

Students desert classes for protest

by Cathy Brodeur & Andrea Stines

Despite chilly zero degree weather close to 100 students from the University of Alberta deserted out in support of the nation-wide Oct. 14th day of protest. A student contingency made up of graduate students, Young Socialists, the NDP club, Young Socialist-Leninists, Non-academic Staff Association (NASA) and students from various faculties marched from the university over the high level bridge accompanied by a strong police escort of four police cruisers and three motorcycles.

Student Marshalls, wearing yellow arm bands showing support with the Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) led the group carrying a non-partisan banner saying "Students oppose government cutbacks and wage controls."

Student spokesman Jim Anderson claimed that cold weather and some mid-term exams on the 14th were factors affecting such a small student turnout.

The student group was warmly received by workers, however, who chanted "Students, workers — one fight!" greeting the student marchers. Both student and labour groups converged on the legislative grounds with chants of "They say cut back, we say fight back," "No way way controls" and "Make the rich pay." Placards, arm bands and stickers all proclaimed the main aim of the protest — "We're out to fight controls."

Among the 1500 strong labor group were workers from Canadian Federation of Auto Workers (CFAW), steelworkers, sheet metal workers, letter carriers, the NDP, Alberta Union



Old Timers, First Timers. Workers from two generations take a stand at Thursday's protest. photo Bob Austin

of Postal Employees (AUPE), Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), League for Socialist Action, brewery workers, Edmonton Voters

Association, Edmonton District Labour Council, Canadian Paper Workers union, asbestos workers, Alberta Federation of Labor (AFL), and coal workers.

They assembled in front of the legislative buildings chanting "we're out to fight controls" and "Wage controls must go."

Speakers who addressed the crowd included AFL President Reg Baskin, Bob Reisman, AUPE President, Bob Clark provincial Socred Opposition leader and Grant Notley, provincial NDP leader.

"As I stand here today and see this huge crowd," Notley said, "I know that I no longer stand alone. We are here today to protest wage controls in this country. If there has been any breach of contract, it has been by the Trudeau government."

Amid cheers from the crowd, Notley presented AFL leader Reg Baskin with a cheque for one day's wages as a contribution to the special protest fund from himself and his legislative staff. He said he had been approached by his NDP supporters to propose a motion for an emergency debate on wage controls inside the legislature.

Socred Opposition leader Bob Clark also volunteered to speak on the emergency debate although he did not say he would second the motion to have the debate in legislature.

After 20 minutes of speeches

and chanting it was clear that Alberta premier Lougheed would not be coming out to address the protestors and the march continued downtown where it stopped at Sir Winston Churchill Square for another rally and speech against controls.

Edmonton had minor participation of the Oct. 14 day of protest as buses were running regularly and most postal workers as well as hospital maintenance staff reported to work. All banks were open, taxi companies and messenger services also reported to work, although some tradesmen including carpenters, electricians and plumbers were not working.

AFL president Reg Baskin said 6,000 CUPE workers were out for the day of protest. Construction at the Commonwealth Games stadium site was halted as workmen honored a picket line of CUPE Local 52, representing 2,600 inside city hall workers on strike.

Provincial Treasurer Merv Leitch said in the Legislature Wednesday that provincial government employees who did not report for work would be docked a day's wages. He warned Opposition leader Bob Clark that some form of disciplinary action may be taken against those provincial employees.

Western services

Eight universities from western Canada were represented at the Western Student Services Conferences hosted by the U of A Students' Union this weekend.

The conference, initiated by the U of A three years ago, is designed as an information exchange for students' union personnel from the various campuses in western Canada.

This year the conference was expanded to include discussion

of other areas besides students union services, including general areas of student interest (such as apathy on campus, community involvement with the university) and academic services as a students' union can provide.

"I was really pleased with the conference," SU vp services Jan Grude said Monday. "We received good response from the delegates, most of whom commented on the good organization of the conference."

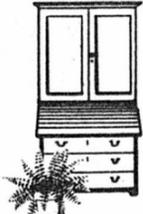
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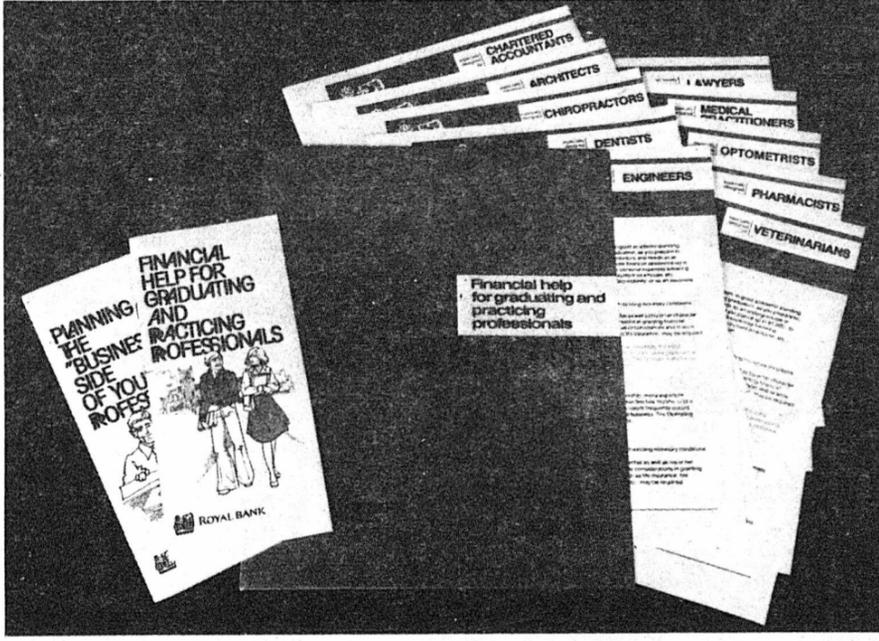


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