

By FORREST ORSER

In May of this year the University of New Brunswick contracted out the janitorial care of most of the buildings on campus to Custodian Services Limited and Modern Building Cleaning.

According to the Department of Physical Plant's Operations Manager Jack Smith, UNB dismissed 44 janitors between April 15 and May 15. Also during this period 57 janitors resigned, apparently knowing of the coming contract. Six janitors were transferred to grounds work for the university. One janitor retired. There were twenty vacancies on the university's janitorial staff at this time.

In September 1972 Tilley Hall and Carleton Hall had been contracted out to Capital Window Cleaners Limited, since the university was also understaffed then.

Twenty janitors and four maids were retained by the university to clean five buildings.

Many of the janitors who were no longer working for the university found employment with either Custodian Services or Modern Building Cleaning. This resulted in a loss of their vacations for this year. They also lost the seniority they had acquired while working for UNB. In the event of a lay-off at either of these companies, these janitors would unfortunately be the first to go. Neither of the companies gives paid sick leave. At the time the UNB janitors were hired, the companies were not unionized.

UNB Vice-President (Administration) B.F. Macaulay, says that this work was contracted out because the university had difficulty hiring people to do it, and because the contractors could do the job cheaper than the university could. Apparently the

university has a higher turnover rate than the contractors, despite offering better wages.

Smith explains that the twenty janitors and four maids were retained because these people had all worked for the university for over ten years. He explained they also provided the university with some personnel to fill in with in case one of the contractors suddenly pulls out.

Those janitors still working for the university are members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees. CUPE Field Representative Philip Booker feels that the university has given "baloney" reasons for the contracting out.

Last year CUPE was granted voluntary recognition as the sole representative of the maintenance workers on campus. This recognition was in the form of a year-long contract, and expired May 31, 1973. The university administration and CUPE are presently negotiating for a new contract, but a major portion of the janitors will no longer be included since they work for other companies.

Booker says that CUPE learned of the decision to contract out this work only when it called a meeting with university management in April.

According to Booker, the university has difficulty recruiting help because it is more demanding than the commercial companies, but points out that by contracting out this work they have no control whatever over who is hired to clean their buildings.

The university's main reason for contracting out janitorial work was to save money. In this case, Booker feels that is scarcely appropriate. "President Anderson's new house, the recent improvements to his office, and



Photo by Mike Carr

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