



Dal Photo/Delorey

Representatives of University cleaning and maintenance staff say they will strike unless the university offers them reasonable wage increases.

Cost of living issue Another strike inevitable?

by Marc Allain

Dalhousie could be facing its second major strike in less than a year if negotiations with the university's cleaning staff do not improve. The negotiating committee for Local 1392 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), the union that represents more than 200 cleaning and maintenance staff on campus, says that unless there is a major change in the university's bargaining position a strike is inevitable.

Wages, shift premiums, and the length of the contract are the terms in dispute. The university insists on a two year agreement and is offering a 40c hourly increase for the first year and 25c an hour for the second year. The union wants a one year contract and was originally requesting a \$2 an hour increase. It has since reduced its wage demands.

Local president, Florence Logan, would not disclose the amount the union was asking, but indicated that they would not settle for less than the

amount received by the Operating Engineers, another campus union. The Operating Engineers, who went out on strike at Dalhousie last year, received a \$1.10 hourly increase spread over a two year period.

The union argues that increases in the cost of living justify the need for higher wages. "Prices are rising at an unbelievable pace, to the point where it's impossible to survive on low wages" the negotiating committee statement says.

The union claims the university is "tight fisted" when it comes to staff's wages. "It is pathetic that a local union has to strike to be able to gain a liveable wage, especially when the employer is supposed to be known as a progressive employer," the statement says.

The CUPE workers are presently the lowest paid people on campus. They receive, on the average, \$1.30 less an hour than the maintenance workers employed by

the Halifax school board. The local was especially hard hit by the imposition of the Anti Inflation Board's wage controls over the last three years. The controls not only maintained them at their low wage level, but it also forced them to repay the University an average of \$500. each because the contract they had negotiated surpassed the maximum increase allowed by the AIB.

The union began negotiating a new contract with the University in mid summer, several weeks before the expiry of their contract.

Negotiations have now deteriorated to the point that a conciliator from the Nova Scotia Labor Relations Board has been called in to encourage negotiations. Should the conciliator fail, the union would then be in a legal strike position within a few weeks. Both parties meet with the conciliator on Friday, October 13.

None of the negotiators for the university were available for comment at press time.

Dal. Faculty says Researchers are Faculty

by Lou Anne Meloche

The Nova Scotia Labour Relations Board has been asked to decide whether or not senior research personnel will be included in the bargaining unit of the Dalhousie Faculty Association. The Executive of the DFA met last Thursday evening and decided it had no resource but to go to the Board.

Negotiations over the definition of union membership began last July after the LRB ruled against the university when it agreed that faculty were indeed an appropriate group to unionize.

At issue are approximately 12-15 people. The university is arguing that faculty who receive more than 50% of their salary from outside research grants are not actual employees of the university.

The DFA, on the other hand, feels it is "patently obvious that these people are our academic colleagues", according to Michael Cross, chief negotiator for the Association. The people in question are in fact being paid by the university. If any of them were to leave, they would be replaced. The research money would not go with them. Cross said it is "an

entirely artificial distinction that's trying to be made."

The DFA will argue that the senior researchers are entitled to the protection the union can offer them. Cross feels that to exclude these people would set a dangerous precedent. The separation of teaching and research "would fundamentally alter the meaning of academic life at the university", he said.

Contract negotiations cannot begin until the LRB makes a ruling on the question. This probably won't happen for a couple of months.

Although the certification vote was taken last April, delays in the process have been numerous. University lawyers have on more than one occasion been unprepared for Board hearings (resulting in their delay), vice-president Andrew McKay was both ill and marooned on the west coast during the air strike, and now the university's seeming intransigence on the senior researchers.

Cross says the DFA is anxious to end the delays. Faculty have been without a contract since the first of July and face extended negotiations in the future. "It's time to get on to the real business", he said.

Bonfires next? Books stopped at border

by Robin Metcalfe

Canadian Customs has returned a shipment of lesbian books ordered from the United States by a Halifax bookstore. Red Herring Co-operative Books, a non-profit bookstore specializing in alternative (socialist, feminist and minority) publications, ordered the books in April from Diana Press, a California lesbian publishing house. The shipment, worth about \$60.00, held nineteen copies of eight different titles, including "Lesbianism and the Women's Movement", "Class and Feminism" and "Lesbian Home Journal". The bookstore received notice of the parcel's arrival on August 24, but was unable to claim the books without an invoice, which had to be sent for from Diana Press, causing five weeks delay. On October 4,

Denise Roberge, a member of the co-op, went to Canada Customs on Hollis St. to collect the books. She was told by the customs official on duty that the books would not be permitted to enter Canada.

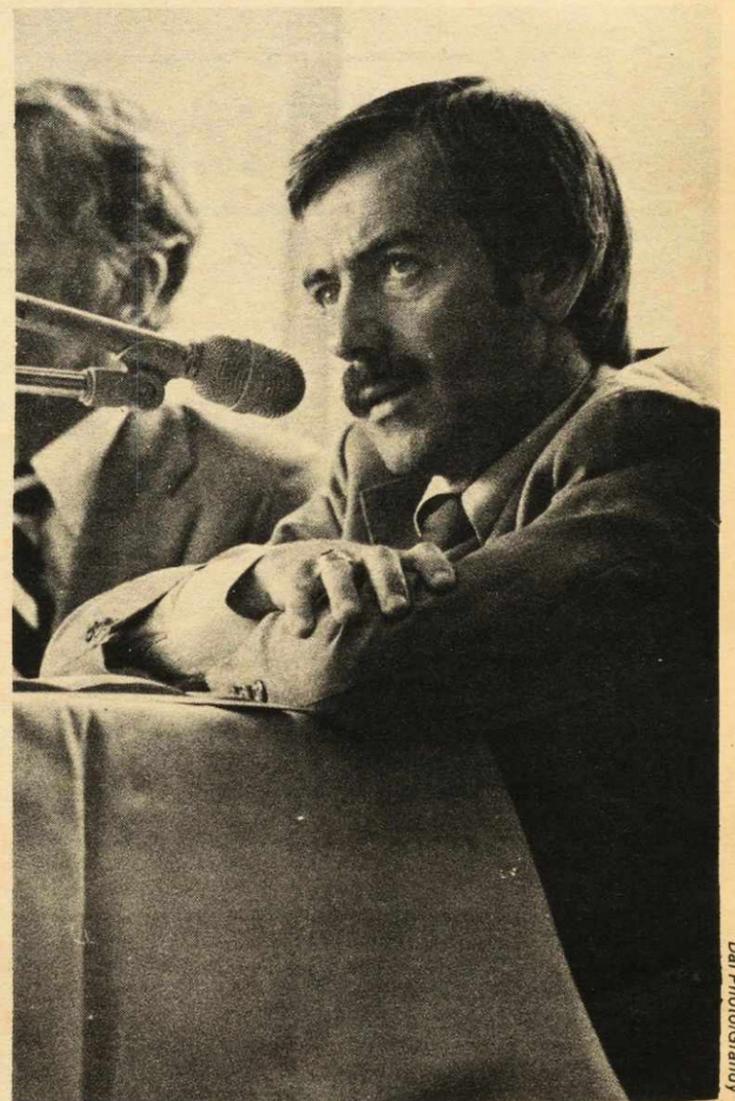
"He read the list of titles, and looked at me and said, 'You can't pick up the books.' I said 'Why?' 'Well, have you read the titles of these?', he said. 'There's a ban on certain books.' He was quite rude. I said, 'Well, you mean to tell me that books on lesbians aren't allowed into the country?' and he said, 'That's exactly what I mean to tell you.'"

In the course of the discussion the official noticed that the books had been held for more than thirty days and so had already been sent back to the U.S. "But had they been there, he wouldn't have given

them to me", Ms. Roberge stated.

Barry Mitchell, Superintendent of International Mail for Revenue Canada—Customs in Halifax, told the *Gazette* that he was not aware of any ban on the books. All incoming books are examined to see if they fall under Customs Tariff Item 9920-1. If local officials think that a particular book should be prohibited, a letter is sent to Ottawa requesting a ruling. Should the book be banned, the importer has the right to appeal, to the courts if necessary.

According to Lou Anne Meloche, a member of Red Herring's Board of Directors, the collective intends to re-order the books from Diana Press. "If a problem arises, we'll certainly not hesitate to take legal action to get the books."



Dal Photo/Grandy

Terry Donahoe, Nova Scotia's new education minister, took office Oct. 4, along with the rest of John Buchanan's 14-member cabinet. As P.C. candidate in Halifax-Cornwallis, the riding which includes Dalhousie and St. Mary's University, he defeated former education minister George Mitchell. Donahoe also administers the provincial Status of Women office.