



Photo by Steve Homer

JANITORS Contracted union status main—what ens next?

the hiring of a presidential assistant show that the university is not really concerned with saving money."

Booker feels that for the most part private contractors are "slavedriving racketeers," who are interested only in making a profit and will get everything they can from their employees.

He says that CUPE's goal is to have the working conditions of all janitors on campus equal to those employed directly by the university. CUPE has already been certified as representative for the employees of Custodian Services, but Booker says it is too early to know what the first demands of the union will be.

Custodian Services proprietor Vincent Fox says that he was going to put a plan for paid sick leave into effect by January 1974, and review wage rates, but now has to wait to negotiate these matters with the union.

While Fox feels the union has often not acted wisely, he says, "I am not anti-union," and that his company will do its best "to work out an agreement in the best interests of our employees."

Macaulay says that so far the university has no serious complaints about the contractors' services. "There has been no more than the usual number of problems to be expected when a service is transferred from one group to another."

However, several janitors have said they do not feel the buildings they work in are being cleaned properly. They think this is because the companies they work for, in an effort to make profits, are cutting corners.

For example, when the university cleaned the men's residences, there were two janitors in each building. Now Custodian has one janitor in each building, with a second man who divides his time between two residences.

Smith says this is accurate, but adds that the budget had been cut and, "It is likely that if the university were still cleaning these buildings, they would also only be using a man and a half per building." Custodian Services Proprietor Fox feels that he was not given an accurate estimate of the amount of work involved in keeping the residences clean. He states that under the present set up, his company is only breaking even on these buildings.

As a result Custodian has given notice that it is cancelling its contract, and the residences will be bid on again by cleaning contractors.

There was some difficulty in getting the Student Union Building cleaned properly when Custodian first took it over, according to SUB Day Director Kevin McKinney. Often there was only one janitor in the building over the weekend. However, McKinney now feels the service has improved, and is optimistic about its further improvement in the future. He points out that the service under UNB was far from perfect.

Representatives of all three companies feel they are giving satisfactory service and say they have received no major complaint from either the university or the occupants of the buildings they have been cleaning.

One member of the Physical Plan has said, "I don't think we could do as good a job as the contractors are doing now."

According to Michael Davidson, Building Supervisor for the Department of Physical Plant, "A lot of people underestimate what a janitor does." If anything is stolen or broken, Davidson points out, a janitor is often blamed. He adds that there is a tendency to treat janitors very poorly and then complain if they do poor work.



Photo by Mike Carr