

TO: All MUNFA Members

FROM: The MUNFA Executive Committee

DATE: August 19, 2008

SUBJECT: Search for a New President at Memorial University

Since the issue of government interference in the Memorial University's search for a new president first surfaced, MUNFA has maintained close contact with the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT). The consultation began in advance of CAUT's July 30, 2008 letter to Minister of Education, Joan Burke, in which the Association stated it wished "to meet with the minister no later than early September to discuss this situation in order that we may resolve the matter as quickly as possible." It is clear that MUNFA would be involved in such a meeting. To date, neither CAUT nor MUNFA has heard from the Minister of Education.

CAUT was however contacted August 6th by the Premier's Office through John Fitzgerald, the government's representative in Ottawa. Dr. Fitzgerald was concerned about whether Memorial University would be censured – the process leading to censure was explained to him – and wanted to ensure that CAUT understood the issue from the Premier's viewpoint. To date, there has been no further direct contact by Dr. Fitzgerald with CAUT.

MUNFA continues to closely monitor the situation, and is in close contact with CAUT. We are prepared to do whatever is necessary to ensure the search process for a new president at Memorial University is pursued without government interference and that the Search Committee be allowed to do its job, resulting in a recommendation to the Board of Regents, which in consultation with University Senate will transmit their choice to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

MUNFA's Executive will continue to keep our members informed of our efforts.