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University of Massachusetts at Boston

Volume 10, No. 28

SUPPLEMENT

March 22, 1977

Faculty Meeting

The Spring Semester faculty meeting began out in the foyer before the formalities were to get underway. Prof. Ernest Becker's Chemistry class was still in session in the Auditorium when Prof. George Salzman outside was advising Secretary of the Faculty Prof. William Percy, History, that "the faculty is going to run this meeting" and that he was going to propose a change in the published agenda.

Prof. Becker's class filed out of the auditorium; the Physical Plant people moved in with a table; the Media Center people brought in a microphone. President Robert Wood, Vice President for Academic Affairs Ernest Lynton; Chancellor Carlo Golino and Vice Chancellor and Provost Robert Steamer entered the hall. The Registrar's staff was handing out lists of January graduates; Faculty Staff Union representatives were distributing ditto sheets with questions and a dozen others were entering the hall with yellow cards stenciled with a word---"Negotiate."

Chancellor Golino went to the microphone. The mike sputtered. Prof. Salzman pounced on his opening words, offering a motion that would change the agenda. A vote was called for. Hands went up and votes were being counted. A demand for a secret ballot was heard. A secret vote was ordered. Prof. Percy sought help from the audience; he needed paper for the ballots. Notebook paper was cut into 2 x 2 strips. Part way through the count, the Chancellor announced that in order not to delay the meeting any further, it seemed that the vote to change the agenda had won, making Prof. Andrew Boelcskev, German, chairman of the meeting.

He introduced President Wood, and did not put a time limit on his remarks, as had been suggested by Prof. Salzman's published motion.

President Wood said he had four points to make to this assembly: Compensation and Cost of Living questions; the state of the university's budget; the status of collective bargaining with the faculty, and organizational adjustments being made to face the collective bargaining question.

President Wood noted that he had testified earlier in the week before the House Ways and Means Committee stating that the Governor's proposal to absorb salary increases by 'savings' in our budget would mean curtailment of programs and laying off personnel. Wood is against this procedure, he said, and added that the Trustees would appeal for the release of Legislatively approved funds to pay for salary adjustments.

In the state of budget, Wood said "we cannot accept the proposal of level funding by this or any other administration.

"It is getting bone weary to get from the Legislature for the past seven years more than what has been proposed in House #1, but our record has been getting about 93 to 94 per cent of the budget that the university has requested. We have been able to get more than the Governors have been proposing to give to us."

He will testify further on this at Beacon Hill on April 14th.

He restated the contents of a letter he had sent to the faculty about the "technical" appeal of the State Labor Relations Commission's inclusion of part-time faculty and department chairmen. Wood said that since this was a new experience for the State Labor Relations Board to have an academic institution before it for adjudication, he said the appeal could not have been made before the election and could only take place after the election, which is now being done.

The president was clear that labor negotiations with faculty "changes the rules of the game" and will require both internal and external adjustments for the trustees and his office. To this end, he said a special trustee committee headed by Robert Gordon, a graduate of UMass-Amherst, with Prof. Ogretta McNeil of Holy Cross College and new trustee, James Crane has been established. Chancellor Randolph Bromery of the Amherst Campus will handle the Administration's role in the labor negotiations and will work with the Gordon committee.

Prof. Harry Brill, Sociology, opened up the question and answer session with a speech, regarding university expenses in various areas. He charged that the Administration's appeal was a "delaying tactic" and linked it with the J.P. Stevens Co.'s tactics with organized labor.

Prof. Joseph Alper, Chemistry, made a similar comment.

Prof. Paul Gagnon, History, suggested a transfer of funds from other units of the university to maintain funds for programs at the UMass-Boston campus. He displayed a list of questions, and sought a written response from President Wood, who said he would consider campus proposals and options.

Prof. James Broderick, English, wanted to know what alternatives in campus planning were being made regarding layoffs. Chancellor Golino said the planning is to take into account a reduction of five percent from the current budget if the campus has to pay salary increments from savings.

Prof. Eric Chester, Economics, told the faculty "we have to work together through the union" and that pressure would be put on the Legislature and Governor to reverse the idea of level funding.

Vice Chancellor Steamer, in responding to a question by Prof. Robert Swartz, Philosophy, said current campus budget planning is to prepare for the worst conditions and that right now these plans are "only proposals."

Other speakers at the meeting were Prof. Percy, who voiced his displeasure at the publishing policies of the University of Massachusetts Press, and Prof. Salzman who berated the Administration for the way it is running things.

Approximately 175 faculty attended the meeting.