

Dal maintenance workers upset

by John McLeod

After a 13 hour negotiating session on Monday, CUPE Local 1392 President, Bill Kelly said that he would know after Friday's negotiating session whether the Dal maintenance workers will have a new contract.

Kelly said that one of the problems was that he was negotiating two contracts at once; one for this year and one for last year which would accommodate the Anti-Inflation Board's rollback of Dal workers. Incorporating the rollback was particularly difficult because the AIB counted everything as income, including Dental Plans and safety boots. However, Kelly said that a new arrangement for payment of the rollback has been presented to the AIB. The AIB rejected previous proposals.

Kelly was especially annoyed because the AIB had added a new dimension to collective bargaining. "The AIB stops 2 responsible units from sitting down and negotiating in collective bargaining. It destroys the image of a good employer because they are bound to abide by the AIB. The employers that are not good find it very handy to hide behind."

It has been discovered by the *Gazette* that there are two points still outstanding in the negotiations for this year's contract; contracting out and sick leave.

Recently Dalhousie started to contract out various maintenance jobs instead of having Dal workers do them. Conifer Landscaping and Construction has an arrangement with Dalhousie to do snow ploughing. Conifer is also involved in grounds keeping and was responsible for reseeding Studley Field last summer. Some cleaning in Fenwick is also contracted out.

The Union views contracting out as a direct threat to job security. If Dal contracts out the Union is concerned with what will happen to the people who used to do these jobs. What happens if more jobs are contracted out? The Union feels that by contracting out, Dal loses its ability to guarantee jobs to people, especially at a time when Dal is reducing staff. The Union is optimistic that this contract will protect them against contracting out and possibly end the practise.

On the surface sick leave could not appear to be a problem but it has been learned that sick leave is

only a part of a much larger problem. In the past few years Dal has created a group of 5 cleaning supervisors which is headed by Gordon Leece, a person with "great experience with computers but without knowledge in cleaning". This group basically performs tasks formerly handled by building caretakers.

The Union feels that these supervisors were picked by the administration from the Union but were given no training in what they should do.

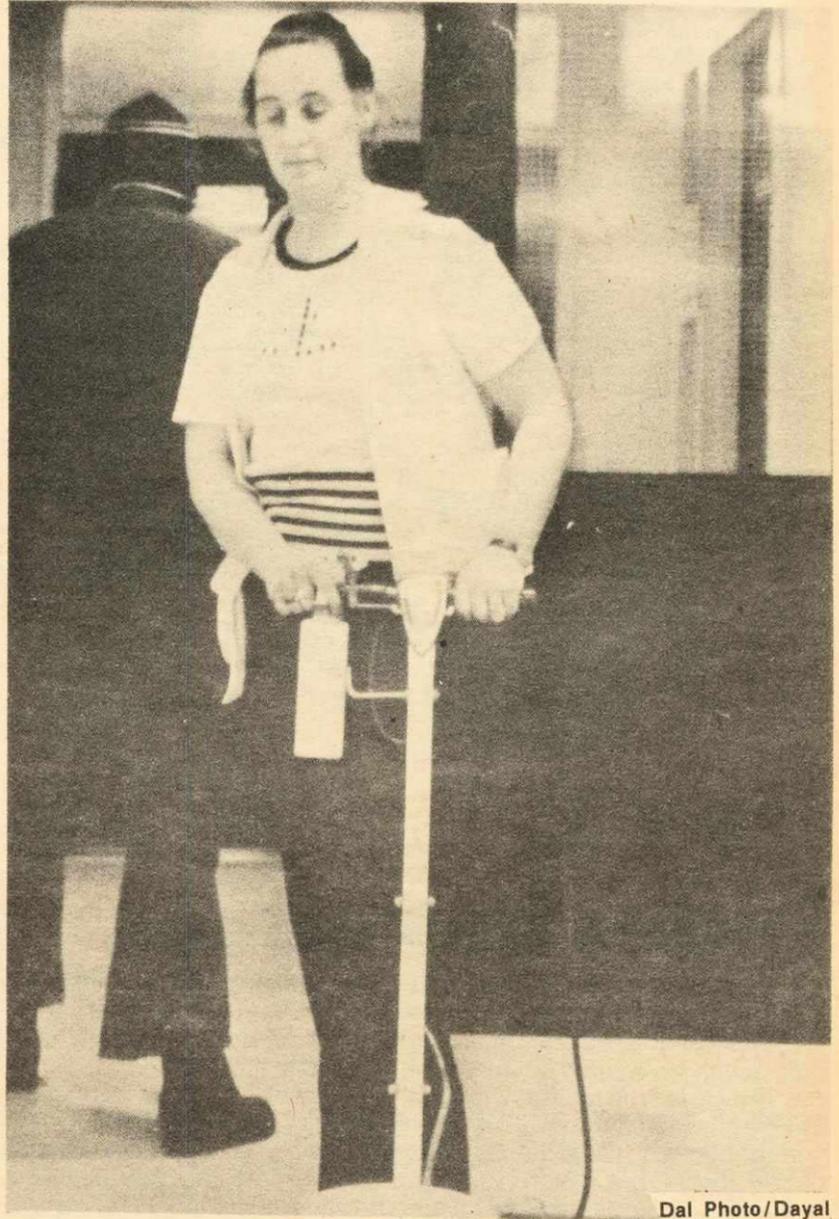
One member said, "They are abrasive, they have juggled shifts without asking people when they wanted to work and as a result there are some people working the backshift who preferred the day shift and some who want to work backshift and some who want to work backshift but are not given the chance."

"People are being disciplined for phoning in sick to security instead of supervisors. Some workers have had the validity of medical certificates questioned or even refused. New employees under probation have been let go because a supervisor felt that they had not accounted properly for their sick leave. Some employees have been fired after only a couple of weeks on the job because in the supervisor's opinion, their work has been unsatisfactory." The Union says that the employees should at least get a chance to learn their jobs before they get fired for not doing them well.

When questioned about the relationship between workers and supervisors Gordon Leece said "A lot of procedures have been changed and some did not like it. In general I am very happy with the present situation. We get along very well. If there are problems I would like to find out where. I would like to think it's perfect."

While not denying any of the union's allegations Leece said that they represent isolated incidents and not the general case. There was a large turnover in new employees because the university had hired people with no experience whose work was generally unsatisfactory.

In the case of the fired employees, who had phoned in sick to security, Leece said that the records of their calls had been misplaced and that the employees were told



Dal Photo/Dayal

Dalhousie Maintenance workers are not happy with the 'contracting out' policy.

this. However, their firings "were the result of a series of incidents" and "would have occurred anyway". Leece said that the problem with medical certificates was that he could never understand what the doctors said about the employees' illnesses because they were so technical. It is now a policy that employees may call in sick to security.

When questioned about the union's charges relating to who worked backshift, Leece replied that, "if backshift causes personal hardship to employees they can

have another shift. All jobs are posted so that employees wanting backshift should have no difficulty in getting it."

Summing it up, Bill Kelly said, "Between them they have created ill feeling from Union membership. They have not really accomplished the job set out for them - getting the work done. Since they took over I've never had so many complaints and grievances."

Another worker put it this way, "They've done nothing but screw up our people to no end."

Council briefs

Camil Chopra, chairperson of Winter Carnival, presented his report which was accepted by council with the recommendation that the problems encountered during Winter Carnival be brought to a committee to be studied.

It was suggested by Paul Zed that council should make an effort to get the charges dropped against a person involved in the joy-riding scavenger hunt episode.

Ken Langille announced that the nominations for honour awards can be received from Friday March 12 until March 26.

Council representatives voted in favour of banning dogs from university buildings.

It was announced that Sheila Beal will be orientation chairperson.

Jeannette Copp shall, for the remainder of the year, fill the senate position left vacant by the resignation of Harvey MacKinnon.

It was decided that the Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students will run their own elections for council representatives.

U de M wants to ban english

by Nigel Allen

MONCTON -- The Université de Moncton (U de M) student union (FEUM) has recommended that the university almost completely ban English textbooks, courses, and exams.

The report, in the February 28 issue of the FEUM weekly newspaper *Le Front*, charged that it is almost mandatory for U de M students to have a good knowledge of English.

FEUM said that 31.5 percent of extension classes in 1976 were given in English, despite a university regulation limiting these to 20 percent.

In order to "safeguard the unilingual character of U de M," the report also asks that U de M stop teaching extension courses in English. It also asks that U de M end an agreement with the anglophone University of New Brunswick which allows UNB to offer courses taught in English on the Moncton campus.

U de M regulations allow non-francophone students to ask for special permission to write exams

and texts in English. FEUM charged that many students do so without this special permission.

More than half (462 of 797) of the textbooks used at U de M are in English. FEUM wants professors who want to use an English text to have to obtain written permission from their dean.

"Often the French version (of official ceremonies) is lamentable and full of anglicisms, while the English version is clearer and better written, the report continued, calling bilingualism "the cancer of French-Canadian society."

Recruiting almost unilingual anglophone professors "is by far the university's most reprehensible action." Faculty who speak bad French perpetuate the poor French of some students, and make it more difficult for students to understand. "The university tends to give itself a bilingual image, perpetuating the idea that everything serious happens in English, and that French is a language reserved for children, kitchen, and church."