

# e' get things done

bases all "merit increases" on this.

These raises are not fixed sums but rather are percentages of an employee's salary at the time of the raise (annually, July 1st) and have varied from zero to six percent. Hence a secretary whose work is judged to be very satisfactory may get a six percent increase while another, whose work is not so adequate, may only receive a four percent increase. With the constant inflation in the consumer price index, all salaries are reviewed annually to ensure that the ranges are correct. Adjustment in ranges are made in January of each year and are granted without consideration of individual merit. The January 1973 range increase, for example, averaged six percent. Hence, a salaried employee receives what is supposedly a competitive salary plus an annual increase, the extent of which depends upon his working ability. In the case of employees who are relatively immobile and locally trained, such as secretaries and janitors, the salaries are maintained at a regionally competitive level, while those judged to be semi-professional, such as lab technicians, are supposedly more mobile and are paid salaries which are nationally competitive. This discrepancy between nationally and locally competitive salaries is illustrated by the fact that the mean wages in some areas of the country, for example Toronto, are higher than those in other areas, such as New Brunswick.

It is also a condition of employment that all people on the payroll contribute towards health insurance, unless married and covered by their spouse's policy. The Administration must enforce this rule in order to meet Mutual Life's requirement of insuring at least seventy-five percent of the staff. In this manner, it obtains a less

costly group insurance policy of which the university pays half of the premium cost for each employee. This health plan is designed to assist in the payment of expenses incurred for accident and illness beyond those which are reimbursed by provincial Medicare and hospital services plans. If last year's figures are any indication of the popularity of this plan, it appears to be adequate, as the insurance company's "payoff" exceeded the premium value of the policy.

Employees are also required to contribute towards the university Group Life Insurance and Pension Plans. By making monthly contributions towards those, staff members are assured of a certain amount of security for themselves and for their families for the future.

These are basically the employment terms of the non-academic staff.

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Some of the non-academic employees of the university, it seems, aren't satisfied with their lot.

They're also a little reluctant to talk about it - at least to reporters.

Opinions varied among those interviewed by The BRUNSWICKAN. Some thought that their wages were low and that they were being paid less than their counterparts in the provincial civil service. Some said that they only stayed here because they liked their jobs. Several voiced discontent with the way the director of personnel, Brigadier Knight, operates.

Phil Booker, the local field representative of the Canadian Union of Public employees, told us that when a portion of the university's employees were unionized in 1971, there was "some nit-picking",

apparently originating with the Personnel Office, in carrying out the contract. He described one situation in which employees had to work overtime in order to make up for a holiday. (The contract specifies that employees have to work 40 hours a week before they can collect overtime. They would lose eight hours if they had a day off.)

Booker doesn't know of any employers, other than UNB, who have acted along these lines; he admits, however, it's "pretty hard to fight against."

According to Booker, the wages of unionized employees at UNB were negotiated in line with the provincial civil service to be five to ten percent higher. The civil service later received a raise, after which their wages were on just about an "even keel" with those of the UNB employees. A new contract is to be negotiated for the UNB employees in May.

The non-unionized employees of UNB, said Booker, "could be in a predicament of any kind." He added that janitors had gained 58 cents an hour when they were unionized.

These people, as mentioned earlier, are non-unionized by choice. Booker said CUPE was "looking forward" to organizing the remainder of the workers, mainly clerical and library employees, but so far had not been able to exercise sufficient influence to do so. Technicians, he said, had not expressed any interest in joining, and although the workers at Graphic Services have signed up, they have not yet become part of CUPE.

Booker said that, on the whole, the university appeared to welcome the union when it came in 1971, and that the only troubles had originated with the Personnel Office.

## "they are underpaid, overworked"

The following is an excerpt from a letter to the editor in the Nov. 24 Brunswickan.

They are the 'little people' who make the university go round believe it or not. I doubt very much if you have a true picture of what the true situation is here at UNB...I know I didn't when I was a student.

I speak to you as a former employee of UNB (as of Nov. 17th) a member of that non-academics (the technicians, janitors, gardeners, secretaries) ...ask them how many people they have to support on that salary. I'd be willing to bet that some of the employees are too embarrassed to tell you how little they are making. I might agree that there are a few people on this campus who do not deserve a 'good' salary, and I'd also be willing to admit that there are a few superfluous people here, but I'd bet

that very few of these people are 'little people'.

However, for the main part of the non-academic employees at UNB they are being underpaid and overworked. A 'good' salary for a non-academic employee (excepting department heads or directors) is \$5000 or less.

If you see a "workie" standing around 'idling' as you have labelled it, chances are he hasn't got any incentive to do anything for the place, and chances are also very likely that he has already done more than is being paid for. The Personnel Office I'm sure will immediately come back with the answer that they have a system of merit raises etc, but the people who determine the worth of a person are more or less

afraid of the ex-army officer sitting in the big chair, and they don't believe in fighting for their staff. The merit raise can be anywhere from 5 - 10 percent raise, but Mr. Editor, it is my belief that 5 percent of nothing is still nothing.

The deductions coming out of that meagre salary cheque total about 35 percent of the total salary. Income tax, UIC and CPP are bad enough, but then the university takes more out of you for health insurance, now compulsory for all few employees whether they are covered elsewhere or not. Well, with that kind of thing going it's enough to destroy anyone's incentive to work let alone produce anything at all that is 'productive'. And yet, things keep going along...I think

the employees deserve a pat on the back because they continue to plod along with absolutely no incentive at all.

I can state many cases of underpayment, but then you hit those people who are below the poverty level. One case in particular, an employee with a mate and a small baby to support is earning the grand total of \$3360 a year (about \$65 a week). The secretaries around here start at that level too. When you figure that rent, food, clothes etc. have to come out of that salary AFTER deductions have been taken off... one would probably do better on welfare, but this employee is too proud to go on welfare (aren't you glad to know that there are still some people like that left! )

If you ask for a pay raise you are handed the old line about the provincial civil service wage scale, UNB wage scale being equal to that (which in many cases is pure BS) or that the budget can't take the payraise (and yet directors get \$1000 more a year on the average) ...or, get this, if we give you a raise we can count on at least 300 others knocking on our door within minutes all wanting raises.

Well, Personnel Office, that's tough. If you aren't paying enough to the people who make this university run, then you ought to expect that sort of thing. But don't expect above average. Or even average production for a below average pay.