

October 21, 1985

RECEIVED
OCT 23 1985

UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES'
UNION (C.U.P.E.)

TO THE UNION EXECUTIVE

Here is my report for the 'committee' set up to assess the present status of the union business office and to make recommendations for discussion by the executive and the membership. I want to emphasize that I feel the union business office is running admirably, considering the incredible workload and the necessity of being continually 'on call' while expected to attend to all the paperwork, consultation, education, and coordination that are incorporated in the position of staff representative. I feel the clerical work could be more efficient, which should result with the new equipment. There could be more emphasis put on prioritization of certain tasks, which should be achieved in consultation with the staff reps, the clerical assistant and the executive.

On a personal note, I am disappointed that the committee turned out to be almost non-existent. I can only surmise that I was asked to be a member of the committee in order to have someone to do the work. I want to emphasize, however, that I received every cooperation from Fairleigh Wettig, Ted Byrne, Pat House, and Rosemary Rising. They were very generous with their time and their comments, for which I am very grateful.

Per Westbrook

15 October 1985

REPORT TO UNION EXECUTIVE BY BEVERLY WESTBROOK WITH REGARD TO
ASSESSMENT OF BUSINESS OFFICE PROCEDURES AND STAFFING AND
RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON DISCUSSIONS WITH STAFF REPRESENTATIVES
AND SUPPORT STAFF AND ON OBSERVATIONS MADE IN OFFICE.

I will preface this report with some comments about the request made to me to become a member of a committee to investigate and discuss means of making the union business as efficient and cost effective as possible. In July I met with the two other members of this committee, at which meeting we discussed what our objectives should be and how we each felt about the present system and whether we felt changes could or should be made. One member of the committee had some reservations about the effectiveness of the committee, but agreed to continue to be a part of it. It was decided that I should spend time in the business office to observe the nature of each staff representative's duties and those of the secretarial assistant. The union office was contacted and a period of time set up for me to spend time observing and discussing the various duties of each member of the office. A second meeting was arranged with the other two members of the committee, but only two members were able to attend and it was decided that we should meet again after my observation of the union office procedures, etc.

I spent the equivalent of a week in the business office during the month of August and following are my observations and recommendations.

2.

During the period of this study, Fairleigh Wettig left the union for another position, and this situation created a need for articulation of the options available to the union with regard to staffing and distribution of workload. From my observations and the discussions with the rest of the committee, the following options were drawn up:

- 1) Continue with 3 staff representatives and the secretarial assistant, which would necessitate advertising the position left vacant by Fairleigh's departure and electing someone to fill that position.
- 2) Eliminate the vacant position and continue with 2 staff reps and one secretarial assistant.
- 3) Continue with 2 staff reps and a secretarial assistant and hire a union business manager.**

**This option was discussed at the first committee meeting. I did not then, and do not now think that we should hire a business manager.

Also discussed were the options with regard to election and/or hiring of the business office staff. The following three options were discussed:

- a) Election of staff representatives and secretarial assistant;
- b) Election of staff representatives, and hiring by the union executive of a secretarial assistant (subject to membership approval;
- c) Hiring of staff representatives by union executive (subject to membership approval.

**The remainder of this report is prepared solely by me, as the other two members of the committee seem to have disappeared.

After my week in the business office, I have some conclusions about various other options to be discussed.

Salary Options

- 1) Leave the present salaries as they are;
- 2) Maintain the present salary structure for the staff representatives and upgrade the office assistant to a Secretary 4 position with commensurate salary;
- 3) Increase staff representatives salaries to top union salary grade and maintain the present office assistant job level and salary;
- 4) Increase staff representatives salaries as in (3) and upgrade the office assistant as in (2).

Workload Options

- 1) Maintain the present workload distribution as is;
- 2) Staff rep workload to be shared equally and staff assistant to be responsible for all clerical, bookkeeping, word-processor and computer workload;
- 3) Staff rep workload to be apportioned proportionate to expertise and/or preference of each staff rep--necessitating precise job description for position, and staff assistant workload as outlined in (2);
- 4) Apportioned workload for a predetermined period, then staff reps swap jobs in order to keep both reps equipped to handle all aspects of the position;
- 5) Decrease staff rep workload by:
 - a) increasing duties of staff assistant;
 - b) utilizing CUPE reps and expertise in grievance procedures as Advocate;
 - c) contracting out/farming out jobs related to printing and mailing of notices, newsletters, etc;

4. Workload options cont.

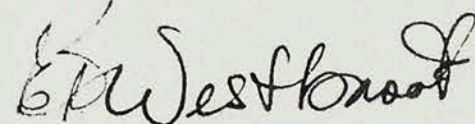
- 6) Remove the job of preparing financial statements from the duties of the staff representative and give it to our present auditing firm. Processing of financial transactions can be done utilizing the computer system and can be handled within the duties of a Secretary 4 staff assistant.
- 7) Incorporate the function of staff supervision in the job description of one of the staff rep positions. Structure is needed in this area and a consistent practice results in productive staff relations.

5.

Based on my observations of the duties and procedures presently in effect in the union office, I have the following personal recommendations. These recommendations are based on my present position of Business Manager of a hectic, understaffed, and challenging department, and on over 35 years business experience in both the private and public sector, and the study of the union staff and office.

In the best-of-all-worlds, with adequate finances and a healthy, consistent backup of volunteer help, I believe that two staff reps and one secretary 4 could easily handle the incredible workload of the union office. By adequate finances, I mean the ability of the membership to support top salary levels for the staff representatives and for the secretary 4 level assistant. Only by making the salaries commensurate with the workload will we be able to keep staff representatives on a longterm basis.

In specific areas, I am aware that a new computer system is being set up and that it is envisioned that this will lighten the workload. From personal experience, I am not sure that the workload will lighten, though I know that the efficiency of some of the present practices will improve and information will be more readily accessible. However, computers tend to increase workload by opening possibilities of "what-can-now-be-done-that-we-never-had-time-to-do-before". As I believe there is little time and room for an increased workload in the union office, I would submit that there are certain options (such as Workload Option 6) that should be seriously considered as important to study in order to distribute those duties that can be easily done elsewhere in order to free the staff reps for those tasks which deal directly with membership problems and solutions.



Beverly Westbrook

Shop Steward and

Business Manager, CANADIAN

LITERATURE