Strike Talks Stall Again

**SGA Calls for Tuition Boycott**

Mediator Post Causes Conflicts

By Ann Karen McLean

A four and a half hour meeting between state negotiator Frank Mason and the AFT leadership on Monday resulted in a seemingly unsolvable paradox, according to Jeffery Tener, acting director of the Public Employment Relations Commission.

Tener said that while both sides have agreed to the need of a mediator to settle the dispute, the state and the union leadership have yet to agree on the conditions under which mediation may take place.

Mason explained that the state is willing to allow mediation to take place on the condition that the strike end first. However, he continued, “we will not be ready to talk money until some time in January,” and, he admitted, the “items of substance” do involve money.

“"The state is somewhat inconsistent in its position," concluded Tener.

Union leader Marcoantonio Lacatena has implied that the state cannot be trusted in that it has "reneged on its agreements before." Should some agreement occur as to the conditions for mediation, both sides agreed to appoint Thomas Colosi, deputy director of the National Center for Dispute Settlement in Washington DC.

According to Dr. Robert R. Beckwith, history professor at MSC, "our only strength is in striking...it is our only pressure." Beckwith concluded that the state is "stalling...to see how long we can hold out."

When asked about the adverse affects that this "power play" might have on state college students, Lacatena initially expressed his concern for students, but when pressed on the issue, the union leader retorted: "Goddammit, why should I be the one to give a damn all the time? Why doesn't somebody else give a damn?"

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MAOC Concert Forced to Montclair High
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By Dean Brianik

Following the removal of a concert from campus last weekend, the union found itself facing student charges of "gross abuse of power" and "irresponsibility."

Leaders of the Music and Arts Organization Commission (MAOC) charged that the union went back on an agreement allowing the concert to take place on campus. Union leaders admit a change was made, but say it was done to protect union interests.

The concert by the New Symphony of New York was scheduled for Sun., Nov. 24. When the strike began, Craig Hughes, president of MAOC got a written agreement from Marcoantonio Lacatena, president of the campus chapter of the New Jersey American Federation of Teachers.

LACATENA AGREED that no picket lines would be set up during either the concert or rehearsal. Symphony members had stated they would honor picket lines if they were set up.

Hughes claimed that Lacatena backed off from the agreement because of pressures of other striking music teachers. He said that the concert was held at Montclair High School, and added that, “the weekend’s actions are a firm indication of how little the union leadership cares for students.”

In a telephone interview on Monday, Lacatena admitted he cancelled the agreement because one member of the music department who was to perform was not honoring the picket line. He said he could not give this person what he termed “special privileges.” He added with a chuckle, “They were lucky we didn’t picket at Montclair High.”

Mary Rosenstein, the advisor to MAOC, denied Lacatena’s statements saying, “Three members of the music department were involved in the concert and all were honoring the picket line.”

In A SECOND interview the following day, Lacatena admitted that he was never given the name of the professor who allegedly was not honoring the picket lines. He also conceded that he did not try to confirm the information from outside sources.
Students at the state colleges must feel like the rope in the tug-of-war as both the state and faculty vie for student sentiments.

The faculty would have the students believe that the strike will benefit them because, should the faculty win their points, they say the quality of education will increase.

Higher salaries for teachers will draw more qualified professors, they claim, who would otherwise go to private schools. However, figures show that the average salaries for faculty members at state colleges in New Jersey are higher than those at private colleges.

When they say they are arguing for smaller class size, they seem to care little that the students are getting ripped off the amount of tuition paid for the week and a half that the strike has consumed so far. Nor do they seem concerned that the possibilities of credit mixups and extended semesters could cause great inconvenience with more than a couple of students.

Students also are being lulled into not caring, or so it seems. Once again, we urge students not to let themselves get taken in. Go to your classes that are being held and call or write to the governor's office and the chancellor of higher education's office demanding an injunction.

Don't support the state. Don't support the faculty. Support yourself.
Opposition Hitting Back at Strikers

By Mike Finnegan

Recent developments at certain stricken state colleges indicate that lines of opposition have sharpened between the state and the NJ Council of State College Locals.

At Ramapo State College, where the strike has been judged as 70% to 80% effective, striking members of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) local there have issued two pamphlets condemning colleagues who have crossed the picket lines to teach classes.

The first pamphlet, "What Is Scabbing?" opposes the strike breakers for undermining the AFT fight to achieve their demands. The second, "Notorious Scabs," lists 22 teachers as "notorious scabs" for crossing the picket lines since the beginning of the strike last Monday and four teachers as "not-so-notorious" scabs who originally honored the strike but had to return to work recently for need of salary.

On Sunday the Stockton Parents Association, representing 3500 parents of Stockton State students, passed a resolution urging NJ Governor Brendan T. Byrne to reopen staked negotiations between the state and AFT officials.

Ralph Bean, president of Stockton's AFT local, suggested that the parents leaned toward the side of the striking teachers, basing his claim on the wording of the resolution, which called for both sides "to negotiate" rather than for one side to capitulate.

Also, Stockton's striking faculty members sent letters to their non-striking colleagues, urging them that if they crossed the picket lines out of desire not to deprive students of an education, and to apply their salaries to a union fund for tuition scholarships. There has been no immediate response to the mailout, as the strike at Stockton remains at about 85% effective, according to AFT figures.

According to Monday's Trenton Evening Times, the strike at Trenton State College remains about 35-40% effective, according to college officials, following the college-wide meningitis scare and mass inoculations that resulted from three cases of spinal meningitis among Trenton State students.

In a press conference held Monday in his offices in Trenton, Ralph A. Dungan, remarked, "The faculty working to get support for higher education has "not been mentioned in negotiations" thus far.

Waving the 21-page document of faculty demands on the wage reopening of negotiations, he asserted, "This is a strong faculty benefits document."

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Walk-Out Strikes Note of Paradox

At first blush, it would seem that higher faculty salaries would mean higher tuitions — and in a general sense, that's true. State college tuition payments are not kept by the state colleges, but rather are turned over to the general state funds from which are appropriated the monies to pay for the operation of the state colleges.

There is no direct link between state college tuitions and faculty salaries, not yet anyway. But there is a link between costs and income. Faculty salaries are a cost item; tuition is an income item. Ultimately, there is a nexus between the two: it's not likely that the costs of higher education can continue to increase at a 15 per cent annual rate while tuition remains stable.

Indeed, the State Department of Higher Education is studying a plan under which costs would be linked directly to tuition, so that, as costs rise, so would the tuition rate. Faculty salaries make up about 60 to 70 per cent of the higher education budget.

There is, of course, a benefit to be derived from low tuitions. But it is a benefit which has its costs; obviously the larger the subsidy to higher education, the lower the subsidy to some other state service.

In any event, this is clear: if the faculty members win their wage demands, it may not mean an immediate increase in tuitions, but it certainly won't guarantee tuition stabilization. It's likely to go the other way "round ultimately.

But romanticism is not yet dead on campus. If the students believe they can join with the faculty to bring down, as one flyer put it, the "imperialist" Byrne Administration, they should have the right to maintain that belief.

The question of union opposition to PERC intervention is a more difficult phenomenon to penetrate. During the spring, public employee unions fought vigorously in the Legislature for a strengthening of PERC. The commission was praised to the highest — it was to be the salvation of public employment bargaining.

The commission, of course, has played a role in the state-faculty dispute. Its professional staff, headed by Acting Executive Director Jeff Tener, has probably done more to bring the conflict to an end than any other state agency.

While the student opposition to increased tuition has no rational economic relation to increased faculty salaries, some students see a political connection. One student at Montclair State put it this way:

"The way we figure it, the state will be asking for a tuition increase soon. The students will oppose it — we won't be able to sit idly. We need the faculty. If we help the faculty now, they will help us oppose tuition." One student flyer passed out during the strike insisted that the only way to ensure faculty support for lower tuitions is to "unite students and teachers throughout the strike in order to provide effective support for our (student) demands."

This particular view is based on a very tenuous assumption — namely that the faculty union will strike in support of lower tuitions, should that issue ever come to a head. Nowhere in the United States — at no time in the brief history of collective bargaining among American colleges and universities — has a union struck to lower tuitions.

If PERC is to be used simply as a pawn in the negotiations game, why was it elevated to a position paramount to that of the commission? Why the persistence in reaching educational disputes by the recent PERC legislative amendments? Now, the question of salaries. By most standards, faculty salaries are not intolerable. A full professor, working 18 contract hours per week and six hours per week in the summer, can, after eight years, make more than $30,000 a year.

A good state college faculty member, and most are, no doubt, good teachers, works hard for his money. But it is by no means physically taxing — like construction work — or dangerous — like service work — or physically taxing — like construction work; or dangerous — like service work. The environment is pleasant, unlike the environment faced by many social service workers and teachers, and the persons serviced — students — provide few emotional headaches. The work is not routine, as is the work faced by many, say, toll collectors, in contrast with it considerable job security once tenure is attained.

But there is much unreality and tension on campus. Feelings expressed by some faculty members reflect a fear that the future is grim. Indeed, it may be impossible for the year following. But it is by no means physically taxing — like construction work — or dangerous — like service work — or physically taxing — like construction work; or dangerous — like service work. The environment is pleasant, unlike the environment faced by many social service workers and teachers, and the persons serviced — students — provide few emotional headaches. The work is not routine, as is the work faced by many, say, toll collectors, in contrast with it considerable job security once tenure is attained.