

CONTRACT PROPOSAL TO BE VOTED ON APRIL 18th MEMBERSHIP MEETING
GRADUATE STUDENT CENTER BALLROOM 5:15

WAGES!!

In the month of March, the cost of living rose another 1%. The latest increase, the second monthly one percent rise in a row, put national living costs up 10.4% during the past year. As of December, Vancouver was paying 20.9% more for food than a year earlier and it has risen since then. This is considerably higher than the national average.

The people most affected by this rise are lower paid workers who have the least purchasing power and whose incomes are spent mainly on the necessities of food, housing, clothing and transportation.

The average monthly wage in B.C. is approximately \$780.00 per month. In contrast to this figure, at U.B.C. the highest paid classification is Library Assistants V, step one, at \$707.00 per month. This is below the Average B.C. monthly wage.

Forty per cent of clerical and library staff at U.B.C. earn less than \$500.00 per month. These are the people worst hit by an increase in the cost of living. Why are we being paid less than even the average provincial wage? One very big reason is because the great majority of clerical workers are women. Clerical and library skills have been greatly undervalued and under-rated in importance by society in general and at U.B.C. in particular. The University administration itself, as reported in the President's Ad Hoc Committee Report on the status of women at U.B.C., recognises the fact that jobs traditionally rated "female" are paid less than those occupations traditionally designated "male" and that this is not necessarily justified in terms of the importance of work performed nor of the skills involved. The President's Committee concluded that "many women are 'heads of household' and that there is no justification for lower pay scales for women because they are either single or augmenting a husband's income."

Where women are organized, progress has been made. For example, the clerical and nursing assistant staff at V.G.H. negotiated a very good contract which was won on the basis of discrimination against women at the hospital. Their lowest paid clerical workers now earn \$621.00 per month - a difference of \$213.00 between them and our lowest paid clerical staff. At V.G.H. we find an incredible situation where U.B.C. employees who work at V.G.H. are doing exactly the same type of work as their V.G.H. counterparts and yet they're receiving over \$200.00 per month less.

Another example of results obtained by collective bargaining for women is OTEU at Enpress Foods Ltd. Their lowest paid clerks receive \$687.00 per month - a difference of \$279.00 between U.B.C.'s lowest paid clericals and theirs. Their highest category of clerks - classified as General Clerks - start at \$853.00 per month.

As a result of the President's Ad Hoc Committee Report, the U.B.C. administration made the commitment "that the University in its leadership role in the community ... work actively to ensure that policies and practices within the University serve to eradicate any vestige of discrimination even though such discrimination may prevail in the larger society."

Up until now, the University has not been a community leader in its determination to eradicate discrimination against women - especially in terms of economic disparity between the sexes. In light of Premier Barrett's public commitment to the University to meet all wage settlements agreed to in collective bargaining, there should be no financial hardship imposed on the University if we were to receive a fair wage.

THEREFORE, IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT CLERICAL AND LIBRARY EMPLOYEES AT U.B.C. EARN A WAGE MORE COMPARABLE TO THE B.C. AVERAGE WAGE, THAT COST-OF-LIVING INCREASES WILL BE MET, THAT OUR SKILLS AND VALUE TO THE UNIVERSITY ARE RECOGNISED MONETARILY, AND TO ERADICATE THE WAGE DISCRIMINATION BETWEEN "MALE" AND "FEMALE" JOB CATEGORIES, I WOULD LIKE TO MOVE THAT A.U.C.E. LOCAL #1 NEGOTIATE FOR A \$250.00 monthly ACROSS-THE-BOARD SALARY INCREASE.

This figure is recommended unanimously by our bargaining committee.