



Budget is not that tight

by Marc Allain

Last week the **Gazette** staff decided to test the veracity of the University's claim that it simply did not have the financial resources to meet the wage demands of the striking CUPE workers. Following an examination of some of the University's financial statements and conversations with two of the University's budgetary administrators, we were able to deduce the following:

—the difference between the University's offer (31c) and the Union's request (85c) amounts to approximately \$160,000 or roughly 1/4 of one percent of the University's \$60 million operating budget.

—the University's claim that it operates on a financial deficit in respect to operating expenditures appears to be more a product of accounting artistry than an accurate reflection of actual expenses.

The University presently charges the interest costs of its accumulated deficit to its operating budget. Because this deficit was in part the result of past expansion programs, a certain percentage of it should be charged against the University's capital expenditures. The difference could very well mean an operating surplus which would more than cover the increase the cleaners are asking for and even present an argument for a reduction in tuition fees. (in 1976 interest charges amounted to 1.2 million. The University's overall operating deficit was a mere \$257,000.)

—contrary to what we are lead to believe, sizeable amounts of money (approximately \$1 million in 1976) are transferred to and from Research,

Endowment and Designated funds. This would appear to challenge the inviolability of these funds. University budgetary personnel could not inform the **Gazette** as of press time where these monies were destined or what criteria governed their transfer.

—because the faculty have not yet signed a collective agreement with the University their budgeted increase for this year is money in the bank for the University. (approximately 1.6 million over the year) The accumulated interest on this temporary saving would cover the increase the cleaners are requesting.

It would appear from our findings that the University is on extremely tenuous ground when it claims that it simply does not have the financial resources to meet the Union's demands.

This, coupled with the fact that the amount of money in question is so insignificant in respect to the University's overall budget, would normally raise serious questions as to the University's managerial and accounting competence. We do not believe the University employs incompetent administrators. Its intransigent stance on wage increases to the CUPE workers must therefore be attributed to other motives.

President Hicks' public statements against the rights of workers to organize and collectively withdraw their labour lead one to suspect that the University is deliberately trying to demoralize and eventually crush the workers it employs. It is no accident that the University has chosen to act against those with the least power to resist its tactics.

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The deadline for articles and letters-to-the-editor is noon on Monday. No unsigned material will be accepted but anonymity may be granted on request. Letters should not exceed 500 words and must be typed on a 64-character line and double spaced.

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Letters

Respect for picket lines

To the **Gazette**:

It is no longer a mere question of supporting the cleaners' just demands. Four hundred and more university members showed that support en masse. Students, faculty, on-campus and off-campus unions, must be called upon to respect and back CUPE 1392's picket lines. Dalhousie's administration has to get a very clear message from everyone: It must come to the bargaining table and negotiate a fair wage with the cleaning workers. Such a settlement will benefit all. Students will be better able to fight cut-backs. Unions on campus will be in a better position to fight for living wages, and society at large will be better served by the university. CUPE 1392

must direct all of us who are affected by the Administration's refusal to bargain to the places where we are needed most by its membership. We must all do our part now to help the cleaners win a wage that will feed and clothe their families and provide them with the opportunity for an education like our own.
Mark Simkins

Bed sheets ?

To the **Gazette**:

I have a suggestion for settling the current dispute between the University Administration and the striking caretakers. The University could save enough money to meet the union on their terms if they used the strikers' bedsheet-placards on the beds in Howe Hall. But seriously,
Norman B. Hill

Doctors only tie tubes

To the **Gazette**:

A notice appeared in the update calendar of the **Gazette** announcing a lecture entitled "Pros and Cons of Tubals and Vasectomies", November 16th issue. I find myself forced to comment. The so-called pros of the discussion can only be in favor of tubal ligations, unless, you happen to be a male over the age of thirty, have at least one child, and a very understanding urologist. I make such a statement on the basis of my exposure to urologists in the Halifax area. My husband and I had requested a vasectomy some time ago, so his physician

continued on page 5

Correction:

In last week's story on the CUPE strike the **Gazette** stated that the striking cleaners were asking for an 85 cent increase over two years. The sentence should have read an 85 cent increase for a one year period.