

CUPE rejects administration proposal

by Ron Norman

Labour negotiations between the Dalhousie Administration and CUPE local 1392 have broken off. According to informed sources the union, representing 250 Dal University employees, has rejected a 28% increase stretched over a two year period, and have subsequently called for the services of a conciliation officer from the Department of Labour.

As of press time no date had yet been set for the conciliation report.

Sources say that part of the Dal Administration's proposal included an adjustment for inflation based on the consumer price index. However, adjustments would only be made if the consumer price index (CPI) rose above 10%, and then for every percentage point over 10% the contract would call for a corresponding raise (ie. 12% rise in the CPI and the union would receive a 2% raise).

The union has been working without a contract since it expired on Sept. 1, 1975 but they have taken a firm stand in their negotiations with the Administration. It is especially behind the slogan "parity not charity" that the union remains firm.

CUPE is demanding equal wages with the other employees in the community who are performing the same jobs - specifically with the Halifax City and Halifax School Board employees.

Halifax City employees have recently finished negotiating what can be termed a lucrative contract with the city. It was to this wage level that local 1392 president Bill Kelly referred when he spoke of parity.

Though neither side when interviewed would disclose any specific figures and were somewhat reserv-

ed, Bill Kelly did call the Dal proposal a "farce".

"We're justified because of the statistics", said Mr. Kelly (referring to the higher wages of the Halifax City and Halifax School Board employees), "and besides, the economy and the cost of living make us justified! Dal's parity is bottom of the ladder wages."

As it stands now Dal janitors earn \$4800 per year, almost \$4000 below the salary paid by the Halifax School Board, and that is not an isolated instance. Truck drivers for the School Board make \$4.39 per hour now and will make \$5.02 an hour in 1976. Dal truck drivers, meanwhile, make \$3.10 an hour.

Prof. Chisholm, director of the physical plant and a member of the Administration negotiating committee, offered some background as to why Dal employees are behind in wages. He suggested that in 1973, just after the signing of the last contract, the cost of living took its first spiral; oil prices rose, food prices jumped, and yet local 1392 had just signed a new two year contract with no provisions for these unexpected rises in costs.

When questioned about the specifics in the breakdown of negotiations Prof. Chisholm, like his union counterpart, was reticent. However, one need not be a genius to guess that the Administration's concept of parity differed somewhat from CUPE's.

Asked if he was aware that Dal janitors (at \$4800 per year) are \$3000 below the poverty level for a family of four, Prof. Chisholm replied that the Administration was not anxious to see anybody starve, nor see them work at two jobs, but that the Administration was not willing to give away money. He



An artistic design of a very practical matter - money!

added that people could still be found to fill employee positions at the current wage level.

It seems that it is now a matter of waiting. The future relationship

between the union and the Administration will be more definite when the non-binding report comes in.

Sabbatical raise

maintenance of university programs must be ensured. Thus to obtain a sabbatical the Board of Governors must approve it - on the recommendation of the department chairman, the Dean of the faculty and the President. When sabbatical is granted (and according to Vice-President Guy McLean there has never been an instance when it wasn't) it is either for six months leave at full salary or one year at half salary.

Taking a sabbatical--frequently entails that a professor and his family leave their home residence. In monetary terms this is a costly venture; new residence has to be acquired temporarily, while the permanent one must still be maintained. In addition to the usual

Cont'd from page 1

travelling and living expenses a professor may have to place his children in private schools if the move is to a foreign speaking country. Half of a professor's salary cannot adequately meet these expenses so often outside funding must be obtained, primarily through Canada Council Grants. But competition for these grants is stiff and usually not applicable to people in the sciences.

According to Dr. Karma, chairman of the sabbatical committee, the proposal of a 25% increase was given March 13th of this year with the request that the increase be made effective as of July 1. - The message from the Board of Governors, as relayed from President Guy MacLean says that the

proposal was taken only as "notice" at the meeting. "If it hadn't been approved it was only because the Board of Governors was not sure of the implications." Mr. MacLean does feel that 50% is not enough, in fact he says, "There's a question in my mind whether a person with dependents can do it on 75%." He goes on to say that money is not the real issue but the continuing maintenance of the department. The problem will ultimately come to rest with the professors and their departments. If the administration couldn't afford to let everybody go on sabbatical then the department would have to help, i.e. some professors would have to take on additional teaching duties and might even be required to forgo their sabbatical for a year.

Sabbatical applications must be in by October--the reason the sabbatical committee wanted the proposal passed in July. However Mr. MacLean maintains that it was "brought up last year too late for anything to be done this year."

Prof's will now have to wait until next year before a 75% salary sabbatical may be available, for Mr. MacLean states that the issue will not come up until sabbatical notices are in. Although there is "financially nothing wrong with it (the increase) providing staff were willing to cover for their colleagues."

The professors feel they are not presenting any outlandish schemes. Other universities in Canada have 75% or better: Memorial gives 75%, St. Mary's-75%, Mount St. Vincent-75%, N.S. Tech-100%, St. Francis Xavier-67%, U.P.E.I.-65%, and U.N.B. 75%. As it stands now Dalhousie professors do not even have parity with their colleagues in the rest of the Atlantic Provinces.

Dr. Karma asserts that the 25% increase would have minimal effect on the budget, and even with that increase outside funding would still be necessary. But he finds that "Dal doesn't seem to have time for money when it comes to the faculty and the faculty doesn't believe in unionization".

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Media mogul challenge

EDMONTON (CUP) --- It appears that one of Canada's largest commercial dailies feels rivaled led by a university paper here.

The Edmonton Journal September 16 refused to print an advertisement placed by the University of Alberta student newspaper **The Gateway**.

Gateway ad manager, Tom Wright, said he was told the student newspaper would be pulling readers and advertisers from the larger paper's list if an ad appeared in The

Journal touting the Gateway's classified ad section.

The proposed Gateway ad was worth eight dollars.

Wright called the Journal's decision "ludicrous" in view of the difference between the two papers.

"If I had a classified ad in the Journal do you think I'd pull it out and insert it in the Gateway instead?", he asked.

When asked this question, Gateway Editor, Greg Neiman replied, "Yes, Darn tootin'".