

Canadian
University
Employees

2170 Western Parkway, UBC, Vancouver, B.C V6T 1V6 224-2308

October 28, 1985

Dr. Stangway
President
University of BC

Dear Dr. Stangway:

On behalf of the Canadian University Employees (CUPE), I extend our most sincere welcome to the University of British Columbia. We hope that your Presidency will be a beneficial period for the workers we represent, and for the University community in general. We wish you the best of luck.

Having said that, I hate to burden you with what follows. However, I feel that it is necessary to express to you our concern, and my personal concern, about the crisis that currently faces us.

I have been an employee, and a part-time graduate student at UBC for almost six years. During that time I have been an active member of the Canadian University Employees union (formerly AUCE Local One), and am currently serving a second term as a full-time elected officer of the Union. Our relationship with the University has not always been amiable, but for the most part we have been able to work out our differences with a minimum of 'labour unrest' as it's called. Currently, our relationship with the University has sunk to a level from which I fear it will be very difficult to recover. The University, suffering from severe cut-backs -- the 'restraint' budgets of the current government, has not granted us a wage increase in over two years. Incremental increases, already agreed upon in our contract, have also not been paid for two years. The University bases its decision not to pay increments on 'inability to pay', as defined in the Compensation Stabilization Program (public sector wage controls). Over this same period of time, the University has been cutting back staff, both through attrition, and through non-filling of funded positions (hiring freeze). However, the volume of work has not decreased, and many of our members are working against severe backlogs created by understaffing. All of the above problems have, as you can imagine, created an atmosphere of tension, frustration, and discontent.

Nine months ago, as if to add to these problems, the University hired the firm Ritchie and Associates to conduct

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an efficiency review of a (rapidly expanding) number of its departments. The enormous cost of this review has caused our members to question the University's above mentioned 'inability to pay'. This, coupled with their generally low opinion of the review, ^{HAS INCREASED} increased their frustration to the point where they ~~felt~~ ^{felt} some kind of action was necessary. Angered by the indignity of being watched, timed, and controlled, they voted, on October 24, to "work to rule". This action, fully supported by the CUPE National, is a small step toward expressing the full extent of our anger, but we hope it will be sufficient to convince the University to reconsider its use of this firm. and to ^{cede} accede to our demands regarding job security, payment of increments and consultation.

The enclosed documents will help you understand our concerns, and the reasons for our unhappiness with this time-motion study, and the 'management control system' it is designed to impose on us.

SITUATION
I fear we are on a confrontation ^{TL} course, and experience has taught me that it is very hard to keep this kind of confrontation from escalating once it gets started. My sole reason for writing to you is my hope that, being new on campus and in the top executive position, you may be able to take a hard, objective look at the actions necessary to bring us back to some kind of equilibrium.

Sincerely,

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and take the*

Ted Byrne
Union Coordinator

TB:dz