

COMMITTEE OF CONCERNED ACADEMICS

A MATTER OF CONSCIENCE

Nov. 7, 1983

We are writing to our colleagues to explain our position on the likely withdrawal of services by members of the campus community on Nov. 8.

Any cessation of services and pickets which may result will essentially be aimed at the regressive legislation introduced by the provincial government on July 7. The Faculty Association has joined Operation Solidarity and has stated its deep concern about the threats to academic freedom posed by Bill 3 and other parts of the legislative package. That same position has been taken by the CAUT and by national associations of university teachers in other countries. Repeated interventions by B.C. faculty associations with the government have borne no fruit.

Under these circumstances, faculty members at UBC find themselves forced to make a difficult, but unavoidable, choice. They can ignore the picket lines that may be going up on Nov. 8 and reassure themselves that their sole professional obligation is to continue to carry on with their normal academic activities even in these extraordinary times. They would be doing so, while members of the support staff of this university, many teaching assistants and many students would be making sacrifices for the preservation of fundamental educational rights. They would be doing so while thousands of teachers, no less professional, no less committed to the interests of their students than any UBC faculty member, put their careers on the line for the same cause. They would do so knowing that many thousands of employees in the public sector were withdrawing their services, not in the pursuit of their particular interest, but in the defence of basic principles and social objectives which we all share.

There are, therefore, faculty members in, we hope, considerable numbers, who will honour the picket lines surrounding the university on Nov. 8th. Some may choose to do so for a limited time, others for longer. We urge our colleagues to join us in respecting the picket lines because of our long term responsibilities to our profession. The right of faculty members, as a matter of conscience, to refuse to cross a picket line established in pursuance to a labour dispute, is applicable in this case. The Faculty Association's notice of Nov. 4 clarifies and confirms this. We also see our action as a form of political protest to which every Canadian has a right.

We also urge all our colleagues, whether they cross or do not cross the picket lines, not to penalize students who have to make the same choice.

To meet these extraordinary conditions, the Committee of Concerned Academics is calling

a **DEMONSTRATION** in support of educational and human rights
on Tuesday November 8, 9:00 a.m. at Gate # 1 (Wesbrook/University)

The Committee will also have representatives at the Campus Lutheran Centre from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., beginning on Nov. 8. They can be contacted for counsel and information in the coming days.

To discuss plans and further actions, we invite interested faculty members to a meeting

TODAY, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7, at 12:30 in Buchanan A 204.

For the Committee:

Fred Stockholder, Philip Resnick, David Aberle, Kathy Scardellato, Bob DeWreede,
Keith Ralston, Hank Rosenthal, Jake Zilber, Norman Epstein, Janos Bak, Ken Pinder,
Lynn Copeland