

2 AUCE

TSSU

TEACHING SUPPORT STAFF UNION

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TSSU

March 5, 1984.

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AUCE LOCAL 6

A. U. C. E

Dear Union Members,

You will have recently received a letter from university president William Saywell outlining SFU's financial difficulties and his initial proposals for dealing with them. AUCE Locals 2 and 6 are disturbed both by the substance of these proposals and the manner in which they have been conveyed to the university community.

Both AUCE Locals are currently negotiating contracts for last year--1983/1984. Several weeks ago, we requested financial disclosures which would prove the university's alleged inability to pay a percentage increase to the members of our bargaining units. We understand that the Provincial government's chronic underfunding of universities has created financial difficulty for SFU. However, we need a clear explanation of how the administration is allocating the funds it has received. Without these disclosures, we cannot negotiate an informed settlement of this past year's contract. Nor can we reasonably be expected to respond to Dr. Saywell's proposals for the coming year.

We are concerned that Dr. Saywell does not understand either the collective bargaining process or the impact salary cuts would have on the members of our bargaining units. In 1982 we negotiated small increases which did little to alleviate increases in the cost of living. Even a "modest salary reduction" will seriously undermine our standard of living. A four percent cut, for example, might seem modest to some, but it would mean increased hardship for us.

It appears to us that by appealing directly to the university community Dr. Saywell is attempting to circumvent the negotiating process. Particularly disturbing are Dr. Saywell's threats of impending layoffs if we do not comply quickly with his proposals. This pressure will ultimately hinder speedy resolution of our collective agreements and lead to an unhealthy labour relations climate. With the appropriate financial information, and commitment from both parties we can work at the bargaining table toward mutually satisfactory agreements.

If we are to convince the provincial government that continual underfunding will further erode the quality of education and working conditions at SFU, collective action is necessary. Unfortunately, Dr. Saywell's letter does little to facilitate such cooperation. We will continue to press for the financial information necessary to conclude bargaining.

AUCE Locals 2 and 6, Joint Committee