun describing the various elements that create a special short edition of a university newspaper in a room the size of a broom closet because that particular journal's ethics forbid such element from assembling a high-quality news tabloid from behind a picket line at SUB 241k.