

Dear colleagues

## 1. Shochat committee

We have made every effort to reach an agreement with the government concerning the Shochat committee. We asked the government to agree that any recommendation concerning changes in salary or work conditions will not be implemented unilaterally but only following negotiations with the coordinating council. While Minister Yuli Tamir agreed, the treasury, in a blatant disregard of the "Malag law", refused to "give up our statutory authority" to enforce any changes they deem fit. The coordinating council had no choice but to disengage itself from the committee and to ask the faculty not to cooperate with the committee. The situation justifies a strike, however the law does not allow us to strike on this issue more than an hour or two, at the most. We thus support the students' efforts to do away with the committee.

## 2. Salary negotiations

Our last salary contract ended at 12/01. During the years 2003-5, we were prevented from discussing a new contract by the "idud hazmikha" law. By 4/06 we started a negotiation process with VERA's salary committee, however when the "memune al hasakhar" was asked to join the negotiations he refused, saying he would like to finish the discussions with the Histadrut first. Unfortunately, nothing can be agreed without his consent. We responded by a threat to strike, which resulted in an immediate agreement to meet with us. During our meeting last week, it was made clear to us that their agreement to meet included just that... but nothing more. Our demand to discuss the erosion in our salaries during the last 5 years was flatly rejected. A few other demands were answered by "we need to study the issue", however it was made quite clear that we shouldn't expect anything. We've explained to the deputy "memune" that his stand would force us to strike and yet he wouldn't agree even to a token gesture, to do away with the 0.25% deduction from our salaries. Therefore, the coordinating council had no choice but to recommend the local faculty associations to declare a nation-wide strike on Sunday January 21<sup>st</sup> and if situation does not change, the second semester will not be opened on time.

Shalom

Zvi

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