

UJ InSight

Newsletter of the
Stony Brook Chapter of
United University
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

A. W. (BILL) GODFREY

At the risk of seeming querulous, I feel I must address some of the covert elitism of the teaching faculty. Many (including members of the administration) believe that a union should have no standing in the academic world since trade unionism is associated with laborers, craftsmen and teamsters. We tend to forget the "poor but honored" status of college professors before the market changed and unions became a factor. We also forget the benefits that have been negotiated by the union. It was through intense UJ efforts that restorations were made to the budget and there were no retrenchments last year.

The current climate in the state and nation is to break the unions and to generate employment insecurity that will make all workers (including teachers) nervous enough to work harder and longer for less -- under the guise of increased productivity.

It could happen here, perhaps not immediately if our members continue to be affected by the hubris that they are secure enough to negotiate their own contract.

The new academic plan has been published and there are several areas in which we have grave reservations including the suggestion that there may be a reconsideration of the concept of tenure. We are very much concerned about such contractual matters as seniority and the statement that there is the intention of cutting support staff by 10%.

There should be no doubt in anyone's mind that the academic plan is intimately related to the budget crisis and the use of resources. It is quite surprising that more of our members have failed to make the connection and have been relatively inactive in advising our legislators about the possible impact of the proposed cuts.

On March 21st we held a hearing on the academic plan that was attended by 31 people. We were able to focus on the general concerns of our members and will do all in our power to promote the continued employment security of our members.

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The bus trip to Albany was very useful and teams of our members, administrators and students met with more than 40 legislators. Special thanks should be given to those who attended:

President Shirley Kenny, Ed Alleyne, Norman Berhannan, Malcolm Bowman, Dana Bramel, Justin Brent, Anne Byrnes, Jennifer Callans, Janice Coughlin, Barbara Elling, Jose Feliciano, Adam Foley, Deborah Freund, Alfred Hiltz, Henry Honigman,

Richard Laskowski, Sue Lavorata, Lawrence Martin, Michael Marx, Gary Matthews, Ann Mayer, Edward Quinn, John Schmidt, Colleen Scholl, Sheila Silver, Evert Volkersz.

Special thanks is due to John Schmidt who has coordinated our campaign and who provided the material about Stony Brook which was given to the legislators.

It seems likely that there will be a budget, though as usual it will be late. The current wisdom in Albany is that it can happen anywhere between the end of April and the end of June. This is an election year and it would look very bad for incumbents if there was no budget by the election. The Governor also continues to find new money -- most recently nearly \$500 million which he says will be put in a "rainy day" fund.

Contract

The contract negotiations seem to be stuck. The issue of "contracting out" is the major stumbling block. The sudden evaporation of Central Stores should give you a foretaste of how some of these budgetary quick fixes can work under this system.

Wild By Nature

"Wild By Nature" a natural food store operated by King Kullen has been in business in East Setauket since November 9, 1995. To get the store into the Three Village Shopping Center in East Setauket, King Kullen described the store as a speciality store so their former King Kullen employees would not have to be hired back. Forty people who belonged to the United Food and Commercial Workers Union lost their jobs in violation of the collective bargaining agreement with Local 1500. Later, King Kullen described Wild By Nature as a chain

food store. This allowed them to build in the shopping center. The Village Natural Food store, which is located in the same shopping center has exclusive rights to sell health food. Currently a lawsuit is filed against King Kullen by Village Natural Food. Wild by Nature has done away with 40 jobs in the community and has pitted itself against an established small family business in the area. Consequently, UUP is asking members to boycott Wild by Nature.

Clean Air Act/Compressed Work Week

The Federal Clean Air Act of 1990 requires large employers in each state make efforts to reduce the number of vehicles driven to the worksite so that fewer emissions from the vehicles pollute the air. Stony Brook has become part of a pilot program. In a March 13, 1996 memo, Karen Nimmons of Human Resources asked department heads for names of volunteers who are willing to participate in the program by working a compressed work week or who currently work a flexible work week. UUP represented professionals whose work obligation is defined by completion of job tasks rather than the number of hours they are on campus are eligible to participate in the compressed work week program. The program is currently in effect until April 30, 1997. A minimum of 100 people are needed to participate. Please contact Karen Nimmons (KNIMMONS or 2-6140) for more information.

Defensive Driving Class Scheduled

UUP is offering a six-hour defensive driving course Saturday, May 4, 1996. The cost is \$25.00. If you would like to take the class, please call Jo at 2-6570 and send a \$25.00 check payable to NYSUT to the UUP office at 104 Old Chem., 3474. Your check will reserve a seat for you. Seating is limited.