

Association of University and College Employees

LOCAL No. 1 (U.B.C.)

CONTRACT COMMITTEE BULLETIN #11

What can we say? Everything and nothing. We tried in the best of faith to come to a settlement that would be acceptable to you. In terms of our meeting with the University on Friday, May 2, 1980 we did not succeed. The Contract Committee can state that in good conscience the effort to resolve the current set of negotiations with the University came solely from our side of the table.

On Thursday, May 1st, we sent a letter to Strudwick, Grant and Connaghan indicating our desire to continue negotiating. On the basis of that letter we thought we were to resume negotiating the next day. We met with the University at 10:15 am on May 2nd and were handed a copy of UBC's allocation of the Universities Council budget for 1980-81, a budget which allocated between 7 and 8% to salaries and benefits for the next fiscal year. After some questions the Contract Committee took the information away and held a caucus in IRC #2.

During an intensive, soul-searching caucus, the seven of us decided (in retrospect perhaps incorrectly) that there was no option but to lend full credence to the budget as presented by Strudwick. Should there be anything misrepresentative or fraudulent about their presentation, good faith bargaining would have been breached in the worst possible manner and we felt that recourse could and would be taken by the union. Therefore, assuming the validity of their presentation, we attempted in every manner possible to address the University's financial picture already on the table (i.e., 10%, EHB 100%, \$100 "signing bonus"). During that caucus we hammered out a package that we were prepared to recommend to the membership as a basis for a settlement. It was a bottom-line package, one which, although we did not feel good about, could not be tampered with. We really thought we had a possible settlement within our grasp.

This package was presented with the clear understanding that it was an all-or-nothing-at-all package -- Marcel said that it represented the absolute lowest (in terms of non-monetary and monetary provisions) that we could ever recommend to you; Marcel clarified that the penalty for refusal to accept this package was a return to our original position.

What we were prepared to propose is as follows: an 11% wage increase over 1 year, 5 and 10% shift differential, tuition waiver excluding sessional employees but containing the Union's concurrency issue, unpaid adoption leave, and job guarantees for union officials. We believed the package was realistic in light of the budget-- the University could fold the \$100 "signing bonus" into a 1% increase and include it in next year's budget as an ongoing expenditure. Other campus unions also have shift differential on the 5 and 10% formula -- no precedent was being established. Tuition waiver was essentially the University's proposal -- obviously no problem there. Unpaid adoption leave -- who could object to it? Full-time leave of absence for union officials -- no precedents here either.

After the caucus we presented the University with this package. Strudwick had a few questions of little consequence. We then adjourned with a tentative decision to reconvene that afternoon at 2:30 pm in the Employee Relations Department (talk about keeping us dangling until the last possible moment -- strike notice was up at 3:30).

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When we reconvened Strudwick immediately passed around a University revision to Article 7.02 -- full-time leave of absence. A cursory glance turned up nothing new -- our concern had not been addressed. What followed was more of the same with the exception of tuition waiver. On wages, Strudwick said the 10% and the \$100 "signing bonus" was as far as the University was prepared to go. Shift differential and unpaid adoption leave fell by the wayside -- the University was not prepared to move. We expressed our concern and amazement that the University would not move to accommodate our concerns and sign a collective agreement on the basis of our package. We pressed Strudwick for reasons why there was no movement in the non-monetary areas. No valid reasons were forthcoming.

At that point Strudwick attempted in vain to intimate that the Contract Committee was willing to pull the Union's members out on strike for 1%. We immediately countered that what we were offering was a package that we felt we could recommend to the membership -- when the University tried to pick and choose from the package it ceased to exist. Marcel informed Strudwick that what was back on the table was our 15% position on wages and the other outstanding issues. We kept returning to the theme that the University's position was incomprehensible to us as a Committee. We had come to the table to bargain in good faith and not to play silly games. We had demonstrated that we were prepared to move, and after taking into account the information the University had provided us with at the outset of the session, we, in the context of the package, had drastically reduced our wage demands. The University's response was not really a response. It appeared to us that they were not prepared to address any of our concerns.

We returned to the Union Office and picket lines went up around the General Services Administration Building and the Computing Centre at 3:30 pm on Friday, May 2nd. In our discussions with the other Unions on campus and with the press we stressed that we, the Union, had done everything in our power to reach a collective agreement but that our efforts had failed. We also indicated that we were prepared to meet with the University, if they were serious, to negotiate an agreement. Finally, we said that the Union's position on wages was a 15% wage demand and that all unresolved items still remained on the table.

In closing, there is a membership meeting at 5:30 on Tuesday. Notices will get to you about where it is -- please keep in touch with a shop steward and please attend the meeting !!!

Wendy Bice
Judy Blair
Neil Boucher
Marcel Dionne
Ann Hutchison
Cathy Mooney
Nancy Wiggs
Susan Zagar