

UBC ADMINISTRATION LIMITS FREEDOM OF SPEECH ON CAMPUS

By applying for and obtaining an injunction which virtually bans all CUPE 2950 and CUPE 116 pickets from UBC campus, the University has severely limited freedom of speech. With the exception of three Main Mall locations chosen by the judge, union pickets are restricted by law to the University gates. The University's action constitutes nothing less than a violation of civil rights and a patent disregard of the democratic process.

What happened to the University as a promoter of free speech? CUPE 2950 and CUPE 116 pickets proved effective on campus. Whether at the Angus, the Main Library, Buchanan, Law, the President's Office, the GSAB, the Faculty Club, the Bookstore, or other locations, people listened to our message and stayed away in droves from these buildings.

The University didn't like this example of democracy at work, so they decided to crush it. The union voice had to be silenced.

This authoritarian approach is consistent with a general absence of democracy at the University, which is run by a small group of highly paid administrators (seven men who make over \$130,000 each) and a Board of Governors comprised largely of male business people. Amongst the University's ruling elite, there is inadequate representation of community groups, labour groups, women, and visible minorities.

Before the strike, this ruling group decided that:

- 1) research, not teaching, was the key to UBC's future
- 2) although funding for new buildings and major projects was all-important, funds for staffing those buildings were a minor concern
- 3) the wage gap between high and low paid workers could actually expand because lower paid workers were expendable
- 4) the atrocious treatment of women at UBC was best dealt with through cosmetic change (an employment equity officer rather than pay equity); in fourteen months of negotiations, the University never responded to the pay equity issue
- 5) centralization of power in the President's Office was crucial to the corporatization of the University - ie., dividing and segmenting the University into profit-making divisions, linked in many cases to corporate research interests

These decisions on University priorities were all made without debate and consultation -- until the unions stepped in and demanded their membership have a say in matters that affect them.

Strike: Democracy, Power and Dignity

The University elite forced this strike on you for political, not economic, reasons. Simply put, the University's old boys' network could not stomach the fact that working people, mostly female members of the UBC community, challenged their self-serving priorities - priorities which clearly excluded pay equity. The University has always had money to meet reasonable union demands; it merely prefers not to meet them.

The unions dared to challenge this authoritarianism, and Strangway *et al* lashed back with strike-breaking, intimidation of teachers and students, excessive security measures, and injunctions. Their actions have resulted in a strike that will divide this community for years to come.

UBC is a public institution funded by taxpayers

The CUPE locals on campus wish to discuss with other members of the UBC community how we can make this university a more democratic institution.

We will request a public inquiry into the administration of UBC.

We will also ask the provincial government to appoint a Board of Governors that reflects public interest.

