

SPECIAL EDITION:

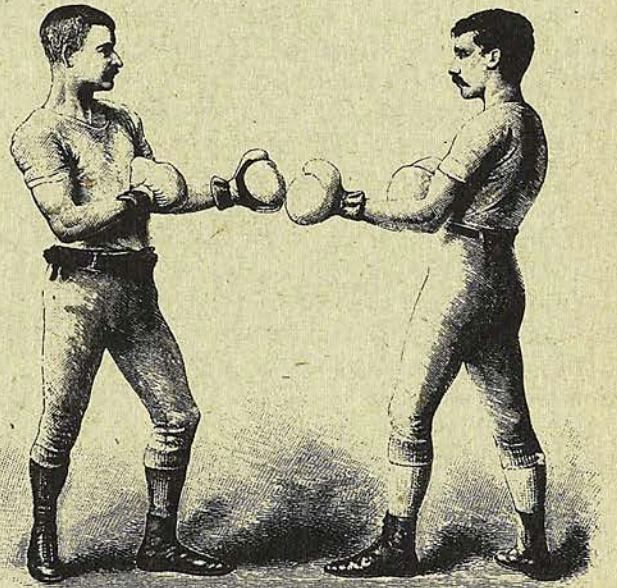
ACROSS CAMPUS
no. 7
may 27, 1977

ACROSS-THE-BOARD

VS.

PERCENTAGE:

a debate



A Brief Introduction

At the April 14, 1977 two hour general membership meeting, approximately 500 members voted to negotiate an across-the-board increase of \$105. At the following evening membership meeting on May 12, 1977, a motion to reconsider the across-the-board approach was carried by a majority of the approximate 50 members in attendance. The wording of the ballot was referred - for a decision - to the Executive meeting held on May 17th. The ballot will follow on the heels of this special edition of Across Campus.

This newsletter contains a series of articles both favouring and criticizing the issue at hand. In addition, you will discover a few pleas and some words of caution.

Your role is to read this special edition from cover to cover, to digest the information presented, and to vote for either the across-the-board approach or the percentage approach.

IT'S YOUR CHOICE - SO VOTE
SAYS OUR PRESIDENT

Shortly a referendum will be sent out to everyone to make a decision as to whether you want an across the board increase or a percentage increase. There has been quite a bit of controversy over this issue and now is the time to vote.

Read this newsletter thoroughly, ask questions, discuss the issue with other members, but most important VOTE.

If you do not vote you have only yourself to blame if the outcome of the vote is not to your liking.

Pat Gibson

PERCENTAGE INCREASE --- A BURDEN

It seems that some members want a percentage wage increase in our current contract negotiations. Their argument is based on being "fair" to those members in higher classifications by giving them a larger increase than lower paid members.

But before we make a decision on this important issue we must look at the effect both percentage and across-the-board increases would have on all members in the context of the reality of our present situation.

The reality is that all of us have been rolled back \$32 a month and most of us will have to pay back, according to the AIB's latest order against us, the equivalent of \$38 a month. (This is currently being appealed, but it is quite possible we will have to pay that much nonetheless.) So a majority of us will have a flat amount of \$70 lopped off our paycheques, regardless of classification or pay grade.

The most significant way of looking at the increase from current negotiations, then, is in relation to the salary we were used to before the roll-back.

This is simple to calculate with an across-the-board increase. The \$105 increase approved by the April 14 noon-hour meeting, less the \$70 the AIB is taking away from us, leaves a \$35 a month increase for everyone. A 6% increase (\$51 across-the-board) would leave everyone actually being paid about \$19 a month less than we were before the roll-back; 8% (\$70 across-the-board) would leave everyone about even; and 10% (\$87 across-the-board) would give everyone a real increase of about \$17.

With a percentage increase things are more complicated. The following table indicates the real increases (or decreases) that could be expected after the roll-back and pay-back with various percentage wage increases. The first column indicates the salary people were paid before the roll-back as printed in the current contract:

REAL INCREASES BASED ON PERCENTAGE

OLD WAGE	6%	8%	10%	12%
\$ 760	\$ -26	\$ -12	\$ 3	\$ 17
780	-25	-10	5	20
800	-24	-9	7	22
820	-23	-7	9	25
840	-22	-5	11	27
860	-20	-4	13	29
880	-19	-2	15	32
900	-18	-1	17	34
920	-17	1	19	37
940	-16	3	21	39
960	-14	4	23	41
980	-13	6	25	44
1000	-12	7	27	46
1020	-11	9	29	49
1040	-10	11	31	51
1060	-8	12	33	53
1080	-7	14	35	56
1100	-6	15	37	58
1122	-5	17	39	61
1144	-3	19	41	63
1166	-2	21	43	66
1188	-1	22	46	69
1210	1	24	48	71
1232	2	26	50	74
1254	3	28	52	77
1276	5	30	54	79
1298	6	31	57	82
1320	7	33	59	85
1342	9	35	61	87
1364	10	37	63	90
1386	11	38	65	92
1408	13	40	68	95

As you can see, there are vast differences in the actual increases members can expect to receive with a percentage. The last column, 12%, is approximately the equivalent to \$105 across-the-board. While members in the low-paid, highly populated classifications would see as little as \$17 a month, higher paid members would get a real increase of up to \$95 a month.

At 10%, real increases range from an insignificant \$3 up to \$68. At 6 or 8% some members would actually be suffering reductions from before the roll-back while others are enjoying modest pay increases of up to \$40.

Clearly, the effect of a percentage at this time would be to redistribute the burden of the rollback and pay-back squarely onto the shoulders of those in the lower classifications who can least afford it.

-Jeff Hoskins

PERCENTAGE INCREASE --- A SOLUTION

DOLLAR AMOUNT

Most deductions from our paycheques are made on a percentage basis. A percentage increase is therefore the most reasonable way of insuring that all members receive similar dollar amount increases. (As a general rule, people in lower classifications do not have deductions for University Pension, Group Life and Disability Insurance, while those in the higher classifications must. It is also important to note that the percentage rate of taxation rises as the salary does, so that a person in a higher classification will be in a higher tax bracket than one in a lower class.)

EQUIVALENT CASH IN HAND

The last two contracts have negotiated across-the-board increases. This has repeatedly resulted in smaller actual dollar increases for persons in the higher classifications. Therefore, it is clear that across-the-board increases do not give each member equal cash-in-hand increases.

PROMOTIONAL INCENTIVE

Adopting a percentage increase at this time will re-introduce promotional incentive, which was unfortunately reduced as a result of the necessary restructuring of the wage scale in the last contract.

COMPENSATION FOR STEP LIMITATIONS

A further advantage to adopting a percentage increase at this time would be that employees who have reached a step and/or professional limit in their classification would be somewhat better compensated for the lack of increment opportunity available to them.

The following version of the pay scale shows an 11.9% increase over the current rolled back pay scale:

Step -	1	2	3	4	5	6
I	815	837	859	882	904	927
Int.	859	882	904	927	949	971
II	904	927	949	971	994	1016
Int.	949	971	994	1016	1038	1061
III	1016	1038	1061	1083	1106	1128
Int.	1061	1083	1106	1128	1150	1173
IV	1128	1150	1173	1195	1220	1244
V	1212	1244	1269	1294	1318	1343
VI	1318	1343	1367	1392	1417	1441
VII	1417	1441	1466	1491	1515	1540

Robert Gaytan

9 years as a library assist.

To the Chairperson of the Communications Committee

I want to express my support for an across the board increase over a percentage one. I am an LA III in my ninth year of employment with the University, this time around. I worked here once earlier for I I/2 years.

I get the impression, from the letters supporting percentage increases, that people in the LA III and LA IV categories have delusions of grandeur. We all work under the same conditions here. The only possible difference between my job and someone who is an LA I or II would be the degree of complication in our various tasks.

Certainly, the pressure, abuse and general non-appreciation of our efforts has nothing whatever to do with my classification or the salary I am receiving. The idea that one should be monetarily rewarded for putting in a certain amount of time out here is just ridiculous.

For one thing, since we got a union, it takes much, much longer to reach the top categories. For another, generally speaking, people in the top categories are more set in their lives, often not bearing the whole financial burden themselves.

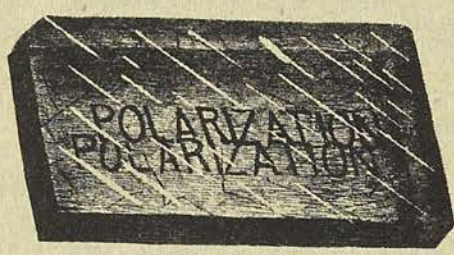
I fail to understand the logic in statements like "why should that person be making almost as much money as me when I have worked here 10 years and they only 3 years." Money just can't be the basis for reward of service - it is too important and necessary to all of us.

As for responsibility and being paid for it, you can only bear as much of that as you want to. Supervisory people are in our bargaining unit because they have no authority to hire and fire and if you are being used by your boss in this way you only have yourselves to blame.

Take off the rose coloured glasses friends - did you really believe all that stuff about starting at the bottom and working your way to the top? We are all in this together, please try to remember it.

Mind you, some people get off thinking they are better than others or at least worth more. If more money is your only game, possibly management is the department you should be looking to for employment.

Carole Cameron
Library Assistant III
Serials Division, Library



To the Members of AUCE From:
Lid Strand

Over the last few months I have become increasingly concerned by a growing split in the membership of our union.

On one side, we have those who feel like "second hand citizens" because they have been forgotten in the rush to increase the salaries at the lower end of the scale. On the other side are those who believe that it is more important to improve the base rate than to reward those who they feel are already earning an adequate income.

At every opportunity both groups have used every means possible to get their own way.

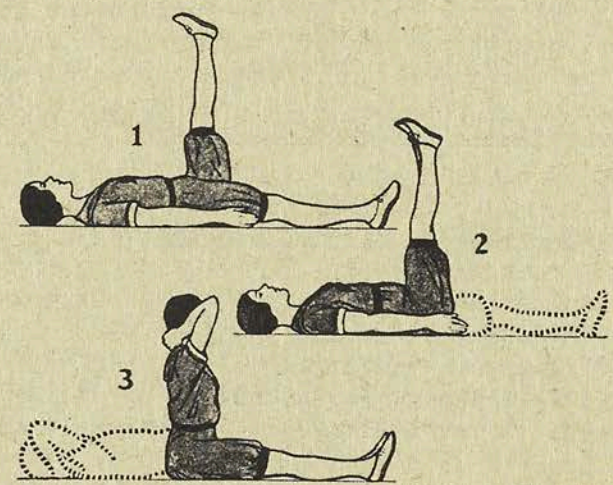
Instead of this issue being settled one way or another, it has continued to foster swallowing up time and energy that could be used to deal with other important issues that are affecting us.

We must deal with the co-ordinated attack on public sector employees by the AIB and the Provincial Government. We must deal with the University and their sophisticated attempt to paralyze the processing of disputes.

So much of our limited energies have been siphoned off by this divisive issue. Maybe it will be settled by this vote, but the thing that disturbs me is that the vote, whichever way it goes, may only be grudgingly (if at all) accepted by the side that loses.

A number of articles in the "Across Campus" show the incredible intensity of feelings that this issue arouses. These articles accuse the union of not representing them and the writers have threatened to withdraw from any participation if their does not prevail. The feelings of many people, on the other side, are just as strong. A refusal to accept the result of this referendum could destroy our union as a viable, democratic organization.

I hope that both sides in this referendum will try to look beyond their positions (regardless of how justifiable their position is) and to look at the damage this struggle is doing to our union. Whatever the result of this referendum, we are going to have live with the effect of our attitude to this referendum and what it will do to our union's ability to survive.



LESSER OF TWO EVILS

Across Campus
c/o Campus Mail Room

May 17/77

To the membership,

At the last General Membership meeting the question of wages was once again brought up. Our union seems to be split as to whether we should ask for an across the board increase or a percentage increase. I have just returned from a divisional in which we discussed the above, and various points on both sides were brought up. Below I have listed some of the objections to asking for a percentage increase and my own personal response to these objections.

- WE HAVE ALWAYS ASKED FOR AN ACROSS-THE-BOARD INCREASE

Yes, when the union was first being formed and it was necessary to bring up our base pay rate, an across the board increase was the only fair way to achieve it. But this did not compensate people with long term employment (let's face it, a \$20 a month increase after a year is ridiculous, and after 6 years, one has reached the top with no where else to go).

- EQUAL DOLLARS FOR ALL

Equal? Not hardly. Once one gets into the higher tax brackets more money is taken off, hence one actually receives less actual cash than those on the lower ends of the payscale.

- WHAT ABOUT THE PENSION PLAN

After 3 years, it is compulsory to go onto the pension plan (this is 5% of one's salary). This has the effect of dropping us back 2 paygrades, thus we have making the same amount of money as someone who has just started and is not required to join the pension plan.

- THE ISSUE OF WAGES HAS ALREADY BEEN VOTED ON 3 TIMES BEFORE

Although this issue has in fact been voted on before, it was done either at evening meetings or during the special 2-hour lunch meetings. At most, there are only usually 500 members present at the 2-hour lunch meetings which is not even half of the total membership of our union. A referendum ballot is the only fair representation of the true feelings of the whole membership.

- WE VOTED FOR AN ACROSS-THE-BOARD DUES INCREASE & AN ACROSS-THE-BOARD ROLLBACK

As for the dues increase, this is obvious. Why should someone who is making more money have to pay more in union dues? They are not receiving any more benefits than those at the bottom end of the scale. MONEY is not a benefit as such, this is something one is entitled to because of better qualifications, more working experience or seniority, etc. As for the across-the-board rollback/payback that we voted for, this was only fair as the original increase was an across-the-board one. It was pointed out to me that \$32 rollback on \$700 was a much larger percentage than it was on \$1500, but if one turns that around the other way, was not a \$32 increase much larger on \$700 than it was on \$1500?

The above is only my opinion, but one which I feel is shared by a great many in our union. I hope that we now have the chance to get a fair and accurate view of the

true feelings of our membership, and that we will all give serious consideration to this question before voting on it in the next week or so. After all, sooner or later, we all become senior employees.

This is not to say that I favour a percentage increase as the answer to the problems facing our union. I personally would like to see larger step increases as this would also benefit the more senior employees, But of the two (across - the - board vs. percentage) I feel that the percentage increase is the lesser of two evils.

Darlene Crowe
Physics.

our duty as a union

Some people have given me their reasons for wanting us to negotiate a percentage increase for this contract.

Some believe that we have always negotiated across-the-board increases and that that has narrowed the differences between salaries.

An across-the-board increase was negotiated in our first contract so that salaries remained the same number of dollars as before the contract.

However, in our second contract, this didn't happen. In our attempt to eliminate irrational pay differences between job classifications with similar job requirements, we ended up having to negotiate pay increases which varied considerably both in terms of percentage and dollar amounts.

For example:

Clerk I, step I	- \$127/mo.
	- 20.1% increase
Clerk II, step I	- \$146/mo.
	- 21% increase
Clerk III, step I	- \$192/mo.
	- 25.7% increase
Computer Op., step I	- \$190/mo.
	- 20.4% increase
Sr. Computer Op., step I	- \$200/mo.
	- 18.2% increase

People in lowest classifications received less than most people in higher classifications both on a dollar and percentage basis - compare figures for 1974/75 contract to 1975/76 contract. Increases in our last contract tended toward greater dollar amounts as one went up the pay scale. Therefore, the salary increase last year widened the gap from top to bottom.

During the life of this contract, we have seen even greater increases in salary differences on a proportional basis. This came about in two ways:

Firstly, we as a Union voted to increase our dues on an across-the-board basis - all full-time members pay \$6.50/mo. instead of \$4.50. Not a great deal of money, perhaps, but this amount represents a larger proportion of a lower salary than it does of a higher salary.

Then the AIB hit us with their rollback and payback order. Again people voted for an across-the-board decrease. Apparently, some people voted this way because they felt everyone should bear financial burden on an equal basis. This, however, is not the actual effect of the reduction - the lower one is on the pay scale, the greater the proportion of one's salary goes toward meeting the AIB's

7

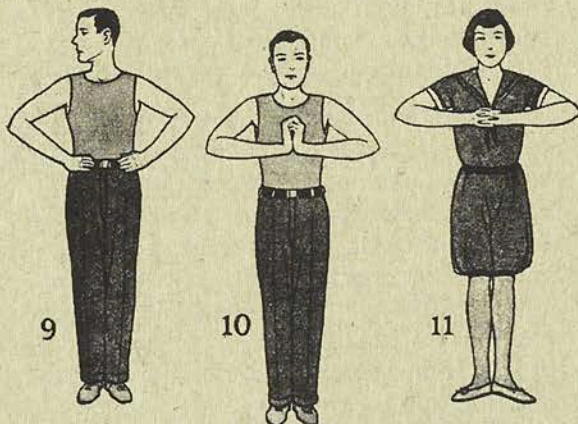
demand. The rollback alone (\$32/mo.) means a decrease of 4.2% at the bottom of the pay scale and 2.2% at the top. These figures do not, of course, take into account the further erosion of our salaries by the payback.

Another factor is the further erosion of our buying power by the continuous rise in the cost of living. The impact of inflation always hits hardest those who can afford it least - people with low or fixed incomes. The less money one has the fewer economic options one has, the fewer economic options one has and the greater proportion of one's income goes toward the basic necessities - food, clothing and housing.

In light of these facts, it is apparent that those people in our union who can afford it least have absorbed the greatest erosion of their buying power. Our first priority as a Union should be that all members have a decent standard of living.

Because it will take all members the same number of dollars to catch up on the rollback and the payback and because it will make those in lower classifications even more dollars to catch up on inflation, it is our duty as a Union to see that all members catch up with the same dollars in an across-the-board increase.

Judy Wright
Clerk II



MY PREFERENCE -- THIS TIME

THE REFERENDUM BALLOT

A. WHY ARE WE VOTING?

I am sure many members will be surprised to hear that a referendum ballot is being held on the issue of whether our membership wants an across-the-board increase or a percentage increase this time. As one of the people involved in putting forward the proposal to have this ballot I feel it would be useful to explain briefly, for those who do not or cannot attend membership meetings, my reasons for making such a proposal.

AUCE has long prided itself on being a "democratic" union. We repeatedly hear that within our union issues are given full and complete discussion, and policies established are done so by majority consensus. Within the last two months however, this does not appear to have been the case. At a general membership meeting held in April, a new and previously unpublished agenda was adopted by an unsuspecting membership, with the result that motions which had been given proper notice were swept aside. Most of us at that meeting did not realize until later that the effect of adopting the new agenda would be to subvert - deliberately or unwittingly - those motions which we had come prepared to deal with. At the same time several new motions were brought forward, some of which had not in fact been given proper notice. The motion passed by the membership that we bargain for an across-the-board increase of \$105 was put through without proper consideration because most of us did not know that that specific motion was going to be proposed. As a result, a thorough examination of this very important issue never took place.

The procedures used in the April membership meeting were not democratic. For this reason I felt it was imperative that the whole issue be reintroduced for membership consideration. At the evening membership meeting of May 12th a motion was passed that before the Contract Committee present a revised wage proposal to the University, a referendum ballot on this issue be held.

I was very surprised to see the amount of hostility that greeted this motion, and even more surprised to notice that much of the negative reaction was expressed by the Contract Committee itself. It was stated at that meeting that there was something wrong with a membership meeting of 50 overturning a decision made by a membership meeting of 500. In fact, there were far less than 500 people at the April membership meeting, but to me, the whole issue of numbers was immaterial. The intent of the motion was not to overturn any decision made - rather it was to give all 1200 of our members the opportunity to make the decision on this important issue. Whether or not they overturned the decision to go for an across-the-board increase would be up to them. If, as the Contract Committee insisted, this issue had already been decided several times by the membership, then what would be the harm in reconfirming this fact? Whatever decision was reached would be the majority consensus of all the membership, and with this behind them our Contract Committee would hopefully be in a stronger position at the bargaining table.

In concluding this brief explanation I would like to add that I cannot recall ever having such a ballot on this issue. Apparently there exist presently some strong views on both sides. I think it is a very healthy sign that such a referendum ballot is being taken. Whatever your preference on this issue, I strongly urge you to vote. If you don't vote you will be defeating the purpose of having this referendum, and in effect will be defeating the reasons for having a union. Please vote!

B. WHY WAS A REVISED BALLOT ADOPTED?

At the executive meeting of May 17 a revised format for the referendum was adopted. Those who attended the general membership meeting of May 12 will no doubt be surprised to see that their ballot will not contain two parts as approved by that meeting: Part A being the contract committee's article on the wage issue reprinted from April 7th's issue of Across Campus and Part B being an article of similar length on the percentage side. After much debate at the executive meeting it was decided that a better approach would be to have a special edition of Across Campus go out to all members; this would contain arguments for and against both sides of this issue. Subsequently a ballot without any motivation would be sent to all members.

In looking at the various tables in this Newsletter please bear in mind that the proposed percentage increase of 11.9% was adopted because it was based on the Contract Committee's original argument for an across-the-board increase of \$105. 11.9% is simply the \$105 increase translated into a percentage figure. As you have no doubt read elsewhere in this Newsletter, we have been informed by the AIB that the guideline for the contract presently being negotiated is 8% rather than 6%; therefore the Contract Committee's original figure of \$105. may well be altered. Please remember that only the two tables showing an 11.9% increase or an \$105.00 increase are comparable.

No doubt the above paragraphs will confuse many who are not up to date on these changes. Perhaps it is best to remember that what is at issue in this referendum is whether you prefer to have your contract negotiated on the basis of an across-the-board principle or a percentage principle. Keep that in mind when making your decision.

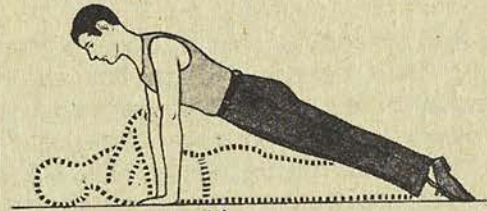
C. WHY I PREFER PERCENTAGE THIS TIME

At this time, for this specific contract, I am in favor of adopting a percentage principle in negotiating our wage increase.

Perhaps the major reason I favor a percentage increase is that for the last two years we have negotiated across-the-board increases. The net result has been that employees at the higher end of the pay scale have been receiving less cash in hand than those at the lower end. If you link this with the fact that our wage scale was drastically reduced from 33 steps to 10 last time, you begin to see a strange thing happening. There is less and less incentive in seeking a promotion and once you have been at UBC for a few years, seniority accrued means little in dollar terms. Seniority becomes a detriment rather than an asset. Those jobs which have more responsibility, or those people who have been at UBC for a long time, are not properly compensated in monetary terms. Perhaps it would be more just to have our wage increases negotiated in an alternating fashion: i.e. one year we have across-the-board, the next year percentage, etc.

One further word on this issue. I am tired of hearing over and over at membership meetings that everyone has to face the same cost of living and therefore to be fair, everyone should have the same dollar increase. Neither percentage nor across-the-board ensures an identical increase. To me, this is a phony issue. The real issue is: do we want to lump everyone together in a middle-of-the road pay scale, or do we want to reward those people who have more seniority, more responsibility, and therefore deserve a few more dollars in their paycheques? Do we want to offer some incentive for promotion and long term service, or do we want to encourage employees to work on a short term basis? A percentage increase this time would bring a much needed element back into our pay scale.

Cathy Agnew
Math Department



14

THE REFERENDUM ---

AN EXERCISE IN DEMOCRACY?

ON GIVING AND TAKING AWAY, BREAD VS. FRENCH
WINE, AND A QUESTION OF DEMOCRACY

by Ian Mackenzie

I think the most important point in this discussion is the following: The roll-/pay-back was a dollar, across the board amount which was taken from everybody. And the main effect of our upcoming raise will be to replace this money taken away by the AIB - and, indeed, if the AIB saddles us with an average 6 or 8%, this will have no effect other than bringing us back to our former wage level. So, therefore, the same amount of money should be given back to people as was taken away. They lost an across-the-board amount; therefore they should gain an across-the-board amount. YOU CAN'T TAKE AN ACROSS-THE-BOARD AMOUNT AWAY WITH ONE HAND AND THEN GIVE A PERCENTAGE AMOUNT BACK WITH THE OTHER. The effect of this would be quite clear: to take money away from the people at the bottom and give it to people at the top. And I don't mean that rhetorically, I mean it quite literally. If everyone got 6 or 8%, the average income of the bargaining unit would be the same as before the roll-/pay-back - but the I's would be poorer and the IV's better off. A percentage increase at this time would be to quite literally reach into the pockets of the lower people - and to give the money obtained to the higher people.

Having said that, I would like to comment on what I see as the reason for this sudden campaign for a percentage increase. Quite simply, everybody is feeling the pinch. We've been clobbered by the AIB, and are in the process of being clobbered by the Provincial Government as well with its inadequate University funding. Our standard of living peaked last year, and is now steadily dropping - with no immediate respite in view. But instead of turning our anger outwards, against the University and the two governments responsible for this state of affairs, we seem to be turning against each other. Some people are scrambling for a bigger piece of the steadily shrinking pie. To the IV's and others in the higher classifications, I say this: taking money from people in the lower classifications may help you fight inflation a little better a little longer. But the loss of that money hurts them a lot more than its gain helps you. Remember, they make much less to begin with: it's their bread versus your French wine. Such a redistribution of wealth within our bargaining unit would add one more injustice to the several that have been inflicted on us of late. But unlike the others, this injustice would be one of our own doing. Everybody's suffering, not just you: wage your war against the causes of that suffering - our employer and the AIB - and not against your fellow workers.

Having said that, I would like to comment on something which disturbs me even more than the percentage proposal itself - and that is, the way the issue was raised. To briefly review the events: Our large, lunch-hour meeting in April passed a motion changing our wage demand to \$105 across-the-board. It also passed a motion to the effect that this would be presented within a package, the other contents of which were to be approved at the following meeting.

The following meeting was a small, after-work one with about fifty people present. At this meeting, with no prior notice in the newsletter or anywhere else, a motion was presented that we reconsider the decision of the big meeting and that a referendum go out to decide, again, on the issue of percentage versus across-the-board. This motion was passed. And, as a result of the extensive debate around it, there was no time left for approval of our package.

There are two issues here: first, no notice. It has always been our practice that any motion of substance must be published at least seven days before the meeting at which it is to be presented. The purpose of this is obvious: it's the simple, democratic right of every member to know what's going to be decided, to have a chance to think about and prepare for an issue, and to know how important it is for them to attend the meeting in question. Publishing notice of motion also helps to prevent the meeting from being stacked - that is, only the people who will vote a certain way on an issue being told that the issue will come up.

There have been times, in emergency situations, where we have dispensed with notice of motion - but this has always been by a sort of general consensus, where everybody recognizes the urgency of dealing with the issue immediately. Examples were our meetings during the strike. But our across-the-board wage demand has been Union policy for a year - plenty of time for notice of motion for reconsideration. And as far as reconsidering the specific motion passed at the lunch-hour membership meeting - those involved had at least two weeks to put notice in the newsletter.

The second aspect of this case that disturbs me is the spectacle of a small, after-work meeting overturning the decision of a large, lunch-time meeting. This flies directly in the face of our past practice, where we have been sensitive about the role of small meetings, and such meetings themselves have often deferred consideration of important questions until the next big meeting. To those who say that the decision to hold a referendum is not really a decision itself, but rather a means of letting the maximum number of people make the decision themselves, I say this: true, but to hold the referendum was not the only decision that was made. There was no motion for this other decision, but it was made just as effectively as if there had been. I speak of the decision to delay resumption of negotiations for another month. Without discussion of a referendum, there would have been lots of time to approve the package, and we would have been back in negotiations right now. As it is, discussion of the package is put off until the next meeting, and the referendum, to be done democratically, will take almost that long itself. We are hardly in a good position to contradict the University if they accuse us of stalling,

and, more importantly, our strike vote, scheduled for June, is jeopardized: we won't be meeting with them until half-way through June, and it doesn't look good holding a strike vote immediately upon resuming negotiations after a long delay - a delay for which we are responsible.

To sum up, the decision of the last membership meeting to pass a motion, for which there had been no prior notice, overturning the decision of a much larger meeting, shows a disrespect for democracy which I had hoped did not exist in our union. Nonetheless, I hope that the end product - the referendum - will be an exercise in democracy. And I say this as one who does not accept the dogma that all referenda are democratic: they are democratic if and only if there has been a full, rounded debate on the issue to be voted on. Debate is the life-blood of democracy. But in this case a proper debate was far from assured. I think it must be said that many members of the Executive wanted to send out the referendum immediately after the membership meeting, allowing no time for debate in the newsletter or in the divisions. They were in favour of allowing only two articles to be enclosed with the ballot: one arguing for a percentage, and the other, a reprint of an article by the Contract Committee written long before the referendum was decided on, which was supposed to be the argument for across-the-board. The idea that an Executive, or Membership Meeting, or any other body has the right to determine who may or may not speak, and what that individual may or may not say is completely antithetical to democracy. However, to its credit, the Executive was persuaded that such censorship was incorrect, the motion to allow only the two articles was defeated, and a decision made to allow all members the right to contribute to a newsletter that would appear before the ballot. Although the motion to disallow debate was defeated, the fact that it could even have been made in a union which prides itself for its democracy is something that really frightens me.

Are we taking the first steps on the path to a bureaucratic union?

a petition:

IN SUPPORT OF THE

PERCENTAGE INCREASE:

We have been members of AUCE since its inception and wholeheartedly supported our union's efforts in our first contract to bring the level of our lowest category up to a fair standard. Since that time, as each contract is being negotiated, we have been urged to continue this method of increase, with the members of the contract committee urging that this is a 'commitment' -- "a loaf of bread costs just as much for a Clerk I as it does for a Clerk IV". If this be true -- then it is time that we realized that with each across the board increase -- the amount of that increase taken home by those in the higher categories gets less and less. IT IS THEREFORE TIME that those of us who have devoted a number of years working at the University to gain a senior level position with its attendant responsibilities be able to afford that loaf of bread just as the lower categories do. It is only fair that service and responsibility reap some kind of reward. WE DO NOT LIVE IN UTOPIA -- and regardless of our contract committee's response to the percentage increase -- it will never become that. It would appear that the Committee does not really want the membership's opinion -- they are headed on a course that says only "Across the Board" -- this was evident at the meeting of Thursday, May 12th - when any mention of a percentage increase drew emotional response and an attitude of sulkiness from the members of the Committee. If their new wage proposal was not able to be brought up at that meeting -- they, the Committee were in a large part to blame because of their continuous carping against the percentage increase. For we, the undersigned, it would appear that our wishes are being passed over, all long-time employees have to feel this way when the responsibility and service of years is disregarded.

our weakened bargaining position

THE FORTHCOMING REFERENDUM AND OUR BARGAINING POSITION

by Margie Wally - Div. H Contract
Committee Representative

Here we are ten months since we first began negotiations and the question of whether to go for an across the board or percentage increase is before us AGAIN. At the general membership meeting of May 12th a motion was passed to rescind the union's decision of April 14th to propose a wage increase of \$105 across the board and to instead put the question to a referendum ballot.

I find it extremely unfortunate that we are still messing around about this issue at this late date, particularly because this further delay leaves us open to further accusations by the University of "stalling" and because this delay may seriously jeopardize the effectiveness of our strike vote.

However, I think the most serious consideration here is the fact that we are faced with a possible reversal of our position after ten months of negotiating an across the board increase. Needless to say, such a decision would have a decidedly negative effect on our bargaining position. Most people will remember that our original wage proposal was voted on last August '76, which provided for parity with CUPE 116, was an across the board increase proposal. Likewise, the revised proposal voted on and carried at the April 14th meeting provided for an across the board increase. Having argued the across the board principle/position in negotiations for ten months (and in fact for the past two contracts), and having finally convinced the University of our desire to see the principle of across the board increases applied in this contract (as indicated in their last package offer), an about-face at this stage of the struggle will absolutely cripple our credibility. Furthermore, all this erratic flip-flopping of our position is not going to get us a settlement.

S. Taylor
A. Palensky
M. Elliott
S. Finneson
W. MacLach
M. H. MacLach
M. H. MacLach
A. MacLach
K. T. Gle
W. B. Kiernan
P. B. Roy
Cheryl Selick
H. MacLach
R. B. Kent
Margaret Lomas
L. Higinbotham
M. H. MacLach
M. H. MacLach
J. Johnson

Members of
Division I of the
Registrar's Office



What it will do is indicate to the University that there are serious internal disruptions in the Union, that there is a lack of solidarity amongst our members in backing our contract demands, that we hold an inconsistent bargaining position and therefore: A WEAKENED BARGAINING POSITION. It also is going to make it very difficult for the Contract Committee to face the University in negotiation knowing that they know that we know that the support for our contract demands, and especially for the wage proposal, is somewhat precarious. Such indications will not inspire the University to take us or our contract demands very seriously.

The most positive steps our Union can take at this time in order to reach a settlement are to solidly reaffirm the across the board wage proposal and to prepare for a strike vote while the time is ripe. We have learned in the past that without a solid membership prepared to take drastic action when necessary to support our contract demands we cannot win a settlement. It's time to decide once and for all what we want and where we stand.

UNDECIDED?

To all interested members:

I would like to urge you all to take part in the upcoming referendum ballot. We have a democratic union, but it won't be democratic if you don't take the time to decide whether you wish to have an across-the-board or a percentage raise and then mark it on your ballot and return that ballot. I have heard a lot of people complaining about the structure of our union: how the executive makes all the decisions and the ordinary member has little or no say in the affairs that concern us all. Now's your chance, folks, so don't blow it! If only half of the ballots are returned, that indicates that half of our membership doesn't give a damn about what is said on their behalf. I realize that many people won't even take the time to read this special newsletter, so any of you who do read it, and are interested in keeping our union a democratic one are urged to take the time to talk to disinterested members and try to get them to vote on this issue.

There are a few things that I consider to be relevant to this whole issue. First of all, I think it should be pointed out that when studying the various wages in the tables, we should remember that pay grades VI and VII are very nearly hypothetical. The following table is extracted from the population of each grade and step: 1 Oct. 1975, as reported to the AIB (I have used these figures as they are the only ones I could lay my hands on, I doubt that they have changed significantly):

	Grade VI	Grade VII
Step 1	3	0
Step 2	1	0
Step 3	1	1
Step 4	1	0
Step 5	1	0
Step 6	1	0

There are then, 9 people in these 2 steps, compared with approximately 1,100 in the other 8. Therefore I think it is invalid to say that a Clerk I, step one gets so much while a person in pay grade VII, step 6 gets another amount. This can be done in a statistical exercise, but when you get down to human terms and compare two people instead of two figures, I consider it much more valid to compare a person in grade I, step 1 (with 181 people in this category) to a person in grade IV, step 6 (with 47 people in this category) (again using Oct., 1975 figures). This is what I plan to do when I see the two different wage scales.

My second point is in reference to the way I think senior people are presently being shafted by our wage scale. To illustrate this, please examine the case of a clerk I who has been working at the university for 3 years. This person is now earning \$768/month; she decides that it is now time for a promotion, applies for and gets a clerk II job. She is now earning the same amount (\$808/month) as the clerk I beside her who has just started working at the university. So, the way things are set up right now, seniority means nothing.

A third point that I would like to make is regarding the cash-in-hand issue. I did some very rough calculations, based on either \$105 across-the-board or 11.9%. It became apparent to me that no matter

how you play with the figures, what deductions you make, or how much income tax you deduct, an across-the-board comes closer than a percentage to giving each member of our union the same cash-in-hand increase.

Finally, I would like to say that I have not yet decided how to cast my vote. As I see it, across-the-board is better because it gives all of our members the same cash-in-hand, but percentage gives the more senior people a break because they've been shafted by our wage scale. I will decide on how to cast my ballot when I have read all the arguments for and against each choice. Then hopefully I will be better informed than I was at the April 14 meeting, when I voted for across-the-board, on a gut feeling rather than with information. But I WILL vote, as we all must. Remember, if we don't vote, we are endorsing other people to make our decisions for us.

Sandy Masai
Mathematics

REAFFIRMING

OUR

PLEDGE

SUBMITTED BY JEAN LAWRENCE

In response to recent cries for democracy and fair play for all members in our union, I would like to make a few points about the philosophy that is at the root of the furor.

This "philosophy", which has come to be, mistakenly recognized as an Across-the-Board stance, has in numerous instances over the past year been misrepresented and bent to suit the arguments of people on every conceivable side of the issue. I say misrepresented because there are members who would have us believe that the philosophy of Across-the-Board should be blankly used no matter what the circumstances. This belies its good intention.

There is a vital principle behind this so-

called philosophy which is the foundation on which AUCE has grown. We are fighting to eliminate disparity between low-paid, mostly women workers and others who are deemed entitled to a respectable wage. We have sought to accomplish this by reducing the burden of under-reward and over-deduction which is the plight of those at the bottom of any pay scale. It does not, however, follow that "Across-the-Board" is the fairest way to handle any and all alterations of salary, but that "ability to pay" (or ability to pay our bills) should be our guide in determining increases and deductions.

Neither percentage nor across-the-board formulae are correct in every instance. If we are to maintain the integrity of the philosophy that unites us, we must be careful to examine each case and decide who will be the hardest hit (in the case of deductions) or who stands to receive the least benefit overall (where increases are the issue). If it is the members who are already the lowest wage-earners, then we have a commitment to apply the formula which will aid the most in alleviating their economic load.

The issue was raised when we resolved to increase our dues assessment last fall, and again when we had to decide on a roll-back formula. The membership voted in these two instances to lay aside our professed aims, with, I believe, the best of intentions, but with the result that those who could least afford it had to bear the largest financial responsibility.

I hope we will not witness another case of "democracy" precluding justice. Let us reaffirm our pledge to conduct ourselves in truly the fairest way we can. In the upcoming referendum on our wage proposal, let us uphold the principle that brought us all together at the beginning by strengthening the Contract Committee's mandate to negotiate an across-the-board increase.



To the Membership:

PERCENTAGE SUPPORT

I am writing in support of the principle of a percentage wage increase during the present set of negotiations with the University administration, and wish only to reiterate what I have previously said on the matter.

Our Union is a good and necessary thing for us all, and we should be taking advantage of the opportunities it offers us to be innovative and forward-thinking, and not using it to take advantage of the long-term members of our bargaining unit, who, for the most part, are in the more senior classifications or at the top of the pay scale in their areas of expertise, and have sacrificed benefits to themselves in order to bring the lower classifications up to a more equitable rate of pay. This has now been accomplished and it is time for us to consider their situation more seriously. Our present thinking and action are slowly causing incentive and motivation to disappear from this campus, and we are making it more and more attractive for short-term employees and less and less attractive for the long-term people, yet we constantly give lip-service to "seniority" in all else that we do.

Why are we seemingly determined to squash ourselves into a bunch of middle-of-the-road wage earners? I am very interested in the statement made at the April membership meeting that a percentage increase would "only widen the gap between the lower and higher classifications". Am I to understand from that remark that the speaker thinks the gap is too wide now and we should all be earning the same salaries? It is an attitude such as this which will cause a rift in our Union between the more senior members and those in the lower classifications.

I hope that before voting on this important and obviously controversial item, each one of us will read and consider carefully all the pros and cons of every argument presented, and not vote just on the dollar amount involved for us personally.

Valerie Pusey
Faculty of Graduate Studies
May 20, 1977

PLEASE PRINT IN THE NEXT EDITION OF "ACROSS CAMPUS" BEFORE THE REFERENDUM BALLOT

ACROSS-THE-BOARD SUPPORT

May 21, 1977

To the Communications Committee:

I'm one of those long service and senior people. I was fortunate. I started as a Clerk II in 1964 when there were more jobs available and turnover was high. I rose through the ranks quickly so that by 1968 I was an LA IV. So far as I know I got all the merit increases going. There was once, I recall, a 'double merit raise' handed out to a select few of us. Those were pre-Union days!

Towards the end of the sixties, however, I began to notice that other LAs were not advancing at my rate. For every promotion that I got as many as 10 equally qualified LAs stayed put. That situation hasn't improved. Many such people are trapped in the lower classifications working every bit as hard as those of us at or near the top.

I cannot agree with Pat LaVac, Robert Gaytan & Valerie Pusey or any other percentage increase supporter. Their view seems to be that, because they are at the senior levels, they should be continually rewarded for just that reason. In addition to their obviously higher salaries they and I have other advantages: we have for example greater job security, generally more interesting jobs, more opportunity for transfer and promotion, longer vacations & first choice where a conflict arises over vacation scheduling. Also, the Pension Plan is not compulsory for those of us who were hired prior to 1971. This enables us to use that money for superior pension arrangements or investments.

A percentage increase would be, in my view, a retrogressive step, particularly so because it would be of greatest benefit to a minority at the top & of least benefit to a majority at the lower end of the scale; as such it would only serve to widen the gap that we fought so hard to close in our last contract.



Ann Hutchison
LA IV
Main Library

so who cares?

TO: Across Campus

From: Larry Thiessen, L.A. IV, Reading Rooms Div.

May 10, 1977.

Could you please include this in the next issue of the newsletter?

When we were trying to decide which payback method to employ back in January, a number of letters were circulated unofficially among the membership. I have just received my May 6, 1977 issue in which are three letters by Robert Gaytan, Pat LaVac and Valerie Pusey which have encouraged me to try once again to put my own views on this subject into focus. Those of you who happened to see the letter I circulated in January will find many of the thoughts similar.

First of all, to the three people mentioned above. BRAVO....
Accolades to you all.....

When I first started working in the library at U.B.C., an L.A. IV made about about 530.00 a month before deductions. That was about one hundred dollars more than an L.A. III base rate. Now the L.A. IV base rate is about 1025. or therabouts and the L.A. III is about 925.00 (We've certainly come a long way - so has inflation.)

Project a few years into the future for a minute. It's fairly inconceivable that the A.I.B. will be around five years from now but let's just suppose that for the next five years each of our wage settlements is rolled back. Let us also suppose that we decide each time to roll back everyone on a percentage basis that is the same for everyone. Suppose further that each of our original settlements is an across-the-board one. The net effect would make the lowest pay-grade identical to the top ones. Even supposing that we are never rolled back again, the pay grades are moving closer and closer together in terms of cold hard cash.

SO WHO CARES???

From my own point of view, as long as I have enough to live on, I don't. When it comes down to REAL BASICS I doubt that anyone else does either. But (patience people) project one step further. How many people want to work harder, have more responsibility, ETC., ETC. when for the same amount of money, or even a little less, they can worry less and do less. Sure - I enjoy my job - but not that much. Up until now we have always followed certain principles in our negotiations with the university. I always felt that I understood and sympathized with these principles. Suddenly I'm not so sure anymore. Are the principles the same or have they changed? Do they need to change? As I have already stated, as long as I don't starve to death I don't really mind how much I make. (Remember I'm being VERY basic - the only thing we all need in the final analysis is food and shelter.

Sure - I'd like a new house in Cypress Bowl and a new Mercedes 450 SLC - but I'll cope in the meantime.) Now back to our principles..... If a person in the lowest pay grade continues to make more and more money at the expense of people in the higher pay grades their salaries will eventually become identical. There's a word for this principle and for those of you unfamiliar with the economics of the situation I'll give you a hint - it starts with a very large "C".

Please don't get the impression that I'm trying to organize a McCarthyesque witch-hunt or scare everyone into a mass guilt complex. (We're all too sophisticated - I hope - for that sort of thing.) I don't even care if that's the direction in which we are heading because I'm basically a drone and as long as some one looks after me, that's fine. All I want is to make sure that we all know where we are going and what we want.

Someone is bound to read this and say that I'm exaggerating and crying "wolf". O.K. - so we're not going to be rolled back five times in a row, ET.C, ET.C. I still think that sometimes you have to project ahead before you can get a clear picture of what your motives are or should be.

I guess the real reason that I'm writing all this is because I really admire the three people who had the courage and the erudition to write the three letters to which I referred earlier. I'm sure there will be a negative reaction to everything they have said in the next issue of the newsletter and I wanted to make sure they had someone to back them up. Once again to all three of you, no matter what your motivation was..... THANKS - IT WAS GREAT.

APRIL 14TH & MAY 12TH

Across-the-board vs. %:

50 PEOPLE OVERTURN DECISION OF 500

by Lissett Nelson

On April 14th. about 500 of our members rejected the university's offer of a two-year contract with \$42 increase in the first year and \$32 increase the second. In response to it, the meeting overwhelmingly approved the motion of the Contract Committee to present the university with a counter-proposal asking for a one-year contract and a \$105 across-the-board wage increase (a figure that covers the loss of wages of every member due to the AIB rollback-payback and includes the 6% offered by the university at the beginning of negotiations).

This decision was taken after two months of discussions in division meetings, in offices and through the newsletter. The 500 members who decided on this important issue were 500 well-informed members who had benefited from the discussion which took place at the meeting itself.

However, in the midst of preparations for the strike vote as approved in the same April 14th meeting* and when the Contract Committee was ready to start discussing the rest of the counter-package with the membership, an evening meeting on May 12 attended by 50 people overturned the decision regarding our wage increase taken at the April 14th meeting, and sent our counter-proposal back to page one.

The motion defended by approximately 30 people at the May 12th evening meeting was that we hold a referendum on the across-the-board vs. % issue before presenting our counter-package. No notice had been placed in the newsletter about it, no warning had been given to any of us that the April 14th meeting decision would be reviewed, but the motion passed.

While the referendum itself is not a bad idea, I feel obliged to criticize its timing and the way in which it was presented. Posed so late, it paralyzes important union activities especially those of the committees which have been already working under the directions given by the April 14th meeting. The place for deciding whether to hold a referendum or not was the meeting called precisely to deal with the university's offer and not the evening meeting held a month later. Intending to review a decision of a meeting as important as the April 14th one, they could have at least placed a notice of motion in the newsletter to encourage the largest number of attendants.

If nothing else, I think that we should insist in requesting notice of motions from committees or individuals especially for the cases in which a decision of a former general membership meeting is going to be reviewed. However the only effective way of keeping on top of union activities, is to make sure that we attend all membership meetings, lunch-hour and evening ones. A broad attendance to union meetings is the best way to make sure that every step we take reflects the wishes of all of our members.

* For more information on our strategy, please read the article titled "Why a Strike Vote?" published in the April 7th issue of Across Campus.

May 9, 1977

Across Campus

A SUGGESTION

To the Membership,

On reading the May 6 issue of the Across Campus I could not help but be struck by the dissatisfaction that the senior members of our union are feeling by the wage scale as it now stands. I myself am in the middle of this scale, but still I feel as strongly as they about the inequity of this scale.

But are percentage increases really the answers? It seems to me, that this method also is unfair. What should be adjusted I feel are the step increases. Its ridiculous that after a year's employment we should only make \$20 a month more than someone who has just started. And as the years go back it gets even more unfair. I would like to see in our next contract negotiations that we go after larger step increases (perhaps \$40 or more) and not an across the board increase of gargantuan proportions.

Speaking of contract negotiations, I was talking with a member from the C.U.P.E. contract committee, and what they do is take 10 issues from their contract which they feel are most important, and which they want changed, and they go to the bargaining table with just these items. WHAT A MARVELLOUS IDEA! Instead of trying to have over a hundred articles changed all at once, let's go at it slowly, bit by bit. Rome was not built in today, nor was CUPE's existing contract built in one year's negotiation. It took them over 10 years to get where they are at today, and we should not try to go at it all at once.

Darlene Crowe
Division C

APRIL 14TH & ACROSS-THE-BOARD

WHY THE APRIL 14th. MEETING VOTED IN FAVOUR OF AN ACROSS-THE-BOARD WAGE INCREASE INSTEAD OF A % ONE

by Lissett Nelson

One of the traditional ways of creating division among workers of the same plant or institution has for years been the % increase which implies the artificial classification of employees into innumerable categories and different salaries.

This differentiation among employees has always ended in friction among them by polarizing more every year the lowest paid employees vs. the highest paid ones. In moments when unity has been necessary (during strikes, for example), demands for % increase have had the effect of keeping a low morale in the majority of workers; the contradiction of having a majority of lower paid workers fighting for a minimum increase and a minority of higher paid workers fighting for a maximum increase never strengthened the unions' bargaining position. To the contrary, it weakened it, as it weakened the social links among employees of the same plant or institution.

After years of struggle unions have started to realize the harm that this stratification and gaps in salary can do to their organizations, and one after the other many unions such as the Postal workers, the IWA, SORWUC, the Construction unions, have adopted across-the-board increases as a norm for their contract negotiations.

Our case is no different: All of us do the same or very similar work. We are all secretaries of one kind or another. We all spend 7 hours per day at the University. We all have the same boss: the University Administration. We all age, we all have obligations, whether it is with our children, parents, or with ourselves. We all have goals and expectations.

We spend the same or similar amount of energy in our daily work. Nobody can say that a clerk I works less than a clerk IV, or that there is no sense of responsibility needed for a clerk I's job.

The union provides equal protection for everyone. As well, the actions of the union affect everyone. When the union is forced to go on strike, we all lose wages (we could add, lowest-paid workers suffer it the most), and we all cooperate.

The increase in cost of living, as Emerald Murphy (Admin I) pointed out at the April 14th meeting affects all of us and not only the higher paid employees. We buy the same groceries, pay the same high rents, and have similar needs for our existence.

With % increases, while the highest salaries move towards reaching the increase in cost of living, the lowest salaries move away from it and fall further below. If we had a % increase this year, for example, a 6% increase would definitely allow the highest paid categories to recover from the AIB rollback and earn more wages, but it would not allow the lowest paid categories to recover from the rollback; needless to say they would not get a salary increase.

Seniority is not affected by across-the-board increases. It remains as the way of defending the rights of employees who have joined the union for the longest period of time. Step-seniority increments, job security, more vacation entitlement, preference in the choice of working hours, preference in promotions and transfers, more independence in their jobs, and so on.

Once across-the-board increases are established as a norm in a union, the union can concentrate in acquiring more justified benefits for employees who have been for the longest time in the union.

There are three specific reasons we can add to the general ones I just mentioned for choosing an across-the-board increase:

- The AIB is being paid back on an across-the-board basis. The decision was taken through a referendum vote. The people who argued in favour of an across-the-board pay said that they couldn't think of a fairer way of dealing with this economic hardship. I ask them now: Is there a fairer way of dealing with the present needs of our members than an across-the-board wage increase? H

- The reduction of the classification scale and the wage gap between employees was partially accomplished at the time of certification of our union, and since then it remains as one of our major goals.

- For those who really believe that categories in the union should be maintained, let me add that an across-the-board increase this year would not eliminate the present wage gap between classifications, it would only stop it from widening.

In summary: We want a strong union. We all want to stand united. Let us in this spirit ratify the decision of our April 14th general membership meeting and vote for an across-the-board increase.

a new issue

WHY A PERCENTAGE AND WHY NOW?

The rollback is across-the-board; we all determined the fairness of this proposal. Now the question has been raised as to how those who voted for across-the-board rollback can justify a percentage increase at this point. As one member who voted for across-the-board payback and will most assuredly vote for a percentage increase for this contract, I would like to try to explain this apparent inconsistency.

Our pay scale has been greatly compressed with the settlement of the last contract; there is a very small difference between pay grades. I personally feel that this difference is a little too small -- but let that pass for the moment. The point is that the increase was negotiated in an across-the-board fashion and has been rolled back in the same manner. If it had been rolled back on a percentage basis, the differences in pay scales would have been even smaller than they are currently, not to mention the fact that they would be variable (i.e., that the difference between a clerk I and a clerk II would have been greater than the difference between a clerk III and a clerk IV). I feel that, if there is to be any variation in the differences between the scales that they should be higher in the higher categories. (Many of us can see that the differences between some clerk I jobs and some clerk II jobs is minimal, yet we all know how drastically most clerk IV jobs differ from clerk III jobs.)

My point is this: The last contract and the payback is one single issue. The settling of the 1976-77 contract is a new issue.

We have the right to re-assess our position. We may look at our new, rolled back wage scale and decide if we wish to increase it by an across-the-board amount or a percentage figure.

I feel guilty when I look around me in the Finance department. I see clerks IV around me some of whom have been at the top step of clerk IV since I started here (four years ago). They receive no step increase, there are no promotions available (they aren't computer operators and P&S positions are few and very far between) and they feel a little neglected. Their deductions are larger than mine, their expenses are greater than mine, and consequently their increases are less than mine. An across-the-board increase is not acceptable to me. I will vote for a percentage increase.

Neil Boucher

A DEFINITION:

What is a percentage?

by Jeff Hoskins

While some people are evangelizing the endless merits of percentage increases I think there is some merit in discussing just what a percentage means.

The issue is confusing. You can't talk about percentages and know what you've got to spend. I mean, when I get into a store they always ask for dollars, never for per cents. If we're going to talk about percentages, I think we'd better find out what kind of dollars a percentage means for everyone.

Recently, the University raised the salaries of the four vice-presidents by 4.4%. Doesn't sound like much until you realize that on their \$54,000 it means \$200 a month. By contrast, 4.4% on the average AUCE salary would be about \$37 a month. Percentages are deceptive - the same percentage means far more to highly paid administrators than to lower paid workers.

One of the most (of many) unfair aspects of the AIB programme is that it is based on percentages. The higher you were paid before controls, the more dollars you are allowed under controls. Therefore, those in lower paid jobs and those paid less as a group (ie., women) will fall further behind yet.

What a percentage means, then, is that some people get a larger increase simply by the right of already having more than others.

Surely this is one of the weakest reasons for giving more money to some people than others. I mean, you could argue that some people should get more because they need more. We could administer a means test to find out who has more dependents or expenses or whatever and compare that to their present salary and give higher increases to those with the greatest need over what they have now.

Or, we could find out who works hardest and give them more. Or, who has the crummiest, most boring job or the nastiest boss. A case could be made for each of these - pay for suffering and what not.

But a bigger increase for those who are already paid more - well, the case is a little weaker; it's based partly on guilt. Some how their past increases weren't good enough, although they were all the same the first year (\$225) and last year with the restructuring of the pay scale the III's and IV's got more than the I's and II's. And based partly on self-interest - after all when the I's and II's get up to higher classifications they don't want to distribute money equally any longer.

Well, I don't think it matters who's in what classification. The people at the top are already paid more. If they have high seniority they get more vacation, more job security, and, generally, they have more interesting and challenging jobs. When it comes to increases I think we all deserve the same money - an across-the-board increase is the fairest.

A REPRINT

April 29, 1977

To the Membership;

I guess it has to do with how fast you want to get there.

Our last two sets of negotiations have been pretty ambitious undertakings. First we were seeking to determine our priorities and establish our rights. Then in the fol-

lowing negotiations to clarify our vision and rectify the long-standing inequities in the pay scale. All in all, those first years saw many essential changes in employer/employee relations on campus - and not just in the clerical/library ranks, but in every area of the University's structure.

It wouldn't be unreasonable to say that the effecting of those changes drew much from the rapidly changing consciousness of the clerical/library staff in regard to women's rights and equality in the work force. But it would really be stretching the truth to say that discontent with the University's policy regarding support staff (regardless of sex) began with the decision to organize.

I began my employment with the University some time before the Union was thought of, and I also began earning at about the mid-range of the old pay scale due to the nature of the work I do. I was glad to be working here if for nothing more than the beauty of the location. But from the outset it was clear that the University was a good deal less than concerned about the welfare of its employees in the support staff.

The one main thing I remember about the working situation here when I first arrived was the regularity with which the more senior members of the staff left the campus. It wasn't a matter of reaching retirement age, but rather of reaching a "dead end" financially (therefore, professionally). Since in those days the University did not give annual raises to support staff except with a promotion, you stayed in its employ only out of a sense of sacrifice or of inferiority. If you wanted good pay or a job with a future you went elsewhere.

With the coming of the Union came hope of improved wages. So far, however, those of us who have been waiting for so long are still waiting. At first - knowing of the dire necessity of improving the low end of the pay scale and easing the hurt those employees had been suffering, most of us, I know, were glad to bow to their request for an across-the-board increase. With the second contract came even more outrageous inflation than before, plus the pressing need to rework the pay scale itself. In reworking the pay scale we were both improving the pay of the lower classifications and making it worthwhile to climb that scale. But, of course, we could do nothing about extending the steps ad infinitum without creating absurd inequities.

So the middle to higher classifications bowed to the need for the changed pay scale and sacrificed once again the increases that were becoming harder and harder to do without.

The last couple negotiations have tended, with the repeated across-the-board increases, to squeeze the high and low ends of the scale into an ever burgeoning middle. While it is nice to see the rising level of the base rate, it would be most welcome for the Union to at last ensure that the middle to high end of the scale start recouperating from the last few years. There are over 500 employees in this Union who have watched their increases mean less and less every year. It's about time that the lower classifications helped us to improve our lot! I've accumulated twelve years of experience at my work and was underpaid even before the Union existed. It's time the membership reminded itself that there are a wider range of problems to be met than can be remedied by quantum leaps in the base rate!

Lissett Nelson implied at the last membership meeting that improving the lowest wages was AUCE's main objective in forming, and further, that we had a commitment to continue to go for across-the-board increases. If we have ever been committed to such a direction it has only been because we deemed it necessary at the time. Her statements in effect disenfranchised almost half of the membership by implying that Local #1 must never go for a percentage increase because this will give the middle to high classifications more dollars than the low to middle ones.

She seems to be saying that we have a "duty" never to give more dollars to one than the other, that the divinely-given eighty dollars between classifications must remain because it should remain! (No longer are we in the realm of finances. Somewhere along the line Lissett and those who feel as she does, have moved us into the realm of metaphysics by dogmatizing our past actions into moral imperatives!)

I would like to submit that we have no such imperative and that if we did it would be to the clear disadvantage of at least half of the membership.

I would only ask each member to try to keep in mind that we have made improvements in the base rate, and though we have not yet made parity with some of the male-type jobs on campus, we also have never adequately compensated our long-term employees. It's not impossible to do both in time,

but if we insist on pursuing one to the detriment of the other the imbalance will surely lead to a bitter end for the Union.

I, too, wish for the bettering of conditions for the lower classifications. But I want to see this Union start serving all of its members NOW, once and for all. The shabby methods used to halt discussion on Valerie Pusey's motion regarding a percentage increase at the last membership meeting has really alerted me to the fact that I may not have anyone looking after my interests. I'm dismayed that we now have to beg the lower classifications for what we need.

Robert Gaytan

Data Processing

FOR A FEW DOLLARS MORE?

I had composed a lengthy article strongly urging the membership to vote for the across-the-board approach - it had to be set aside when the newsletter reached its twenty-four page limit.

Many of the reasons why I am opposed to a percentage increase have been dealt with - some have not. Misconceptions and myths run amok. Arguments and positions are not developed to their logical conclusions. The debate is necessary, but it should have been initiated after this set of negotiations had been resolved. Many questions remained unanswered.

The present debate is ill-timed and hasty. For the sake of a few dollars more for the higher classifications - if, indeed, that is what is at stake (and I have my doubts) - the whole affair hardly seems worth it. It would have been more opportune to have initiated a more analytical and purposeful debate for the next set of contract proposals.

I am an LA IV with seven years of library experience. I support - barely - a wife and a child, and I believe I have benefited greatly from the different approaches taken in the past sets of negotiations. I support the across-the-board approach - as do many other members in the higher classifications. We are by no means a monolithic group harbouring resentments that we have been shafted because of past sacrifices.

I will vote for an across-the-board increase.

Ray Galbraith