

## Union considering stronger salary protest

### Next step could affect classes

Further job action is being considered by Faculty Association members in a referendum being conducted by their Executive Board. The decision to consider stronger measures came after the University failed to make a new salary offer at a Sept. 18 negotiating session for a new contract between the faculty and the University.

Possible actions on which Association members are voting preferences include:

- Meeting classes but not teaching them
- Calling Association meetings in place of classes and giving administrators only a five minute notification
- Having teachers call in sick on random days.

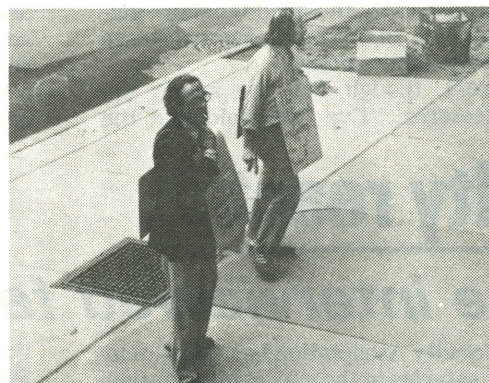
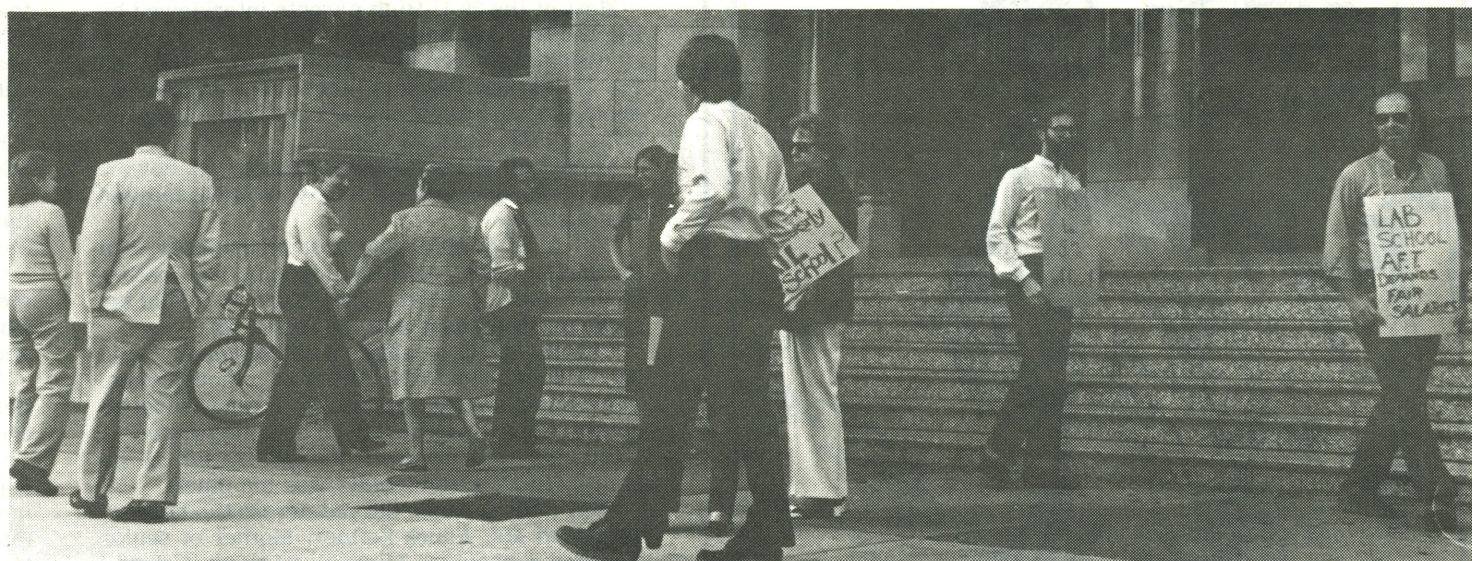
THE UNIVERSITY so far has offered the teachers a 6 per cent salary increase. Members of the Association, the teachers' union, say the minimum increase they will accept, because of the high cost of living in Chicago, is 10 per cent. Originally the union asked for a 15 per cent increase, which it later lowered to 13 per cent.

In hopes of getting a higher increase, union members the week before school started began informational picketing, refused to attend faculty meetings or scheduled Open Houses, and refused to sponsor student organizations or chapter school events.

The Association also plans to send a letter to parents explaining its position.

CONCERNING the most recent negotiating session, Social Studies Department chairperson Earl Bell, union president, said, "They're saying they don't consider the crisis in the Lab Schools serious enough to offer the teachers any more money.

"You can't sit down and reason with these people," he continued. "You have to take some sort of action. They're trying to make us absorb a 9 to 10 per cent



Photos by Matt Gerow and David Yufit

FACULTY ASSOCIATION members picket outside the Lab Schools and the University Administration Building.

loss on the cost of living."

About the effect the union action has had on the school Mr. Bell said, "There's a great deal of energy and effort used in placing blame. Is it the teachers' fault because they're taking action? How provocative and inflammatory is a 5 per cent increase when we're facing a 17 per cent increase on the cost of living? There are only two choices, capitulation or confrontation. And that's the position they've put us in."

UNIVERSITY PROVOST D. Gale Johnson did not respond to repeated Midway requests for an interview to get

the University's position on the negotiations and the teachers' actions.

Lab Schools director R. Bruce McPherson commented concerning the teachers' action, "I don't believe in negotiating away from the negotiation table or the informal contact between the negotiators."

Concerning the strain placed on the school's activities program by the union action, principal Geoff Jones said, "It will certainly be a more limited program than usual but we're going to make the effort to do the best we can."

WITHOUT FACULTY ADVISERS

clubs or organizations cannot, under the student government constitution, receive funds for activities. Mr. Jones, however, is serving as Cultural Union's adviser for budgeting purposes for an all-school party 7:30-11 p.m. this Friday. He added he will do the same for other clubs. Student Activities director Don Jacques said he would serve as adviser for the Student Legislative Coordinating Council and also work with clubs as much as he could as long as the dispute continues.

The dispute could go on much longer, Mr. Bell feels.

## Why director decided to go

### Position didn't get support, he feels

Lack of respect and support from the faculty for the position of director and a desire to move into new areas in education were among reasons Lab Schools director R. Bruce McPherson cited for deciding to resign at the end of this year.

Mr. McPherson, now in his fourth year as director, told faculty members of his decision at a meeting during Planning Week.

"I don't feel the position of director has had the kind of respect and support a director needs to have from the faculty to get the job done," Mr. McPherson told the Midway. "It's not something somebody should sit back and whine about. I just think it's time for somebody else to step in and see what they can do."

Another reason for his decision, Mr. McPherson said, was a desire to pursue other areas in the field of education and administration not related to the direct administration of a school.

Mr. McPherson said he is generally pleased with what has been accomplished while he has been director.

"I think we have done a great deal of work on curriculum in every school," he said. Among other accomplishments he cited were physical improvements to Sunny Gym and the Kenwood Mall.

The next director will have to work on bettering relations between the



Photo by David Yufit

MR. R. BRUCE MCPHERSON  
Director to leave in June.

Faculty Association, Lab Schools administrators and the University, Mr. McPherson feels. "A good deal of patience, understanding and trust, regardless of the fact there are differences of opinion, is necessary," he said. "I think it's an area where the faculty is going to have to do some soul-searching."

Declining enrollment; development areas such as alumni relations, fundraising and public information; curriculum; and continuing work on renovation and maintenance and security are other concerns Mr. McPherson feels the next director must face. University administrators will choose a new director later in the year, however, Mr. McPherson did not know the process involved in choosing a director.

## Students react

### Endorse raise, question action

Teachers here deserve a salary increase, all of 40 U-Highers interviewed last week by the Midway felt. But about half of them also felt the Faculty Association is taking the wrong kind of action to secure higher pay because it is directing too much of its action against the students.

Only about half the students interviewed knew of the action the teachers were taking, besides picketing, until the reporter told them.

"SINCE THE COST of living is way above their salaries, the teachers have every right to demand a salary increase," said senior Bobby Cowan. "It would be nice if we were left out of it, though."

Senior Robert Light felt similarly, saying, "The action the teachers are taking now will hurt the students, not the University. Not sponsoring our activities doesn't make their positions any better."

Other U-Highers agreed with the action the teachers are taking.

"I THINK THE University could afford a pay increase," said sophomore Bobby McDermut. "They're just being stingy, as far as I can see. If getting enough to live on means no parties or clubs for awhile, I think the teachers should continue the action they're taking."

"The teachers here have a right to an increase in pay, considering the cost of living," junior Adam Helman said. "They aren't striking, which means they have us in mind, so I think they're going about it in the best way possible."

Presidents of the Student Legislative Coordinating Council (SLCC) and Cultural Union (C.U.) said that while the

action would hurt their groups, the teachers have no alternative.

"YOU'VE GOT to respect their demand for more pay," SLCC president Alyson Cooke said. "They've got to live, too. Though their plans hinder the progress of the organizations, I feel it's worth it. The faculty's got to take some kind of action to get a better salary, and this is probably the best way."

"Though it hampers our plans for activities," C.U. president Tracey Davenport said, "the teachers have got to be paid enough or we might lose the good faculty we've got."

While other students said that the loss of some activities and clubs was an acceptable price to pay for the teachers' well-being, they felt apprehensive that a tuition increase might go along with higher pay.

"I THINK THE way they're going about getting the increase is effective," said sophomore Claudia Whitaker, "but the tuition increase that might accompany the pay raise I'm definitely not for."

"Maybe the best way to go about the settlement is to compromise," said sophomore Carise Skinner. "Give the teachers enough to live on but try to minimize the tuition increase."

Some students suggested alternative ways to settle the dispute.

"I BELIEVE the teachers are being too nice," Tracey explained, "and maybe that's why their demands aren't being met."

"It's really not fair to include us in the dispute," senior Dan Zellner said. "While the boycotting of meetings and picketing is good, perhaps they should try a walkout for a day, anything that wouldn't hurt the students."



## As the midway sees it



Art by Chris Maddi

### • Making the most of a bad thing

***U-Highers must keep activities going until contract settled***

In last issue's editorial the Midway staff said it hoped to make U-High into a little better place — not just somewhere students go to classes. But now, as a result of the Faculty Association's actions, the students face a school which truly has become just a place to go to classes.

Association members, who include most of the U-High faculty, will not advise any club or organization until their contract dispute with the University is settled. Without faculty advisers clubs cannot constitutionally receive funding from the Student Legislative Coordinating Council (SLCC). Without funds, clubs can't start activities, their main purpose for existence. In addition, Union members will not chaperon any parties or school events.

**IF THIS KEEPS UP** it doesn't look like we'll have much of a year. Hope everybody gets good grades and goes to college.

But wait a minute. Administrators are doing a lot right now, and there's plenty we as students can do, to make this year a good one. Principal Geoff Jones has worked with Cultural Union (C.U.) and will, for budgeting purposes, act as its adviser for a party this Friday. Student Activities director Don Jacques says he will work with SLCC, C.U. and other clubs to help them plan. The students, too, can do a great deal to keep things going. Club members could have meetings at people's houses and plan out activities now. Then they could work out with Mr. Jones and Mr. Jacques how to fund their projects. They could even line up faculty advisers for the time the dispute is settled.

Many U-Highers feel that the union action does not seem to affect the University. It seems to be directed only at the students. What difference does it make to the University, U-Highers are asking, if the students in the Lab Schools don't have parties or have no student government? Probably none at all.

**BUT IT MIGHT** make a difference to our parents. And if our parents complain, then the University will take notice. But what is strange is that in Midway interviews most parents didn't really know what was going on. Most of the students had no real idea of the situation, either.

And as long as people don't know what's going on, it will be kinda tough for the union to hit home with the University.

You know, if the students get to work and get their clubs and organizations together, and work with administrators to have activities, this might not be such a bad year after all. It might be kind of a long one for the faculty and University, though.

## u-high midway

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*This extra issue of the Midway was prepared by John Schloerb, editor-in-chief, and Matt Gerow, associate editor*

## Parents react

### *Few questioned knew much of issue*

Most of the 20 U-High parents interviewed by the Midway last week had heard little of the salary dispute between the Faculty Association and the University. Most of those who had heard about the issue knew only about the union's picketing outside the Lab Schools.

Almost all of the parents interviewed, however, felt the Association's salary increase demand was justified.

**"AS A TEACHER** and a union member, I'm for the teachers," said Ms. Joyce Lofton, mother of sophomore Connie. "They work hard and deserve pay increases like the rest of us."

"Anything less would be a cut in salary," said Mr. Gordon Schmierer, father of junior Gordon, of the union's salary proposal. "Even with an increase, they would barely be breaking even."

One parent, however, thought a salary increase for all of the faculty was too much.

**"I'M FOR A raise,** but not across the board," explained Ms. Agnes Zellner, mother of senior Dan and sophomore Michael. "I think it should be a merit increase, only the good teachers getting the raise in pay. In my mind, some deserve the increase while others don't."

Another parent, though, felt the salary demands too excessive. "I've been told that the

teachers' salaries at the Lab Schools are competitive with salaries of other teachers in the Independent School League," said Mr. Howard Siegel, father of senior Jonathan and junior David. "I feel their demands are too excessive."

Parents' response to the action teachers are taking to secure a pay increase was mixed, too.

**"I AM NOT** happy with the teachers because they won't sponsor any student activities," Mr. Siegel said.

"They're not closing the school, so they're still meeting the needs of the students," Ms. Lofton said. "Their protest is basically against the University, affecting only the administrators."

"If it hurts my kids, I disagree with the action," said Ms. Ruth Kaplan, mother of junior Andrew and freshman Bruce.

"It's either an effective way for the faculty to learn it's not indispensable," Ms. Zellner commented, "or it will help parents to learn how much the faculty is doing during the day besides teaching. I'm sad to see the teachers feel the need to take action to prove their worth," she added. "Once a union starts a pattern of protest, however, as in suburban schools, nothing gets accomplished after awhile. It loses its effectiveness. I hope that doesn't happen here."

## Faculty react

### *Those interviewed feel action justified*

Action the Faculty Association has taken to increase faculty salaries in the way of informational picketing, boycotting of meetings and refusal to sponsor student activities is justified, 20 U-High teachers interviewed last week by the Midway felt. One teacher placed qualifications on her approval. Two other teachers, both nonunion members, refused to comment.

The teachers believe they are taking the right steps to insure a raise while keeping the welfare of the students in mind.

**"I THINK THE** action we're taking is justified in view of the blatant manner in which we were turned down," said music teacher Ralph Abernathy.

"To continue to accept employment on the terms offered now, we'll have to accept less and less salary," said English teacher Rex Martin, "though the world requires more and more money to live on."

"We really can't do anything that wouldn't hurt the students and at the same time make the

University take us seriously," said math teacher Shirley Holbrook. "Teaching is the most important, and we're continuing that."

**MOST OF THE** teachers felt the Faculty Association had the best interests of the students in mind when it formulated its plans for action.

"I think the union is going out of its way to see that students aren't hurt," phys ed teacher Karen Lawler said. "The union has tried to prevent this. We're not out to make enemies."

Expressing both support and doubt, English teacher Sophie Ravin said, "Originally I was opposed to the divisions in the faculty the union created. Now, I'm not convinced that teachers' unions can achieve a faculty that pays as much attention to the needs of students as to themselves. I support the resistance of the Faculty Association, however, because the administration's offer of a 5 per cent increase is ridiculous because that's simply not enough to live on. Though I didn't want to boycott Planning Week meetings, I did because I feel the faculty must be united in order to get the increase."

## New mood creates action

**PICKETS ON 58th street.** No sponsorship of student activities. No attendance at administration-initiated meetings. No departmental meetings or planning activities.

This state of affairs is part of the Faculty Association's job action, taken because of the University's refusal to meet teachers' wage increase demands. Such actions have never before been taken at U-High, though there have been contract disputes before.

**WHAT ALLOWED** this unique situation to occur is a new prevailing mood among the faculty. A mood of unity. Of support for the union. And of anger.

Teachers here have been generally moderate on union issues in the past, according to Social Studies Department chairperson Earl Bell, Faculty Association president. Yet this year teachers are seriously, collectively angry and have taken serious, collective action as a result. Part of the reason for this shift of mood is, of course, economic. Rising inflation and raised University rents are among factors applying heavy financial pressure on Lab Schools teachers, Mr. Bell pointed out.

But another contributor to teacher dissatisfaction and unity, teachers told me, was their impression of the University's attitude during negotiations.

**"NOBODY WANTS** to do this stuff. Nobody likes it," Mr. Bell said, referring to job action measures. "But when we sit down at the negotiation table and are met with continual arrogance and insensitivity, our reluctance withers away as a result."

It's strange to see our teachers, who have traditionally represented the school and the system to us, visibly angry at, and in conflict with, that same system. Maybe one positive result of the situation will be that we'll gain a new, more human perspective on teachers. Right now

we're seeing a different side of the adults we're with in classrooms, 50 minutes a day, four days a week. We're seeing committed, upset people with a common grievance working together to improve their conditions.

Perhaps this will bring an increase in communication and understanding between teachers and students. As people.

**IT'S IMPORTANT THAT** everyone involved recognizes the state of mind of the teachers. That includes parents. In fact, our parents could be instrumental in bringing about a reso-

## Non Sequiturs

By Sebastian Rotella, Midway columnist



lution to the contract dispute. Our parents, as the faculty and the University are fully aware, pay the bills. Consequently, any parental opinions on the situation will be highly influential.

The union plans to send a letter to all parents outlining its position. Hopefully, this will make Lab Schools families more knowledgeable on the situation. Hopefully, our parents also will realize that the situation at our school should be brought back to normal, the sooner the better. If the University does not reach an agreement with the Union soon, the determination of the faculty indicates that the teachers will take further, more serious measures, which will further affect the state of the schools.

It's up to our parents, therefore, to exert pressure on the University administration to bring a resolution to the dispute. And perhaps once the matter is resolved, we can turn any new unity and spirit that has come out of the conflict into further positive directions.