

DEFEND THE SFU 18

On March 22, 1979, 18 persons were arrested on the picket line of the Association of University and College Employees, Local 2 (AUCE 2) at Simon Fraser University. Fifteen of those arrested are or have been members of trade unions, including the Construction and General Labourers Union; the Hospital Employees Union; the Service, Office, and Retail Workers Union of Canada; the International Steelworkers of America; the Association of University and College Employees; the International Woodworkers of America; the B.C. Bartenders Union; the International Association of Bridge, Structural, and Ornamental Iron Workers; the B.C. Government Employees Union; the Canadian Paperworkers Union; the Canadian Union of Public Employees; the Carpenters and Joiners United Brotherhood of America; and, the Irish Postal Workers Union. Twelve of those fifteen were also students at the time of the arrests.

AUCE 2 is the bargaining agent for 650 clerical and technical workers at Simon Fraser University. After months of bargaining, AUCE 2 began a series of rotating strikes in December, 1978. In January, 1979, the SFU Administration stated that its final offer, as directed by the University's Board of Governors, was 6% over two years. Then on March 6, 1979, the University began selective lockouts which forced AUCE 2 into a full-scale strike. On March 8, 1979, a picket line was set up at the entrance to the University and remained in place until April 20, 1979. An Industrial Inquiry Commission, whose decision will be binding, has now been appointed by the Minister of Labour with hearings set for [REDACTED].

All through negotiations, the SFU administration showed bad faith and attempted to break AUCE 2. For example, the Administration made the offer of conditional binding arbitration, a major condition being comparability with unorganized clerical workers in the private sector and selected by the employer. Unfortunately, the latter are traditionally low paid and the comparison was put forth for the purpose of reducing unionized wages. The fact that members of the SFU Board of Governors are also involved in big business is significant. By working against AUCE 2, Board members such as [REDACTED] (also president of the Employers Council of B.C.) work to maintain interests other than those of the University community.

On March 22, 1979, a rally at the picket line concluded with approximately two hundred supporters joining the line. The picketing was peaceful and legal and at no time did the RCMP tell the picketers that they were committing an offence or require them to disperse. After three hours, however, the police, including members of the RCMP Security Service's "Ad Hoc Labour Liaison Committee", attacked the picket line and arrested 18 picketers.

The charges laid on March 22, 1979 were "obstructing a peace officer in the execution of his duty", a criminal offense carrying a maximum two year jail sentence. The Crown laid the second charge of "blocking a highway" approximately a month later and this is a summary offence carrying a maximum sentence of six months in jail or a \$1,000 fine. One of the 18 arrested is no longer being charged.

The first trial is set for [REDACTED] in Courtroom No. 3 of the provincial courthouse at 6263 Gilpin Street in Burnaby. Individual trials were set which are costly and time consuming. Since all those arrested face the same charges, the first trial is expected to be decisive.

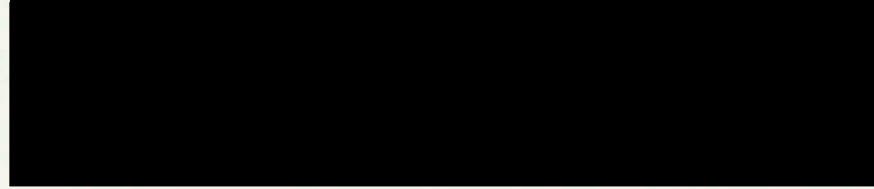
Organization to defend the 18 persons arrested began immediately after the police attack. The SFU 18 Defense Committee, composed of those arrested and supporters, was set up shortly after and began to lobby for the dropping of the charges and to raise funds for the defense. The Committee organized a Public Meeting for Monday, June 18, 1979 at 7:30 p.m. in the Fishermen's Hall (138 E. Cordova, Vancouver). The purpose of this meeting is to rally the support of the trade union movement in addressing the larger issues of defending the right to strike, defending the sanctity of the picket line and opposing police intervention against the labour movement, including attacks on picket lines. The focus of this meeting will be the demand to drop the charges against the SFU 18.

The speakers invited to the meeting are those representing unions which are experiencing government repression: CUPW, UFAWU, SORWUC (Muckamuck Restaurant), CAIMAW (Endako Mines), and the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (Adams Laboratories). From their immediate and bitter experiences, these speakers will be clarifying the relationship between the importance of the defense of the SFU 18 and the defense of the right to legally and peacefully strike.

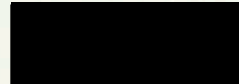
Individuals and organizations who have endorsed the call for the charges to be dropped and who will be releasing press statements at the Public Meeting include:

Association of University and College Employees,
Local 2
Association of University and College Employees,
Local 6
AUCE Provincial
Vancouver & District Labour Council.
Jack Munroe, International Woodworkers of America
Canadian Union of Postal Workers, Vancouver Local
Jean Claude Parrot, President, CUPW
CUPW National Office
BCGEU
John Fryer, General Secretary, BCGEU
Simon Fraser Student Society
The BC Federation of Women
Service Office and Retail Workers Union of Canada
Trade Union Research Bureau
Working Women Unite
Social Service Employees Union, Local 2
Canadian Association of Industrial, Mechanical and
Allied Workers
Peter Cameron, Regional Vice President, CAIMAW
Margaret Mitchell, MP, Vancouver East
Vancouver Status of Women
Art Gruntman, Regional Vice President, Canadian
Paperworkers Union
B.C. Provincial Council of Carpenters
Hotel, Restaurant and Culinary Employees and
Bartenders Union, Local 40
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 213
Construction and General Labourers Union, Local 1070
Victoria Labour Council
Gay Alliance Toward Equality
Syndicat des Charges de Cours de l'Universite du Quebec
Raj Chouhan, Farmworkers Union
National Union of Students
Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union
Nanaimo, Duncan and District Labour Council
Ron Johnson, Federal NDP Candidate, Vancouver Centre
Bruce McRae, National President, Canadian Association
of Smelter and Allied Workers
United Steelworkers of America, Local 3495
Okanagan Labour Council
Canadian Brotherhood and Railway Transportation and
General Workers Union
Hospital Employees Union

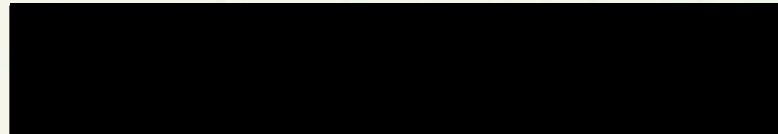
For further information regarding the arrests of the 18 persons, the Public Meeting on June 18th or the continuing activities planned around the defense campaign, please contact:



Joan Meister
(AUCE 2)



or



June 11, 1979.

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