

HELP WIN THE STRIKE!

Members of AFSCME local 1583 provide services essential to our getting an education. But despite that the university has not seen fit to offer them a decent contract. The workers are not asking for something extravagant; they're asking for enough money to pay their food, rent and utility bills. Fleming's response to this is to say that the current budget does not allow an additional allocation for wages. If that's so, what does that say about a system where people who provide essential services can't make a decent living? Fleming, living in a palatial mansion, with an income of \$71,000 a year, and with servants waiting on him hand and foot, should be the last one to talk about the university not being able to "make ends meet". As plans get underway to build the new presidential library (so future generations can marvel at how Gerald Ford was able to read and write), the workers hit the nail on the head when they say that the university has money for EVERYTHING except the workers!

University workers are fighting for their very livelihood. For them, striking is a serious thing---especially when you consider that they don't have any strike benefits. But the alternative- increased hardship for themselves and their families- was no alternative at all, and so they had to take a stand. The university's response has been to try to break the strike. Their tactics have included paying out \$1000 a day to hire policemen on overtime, who have been beating up strikers and their student supporters. Running into people with university vehicles (chief U-M negotiator, William Neff, even got into the act by running over a member of the union's bargaining committee who was picketing up on North Campus). And hiring scabs to work at \$2.30 an hour, as well as demanding that students work union positions or lose their jobs. All this is despicable, but the workers are determined and are standing firm.

Of course, the university is also trying to divide people by saying that to meet the workers' demands might make a tuition hike necessary in the fall. But any thoughtful person can realize that that's a lie! The dorm rate hike was made official before any settlement had been reached with the union, and tuition has gone up almost every single year regardless of any increase in the workers' wages.

What's happening at the university is not unique---it's the same everywhere. Gas prices skyrocket while the oil companies put the lid on the wells; unemployment benefits get cut from 65 to 39 weeks; and increasing numbers of people get frozen in their homes because they can't pay their utility bills. Everywhere, workers and ordinary Americans are being asked to cut back so that the rich can avoid any cut in their profits, and can continue to live like modern-day kings and queens. By refusing to accept a lousy contract, the AFSCME workers are, in their own way, bucking the system. If they win (and we hope they do), it will be an example to others of what can be done to fight back. So, let's do everything in our power to make sure they do win! Fellow students! Picketing is a great way to show your support. Not only do the workers get a boost in morale by having you out on the line, but you can help keep out the trucks and slow the university down. For more information about picketing, call 995-8957 or 663-5364. ON TO VICTORY!

HELP PICKET AT THE HOSPITAL,
Wednesday Morning at 7:30-meet
at the front entrance

- Revolutionary Student Brigade