

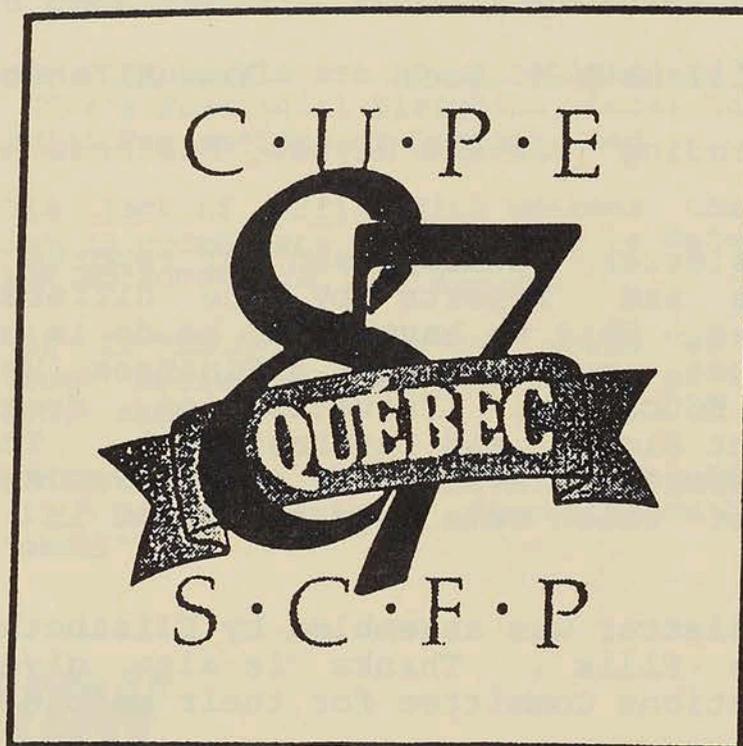


Canadian  
University  
Employees

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224-2308

# CUE GOES TO



## CONVENTION

Oct. 26-30

This is a special newsletter covering the CUPE 1987 National Convention. The CUE delegates who attended this convention were:

Adrien Kiernan	President
Pamela Lundrigan	2nd Vice-President
Diana Ellis	Secretary-Treasurer
Susan Berry	Chief Shop Steward
Elizabeth M. Zook	Communication Chair

Also attending was Rod Haynes, Business Agent for CUE.

This newsletter is comprised of reports by the delegates and reports by the different CUPE committees. What we have tried to do is cover the main issues, such as CUPE's Finances, Health and Safety, Education, Privatization, Free Trade, Employment Rights and International. There was more information available on these and other issues, of which some may be found in the CUE office.

This newsletter was assembled by Elizabeth M. Zook and Diana Ellis. Thanks is also given to the Communications Committee for their participation.

# **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

As President of this local I feel that my report should be one to inform you, the membership, of the most controversial issues voted on at the CUPE Convention. What follows is my report on these issues and the outcome of them.

## **ISSUE**

### **CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT C-15 TO FORCE ALL LOCALS TO JOIN ALL OF THE CUPE DISTRICT COUNCILS AND PROVINCIAL FEDERATIONS OF LABOUR**

WHEREAS many CUPE locals are not affiliated to CUPE District Councils, CUPE's Provincial Divisions, Local Labour Councils and Provincial Federations of Labour; and

WHEREAS this lack of affiliation weakens the ability of these bodies to coordinate local unions to defend the labour movement and to accomplish its agenda;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the words "be urged to" be deleted from Articles 15.2 and 15.3 of the National Constitution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the word "should" in articles 15.4 and 15.5 of the National Constitution be replaced by the word "shall".

## **DISCUSSION**

The committee recommended nonconcurrency with this motion and the motion was defeated. CUPE 2950 delegates also voted against this Amendment since it could have forced us to join the B.C. Federation of Labour as well as the CUPE B.C. Division.

This Executive feels that it would be desirable to do so in order for us to become aware of the local issues confronting all CUPE members. However, over the past year we could not recommend to the membership that we join the B.C. Federation nor CUPE B.C. as we financially could not afford to do so and with the passing of that resolution, we would not have had a choice.

# ISSUE

## SUBSTITUTE RESOLUTION 404

Covering strike pay was debated and became a very contentious issue.

There were several resolutions put forward on strike pay increases ranging from \$150.00 per week to \$250.00 per week and that benefits payable, for dependants for example, be also increased.

Finally, the following resolution was agreed to:

WHEREAS when strikes occur in the public sector, they are becoming longer and longer in duration; and

WHEREAS the cost of living has risen steadily for several decades; and

WHEREAS the level of strike benefits paid under the National Defence Fund have not risen adequately to cover cost of living increases; and

WHEREAS the National Executive Board (NEB) must take into consideration a number of factors, including needs and financial resources available, in setting an appropriate level of strike benefits; and

WHEREAS the National Executive Board has recently decided to increase the level of strike benefits to \$100.00 per week (effective January 1, 1988);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NEB consider fully all affiliate concerns with regard to the level of strike benefits currently being paid; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NEB review on a regular basis all factors associated with determining an appropriate level of strike benefits payable.

# DISCUSSION

The approval of this resolution is a major step forward since union members will not be so afraid, when it is necessary, to vote to strike to support their demands and have the fear of not being able to feed themselves and keep a roof over their head. Certainly, the strike pay is still not what it could be, but it is a step in the right direction.

# ISSUE

## SUBSTITUTE RESOLUTION NO. C 702

### ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL CONVENTION ASSISTANCE FUND

WHEREAS, to foster maximum participation of chartered organizations in CUPE National Conventions, the 1985 National Convention approved, in principle, the establishment of a National Convention Assistance Fund; and

WHEREAS a subsequent membership survey overwhelmingly supported this initiative and expressed very clear expectations of such a Fund; and

WHEREAS yesterday, the National Convention adopted the Report of the National Convention Assistance Fund Committee; and

WHEREAS the National Executive Board assures the establishment of a system of advances to the eligible local unions that apply for assistance from this fund;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the recommendations of the National Convention Assistance Fund Committee form the basis for the establishment and administration of a National Convention Assistance Fund; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the second last sentence of Article 6.3 (a) of the CUPE Constitution be amended to read:

"A registration fee of \$100.00 for each delegate shall be attached to the duplicate credential forwarded to the National Office."; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a new Article 6.3 (c) be added to the CUPE Constitution as follows:

"\$75.00 of the delegate registration fee shall be placed in the National Convention Assistance Fund financially to assist Local Unions with the cost of sending a single delegate to Convention. Not less than 90 calendar days prior to issuing the convention call in the case of a regular Convention, and 30 calendar days prior to issuing the convention call for each Special Convention, the National Secretary-Treasurer shall provide all Local Unions with a copy of the application form and guidelines. The National Convention Assistance Fund shall be governed by the regulations established by the National Executive Board in compliance with National Convention decisions."; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Article 6.3 be amended to provide that in 1991, the delegate registration fee be increased by a further \$20.00, with the additional monies placed in the National Convention Assistance Fund to help Local Unions to offset travel cost increases, etc., and improve the Fund's effectiveness; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that at each National Convention the National Secretary-Treasurer make a full report to the Convention on the administration of this Fund.

# DISCUSSION

This resolution was defeated on several occasions and never did get passed. The resolution was favoured by the majority of delegates which included CUPE 2950 delegates. The contentious issue with respect to this resolution was the formula to be used to levy a fee in order to help our poorer sister locals to attend conventions.

We could have far wider participation in the Convention, which would greatly benefit us all, except for the fact that the cost of sending delegates to the convention is too onerous for some locals. There was attendance from 600 locals out of a possible 2200 locals, so you can readily see how much greater the solidarity would be if all locals could be represented.

# ISSUE

## THE RIGHT TO NEGOTIATE MANDATORY RETIREMENT

The issue of the right to negotiate mandatory retirement was debated. The Convention agreed with the recommendation that unions should have the right to negotiate mandatory retirement.

The Committee Report on this issue pointed out that New Brunswick, Manitoba and Quebec have banned mandatory retirement and further, that the federal government has declared the same intention. The paper pointed out that the fundamental issue involved in this issue is the principle of individual choice. All employees should have the right to choose when they are going to retire. However, that choice is not made simply in a context of employee specific factors such as health, desire to work and personal productivity.

It is also made in a broader context of interlocking factors related to the particular employment situation and his or her fellow workers - pension provisions, employee benefits, and employer policies regarding the job security of older workers. These are questions that are at the very heart of our negotiating responsibilities as trade unionists.

Maximizing individual choice in this broader trade union context can only take place in a balanced and fair way when employees as a group have, through their bargaining agent, the ability to make a majority choice whether and how retirement should take place at a specified age. In other words, the conflicting needs and priorities of individual workers on this question - as with all questions in the workplace - should be decided for the benefit and security of the group as a whole. The issue of mandatory retirement does not affect just those employees who are at retirement age and want to continue to work; it affects all employees in the bargaining unit. And every workplace, every bargaining unit, is different.

For maximum fairness and protection, therefore, the matter of retaining or abolishing mandatory retirement (and the details thereof) should be decided by each bargaining unit in the interests of the majority. The alternative - abolishing mandatory retirement across the board, without attention to each workplace situation - poses certain dangers. First, it could adversely affect all employees through its impact on pension provisions. If employees were free to continue working for as long as they wished, could that undermine the willingness of the group as a whole to insist upon fully adequate pension provisions? It certainly might, with younger employees putting less emphasis on pension improvements, believing they could always continue working if their financial position were inadequate at the normal retirement age specified in the pension plan. That would be very undesirable.

Second, across the board prohibition could adversely affect the design and cost of other employee benefits programs, many of which involve distinctions based on age. For example, group life insurance and long-term disability coverage normally terminate at retirement age. Continuing coverage for employees who worked past normal retirement age could have heavy cost implications and consequences for the bargaining unit as a whole.

Third, and most important, across the board elimination for reasons of individual rights could have a very damaging impact on the job security and on the pensions of older workers. In many work settings, it is common for workers' health - and, in some cases, their effectiveness - to begin to decline as retirement age approaches. Where mandatory retirement is in effect, and where an employee who may be having difficulty has only a few years to go to reach that age, most employers will keep such a worker on the job until the specified retirement age is reached. In the process, the employee maximizes his or her pension. In other words, the employer accepts a lower effectiveness level for a certain period of time, knowing that the worker made a greater contribution earlier in his or her working life, and knowing that the worker can be replaced with a younger (perhaps more productive) worker at the specified time of retirement.

# DISCUSSION

The question of mandatory retirement has come up in our bargaining unit and in some cases the University, where it has chosen to do so, has requested that an employee have their retirement extended and in other instances, has encouraged early retirement.

The Union's position has been that our contract should be adhered to and that the University should not be able to selectively choose to extend the retirement age for a favoured few.

# A Delegates View ...

Hello. I'd like to share with you my feelings on CUPE 2950's attendance and participation at the 13th Annual National CUPE Convention held in Quebec City, October 26 - 30th, 1987.

Sitting in the convention hall with over 1700 other union delegates, listening to members from across the country share their experiences, I became aware of how localized each union can be. Becoming conscious of universal, national and regional difficulties and happenings was one of the most important changes that occurred to me. It left me with a feeling of togetherness, with the knowledge and comfort that we're not facing our obstacles alone. Seeing the support expressed for one another, I felt more optimistic in facing our struggles more readily, with more spirit and determination.

Some of what we face in B.C. has been experienced and fought in other provinces. For example, aspects of Bill 19, like the Successor Rights clause, are embodied in Section 37 of Saskatchewan's legislation. Other locals nation-wide share certain struggles experienced by ours. The Ontario Library Division hosted a two-day seminar at the lunch hour on problems experienced in municipal, university and school libraries across the country. Members from each province and each division shared their difficulties. Discussion followed on how to combat the inequities.

During lunch breaks and evenings, many forums were held, enabling delegates to network and build an information and support system to deal with issues and problems, and to discover alternate ways of handling them. Contacts were made, with commitments to continue the sharing and support process. We will be receiving contracts and legislation from across the country with which to compare our own. The experience of many old-time delegates is invaluable, and you can be sure we tapped that experience.

The next National CUPE Convention will be held in Vancouver in October of 1989. At this time our contacts will be reinforced, further cementing the solidarity among member locals.

Our local is one of 2200 sister locals that comprise CUPE National. We can feel proud to be a part of such a strong organization, an organization that promotes affirmative action policies and equality in every area.

By Pam Lundrigan

# ISSUE: CUPE's Finances

## REPORT OF THE NATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER

Our National Secretary-Treasurer, Jean-Claude Laniel, presented the 1986-87 financial statements and reported on the current status of CUPE's finances. He discussed the effect the percentage per capita tax has had and emphasized CUPE's commitment to a more active and effective union.

Laniel said that the general fund has been used effectively to increase and improve services to our members but the demands of the past two years tested our commitment to our beliefs and our resources. This has resulted in the fund going \$4 million over budget in 1986-87.

He informed us that the number of CUPE locals has increased from 1930 (in 1985) to 2081 and it is estimated that by the end of 1987 CUPE will have over 350,000 members.

Members equity in CUPE's National Defense Fund is more than \$17.5 million. The fund has been used "to combat the ever more sophisticated and coordinated attacks on our members". It has funded fights against contracting-out, strike-averting campaigns and has financed the computerization of CUPE offices.

Overall CUPE's finances are healthy and growing. The future of CUPE's finances is described in the policy statement on CUPE's Financial Strength which was adopted at the convention. The policy statement reviews CUPE's strategy to ensure our financial strength and reinforces our commitment to use resources responsibly and creatively to build the unions strength.

Both the Secretary-Treasurers report (including all financial statements) and the policy paper are available in the union office.

## POLICY STATEMENT

### CUPE'S FINANCIAL STRENGTH

By themselves, financial resources cannot create and maintain a strong, dynamic trade union. Without a motivated membership and trained, committed activists and leaders, the size of a union's bank account does not translate into an effective fighting organization. But at the same time, to stay effective and strong, and to sustain its ability to meet employers on equal terms, a union needs a continuing strategy which will ensure its financial strength for today and for the future.

In the past, CUPE has adopted and put into practice elements of such a strategy. For years, the National Executive Board has been committed to building a fighting organization and providing the membership with needed tools and services, even though that has often required funding additional to the annual revenue. To do this, the Board and the National Convention have pledged not to act like a government or a business (i.e., not to balance the budget on the backs of the membership). Instead, to increase activism and effectiveness, CUPE has borrowed against future revenues, using today's responsible deficits — financed for years through the Credit Union and now through the National Defence Fund — to build a stronger union for today and tomorrow.

Wisely, CUPE long ago rejected any Tory-like preoccupation with a "balanced budget". But from time to time, the union still faced a strained financial situation, a debt of several million dollars, and doubts about money. On those occasions, proposals for per capita increases became based not so much on the increased services that a stronger union might make possible, but on forecasts of financial calamity if increases were rejected. Just as it did in our workplaces, "restraint" sometimes became the watchword, to the detriment of legitimate membership needs. Slowed growth, frustration, and failure to innovate and progress came to the fore.

All this has given a glimpse into what our activist union can and must be in the late 1980's and beyond. It has pointed the way toward the maintenance of an organization capable of defending and advancing the members' interests in every province and every community. CUPE has kept on the right track, though of course we still have far to go and much to achieve.

As already noted, to meet these objectives the tradition of deficit financing has been continued. More has been spent than has been taken in through the per capita tax, and we have accordingly borrowed to meet the shortfall. (Incidentally, the decision to cover the previous debt and succeeding deficits by borrowing in-house, rather than from the Credit Union, has saved us hundreds of thousands of dollars in interest payments to the bank since 1984.) Meanwhile, the difference between revenue and expenditures has not been excessive: in the last three fiscal years, the deficit has averaged about 6% of total revenues annually.

We believe this approach — using resources responsibly and creatively to build the union's strength — has been the right one. CUPE has to keep moving forward, and it has done so. The deficits have been responsible and manageable, and we should continue to ensure, under the guidance of the National Secretary-Treasurer, that any future deficits remain so.

At the 1985 National Convention, delegates took the step of implementing a percentage per capita — a per capita based on the local union's average regular wage rate, rather than a fixed monthly amount — and of cutting in half the proportion devoted to the National Defence Fund. The percentage formula was phased in over three stages, with a figure of .61% coming into effect January 1, 1989. The percentage figures arrived at (in 1985, but for 1989) required more than foresight — they required a good deal of guesswork too. Why? Because it was difficult to foresee the level of expenditures that would be required for four or more years to meet the needs of the union, and because it was even more difficult to predict the revenues that the new formula would produce. (The union's revenues were no longer based on a simple multiplication of the number of members times a flat monthly sum (such as \$11.25). From 1986 onward, revenues also depend on factors such as the wage increases negotiated by each local, the mix of full-time and part-time members, and the timeliness of locals in making the switchover from paying on the flat rate to paying on the percentage per capita.)

Given that uncertainty in forecasting revenues and expenditures, the Convention decided to deal with the period up to January 1, 1989. In view of this, the incoming CUPE National Executive Board should carefully examine CUPE's financial resources and growing requirements (General Fund and National Defence Fund) for 1989 and beyond. Local union financial capacities, as well as the particular situation of historically self-servicing locals, provincial locals, and provincial bargaining groups, should be carefully examined as well. Local union advice, input and expertise in this regard should be utilized by the Board to the fullest. Experience has shown that CUPE members want a dynamic, activist union, and that they give their union the financial means to make that happen. At the 1989 National Convention, the National Executive Board should report to the delegates accordingly, including a comprehensive financial plan, accurate forecasts, the assurance of continued full accountability, and a program for action, service and security that are related to revenues.

At the 1983 and 1985 National Conventions, the delegates made it clear that they wanted a commitment to build an activist union based on rank-and-file knowledge and strength. New programs, ideas and approaches were needed, and the National Executive Board moved to meet the challenge. Drawing upon the National Defence Fund, the Special National Defence Program was created to give impetus to our membership education program (the key to a well-trained and committed core of activists), and to develop new training programs for rank-and-file occasional instructors, rank-and-file trainee representatives, and existing staff representatives. Within the scope of our financial capacities, responses were developed to the urgent need to step up CUPE's ability to fight contracting-out and privatization, by helping to subsidize local union and Division campaigns, by putting in place full-time national and assistant national coordinators, and by establishing a national task force to help get the job done. A massive program of internal computerization was set in motion which, by early next year, will result in the introduction of effective computer technology into all CUPE offices across Canada. Significant additions were made to the CUPE staffing complement in areas of servicing need, together with the creation of a Health and Safety Department and an Equal Opportunities Department, plus the introduction into various regions of staff lawyers and specialists in public relations, equal opportunities, research, and health and safety. Dozens of temporary rank-and-file organizers were taken on to spearhead organizing drives. The need of local unions and staff for temporary replacements on certain occasions when staff representatives are ill or on vacation began to be addressed. There have been several significant increases in weekly strike benefits. And, very importantly, CUPE has utilized its momentum to help lead the labour movement in struggles against cutback-minded governments and their anti-labour legislation right across the country — from Bill 59 in Newfoundland, to Bills 37 and 160 in Quebec, to contracting-out and Bills 19 and 20 in B.C.; from New Brunswick cities' attacks on their police and municipal workers, to Getty's cuts and contracting-out in Alberta, to the Saskatchewan government's attempt to turn the clock back fifty years.

These and other programs have made a difference. We are a union very much on the move, with a strong level of commitment and involvement. That growing strength can be seen in many ways, but perhaps most dramatically in our expansion in membership. In a time of public sector cutbacks, when some of our locals have suffered substantial cuts in their membership through attrition and layoffs, CUPE has grown by a net increase of 50,000 in the last three-and-a-half years. (To give that figure greater perspective, there are only nine unions in the Canadian Labour Congress that have that many members in total.) The difference can be seen in other ways too — such as the positive tone of conventions, educationals and conferences, the increased interest of members in becoming involved at all levels of the union, and the outpouring of mutual support for locals, councils and Divisions involved in struggles against employers and governments bent on crushing them.

# ISSUE: CUPE computer systems

Over the last two years CUPE has been computerizing their national and regional offices. The new software programs for local unions were previewed at the CUPE showcase. They include:

The **Local Union database** which was specially written (using DBase III) for CUPE local unions and is available to locals free of charge. It allows the computer to track mailing information, job related information on members and grievances. These programs run on IBM or IBM compatible microcomputers. (we have an IBM micro)

The mailing part of the program lets you print out specialized mailing lists on labels. The job tracking allows you to keep information such as a history of an employee's jobs in the unit, personal information (birthdates, home address, etc), starting date and occupation. In the grievance part of the program you can track which employees have active grievances by both grievance type and step.

Our current computer database system is capable of all these functions except the grievance handling. Our system is using a database program called Sensible Solution.

CUPE helps its locals purchase **commercially available software programs**. The prices of the programs are 50% subsidized by CUPE. They include: **WordPerfect** - the standard CUPE wordprocessing program (our local is currently using MicroSofts The Word). **CrossTalk** a communications program we would need to access CUPE's computer communications network, SoliNet. **Lotus 123** which is a spreadsheet program (we are already using it).

**SoliNet** CUPE's Solidarity Network allows local unions with a micro capable of communications to do electronic mail (the use of computers to send messages to individuals) and computer conferencing (groups of people use the computer to send each other messages as well as read all the messages sent by members of the group). This will enable locals to communicate with other locals anywhere in the country at any time of the day or night.

SoliNet subscribers will have legal passwords and authorization to read the messages of particular conferences. Electronic mail is kept completely private between the individuals using the services.

All the programs previewed are still in the development and testing stages and should be available in the spring of 1988.

*\*\*\* Our current computer system consists of an IBM XT with 2 hard disk drives (20 meg & 10 meg), 5 1/4 inch floppy disk drive, and an IBM Quietwriter III printer. We are using Sensible Solution for our membership database, MS-Word for wordprocessing and ACCPAC and Lotus 123 for our accounting functions. We don't have a modem (necessary for communications) or any communications software at this time.*

By Diana Ellis

## CUPE MEMBERSHIP/GRIEVANCE COMPUTER SOFTWARE

As does every large organization these days, CUPE has its own computer section. We visited the Computer Booth at the Convention to see what CUPE has available, and Diana Ellis is able to evaluate what would be of most use to CUPE 2950. Susan Berry was given a demonstration of the software program similar to DBase that would create data base Membership files and Grievance files. Since the program was still being developed in October we had the opportunity to make suggestions as to how it could be improved to make it more 'user friendly'. When the program has been completed and is available to the local union offices, Diana will re-evaluate the total package.

The Membership portion of the data base would contain much of what you might expect: name, address, phone number, date of birth, social insurance number, position(s) held (when and where), work location and phone, and supervisor. We requested CUPE add a section for retirement date, and for U.B.C. - a section for what Division the employee is in, and a section to note whether there is current grievance information for this employee. We were looking for a way that a simple command to the computer would allow us to easily and quickly compile a list of any combination of the above data that the union might deem necessary.

The Grievance portion of the data base would contain some of the above information, plus the following: Steward involved and the Steward work location and phone, type of grievance, sections for each Step of the grievance and the dates involved, date of most recent meeting, date of most recent correspondence, management personnel involved, arbitrator involved, date resolved, and a memo section (working somewhat like MS-WORD Windows) that would allow notes on the progress of the grievance to be input direct to the grievance file and easily recalled. We recommended some of the extra sections involved here and also the memo facility. This data base would be of most use to the members of the CUE Grievance Committee.

There will be PASSWORD restrictions built into this software package so that only the Union Executive and employees authorized would be able to access any of the data base. We were reassured that this part of the system would be written for maximum difficulty to be interfered with so that confidentiality and union security would be maintained.

By Susan Berry

# ISSUE: ELECTIONS

all elections were by acclamation

**PRESIDENT: Jeff Rose**

- president for the last 4 years

**SECRETARY-TREASURER: Jean-Claude Laniel**

- previous secretary-treasurer

## GENERAL VICE-PRESIDENTS

**Ed Blackman**

- President of the City of Winnipeg Employees Union
- Vice-President of CUPE Manitoba division
- this is his first term as a general VP

**Andre Charbonneau**

- from the Quebec division
- this is his first term

**Mike Dumler**

- full-time President of CUPE BC
- Vice-President of BC Federation of Labour
- member of CUPE National Computer task force
- second term as a general VP

**Lucie Nicolson**

- 12 years president of CUPE Ontario Division
- CLC vice-president
- officer of the Ontario Federation of Labour
- previous general VP

**Tom O'Leary**

- 4 years on the national executive board
- 14 years president of City of St. Johns Outside Municipal Workers
- 5 years president of Newfoundland & Labrador Division

Retiring General VP Jack Rodie was honored by the Saskatchewan division (which he represented) with a gift which "symbolizes Brother Rodie's courage, strength & commitment", a large statue of a black panther.

## REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENTS

Also elected by acclamation as the choices of their caucuses. Four were newly elected & the other 9 re-elected.

Lorne MacLeod	- Nova Scotia
Isabelle King	- NFLD & LABR
Jacques Sirois	- New Brunswick
Aubrey MacDonald	- PEI
Louise Valiquette	- Quebec
Maurice Vezina	- Quebec
Terry O'Connor	- South Ontario
Judy Darcy	- South Ontario
Daul Levesque	- North Ontario
Jacques Samyn	- Manitoba
John Welden	- Sask.
Dolores Viney	- Alberta
Bernice Kirk	- BC

# ISSUE: EDUCATION

CUPE'S University and College Caucus Meeting  
By Elizabeth M. Zook

The University Caucus meeting was held on Thursday, October 29th, after the convention adjourned. The university and college workers make up 5% of CUPE'S membership and the caucus was well attended. I have included in this section a list of all universities who belong to CUPE.

The common issues discussed were:

- . contracting out
- . wage freezes
- . telephone-registration
- . cutbacks
- . pay equity
- . technological change

Basically, the main concern is the lack of money being spent on higher education in Canada. Both Saskatchewan and B.C. seem to be the most affected by this through their provincial legislations.

There was also a discussion on CUPE'S new computer data-base system on all university collective agreements. Morna Valentine from the CUPE Research Department was present and explained that CUPE has been developing this data-base and would create a system named SALAD for all universities/colleges to use. In this system any local can go into the system and call up any collective agreement or part of a collective agreement of any other CUPE university/college local. For example, if our local wishes to know what is in other contracts in regards to VDT clauses, we may access these through the data-base. At present, the contracts for B.C., Saskatchewan and Ontario have been entered into this system. It was stated that the system will be complete within the next year.

During the caucus it was also mentioned that a one day conference for the university members be organized. This was brought up by CUPE 116 of UBC. The idea was well received and it was discussed as to how this could be developed, but no conclusions were drawn. It was thought that a questionnaire could be created and sent to the locals to get more input on this idea.

All in all, the caucus was good but it did give me a feeling of how small a portion of CUPE'S membership are actually university and college members. Within this section you will find a report on the Library Workers Caucus, and a Policy Statement on Education Reform and our Children. Within the Policy Statement we did take note that not much was said on post-secondary education. It was felt strongly by our delegates that the university and college locals need to develop a stronger voice in order to be heard along with other CUPE locals.

## LIBRARY WORKERS CAUCUS

There was a library workers caucus during the Wednesday and Thursday lunch breaks. Library workers from both the public and educational libraries from across Canada meet to discuss common problems that may face them.

The main issues seemed to be:

- tech change
- reorganization
- job evaluation
- the hiring of management consultants
- benefits for part-time employees
- centralization
- cutbacks

Both the public and university libraries are facing the same problems. It was felt that libraries are "ghettos" for female workers and that automation has caused "the industrialization of the work place".

The library workers in BC will be meeting November 12 in Vancouver. We were invited to attend.

We also were given a list of all the CUPE locals across Canada with library workers. This list included names and mailing addresses of contacts within most of those locals. There was a brief discussion on CUPE'S SALAD system and some of the information pertaining to library workers that is available through this system.

This is just a brief report on the caucus, a more detailed version is available to those interested at the Union office.

# POLICY STATEMENT

## EDUCATION REFORM AND OUR CHILDREN

Something is wrong with the education system.

For decades, CUPE members and other working Canadians have believed that education should be a means of promoting social equality, self-sufficiency, and mutual respect. Through quality instruction and first-class facilities, the education system should prepare children for productive and fulfilling lives, and give them the skills they need to find useful, satisfying work and to adapt to the future.

But it is becoming more and more obvious that Canada's education system is not achieving these goals. Cutbacks, closures, restraints and overcrowding have eroded the quality of teaching and the morale of all employees in the education system. Far too many workers' children never graduate from secondary school: the drop-out rate is in the area of 30% for the whole high school population, and as high as 70% for students in educationally-dead-end programs. Many children who do graduate from secondary school are unable to communicate effectively, read and write well, or do basic mathematics. A high proportion of young people enter the job market without any of the skills needed to find meaningful employment. And a worker/trade union perspective is completely absent from the curriculum in all but a handful of examples.

These and other education issues — such as the underfunding of schools, colleges and universities; the unacceptably high class sizes; the reliance on an inadequate tax base for funding; the increasing costs which impede access to post-secondary education by the children of workers' families; the erosion of a good learning environment through the use of crowded facilities and portables; and the current expansion of the private education system while the public system is in relative eclipse — are all crucially important for CUPE members, and ones on which we must increasingly speak out.

Why? First, because of our responsibility to our own children, and the children of our fellow workers and trade unionists. Second, because we as public employees — and as school, college and university employees in particular — are in a key position to do so, and are able to speak with the authority of those who work every day in educational institutions and see first hand what is going on. Third, because a strong education system is squarely in our interests as workers — strengthening our job security, and increasing the satisfaction of our work. And fourth, because our involvement in education issues will foster the development of coalitions with groups who share our goals and concerns in these and other areas — teachers, other parents, students, progressive trustees, and concerned community groups — groups we can and should work with to improve all aspects of the system. For all these reasons, CUPE members must play a greater role in the policy planning, administration, and political accountability of education at all levels.

Particular attention must be paid to the areas of curriculum and "streaming". Workers believe that education provides one of the few opportunities available for our children to "get ahead" — to achieve a more satisfying, useful and fulfilling job and a higher standard of living. Yes, many children do succeed in school and attain their desired levels of education. But despite those successes, the painful reality is that the majority of children from workers' families — especially those from black, Asian, native and immigrant backgrounds — are "streamed" into educationally-dead-end programs. Once consigned to these programs, it becomes virtually impossible to re-enter a stream which would allow them to go on to a college, university or other post-secondary education. And, as noted above, the proportion of students dropping out of such programs is alarmingly high.

The education system thus perpetuates the economic structure of society (including the stereotyping of the role of women, which reinforces the inequality of women in the economy). On the whole, workers' children are streamed (using evaluation methods that inevitably give this overall result) into programs designed to produce the manual and service workers of the future. Children from professional/managerial homes are generally channelled into the "academic" stream, on their way to becoming society's future managers and professionals. Along the way, young people quickly and firmly learn that it is the ideology of business and management which is "valued" by society, and that manual and service work — however vital it may actually be for society — is for those who couldn't "make it". Small wonder that so many drop out and that so many are alienated, deciding that this kind of schooling isn't worthwhile and doesn't speak to the reality of their lives and their futures.

Many CUPE members are now questioning the kind of system that so consistently produces such results. They are particularly questioning the philosophy of education which removes the "bright" or "gifted" from the regular classroom for "higher-level" work, while sending the "bottom stream" to other classes (and sometimes other schools) for what can best be called therapeutic handling. While that philosophy is seen by some to be advantageous to the particular children affected, the result of this present system is that the regular classroom is weakened and fragmented, left to cater to the "average" student, and all students are deprived of the benefits of receiving their schooling with children with a broad range of academic abilities.

We in CUPE believe the educational system needs to be reformed, and that a major goal of such reform should be the elimination of curriculum-based streaming. Many steps need to be taken to reach this objective. Perhaps the most important step involves strengthening the regular classroom in our elementary schools, rather than fragmenting them into a spectrum of "special" classrooms for various levels of academically "advantaged" and "disadvantaged" children. Achieving a stronger regular classroom will require a level of funding which will facilitate optimum conditions for learning, including smaller class sizes, more teacher aides, and the best possible techniques, equipment, technology, materials and

accommodation. In curriculum terms, it will mean that new developments should focus on the regular classroom for implementation. It will mean tackling teacher training and teacher support in different ways, providing them with more time to work with one another, with other school employees, and with their school communities, to develop and implement meaningful programs and methods appropriate to their students' environment and lives. In secondary schools, it will mean strengthening the general-level programs — the programs in which most children of workers' families prepare for entry into the labour force — so that they challenge and stimulate students, relate to the reality of their futures, and focus on literacy skills and numeracy skills — language, logic and ideas — right across the curriculum.

Today's and tomorrow's workers are less in need of knowing and regurgitating "facts" (the focus of much of the current curriculum), or of acquiring and perfecting a particular "trade", than they are of developing the ability to think logically, to analyze, and to communicate using language and numbers. Those abilities, and the resulting ability to adapt to the changing requirements of the information/service economy, are dependent on the mastery of language, logic and ideas. These capabilities are thus the crucial base for all students, and must be the focus of future curriculum development across the entire education spectrum.

Does this mean that we support a "back-to-basics" approach? No, for that phrase is too often mixed up with a restrictive, fundamentalist approach to education (which denies the importance of relevant study areas such as human rights, labour studies, women's issues, etc.). Nor do we see education in terms of "preparation for a job", as opposed to "preparation for life". CUPE believes, rather, that literacy skills and numeracy skills should be the hub around which the whole curriculum is built, encouraging mastery of subjects which are truly rooted in the economic, social and political realities of Canada and the world.

In conclusion, these are just some of the pivotal issues in Canada's education system today. The point of this policy statement is not so much to lay down a rigid "blueprint" for educational reform, but rather to urge CUPE members at all levels of our union to become more involved, to raise public awareness, and to develop membership support and action on these issues (especially at the political level, where we can and should have a much greater impact on the election of school trustees). CUPE will also urge the development of a policy statement on education reform for the next CLC Convention. No longer should the policy planning, administration and political accountability of Canada's education system be left in the hands of a few. It is time we made our voices heard more strongly as parents and as trade unionists. Who better to promote the reform of the education system than the union that represents over 340,000 Canadians and their families, tens of thousands of whom work every day in our schools, colleges and universities.

Committee Recommendation: Concurrence  
Convention Decision: Favoured

# RESOLUTIONS

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## Resolution No. 115

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*Submitted by the Saskatoon District Council, Sask.*

WHEREAS the *CUPE Facts* is the most informative educational publication in Canada for CUPE members and active union members in general;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CUPE National's educational magazine, the *CUPE Facts* be utilized and actively promoted by the provincial education department when carrying out their educational program.

Committee Recommendation: Concurrence  
Convention Decision: Favoured

## CUPE UNIVERSITYS AND COLLEGES

December 31, 1987

<u>UNIVERSITY CAMPUS</u>	<u>UNION AFFILIATION</u>	<u># OF EMPLOYEES</u>	<u>OCCUP.</u>	<u>CONTACT</u>
Brock University	CUPE - L.1295	76	Manual	R. Kirton
(Part-Time)	CUPE - L.1295	6	Manual	R. Kirton
Saga Man Svs.A	CUPE - L.1295	35	Manual	R. Kirton
Camosun College	CUPE - L.2081	191	Manual Office	Val Groux
Caribou College	CUPE - L.900	65	Manual	John Enman
Carleton University	CUPE - L.910	103	Manual	Brian Brady
	CUPE - L.2424	600	Office Library & Tech.	Dixie Ellison
	CUPE - L.2323	650	Teaching Assist.	M. DeCoursey
	CUPE - L.2451		Manual	D. McKenzie
College of Cape Breton	CUPE - L.2733		Manual	Glenda Lewis
Dalhousie College and University	CUPE - L.1392	200	Manual	C. Hamilton
E. Kootenay Com. College	CUPE - L.2773	34	Office	C. Babineau
Keyano College	CUPE - L.2157	140	Manual Office	A. Harper
Laurentian University	CUPE - L.1555	21	Manual	J. Boucher
	CUPE - L.2660	21		S. Decosse
Malaspina College	CUPE - L.1858	117	Manual Office	Lynn Gibbs
Memorial University	CUPE - L.1615	725	Office	Patty Cave
Memramcook Inst.	CUPE - L.1044	26	Manual, Office	A. Leblanc
Mt. Allison Univ.	CUPE - L.2338	91	Manual	J. Zoellner
	CUPE - L.1440	20	Manual	A. Parsons
Niagara Institute	CUPE - L.2802	10	Office	Roger Rutton

Northwest Community College	CUPE - L.2409	17	Professional	C. Stanley
Queen's University Library	CUPE	325	Manual	
Queen's University	CUPE - L.254	130	Technical	Ray Pare
	CUPE - L.1302	160	Library	E. Compeau
Red Deer College	CUPE - L.1445	78	Office	D. Gauthier
Ryerson Polytechnical	CUPE - L.233	63	Manual	J. Viera
	CUPE - L.596	522	Manual Office	
Simon Fraser Stud. Society	CUPE	11	Office	
St. Francis Xavier University	CUPE - L.1626	10	Guards	Paul White
Universite de Montreal	CUPE	1160		
	CUPE	250		
University du Quebec	CUPE	850		
Universite Laval	CUPE	1800		
University of British Columbia	CUPE - L.116	1600		
	CUPE - L.2950	1350		
	CUPE - L.2278		Teach. Assist.	
	CUPE - L.882	1500	Oper.Eng.	
University of Guelph	CUPE - L.1334	355	Manual	H. Morton
University of Manitoba	CUPE - L.1482	40	Engineer.	B. Bourbonnais
University of New Brunswick	CUPE - L.1326	390	Manual Office	C. Campbell
	CUPE - L.2266	69	Manual	D. Brown

University of Prince Edw. Island	CUPE - L.1870	47	Manual Office	J. McLaine
	CUPE - L.501	9	Guards	K. Lavers
University of Regina	CUPE - L.2419	311	Teaching	S. Hamm
	CUPE - L.1975	486	Manual Office	B. Leer
University of Saskatchewan	CUPE - L.1975	1900	Manual Office	B. Leer
University of Toronto	CUPE - L.1230	299	Office	Joan Links
University of Victoria	CUPE - L.917	240	Manual	E. Ewen
	CUPE - L.951	505	Office	J. White
University of Waterloo	CUPE - L.793	407	Manual	
University of Western Ontario	CUPE - L.2361	319	Manual	W. Dempsey
	CUPE - L.2692	127	Manual	J. Clark
University of Windsor	CUPE - L.1001	178	Manual	A. Sorrentino
	CUPE - L.1343	58	Technical	J. McGuire
Victoria University (U of T)	CUPE - L.3109	39	Manual	V. Soundy
Wilfred Laurier	CUPE - L.926	72	Manual	David Green
York University	CUPE - L.1356	250	Manual	A. Starosticki

SB-File: CUPElist

# ISSUE: Health & Safety

## HEALTH AND SAFETY FACT SHEETS (By Susan Berry)

There was a Health and Safety information and booth set up at the Convention Hall displaying some of the Fact Sheets and other booklets published by CUPE on some of the pressing issues. The following is a précis of the booklets available that we obtained for the CUPE 2950 office. If you are interested in reading any of these in detail, please drop by the union office and ask the secretary for them:

### AIDS

#### 1. FACT SHEET - AIDS

This three page report briefly offers an accurate description of AIDS and answers some of the main questions about AIDS:

What is AIDS?

What are the causes?

What are the symptoms?

Who is affected?

How is the AIDS virus spread?

How can a person know if they've been exposed to AIDS?

Are workers at risk?

How can potentially exposed workers be protected?

What are some controls specific for health care settings?

What about protection for other workers?

Some government sources for further information on AIDS.

#### 2. SEMCOSH FACT SHEET - AIDS IN THE WORKPLACE

Four page report published by Southeast Michigan Coalition on Occupational Safety and Health, reprinted through CUPE. This report addresses some of the fears and misconceptions about AIDS and offers sound advice and information:

What is AIDS?

Who is most at risk?

Close, non-sexual contact causes no risk.

AIDS is not easy to catch.

What precautions should be taken?

Where AIDS is NOT transmitted from.

Anti-AIDS discrimination.

What can unions do?

Resource material information.

#### 3. ALERT - Various topics

These single page sheets published by CUPE Health and Safety are printed out when potentially dangerous situations are recognized. The following were available at Convention.

Beware of the weed killer 2,4,5,T and 2,4,5TP.

(This weed killer leaves dioxin residues and is extremely toxic and carcinogenic. Its use has been banned in British Columbia).

Asbestos Fibres - A part of your daily breath

(U.B.C. has been involved in a program to remove asbestos insulation from the all campus buildings. If you note this type of insulation in your building, or have questions concerning the removal procedure going on in your work area please contact your Union Health & Safety Representative).

Self Contained Breathing Apparatus - May be the Death of You.

(Following units are faulty: Scott Air Pack II/IIA, Scott Pressure Pack II/IIA)

Beware of fleas and their treatments - LINDANE

(Some offices on campus have required insect spray from time to time. You should ask the exterminator exactly what they are using in your work area.)

P.C.B.'s exposure can cause disease

(Some of the older U.B.C. buildings have fluorescent light fixtures that have a ballast that contains PCB's. As these fixtures now move into their 'twilight' years the ballasts have been exploding. Do not attempt to clean up any oily, dark substance that you find dripping from these fixtures, or puddled below. Call the University Health & Safety Office for removal - fast.)

Photocopying machines may cause reproduction problems

(The main threat is not from the machine itself, but due to the location of the machine. Is your photocopier in a well-ventilated area?)

4. FACT SHEET - ASBESTOS

This is a seven page report on the health hazards related to asbestos that asks and answers the following questions?

What is Asbestos?

Are CUPE members exposed? (Yes)

What are the effects of exposure? (asbestosis and cancer)

How is asbestos recognized?

What is the cure? (none)

CUPE victims.

What types of cancer develop?

What are the safe levels?

How are Asbestos diseases prevented.

Are any occupations safe? (check your ventilation systems)

How is asbestos detected? (air sampling)

There is no safe level of exposure to asbestos.

5. BACK INJURIES - THE HIDDEN EPIDEMIC

A report contained in the Summer 1987 issue of CUPE Health & Safety.

In 1984 150,000 workers were off the job due to back injuries. Of these 29% were employed in educational institutions.

6. FACT SHEET - CYTOTOXIC DRUGS

These are drugs used in the treatment of cancer. Health care workers that are exposed to this drug (airborne or while administering to a patient) are at risk.

7. FACT SHEETS - ETHYLENE OXIDE, HYDROGEN SULFIDE

8. FACT SHEET - NOISE

This is a nine page report that begins by describing Noise as "any sound that is loud, harsh or undesirable". Any of you that has worked for a long period of time beside a 'noisy' ventilation, computer, or copying system can attest to the stress levels experienced:

What is Noise?

How is Noise Measured?

What causes Noise?

Is Noise harmful? (you bet)

How is hearing affected?

Are there any signs or symptoms?

Is there a safe level of noise? (below 80dB if 16 hours exposure)

How is a Noise problem detected?

How is Noise prevented? (sound covers on your printer)

Are there any other harmful effects? (decrease concentration)

Do workers have to live with Noise? (no)

9. FACT SHEET - VISUAL DISPLAY TERMINALS

Four page report developed from summary of Swedish statistics for the period 1976-1981. It is notable that 47% of people working 3.5 hrs/day at a VDT have eye related complaints, but increase the exposure, and 75% of people working 7.5 hrs/day have eye related complaints.

Health Hazards of VDTs

Are CUPE members exposed? (secretaries, library workers)

What are the effects of exposure? (alot)

Visual problems

Controls (union contracts)

Physical Hazards

Controls (ergonomics, limiting exposure)

Psychological Problems (stress)

Controls

Radiation

Symptoms and Signs

Controls

Resource information

10. HEALTH & SAFETY LIBRARY SOURCES

A five page list of the newsletters, texts, books, and audio-visual resources available on Health & Safety issues. If you are a member of your Department's Safety Committee you might be interested in having the union office send you a copy of these lists. There is something for every type of worker and work place listed.

Following is the Task Force Report of the National Health and Safety Committee and the Policy Statement on The Back Injury Epidemic. There were many resolutions passed on Health and Safety and these are available in the Union office.

# TASK FORCE REPORT

## NATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Since the last CUPE convention in Winnipeg, the National Health and Safety Committee has met on four occasions. This committee is comprised of members representing each province and one member from Ontario Hydro.

During our twice-yearly meetings the committee has discussed numerous ways of carrying out our mandate to help improve working conditions for CUPE members across the country. These include:

- development of written materials such as fact sheets, newsletters and more in-depth health and safety materials;
- targeting of special hazards for comprehensive coverage including audio-visual production, surveys, etc.;
- organizing and sponsoring a biennial national conference and assistance in the running of division conferences;
- action on legislative issues;
- planning for future programs.

### Materials and Audio Visual Development

Committee members targeted several topics for development of fact sheets or other informative materials. Since the January 1986 meeting, several of these new fact sheets have been produced. They cover:

- AIDS
- Cold Work
- Cytotoxic Drugs
- Ethylene Oxide
- Hydrogen Sulfide
- VDTs (update)
- Violence

The committee has also been concerned with regular publication of the health and safety newsletter. Deadlines were set in January 1986, and the Health and Safety News has been published on a quarterly basis since that time. A number of committee members have contributed articles to the newsletter. Two special issues, one focusing on Nova Scotia CUPE members and one on the Alberta scene, have been produced. The Alberta issue, produced for the first Alberta Division health and safety conference is accompanied by a 17-minute video, *Taking Care of Each Other*, which focuses on hazards faced by Alberta workers and what CUPE members are doing to make their workplaces safer and healthier.

## **Health and Safety Conference**

A major project for the committee has been organizing and conducting the fourth national health and safety conference.

The committee selected Halifax, Nova Scotia as the site for the 1986 conference and chose a theme reflecting CUPE's commitment to change and progress: "Blueprint For A Safe Future".

Over three hundred delegates from across the country attended the November 17-19 conference. On the committee's recommendation, the biennial function was structured to facilitate the development of guidelines for action on five key issues selected by the committee. These were:

- Communicable Diseases
- Employee Assistance Programs
- Smoking In The Workplace
- Violence On The Job
- Ventilation (indoor air quality and general ventilation issues)

Committee members made suggestions on material development, reviewed the draft workbooks and participated in the conference as resource persons or facilitators, or assisted with registration and the numerous activities necessary for a conference to function smoothly.

The conference format, which required full participation of delegates in preparing draft guidelines, was the subject of much discussion by the committee at their post-conference meeting. Based on preliminary evaluations, the committee decided that the working conference format should be used in future conferences. However, to ensure that the membership's feelings about the format were understood it was decided to do a follow-up evaluation of a random sample of participants, as well as facilitators and resource persons.

The results of the survey were the basis of a paper, *Worker Participation in Guideline Development*, presented by the Senior Officer in the Health and Safety Department at the XIth World Congress on the Prevention of Occupational Accidents and Diseases in Stockholm, Sweden.

The first guideline to be produced in final form, based on participant drafts, is *Stopping Violence At Work*.

Meanwhile, the committee begins planning for the 5th health and safety conference which will be held at the Banff Springs Hotel, Banff, Alberta, October 23-26, 1988.

## **Special Programs**

### **Surveys**

The committee suggested that the hazards facing sewage treatment workers should be studied, and became involved in a national survey of these workers. The study results reported by Dr. Roland Wong of the Manitoba Federation of Labour Occupational Health Centre are now available. The data show that sewage treatment plant workers, particularly in Toronto and Winnipeg, suffer higher than normal rates of some occupational diseases.

Interest in the issue of violence on the job led to the topic's inclusion in the 1986 National Conference. In addition, this interest has resulted in a number of surveys of violence in certain work populations, notably social service and health care workers.

Data from the study of social service workers in Winnipeg is currently being analyzed.

## **Backs**

In 1985 the committee identified back injuries as a major target area for CUPE action. Research and discussion on the topic have resulted in the development of CUPE's back program, a major endeavour for the next few years. This includes:

- an initial flyer announcing the campaign and seeking contact persons in each local union;
- a background booklet on the scope of back injuries, the causes and some solutions;
- a regular bulletin to keep locals informed about the campaign;
- a policy paper for the 1987 convention;
- a questionnaire to be administered at the 1987 CUPE annual convention;
- a 25-minute film on work-related back injuries and a union program for eliminating them, to be premiered at the 1987 CUPE convention;
- a pilot project with an employer who is interested in trying to change the pattern of injuries by changing the workplace and the work procedures.

In tackling this important issue CUPE has once again demonstrated that it is a leader in the field of health and safety.

## **Workers' Compensation**

The health and safety committee has become increasingly involved in the issue of workers' compensation, as the number of CUPE members seeking (and often being denied) compensation increases. Our concern over this issue has led to background research and development of several briefs on compensation, specifically for:

- the Newfoundland and Labrador Review Commission on the Workers' Compensation Act;
- the Newfoundland Division (impact of experience rating);
- the Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Ministerial Action Group Workers' Compensation Review;
- the New Brunswick Workers' Compensation Review Committee;
- the Alberta Minister of Community and Occupational Health (focus on light duty work and the right of injured workers to continuing employment).

In addition the committee has identified this as an area of ongoing concern.

## **Future Programs**

The committee has also identified issues which should be addressed by the committee, the department, indeed the union in the coming months. These include:

- the need for grass-roots training in handling workers' compensation and an increase in time devoted to this issue;
- the need for ongoing training of CUPE members, using the 30-hour program;
- the need for more CUPE developed audio-visual materials on health and safety issues. We need materials that speak to the needs of public employees;
- the need for additional informational materials such as pamphlets and fact sheets on topics including PCBs, carcinogens, radiation hazards, medical monitoring, the right to know (training in the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System), hazards for welders and painters, and accident investigation.

The committee is committed to uncovering hazards facing the membership and to seeking solutions that will improve the lives of CUPE members and all workers. We wish to thank our respective divisions for allowing us to serve their interests at the national level. We are open to all consultation with the membership and welcome all comments and requests for assistance.

### **Members of The National Health and Safety Committee**

Paula Celani-Capraro	Quebec
Bob Waghorn	British Columbia
Jamie Desmond	Manitoba
Una Pollock	Saskatchewan
Jack MacDonald	Ontario
Jim Bolan	Ontario
Peter Jones	Alberta
Terry Goulding	Newfoundland
Gerald Jackson	Prince Edward Island
Betty Warrell	Nova Scotia
Rollande Langlois	New Brunswick
Colin Lambert	staff

# **POLICY STATEMENT**

## **THE BACK INJURY EPIDEMIC**

There is an epidemic hidden in recent workers' compensation statistics. These statistics for 1984 (the latest figures available) show that 137,400 Canadian workers were incapacitated as a result of work-related back injuries. Together, these workers lost over 7 million work days in 1984: an average of 53 days lost per worker. And that's not the whole story. Many others suffered from work-related back injuries, but took unpaid leave (or used their sickness and accident plans) rather than claim workers' compensation.

Back injuries accounted for 27% of all compensation claims in that year. For many CUPE occupational groups, the back injury rate was around that average. But for others, the rate was worse. For example, in primary and secondary health care, 41% of all claims were for back injuries; in long-term nursing care, 51%; in educational institutions, 28%; in electrical utilities, 29%; and in municipalities, 29%.

The economic costs of back injuries are staggering. In the year in question, each back injury cost an average of \$5,480, totalling over \$750 million in direct compensation expenditures. But even these figures understate the total economic cost. Compensation expenditures cover only medical charges and direct wage repayments. Since workers on compensation receive a percentage of their normal salary up to a ceiling level, the total wage loss doesn't even get recorded. Lost time and lost production are not counted either. Replacement and training costs for new workers, as well as rehabilitation and retraining costs, are omitted as well. Clearly, the total economic costs are many times greater than those normally quoted in compensation statistics.

While the economic costs of back injuries are overwhelming, the costs in terms of human suffering are incalculable. Many thousands of workers live with chronic pain. Many thousands must rely on prescription drugs. Many thousands have lost the ability to work, and must live on welfare. Many thousands more have injuries which restrict the normal pleasures of family and personal life. The financial difficulties, physical restrictions and psychological trauma which often accompany chronic infirmity take their toll. The strain often leads to marital, family and other personal and social problems.

Despite these staggering human and economic costs, little is being done to address the back injury epidemic. Few preventive programs exist in workplaces. No government has enacted special regulations to reduce the toll. Instead, employers, safety organizations and government agencies continue to promote the unsuccessful programs of the past. They continue to rely on vague, ineffective regulations which fail to recognize that the major cause of back injuries is found in the workplace, not in the worker's back. They continue to focus on training workers to lift correctly, ignoring the need to eliminate the hazards that are the real causes of injuries.

For example, we know that there is a direct correlation between understaffing and back injuries, between repetitive lifting and back injuries, and between awkward lifting and back injuries. Yet little is being done to **reduce exposure** to such hazards. While employee training programs are important and should be increased, to rely only on training without dealing with the hazards themselves merely reinforces the "blame-the-worker" bias so prevalent on the job.

It is time to examine new initiatives. Back injuries must be treated in the same manner as other workplace health and safety hazards. Principles normally applied to other hazards must be used to control and ultimately halt the back injury epidemic. First, identify the causes. Then, eliminate the causes or modify the workplace (or the organization or pace of work) to **reduce exposure**. Then, educate and monitor carefully. These principles can and must be applied to reduce back injuries.

CUPE is putting employers, safety organizations and governments on notice that halting this back injury epidemic is a major national priority for this union. Our action plan calls for jobs to be redesigned to eliminate all unnecessary lifting, as well as the twisting and bending that increase the likelihood of damage to the back. We are insisting that workplaces and work organization be redesigned to reduce the pace of and need for much of the lifting. We are pressing for legislation that will require worksites and tasks to be ergonomically planned to eliminate as much lifting as technically possible. We are seeking limits on how much weight can be lifted, as well as limits on the number of lifts per shift. We are calling for more and better-designed lifting aids. And, very importantly, since understaffing is directly related to the number of lifts any one worker performs, we are insisting that sufficient staff be required so that legislation will be effective.

It is time society got serious about this hidden epidemic. Through the efforts of our National Health and Safety Committee, CUPE is determined at all levels of our organization to make this struggle a success.

Committee Recommendation: Concurrence  
Convention Decision: Favoured

# ISSUE: EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

Under this section you will find issues that deal with employment rights. There is the Task Force Report on Women, a Policy Statement on Harassment in the Workplace and a Resolution on Pay Equity and a Resolution on Affirmative Action. There was much more material available on these issues at the convention and they will appear in future newsletters. (by Elizabeth M. Zook)

## TASK FORCE REPORT

### NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON WOMEN

Since our last National Convention, we have faced many challenges and many changes have occurred. This report outlines our work for the past two years and sets out concerns which we feel have to be addressed in our future work.

Since October 1983, we have used the policy document "CUPE Women: Survival in the Crisis" as the cornerstone of our endeavours. As more female staff have been hired in the field and at National Office and with the continued integration of women on both the trainee rep. and occasional instructor's programs, CUPE women are seeing more women in leadership roles within our union. This has encouraged our female members to see their union as an effective vehicle for change and to be a catalyst to promote women's issues at the workplace and in the union.

#### Work of the Task Force

The task force has met four times since the last National Convention; January 1986, July 1986, December 1986 and May 1987. With the adoption of the policy paper, "Women's Economic Equality" at the 1985 National Convention, we felt that our first step would be the development of printed material for distribution to our members in order that national, provincial and local union strategies could be developed around the goals outlined in the policy paper. Four background papers were produced to assist members in beginning the dialogue around pay equity. (#1 — What is Pay Equity?; #2 — Why is Pay Equity Necessary?; #3 — What are the Options for Pay Equity?; and #4 — Lobbying for Pay Equity.) Provincial Divisions across Canada at their women's or equal opportunities conferences made pay equity a priority and at bargaining conferences pay equity was a key issue for delegate debate. Our Second National Women's Conference, held in Montreal, Quebec in December 1986, also reinforced our commitment towards keeping women's economic equality at the forefront of our work. This work is not finished and we will continue to seek new strategies and encourage membership education in order to achieve our goal.

#### Networking

National task force members continue to link with CUPE provincial and local union women's and equal opportunities committees, and federations of labour women's committees. A closer liaison between the national task force members and the national day care committee members in each province has resulted in more effective co-ordination. This was particularly important in our response to the Special Committee on Child Care and in collecting signatures in the Countdown for Child Care petition campaign. Task force members continue to encourage local unions to implement women's or equal opportunities committees and ensure that equal opportunities material is available.

Where coalitions have been formed our task force members have promoted CUPE's policies and participated at the meetings. Equal pay coalitions are a good example of this work. Building solidarity with other unions and like-minded groups is important in our struggle towards achieving equality.

## **Equality within the Union**

At our 1985 National Convention delegates received a document entitled "Notes on Affirmative Action within CUPE Taken from Women's Task Force, CSU, ATSU "A" and "B", OPEIU, and NEB Women's Submissions" which was prepared by our equal opportunities officer. One of the objectives outlined in the document (which was part of the 1983 policy paper "CUPE Women: Survival in the Crisis") was "... to increase the number of female CUPE staff in non-traditional jobs. . ."

In the three years that the trainee representative program has been in effect, 19 of the 32 participants have been women (1985 — 7 women, 6 men; 1986 — 5 women, 5 men; 1987 — 7 women, 2 men).

In the past 16 months we have seen a steady increase in the numbers of women being hired in technical, professional and staff rep positions. In new and replacement positions, 41 women and 35 men were hired. Temporary assignments have been almost equally male and female appointments (28 women and 30 men). It is apparent that the past hiring inequities between women and men is in the process of being corrected.

The equal opportunities officer, at the request of the executive of OPEIU (the union representing CUPE support staff) has been conducting affirmative action sessions with OPEIU members across the country. Quebec and national office OPEIU members still have to be consulted. Already much has been learned about how these staff persons view their existing work within CUPE and their commitment to the membership and to the goals and objectives CUPE promotes. Many concrete suggestions have been offered on ways to increase female staff representation in non-traditional jobs beyond those outlined in the 1985 document. The president of OPEIU and the equal opportunities officer will be submitting an interim report to the National Officers and once the sessions are completed, a final report will be prepared. We believe this important consultation process, with realistic recommendations, along with the many women going through the trainee representative program, will help us achieve our objective of increasing women on staff in non-traditional jobs.

## **Political Action**

Preparing briefs, monitoring the work of various special government committees, and pressuring governments in the area of affirmative action and pay equity has demanded a significant amount of work by task force women in their provinces. With the introduction of pay equity legislation in Manitoba, P.E.I., and Ontario it has become clear that only through actively lobbying for legislation and legislative change will the minimal standards as proposed in most legislation be improved. In B.C. the recent amendments to the Labour Relations Act will impede our members' objectives on this issue. Employers will be able to plead inability to pay as a justifiable reason to deny pay equity to women workers.

Task force members continue to lobby for better legislation where legislation exists. And where there is no legislation, representations are being made to reinforce our goals of achieving full equality in all areas for CUPE women.

## **Future Directions**

The creation of a Department of Equal Opportunities in July 1987 was warmly welcomed by the Task Force. This had been one of our key goals and we believe it puts our union again in the forefront, within the broader labour movement, in recognizing the importance of equal opportunity issues. It is by actions such as this that we believe our National Union has gone significantly beyond lip service and moved towards building a dynamic program for CUPE women. Working with local unions, providing nuts and bolts information, helping develop skills, and sharing our common knowledge and expertise will help us all deal more effectively with our employers.

With the addition of more staff in the Department of Equal Opportunities, the focus of their work is being broadened. This will, of course, have a spill-over effect. Women and men of colour, native and immigrant workers and mentally and physically disabled workers' issues can now be addressed in more depth.

Through consultation with our members, action plans will be developed to ensure that visible minority workers see CUPE as a sensitive and caring organization that reaches out and encourages them to bring their issues and concerns to their union for help in resolving them.

For women of colour along with native women, visible minority and immigrant women, the combination of racism and sexism is debilitating.

The objectives which we identified in 1983 remain. Full economic and social equality for CUPE members is our goal.

We propose the following areas of concern for our future work:

## **INEQUITIES WITHIN THE WORKPLACE**

### **Affirmative Action**

- Accelerate our program of action on this issue by encouraging provincial divisions and local unions to develop their own strategies for the implementation of jointly negotiated and maintained affirmative action programs. (Quebec and Saskatchewan's success in this area is noteworthy.)
- Maintain an active role in monitoring and responding to government initiatives to ensure that maximum benefit is provided for our members.

### **Pay Equity**

- Continue our double barreled approach towards achieving equal pay for work of equal value: by encouraging local unions to step up their demands for equal pay at the bargaining table and by consistently, province by province, keeping the pressure on governments who already have pay equity legislation to improve the legislation to achieve equal pay for work of equal value. For those provinces who don't have legislation, lobbying hard for tough pro-active laws that will completely close the pay gap. Legislation must enshrine the best principles of pay equity and bargaining within the legislation is the main tool.

### **Harassment**

- Promoting a greater understanding amongst our members of what harassment is and encouraging provincial divisions and local unions to develop their own harassment policies and programs to combat harassment in its many forms.

We believe there has to be recognition of the role of women in the economy of our country and indeed how we fit into the social fabric of our society. By developing internal campaigns to convince newer members of CUPE of the validity of our policies and the need to be vigilant in protecting these policies we guarantee that hard won gains are not lost. Women's issues have a high profile in our union and we rededicate ourselves to the challenge.

### **Members of CUPE's National Task Force on Women**

Barbara Kowalski	Nova Scotia	Lyn Godin	Alberta
Cynthia Wishart	staff	Diane Jolly	British Columbia
Rhonda Rowsell	Newfoundland	Elisabeth Plettenberg	staff
Julie Crabbe	Prince Edward Island	Bozica Costigliola	staff
Claire Doiron	New Brunswick	Shereen Bowditch	staff
Carol Robertson	Quebec	Suzanne Monier	staff
Louise Primeau	Ontario	Gene Errington	staff
Darlene Muloin	Manitoba	Shireen Cammell	staff
Adeline Scammell	Saskatchewan		

PASSED - ALL IN FAVOUR

# POLICY STATEMENT

## HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

Almost all working women will be subjected to sexual harassment at some point or other in their working lives. Yet, despite the pervasiveness of the problem, until recently it had remained an almost uncharted area in the fight to end discrimination at work and in society as a whole. Now, with the growing initiatives of women's groups and of unions like CUPE, this devastating hazard is being brought out into the open and fought head on.

Sexual and other personal forms of harassment are fraught with fear, controversy, and emotional intensity. There is the victim's insecurity and fear of losing her job or jeopardizing her economic livelihood if she reports the harassment; the controversy over defining what constitutes sexual or personal harassment; and the emotional toll harassment exacts on victims and their families.

Because of this, unions must blend courage with sensitivity when developing educational programs, internal procedures, and bargaining and legislative strategies to deal with the problem.

A major area of contention is defining what constitutes sexual or personal harassment. Many argue that what is harassment to one person may not be to another. But this view has not deterred CUPE from taking harassment and its consequences seriously. Some elements of the definition simply can't be disputed. Harassment is an abuse of power or position. It is a form of emotional extortion, and an attack on a person's personal integrity. It is used to intimidate victims into submission, to demean them, or to adversely affect their working future. It is often repetitive, always humiliating, and always damaging to the victim's health and psychology. The key element differentiating harassment from flirtation, "friendly gestures", or kidding around is that it is not welcome, not mutual, and not equal.

Workers of both sexes have been subjected to this hazard, but the majority of victims are women. It is easy to see the social and economic roots of harassment. Traditionally, women have been thought of as sexual commodities who mean "yes" when saying "no". Women have been looked on as the physically — and, all too often, mentally — weaker sex.

Rarely have women achieved positions of power in either the workplace or the political sphere. When they have made their way into non-traditional areas, they have had to overcome prejudice and skepticism before gaining acceptance. And on the economic front, women's average earnings have consistently lagged far behind those of men.

Is it any wonder, then, that bosses, supervisors and on occasion co-workers and even fellow unionists have subjected women to the power play of sexual or personal harassment?

It is precisely for these reasons that CUPE is approaching the battle to end workplace harassment as a vital element in our efforts to achieve full respect and full economic and social equality for women.

Until recently, a victim of harassment had few options in dealing with the problem. She could either submit, quit, or endure the coercion and stress that go with non-compliance. Coming forward with her story was a risky business, since she was almost sure to be faced with blame, or doubt, or complacency, and she may not have had iron-clad proof of her allegations.

Now things are changing, albeit slowly. While legislative measures to protect workers against sexual and personal harassment are still lacking, unions have taken the lead in recognizing and combatting the problem. Backed by sexual and personal harassment clauses in their contracts, educational programs which are more effective, and unions which are more supportive, victims are finding the courage to come forward and identify and denounce the harassers.

The best strategy in this matter for us as trade unionists is to have an impact on the workplace: making management aware of the problem, making employees aware of the issue (and aware of their rights under legislation and under their collective agreement), and training local union officers and stewards to deal with the problem in the context of their workplaces and within our own structures.

What can local unions do in the workplace to put in place the key elements of this strategy? First and foremost, a strong harassment clause should be negotiated into the contract that includes a definition of

harassment, its rationale, a detailed and sensitive grievance procedure, and a strong obligation on management to assure a harassment-free environment. Beyond that, locals should press for broader educational and preventive measures. These could include a jointly developed union-management policy on harassment posted in each work area; an anonymous/confidential employee survey on the extent of the problem, with an analysis of the results circulated throughout the workplace; and joint education seminars in the workplace for employees and managerial staff, with ongoing orientation of new employees on the issue. After all, as the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in the recent, historic **Robichaud** case, management is legally responsible for the actions of harassers in its employ. This gives us a very good basis on which to push for progress.

At the national level, through our National Women's Task Force and our new Equal Opportunities Department, CUPE will continue to put emphasis on raising the awareness of our members on the issue and providing locals with assistance in developing protective clauses against harassment, appropriate internal procedures, and educational programs and policies for the members and for the workplace. CUPE at all levels must promote the dissemination of literature, courses, and training on workplace harassment at national and provincial conventions and CUPE-sponsored educationals. And we must also urge and assist our chartered organizations to examine our own practices, and to work to respect one another's rights in every way in our own ranks, because co-workers and fellow unionists can be harassers, too.

CUPE is confident that harassment can be stamped out in the workplace and in society. Accordingly, we will continue to push for stronger contractual and legislative measures and to develop appropriate internal procedures to end this assault on workers' dignity and health. The long-term solutions, however, lie in the broader fight to eradicate the social and economic disparities between women and men. Through that broader fight, women and men will come to abandon the restrictive role stereotypes of each other, truly recognize and remunerate each other as equals, and truly communicate with each other. Only then will we all be able to work and live in a non-threatening environment. And only then will we be able to value and trust each other as sisters and brothers in our contribution to the workplace and to society.

PASSED - ALL IN FAVOUR

# RESOLUTIONS

**SUBSTITUTE RESOLUTION NO. 403**  
(covers Resolutions Nos. 109 and 110)

WHEREAS pay equity legislation has to date only been introduced by a few provincial governments; and

WHEREAS in certain areas where legislation has been introduced, groups such as the National Citizens' Coalition have undertaken media campaigns in opposition to pay equity and such campaigns have distorted the issue and misled the public; and

WHEREAS it is essential that workers continue to press for improved legislative provisions, or to lobby strongly for the introduction of equal pay for work of equal value legislation;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CUPE re-affirm support for the principle of equal pay for work of equal value; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CUPE through Provincial Divisions and Federations of Labour urge every province in Canada to establish equal pay for work of equal value legislation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CUPE assist affiliates, when necessary, in launching public campaigns to accurately inform the public about pay equity and its importance for all workers.

Committee recommendation CONCURRENCE  
Convention decision PASSED

**Resolution No. 114**

*Submitted by the Ottawa-Carleton District Council, Ont.*

WHEREAS discrimination in hiring, pay and promotion must be recognized as a problem; and

WHEREAS locals must come to terms with the problem of discrimination and to critically evaluate their collective agreements to achieve true affirmative action;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CUPE develop an educational program in order to enable locals to negotiate contracts to ensure equal rights for women, visible minorities and the disabled at all CUPE organized workplaces; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CUPE's model collective agreement include language to operationalize affirmative action.

Committee recommendation CONCURRENCE  
Convention decision PASSED

# ISSUE: DEREGULATION, CONTRACTING OUT, PRIVATIZATION AND CUTBACKS

These are important and contentious issues in Canada's society today, and were touched on at the convention by covering the following: Task Force Report on National Contracting-Out and Privatization Coordinating Committee, Policy Statement on Preserving Airline Service Against Deregulation and Privatization, and various Resolutions on contracting out. NOTE Resolution Number 59 which mentions Bill 104 in Saskatchewan and Bill 19 in British Columbia.

## TASK FORCE REPORT

### NATIONAL CONTRACTING-OUT AND PRIVATIZATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE

The new National Coordinating Committee on Contracting-out and Privatization respectfully submits this report to the Thirteenth Biennial CUPE National Convention.

This is the first report of our Committee. Indeed our first meeting took place last month, on September 17 and 18 in Ottawa. By way of introduction, we therefore first wish to use this opportunity to express our solidarity with all CUPE members and staff. We look forward to working with you. We look forward to implementing the important mandate given our Committee by the National Officers and National Executive Board. And we look forward to coordinating our Union's fight against contracting-out and privatization.

As predicted in the policy statement adopted at our last National Convention, the problems of contracting-out and privatization have grown steadily more pervasive and severe during the past two years.

Contracting-out, one form of privatization our Union has had a considerable amount of experience with, is now impacting on virtually all the jurisdictional sectors of our Union. Significantly, many of the major strikes and lock-outs we have had during the past two years stemmed from disputes over contracting-out. Ever more frequently, this has become the number one issue in contract negotiations in different sectors of our Union.

But this problem, severe it is, has now been significantly compounded — privatization has now become a top priority for the federal and many provincial governments. For the first time in the history of our country, we now have ministers responsible for privatizing public corporations, programs, services and jobs. At the federal level, the Tories have already sold eleven crown corporations. The CBC, Petro Canada and Air Canada may be next. At the provincial level, British Columbia and Quebec have led the way, giving away public assets and resources, publicly transmitting anti-public sector messages and biases, and serving to legitimize these backward policies in the minds of all similarly disposed governments across the country.

CUPE members and staff, based on their own personal and collective experiences, know what contracting-out and privatization engender. We have learned they mean lost jobs and livelihoods. They mean cheap labour and a general deterioration in community standards of living. They mean eroding the quality and the reliability of services offered citizens. They mean increased costs, new user fees, loss of accountability, diminished public revenues, inefficiency, and placing individual greed and profit ahead of the common good. They mean circumventing collective agreements, de-unionization, and invalidating all the gains we have worked so hard to achieve through collective organizing and bargaining. And they mean the quality of life Canadians have worked and struggled to achieve and enjoy must be defended with increased determination.

CUPE has been in the forefront of fighting these anti-people measures. We can all be proud of the campaigns we have mounted. But for all the reasons listed above (others could be cited), the delegates attending the last National Convention directed the Union to step-up its fight against contracting-out and privatization. Two of the directives adopted relate directly to the formation of our Committee, so we wish to briefly highlight them here.

The first was to continuously monitor our Union's efforts in fighting contracting-out and privatization in order to determine whether sufficient resources were being allocated to these

fundamentally important issues. This process of monitoring began immediately through consultations with the National President.

The second was to organize a national conference on contracting-out and privatization. This was to be a practical, nuts and bolts conference, one which would discuss and review the ideas, tactics, strategies and lessons derived from our day-to-day experience with these problems. The conference was also to lay the foundation for developing a more coordinated approach within the Union for coming to grips with these problems.

The conference, called "Ways of Winning", was held last February, and was acclaimed by all in attendance as a great success. Exceeding all expectations, more than 550 CUPE members and staff from all sectors and parts of the country participated. And after the 16 consecutively running workshops were completed and the ideas and suggestions emerging from the workshops were pooled and summarized, National President Jeff Rose announced the time had obviously come to significantly augment our fight against contracting-out and privatization. To help fulfill this objective, Brother Rose then announced that we needed to put in place a new national structure to be responsible for coordinating our Union's efforts.

Our Committee has now been structured to provide membership and staff representation from across the country. It is composed of a National Coordinator and Assistant National Coordinator working out of our Ottawa and Montreal offices respectively. There is one CUPE member from each provincial division and one staff person from each province. A national office staff person from each of the departments of Organizing and Servicing, Education, Research and Public Relations is also on the Committee. And representation is also present from the Airline Division, the Broadcast Division, Local 1000 and the National President's Office.

Our Committee has also now been given a general mandate by the National Executive Board. Our mandate reads:

Under the direction of the National Officers and National Executive Board, the National Committee will:

1. Coordinate the efforts of the National Union in combatting contracting-out and privatization;
2. Develop proposed workplans (including objectives, priorities, time frames and evaluations) on contracting-out and privatization for the National Officers;
3. Work in cooperation with the national departments to help coordinate the efficient use of available resources and <sup>guided by the Education Department</sup> the development of practical skill-building throughout the Union so that we effectively contend with the full scope of the contracting-out and privatization problem;
4. Work in cooperation with provincial divisions and their committees, and provide specialized support for regional target campaigns;
5. <sup>Be kept up to date regarding</sup> Monitor the work of division committees, make recommendations to division committees, and facilitate information sharing on contracting-out and privatization across the country; and
6. Provide local unions, divisions, committees and CUPE staff with background and resource materials on contracting-out and privatization.

As we have already stated, our Committee had its first meeting last month. At this point, we would like to simply say that our meeting focused on two main agenda items. First, we reviewed all the important lessons our Union has already learned from its fights against contracting-out and privatization. Then we looked at the question of coordination, and what roles committee members would have to play to create a team approach, establish an effective infrastructure, and reach out to the members and staff of CUPE across the country.

In our discussions, a few major points were repeatedly emphasized. We need to create a proper division of labour. We need to work as a coordinated team. We have to tap the resources and talents available throughout the Union. We have to use our resources wisely. We have to always bring the best collective judgement we can muster to every campaign. We have to do skill building within the Union. We have to institute early warning — an alarm system — where and when problems are emerging. We have to establish strict guidelines of information sharing, consultation and decision-making. We must take seriously the Union principles of solidarity and unified action. And we need to set targets and objectives which are achievable and which move us continuously forward to stronger levels of coordination.

Our committee is now beginning to act on these points. In the months ahead we will be presenting detailed workplans and evaluations to the National Officers and National Executive Board. For now, we wish to simply re-emphasize that by working closely with CUPE members and staff across the country, it is our intention to strengthen our Union's fight against contracting-out and privatization and to give real meaning to the word coordination.

#### Committee Members

<b>National Coordinator</b> Larry Katz	<b>Manitoba</b> Dale Kinniburgh-Eccles	<b>New Brunswick</b> Bill Whalen	<b>Office of the National President</b> Randy Sykes
<b>Assistant National Coordinator</b> André Bouthillier	<b>Saskatchewan</b> Laurie Thompson	<b>Prince Edward Island</b> Kelly Murray	<b>Department of Organizing and Servicing</b> Barry Thorsteinson
<b>Division Representatives</b>	<b>Alberta</b> Josy Burrough	<b>Québec</b> André Bouthillier	<b>Public Relations Department</b> Fred Tabachnick
<b>Newfoundland</b> Gary Greene	<b>Ontario</b> Mike Hurley	<b>Ontario</b> Tom Edwards	<b>Education Department</b> Dave Adams
<b>Nova Scotia</b> Rodney Young	<b>British Columbia</b> Wilbur Wostradowski	<b>Manitoba</b> Charles Carlson	<b>Research Department</b> Gilbert Levine
<b>New Brunswick</b> Daniel Bernatchez	<b>Staff Representatives</b>	<b>Saskatchewan</b> Jim Holmes	<b>Broadcast Division</b> Len Carter
<b>Prince Edward Island</b> Barb Boudreau	<b>Newfoundland</b> Robert Matthews	<b>Alberta</b> Gerry Patterson	<b>Airline Division</b> Val Udvarhely
<b>Québec</b> André Bouthillier	<b>Nova Scotia</b> Hugh Lennon	<b>British Columbia</b> Connie Credico	<b>Cupe Local 1000</b> John Murphy

# POLICY STATEMENT

## PRESERVING AIRLINE SERVICE AGAINST DEREGULATION AND PRIVATIZATION

Deregulation has been one of the hallmarks of Ronald Reagan's United States. Federal regulatory authority over telephones, telecommunications, and transportation has been largely eliminated. Many other regulatory activities introduced in the public interest, such as the monitoring of workplace health and safety laws and equal opportunities legislation, have been administratively deregulated by cuts to funding and inspections. The goal: Let the market rule.

Privatization has been one of the hallmarks of Margaret Thatcher's Britain. The campaign to dismantle that nation's social institutions — the embodiment of years of political and social gains for working people — continues unabated. Thatcher is selling off everything profitable in the public sector to corporate friends at bargain-basement prices. Britain's telecommunications and oil industries, its national airline, and its airports have already been sold. Schools and the supply of water may be next. The goal: Let free enterprise rule.

Not surprisingly, the backwash from these deregulation and privatization waves has reached Canada. The Mulroney government has put forward legislation to deregulate transportation (air, rail, shipping, and trucking), and there has been much federal and provincial activity aimed at liquidating publicly-owned corporations, including — very probably — Air Canada.

Unfortunately, the federal Conservatives are not interested in learning from the experience of others. The evidence shows that transportation deregulation does not work. The most striking example — the American experience with airline deregulation — shows that it has been a dismal failure. Overall, the U.S. has a much worse air passenger system today than in 1978 when air deregulation was introduced. In terms of fares, service, employment and labour relations, and especially safety, deregulation must be considered a colossal mistake.

Airline cost-cutting brought on by deregulation has lessened the margin of safety in the industry. Near-collisions in mid-air have increased, and fines for safety violations by commercial airlines are at a record high. Deregulation has brought cuts in service to many areas of the U.S., and the impact on many small communities has been dramatic. Small carriers, running poorly-maintained aircraft and often shifting their routes from one day to the next (if not going out of business), have denied reliable service to travellers in small centres.

The on-time performance of U.S. carriers has deteriorated. Passenger complaints about airline service have soared, jumping 600% in one year alone. Long lineups at check-in counters are now the norm, with passengers often being obliged to arrive hours early to make their flights.

Deregulation in the U.S. has also generated an all-out attack on the wages, benefits, work practices, and job security of unionized airline workers. The proliferation of new, non-union carriers, and the cut-throat competition spurred by deregulation, have reversed the longstanding pattern of improvements in wages, benefits and conditions in the unionized airlines. Corporations have also used weak labour laws and bankruptcy provisions to break unions and repudiate collective agreements.

Contrary to the predictions made by its proponents a decade ago, the removal of public regulation has not led to greater competition in the U.S. airline industry. While there has been considerable entry and exit by new carriers since 1978, the top ten carriers have ended up with a larger share of the total market than they had in the period immediately prior to deregulation. After a relatively short period of fare wars, the majority of the new "no frills" carriers went bankrupt or were taken over by a few dominant carriers. The end result has been, in the words of one air industry expert, disruption and harm to tens of thousands of people, all to achieve "a few low fares for a few people, to a few places, sometimes, for awhile".

In Canada, CUPE members and other airline workers are already feeling the effects of the Mulroney government's policy of open competition in transportation. Labour relations have never been so strained and acrimonious, with wages and working conditions under attack by employers eager to "gain a competitive edge".

Every major Canadian air carrier has attacked its workers in recent negotiations, using deregulation as its excuse. Since 1981, strikes have been provoked at all of Canada's major carriers: Air Canada, CP Air, Eastern Provincial, Pacific Western, Wardair and Nordair. There was also a bitter strike at Air Ontario in 1986. In all cases, the strikes were fought not to win gains for employees, but rather to combat employer demands for concessions.

The negative effects of deregulation in the Canadian airline industry will be compounded by the privatization, whether in whole or in part, of Air Canada. Air Canada has been, and continues to be, an extremely important instrument of national transportation policy and national social policy. Public control of the largest carrier has been crucial in guaranteeing safe, reliable, affordable and bilingual air service for all Canadians.

In private hands, Air Canada would no longer have the responsibility of serving smaller and more remote Canadian centres. Routes, facilities and services would appear or disappear, based solely on profit-and-loss considerations masquerading as "efficiency". Countless jobs would be lost as well. (The recent privatization of Quebecair by the Bourassa government of Quebec, with its service cuts, layoffs, concession demands and resulting strikes, clearly shows the destructive consequences of such a policy.)

For all these reasons, CUPE has consistently opposed deregulation and privatization of Canada's airline service. An economy and society that are dominated by corporate self-interest and the unfettered marketplace cannot operate to the advantage of ordinary Canadians. Moreover, deregulation and privatization of our transportation system is an institutional precondition for free trade with the United States. We all know the probable consequences of that policy: loss of our economic sovereignty and the destruction of independent political decision-making.

Transportation has always been a cornerstone of Canadian nationhood. Beyond its central importance — both as a high technology industry and a public utility essential to our economic, social and regional development — transportation is the life-blood of our far-flung and diverse country. Canadians have worked too hard to build what we have to let it fall now into the hands of short-sighted corporate interests.

Concerted efforts by CUPE, other airline unions, the CLC and our political allies have not, however, removed deregulation and privatization from the political agenda of the federal and provincial governments. Airline deregulation and privatization are going to be with us as long as the current federal government is in office, and perhaps longer. But, spearheaded by CUPE's Airline Division, we are having an impact. The privatization of Air Canada has been delayed, and more and more Canadians are rejecting air deregulation. A recent CUPE poll of frequent flyers found that over 63% of those expressing an opinion opposed the policy. Nevertheless, much more needs to be done. A successful strategy to combat these policies must be sustained. It must identify and document the damage these policies are doing and will do to Canada. It must reveal the links between these policies and the "hands-off" economic philosophy that guides them. It must also lead to successful action, both in the political arena and at the bargaining table.

As part of CUPE's continuing fight to preserve and expand all public services, we will keep up the struggle against airline (and other forms of) deregulation and privatization, working in full cooperation with our membership who are directly affected, with CUPE chartered organizations at all levels, with the CLC, federations of labour and labour councils, and with other air transport unions. This will mean resisting concessions at the bargaining table; reaching out to the public through innovative tactics such as the direct-mail "Air Fair" campaign for frequent flyers; lobbying federal, provincial, and municipal politicians; organizing unorganized airline workers; forming and strengthening common fronts with other air transport unions; and continuing to raise the awareness of CUPE members, other trade unionists, and the public to the dangers inherent in any deregulation and privatization of public services.

Committee Recommendation:  
Convention Decision:

Concurrence  
Favoured

# RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 58      COVER RES. NO. 54

*Submitted by CUPE-Quebec*

WHEREAS the research undertaken and the struggles we have experienced indicate to us the deterioration of public services and the extent of the social damage caused by the government policies of privatization, deregulation and contracting out; and

WHEREAS all sectors of CUPE are affected by these policies; and

WHEREAS these policies also threaten workers in the private sector; and

WHEREAS the effect of these policies will be the impoverishment of the public as a whole; and

WHEREAS the said policies run counter to all of the values for which the labour movement has always fought;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the governments that have embarked on a dismantling of the State through privatization, deregulation and contracting out be denounced, and the indispensable and irreplaceable nature of the direction and role of the State in economic and social affairs be proclaimed;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Canadian government be called on to end its policy of deregulation, contracting out and privatization, including its policy of privatizing public services in favour of cooperatives, community groups or volunteers generally, and instead to promote the nationalization of public services and the funding of community groups whose role would be to try new approaches to public services and/or to identify new needs of the people.

Committee Recommendation:  
Convention Decision:

Concurrence  
Favoured

Submitted by the Saskatoon District Council, Sask.

WHEREAS the blind pursuit of pro-business, monetarist policies by the federal and provincial governments has caused enormous dislocation of the economy; and

WHEREAS all workers, especially in the public sector, have been subjected to an orgy of vicious cut-backs of our hard won social services as well as our jobs; and

WHEREAS we face direct and increasing attacks on our trade union rights, such as the current interpretation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the implementation of Bill 104 in Saskatchewan and most recently Bill 19 in British Columbia; and

WHEREAS the working class is being forced to pay for this losing economic model through increased taxes and costs for basic services;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the National Union continue and increase its support, both financial and administrative, to Provincial Divisions and local unions, as required, to fight these concerted attacks.

Committee Recommendation: Concurrence  
Convention Decision: Favoured

EMERGENCY RESOLUTION NO. 306

Submitted by Local 2929, Montreal, Quebec

WHEREAS ever since the Bourassa government came back into power, they have relentlessly tried destroying the Société Immobilière du Québec set up by the previous government; and

WHEREAS the Bourassa government are behaving as if the SIQ were for them one of the best patronage opportunity where they may with impunity and with a vengeance test the application of their privatization programs or policies; and

WHEREAS this privatization policy will substantially reduce the quality of services provided until now by the SIQ; and

WHEREAS this so-called "privatization" and "farming-out" policy has already begun, as the SIQ is getting ready to hold a real "garage sale" next Saturday, October 31, when they will let go quite a large part of their equipment like trucks, tools, etc.;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CUPE support Local 2929 in its struggle to oppose the contracting-out and privatization policies of the Société Immobilière du Québec begun by the Bourassa government; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CUPE officially condemns the whole privatization and contracting-out policy package of the Bourassa government, especially the sale, on October 31, of equipment used by the SIQ unionized employees.

Committee Recommendation: Concurrence  
Convention Decision: Favoured

EMERGENCY RESOLUTION NO. 305

Submitted by the National Executive Board

WHEREAS we are concerned about the current commitment of the Quebec government in favour of privatization; and

WHEREAS Hydro-Quebec is the most important State-owned Corporation in Quebec; and

WHEREAS decisions have already been made to begin privatizing Hydro-Quebec, including contracting-out of the construction, maintenance and operation of those powerhouses which produce less than 25 megawatts; and

WHEREAS the contractors, through their associations, have achieved the establishment of a Parliamentary Commission, with the mandate of studying contracting-out possibilities in Hydro-Quebec; and

WHEREAS the briefs that have already been submitted to the Commission fiercely attack CUPE's three Hydro Locals (957-1500-2000); and

WHEREAS CUPE Locals 957, 1500 and 2000 represent nearly 14,000 members, who have to defend themselves before the Parliamentary Commission; and

WHEREAS the contractors are directly attacking our Locals 957-1500-2000 members' jobs in all kinds of work activities; and

WHEREAS this is urgent, as the Parliamentary Commission will be sitting on October 27, 28 and 29, 1987;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CUPE give as much support as possible and practicable to our three Hydro-Quebec Locals (957-1500-2000) in the fight to prevent the phasing-in of privatization and contracting-out of Hydro-Quebec.

Committee Recommendation: Concurrence  
Convention Decision: Favoured

# ISSUE: Free Trade

The Free Trade issue was heavily discussed at the convention and it was quite apparent that CUPE does not support Free Trade. In this issue we are presenting the resolution and the policy statement that was passed with a majority vote. We will in future newsletters focus on this important issue. (by Elizabeth M. Zook)

## EMERGENCY RESOLUTION NO. 301

Submitted by the National Executive Board

WHEREAS the free trade deal between Canada and the United States threatens Canadian jobs, culture, services and sovereignty; and

WHEREAS the deal opens the floodgates to further Americanization of our society, and gains nothing for Canada or Canadian workers; and

WHEREAS there are viable alternatives to free trade that would strengthen our economy and preserve our national values and political and cultural independence; and

WHEREAS the Mulroney government in the last federal election did not seek and therefore does not have a mandate to pursue continental free trade;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Canadian Union of Public Employees throw its full resources behind the campaign by labour organizations and broadly-based coalitions striving to oppose and defeat this sell-out of Canadian workers and Canadian sovereignty; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CUPE continue to demand that the Mulroney government give the people of Canada a chance to vote democratically to accept or reject the free trade pact by calling an election before any such deal is consummated.

Committee recommendation	<u>CONCURRENCE</u>
Convention decision	<u>PASSED</u>



public services, every time they sell off a crown or public corporation, every time they give another handout or tax break to a U.S. multinational, they are undermining the distinctiveness of our country. And every time Mulroney caves in to U.S. trade demands — exports of shakes and shingles, softwood lumber, and steel (curbed), and the Foreign Investment Review Agency (emasculated) — and falls in line with Reagan policy positions — acid rain, the cruise missile, energy policy, drug patents, arctic sovereignty, and foreign policy generally — it deals another blow to Canada's sovereignty and independence.

The third and most serious threat to our independence and survival is the comprehensive free trade deal with the U.S. that the Mulroney government and a number of provincial governments are so determinedly pursuing. Comprehensive free trade with the U.S. would mean the end of our distinctive society. We would effectively lose our ability to preserve and promote our unique national identities, linguistic duality, multicultural heritage, superior social programs, traditions of caring and sharing, and our very economic nationhood.

Despite Mulroney's reassuring rhetoric, this would be the inevitable consequence of any deal that locked the Canadian economy to that of a country 10 times our size. In the interests of creating a "level playing field" for business, governments at all levels would be required to cut back or abolish social services, unemployment insurance, marketing boards, labour standards, regional development grants, the Auto Pact, and anything else the U.S. government and business might regard as "unfair subsidies" to our own producers, workers and consumers. Deregulation and privatization would be carried to new extremes; controls on U.S. investment in Canada would be scrapped entirely.

U.S. corporations, especially those which have relocated to low-wage states in the sun belt, would quickly come to dominate the integrated market. Our smaller manufacturing industries, built to serve the smaller Canadian market, would be swamped by the competition of lower-cost U.S. imports. Many industries would literally be wiped out, and those that did survive would do so by cutting costs through reduced wages, fewer workers, and more anti-union activity.

Lost, too, would be the opportunity to build on Canada's economic strengths — to expand our manufacturing sector, to make the tax structure more equitable, to reduce inequality and regional disparities, to plug the gaps in our job, family and income security networks, and to widen trade with other countries.

For decades, we and our labour forebears have been trying to create a land that is economically viable, politically independent, socially just, and culturally and linguistically distinct. We in labour have pursued the vision of a society that functions to benefit all its people, not just those that wield economic and political power. Granted, as workers and citizens we are far from achieving that objective. But now that vision of a better, brighter and more equitable future is in real danger of being shattered. Powerful forces in business and politics are bent on returning our country to the rule of market forces, and on sacrificing our sovereignty, cultures, and political and economic destinies to their narrow corporate and ideological interests. Preventing this ultimate betrayal is, we firmly believe, the overriding priority for all Canadians today.

Led by the labour movement and our allies in the churches, the women's movement and social action groups, more and more Canadians are fighting back. CUPE has played an important role in this fundamental struggle, involving our members, raising awareness among the public, advocating labour's alternative economic policies of job creation, multi-lateral trade and better planning, and demanding that the Mulroney government seek a democratic mandate for the drastic, irreversible step of a free trade deal with the U.S. Free trade was not part of the Tory platform in the last federal election, and without that specific mandate they have no right to sign any deal, regardless of their huge (though shaky) majority in Parliament. CUPE must continue to work with the CLC, the federations of labour, the labour councils, and all our other allies to **stop free trade** through increased public pressure, mobilization of our membership, and by pressuring the government to call a general election before any free trade agreement is submitted to Parliament for approval. Every Canadian citizen deserves the right to vote on one of the most crucial political and economic questions which we may ever face. Democracy and the future of our country demand nothing less.

STANDING VOTE - ALL IN FAVOUR

# **POLICY STATEMENT**

## **CANADIAN SOVEREIGNTY AND THE FREE TRADE THREAT**

Canada's way of life is, and always has been, distinctive from that in the United States. While there is much we admire in U.S. society, we have chosen to create in Canada a society that is different in fundamental ways. Despite the tremendous influence of U.S. economic and cultural institutions and attitudes, we have created on this side of the border a country of political uniqueness and linguistic and cultural duality that we believe to be more compassionate, more tolerant, more peaceful, and more equal.

Despite many shortcomings, most of us in Canada agree that our towns and cities are generally cleaner, safer, less violent, better planned, and more liveable. The countryside is generally less exploited and the environment generally more respected. Our social programs are more extensive, accessible and generous; in the U.S., there is no universal public health insurance, no public pension plan, and the social assistance and unemployment insurance programs are well below our standards. Our education and health care systems are more financially accessible, more uniform in quality, and more subject to public control. And notwithstanding certain unfortunate aberrations, our labour laws and standards are generally better, and our unions stronger.

True, we in Canada have much to improve. The levels of unemployment and poverty in this country remain unacceptably high, and social programs are being eroded rather than improved. Inequality of opportunity persists and is becoming more entrenched. Nevertheless, until recently, we had been making progress. The quality of life of each succeeding generation had been improving.

However, since the early 1980's, jobs and prosperity have been under attack. And so has compassion. Income disparities have widened. The funds necessary to keep our municipalities safe and liveable have been reduced. Governments have begun to give up their ability to influence economic and social development in a headlong rush toward deregulation and privatization. Militarization has increased. In all those ways, our country is beginning to suffer some of the same problems we see afflicting our neighbour to the South.

This "Americanization" trend in Canada has its roots in three related developments. The first is the rise to power in our country of right-wing, "neo-conservative" or "neo-liberal" political parties at the federal level and in most provinces. These governments have embraced the rugged individualism and "marketplace freedom" characteristic of U.S. society — a view of the world which is fundamentally opposed to our tradition of mutual assistance and greater public intervention to promote the common good.

In the United States, public intervention in corporate or individual marketplace activity is seen as generally undesirable, to be limited to a bare minimum. In Canada, by contrast, the public good is not so frequently seen as subordinate to individual or corporate freedom. That has meant significant government intervention in the public interest to regulate the marketplace, curb corporate power, control economic activity, introduce and fund universal social programs, and help address people's needs through public sector programs and services. This commitment was shared, in varying degrees, by all political parties in the past. But the governments now in office in Ottawa and many provincial capitals are abandoning that tradition to follow a more "American way" — a way taken to its extreme by the current Reagan administration.

The second development undermining our way of life is the continuing growth of U.S. dominance of the economy. U.S. corporations control more than 25 per cent of our business enterprises, and more takeovers are being encouraged and accelerated by government policies which make the review of foreign investment a mere formality. Gone are most of the mechanisms and regulations that had been put in place to restrain or at least slow the loss of our economic sovereignty, replaced now by generous tax incentives and an open invitation to U.S. corporations to extract more of our natural resources and carve out a bigger share of our markets.

The more U.S. corporations control economic power here, the more pressure is exerted on our institutions, attitudes, beliefs and cultures to reshape themselves in the U.S. mould. Most Canadian governments are bowing to U.S. pressure to hasten this trend. Every time governments cut funding for

# ISSUE: INTERNATIONAL

Below are resolutions which were passed at the convention dealing with the countries of South Africa, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala.

## RESOLUTIONS

### SUBSTITUTE RESOLUTION NO. 407 (covers Resolutions Nos. 85, 86, 87, 88, 89 and 90)

WHEREAS recent events in South Africa including elections, the miners' strike, and the escalating violence and detention being carried out by the government, make it clear that the apartheid regime has no intention of varying its racist and brutal policies; and

WHEREAS the South African regime illegally occupies Namibia and continues its deliberate strategy of military and economic destabilization against neighbouring states; and

WHEREAS CUPE has in the past affirmed support for all political and trade union organizations committed to a democratic, non-racial South Africa; and

WHEREAS CUPE has supported economic sanctions against South Africa and encouraged trade unionists and members of the general public to refuse to use goods from South Africa;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CUPE reaffirm support for the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), for the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), for the South West African Peoples Organization (SWAPO), and for all other political and trade union groups committed to a democratic, non-racial South Africa; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CUPE, through the CLC call upon the Canadian government to take strong action in support of total economic sanctions against South Africa including all goods and services imported or exported, and by increasing pressure on other nations to impose similar sanctions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that CUPE, through the CLC call upon the Canadian government to increase financial assistance to the Frontline States who are being so severely affected by South Africa's aggression; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Executive Board, in accordance with past policy, regularly consider the matter of appropriate levels of financial support to those groups supported by CUPE who are engaged in the ongoing struggle for a free, democratic, non-racial South Africa.

Committee recommendation Concurrence  
Convention decision favoured

#### Resolution No. 91

Submitted by the Saskatoon District Council, Sask.

WHEREAS CUPE has affirmed a strong policy of sanctions against South Africa;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that particular attention be paid to the selection of accountants and auditors by employers to determine if they have corporate ties to South African accounting firms.

Committee recommendation Concurrence  
Convention decision favoured

#### Resolution No. 92

Submitted by the Saskatoon District Council, Sask.

WHEREAS the trade union movement was the instigating factor in the organization of the annual national Tools for Peace campaign; and

WHEREAS Tools for Peace is presently organizing the 1987 campaign for aid to Nicaragua;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Convention endorse the 1987 Tools for Peace campaign by taking a collection at this Convention to assist Tools for Peace in their work with our brothers and sisters in Nicaragua; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Convention encourage all locals of CUPE to contribute to the Tools for Peace campaign.

Committee recommendation Concurrence  
Convention decision favoured

Resolution No. 94

*Submitted by the Saskatoon District Council, Sask.*

WHEREAS the Canadian government has resumed bilateral aid to the El Salvadoran government under the pretense of an improvement in human rights in El Salvador; and

WHEREAS the Salvadoran government backed by United States' financial and military support is conducting the heaviest aerial bombardment in the history of the Western hemisphere upon its own people; and

WHEREAS over 60,000 Salvadorans have been killed, 6,000 people disappeared, over 900,000 Salvadorans have been displaced within the country, and there are over 1,400 political prisoners;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CUPE demand that the Canadian government:

- 1) channel substantial aid to the Salvadoran people through Canadian non-governmental organizations and churches that have a long-standing record of service in El Salvador; and
- 2) immediately suspend all aid to the Salvadoran government; and
- 3) publicly denounce the United States' military intervention in Central America.

Committee recommendation

CONCURRENCE  
FAVORED

Convention decision

Resolution No. 95

*Submitted by the Ottawa-Carleton District Council, Ont.*

WHEREAS the civilian government in Guatemala, headed by President Vinicio Cerezo, has been unable to control the abuses of the military during its 18 months in power; and

WHEREAS under pressure by the local business elite, the Guatemalan government has failed to address the most urgent needs of the population, particularly those related to land distribution, social services, control of basic goods prices and adequate salary policies for working people; and

WHEREAS during recent months military repression has increased dramatically in areas such as El Peten, Huehuetenango, Quetzaltenango, El Quiche and Solola, resulting in growing numbers of disappearances, deaths, scorching of crops and cattle among the rural population;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CUPE pressure the Canadian government to:

- 1) officially condemn the increasing human rights violations by the military against the civilian population; and
- 2) deny any bilateral assistance program to the Government of Guatemala as long as it continues to resort to repression in the face of the deep socio-political and economic problems of the country.

Committee recommendation

CONCURRENCE  
FAVORED

Convention decision

# POLICY STATEMENT

## NATIVE PEOPLE AND ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

The goal of Canada's native people is to regain the right to manage their own affairs on their own lands. They will no longer tolerate being patronized and treated as second-class citizens in their own country.

Canada's native people are composed of four main groups: the Inuit (formerly referred to as Eskimos); Status Indians (who, like the Inuit, are governed by the federal Indian Act); the Métis, who are descendants of both native people and Europeans; and Non-Status Indians, who lost or were never granted Indian status for a variety of historical reasons (for example, until recently Indian women lost their status once they married non-Indians). Although native groups have many common concerns, their diversity reflects their distinct historical traditions, as well as ever-changing social and economic conditions.

By most standards, Canada's aboriginal peoples live in a state of institutionalized poverty. Studies have shown native unemployment of about 35%, and the average income of Indian people is between one-half and two-thirds of the national average. The vast majority of native people live in substandard housing. More than 33% live in seriously overcrowded conditions, often without indoor plumbing or central heating.

The educational system has also produced disturbing results. For example, only 19% of Indians on reserves have finished high school. This high drop-out rate is partially linked to a sense of hopelessness in face of scarce job prospects. It also stems from the fact that Indian education has been controlled by non-Indians for more than a century. In the past, many native children were forbidden, even punished, for speaking their own language in school. Until recently, many Indian children had to leave their communities and parents to live in residency schools, hundreds of miles from home. This system has been a recipe for cultural dislocation, causing great harm to the identity and self-worth of thousands of native children.

The health conditions in most native communities also reflect the tragedy of poverty. Native life expectancy is about 10 years less than the Canadian average. Until age 65, death rates for Indians and Inuit are two to four times the national average.

Centuries of cultural devastation, combined with poor physical health and other social conditions, have stunted the development of mental health in many communities. The native suicide rate is three times higher than the national average, and the rate of alcoholism is up to five times greater.

The legacy of a robust lifestyle known to the ancestors of today's native people has been all but destroyed by centuries of colonialism, poverty, and enforced dependence. Before the Europeans emigrated to Canada, the First Nations had developed complex and diverse economies founded on hunting, fishing, agriculture, trapping and commerce. As European settlers encroached on native lands and waters, the basis of these economies was diminished and then largely destroyed by force of arms.

The beginning of the end of Indian self-reliance came with the advent of the "reserve" or "reservation" system. Reserve lands, which were designated for the "use and benefit" of Indians, confined First Nations to lands which were too small or scarce in fish and game. Although many Canadians believe that native people actually own the lands called reserves or reservations, the legal title to those lands in fact rests with the federal government.

As a result, independent economic development has been almost impossible. Without legal title to their land, native people have found it difficult to raise money for job creation projects and capital investment. They have also lacked the power to plan and implement other economic ventures because they do not control their resource base or the political process overseeing economic development in their communities. Native people are still dependent on "made-in-Ottawa" projects, conceived and funded by the federal government.

For many years, Canadians have heard native organizations call for a system of local self-government. Members of First Nations maintain that they have never surrendered their autonomy, but that the Indian Act of 1876 forcibly restricted their ability to govern themselves. According to the Assembly of First Nations and other native organizations, the Indian Act denies native people the right to make their own

decisions, develop their lands and economic potential, educate their children, and plan their future. Like citizens grouped under municipal governments, Canada's First Nations want to control their social and economic development, in general cooperation with other levels of government and other Canadians.

CUPE supports the principle of such demands for native local self-government, and accordingly calls upon the federal government to:

- Recognize and respect the rights of native people as guaranteed by the United Nations international covenants on the political, economic, social and cultural rights of humanity. This should apply to all native people, whether or not they have chosen to participate in the constitutional process, and whether or not they have Indian "status".
- Engage in accelerated and comprehensive negotiations on outstanding native land claims. This would include negotiations for the ownership of and jurisdiction over traditional lands in order to provide a secure economic base for local self-government and self-development.
- Respect treaty obligations with Indian and Inuit peoples on the same basis as any other treaties. After all, the majority of lands in dispute are crown lands which are neither owned nor used by non-Indian people.
- Entrench in the Constitution the aboriginal right of local self-government as set out above.
- Ensure that all aboriginal groups have fair access to the process and to the financial resources required to negotiate such agreements.
- Guarantee appropriate native language and cultural rights.

The process leading toward local self-government will vary from one aboriginal group to another. Some would like a speedy transition, while others plan to move more gradually. Many First Nations are already developing an independent economic base. However, unsettled land claims and the lack of legal title to their existing lands remain serious obstacles to economic self-sufficiency.

In our commitment to social justice for all Canadians, CUPE members will not remain passive while the aspirations of native people are ignored or swept aside by governments. Together with other trade unions and progressive organizations, we will make our voices heard.

At an October, 1986 meeting, labour and aboriginal leaders in British Columbia issued a joint statement calling for a program of dialogue and mutual understanding between the two movements. Following the spirit of this declaration, and consistent with CUPE's existing policies on native rights, CUPE will move to educate our members about the aspirations of Canada's native people and about their goal of local self-government. And we will act at all levels to strengthen ongoing links with aboriginal groups to help achieve the goals outlined above, and to help combat discrimination and native unemployment, at the bargaining table and beyond.

# POLICY STATEMENT

## MUNICIPAL UNDERFUNDING

Over three-quarters of Canadians now live in towns and cities. Municipal governments deliver more services to people than any other level of government. The quality and level of these services impact more directly on the day-to-day lives of Canadians than any other component of governmental economic activity.

Yet inadequate municipal revenues, combined with increasing public demand for services, is creating a serious financial squeeze. This has strained collective bargaining in the municipal sector across the country (and in the education sector as well, for that matter), and many jobs have been eliminated through budget cuts and contracting-out. In addition, there has been a general deterioration in the quality and quantity of services, despite higher municipal property taxes and user fees.

The underlying cause of the financial problems facing many of Canada's towns and cities is the inadequate tax base. Property taxes — the only major independent source of income for most local governments — are usually slow to respond to changes in the economy, and are unable to generate sufficient revenues. And in recent years, these fiscal problems traditionally associated with the property tax have accelerated, and have been compounded by several factors.

First, the deterioration of Canada's municipal infrastructure has reached a critical point. A country-wide survey conducted in 1985 by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) revealed serious urban decay across the country. Roads, bridges and sidewalks are in the greatest need of repair and renewal, followed by sewers, water mains, public buildings and parks. It was found that Canada's water distribution and sewer systems are, on average, thirty years old and deteriorating quickly. Yet average spending on public works in recent years has actually declined as a proportion of total municipal budgets. Recent studies by the FCM estimate the cost of upgrading the municipal infrastructure to acceptable standards at approximately \$15 billion. Obviously, such a program cannot be funded solely from municipal budgets and municipal taxes.

A second factor contributing to the financial problems confronting municipalities is fiscal restraint at higher levels of government. Over the last forty years, municipal governments have become increasingly dependent on transfer payments from the federal level and from the provinces. Previously, federal and provincial grants compensated for the inadequacies of the property tax. In recent years, however, provincial support has not kept pace with the growing demand on municipalities for services, or with the higher costs of service delivery. Federal contributions have also been reduced, with the termination in 1984 of the last federal assistance program for municipal infrastructure. And the situation will become much worse if the Tories' national sales tax is ever passed into law.

A third factor, alluded to earlier, has been the significant rise in demand for municipally-funded "soft" services such as health care, social assistance, housing, child care, community recreation, libraries, and arts and cultural facilities and programs. The pressure for expanded municipal services is partly due in some provinces to a shift in responsibility for the provision of certain social services from the provincial level to local governments. For example, provincial policies of deinstitutionalization — promoting the integration of the mentally disabled and the aged back into the community — have transferred some of the costs of care for those with special needs to the municipal level. As well, high levels of unemployment and changes to the unemployment insurance program have forced many more people onto local assistance programs. At the same time, towns and cities have had to contend with the pressures created by the continued urbanization of the Canadian population and the growing expectations of taxpayers.

Most municipal governments, lacking the political will to address the long-term needs of their communities, have responded to this financial squeeze by increasing property taxes and user fees, while cutting back on spending (actual or planned). The general results: reduction in some services and the elimination of others; increased use of private contractors; reduction in real income for municipal workers (including library, health care, social service, municipal child care, municipal utility, and zoo workers); and staff layoffs or attrition, leading to increased workloads.

Budget-cutting measures such as these have a detrimental impact on workers and on the quality of life in our communities, and do little to resolve financial pressures facing municipalities. Policies of restraint at the local level serve only to aggravate the situation by furthering urban decay, contributing to general economic downturn, and creating worse burdens for future generations.

The real solution to the fiscal malaise of Canada's municipalities lies not in spending restraint, but in increased levels of funding. First and foremost, federal and provincial funds must be made available for urgent upgrading and repairs to municipal infrastructure. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has proposed that the cost of its infrastructure renewal program be shared equally among the three levels of government over a period of five years. This program would, while revitalizing the infrastructure, also provide a much-needed stimulus to the economy. 57,000 jobs a year would be generated, and economists have estimated that 60% of total government expenditures on the program would be recovered through enhanced economic activity.

All ten provinces and the two territories have agreed to take part in the FCM program. Yet the Mulroney government continues to turn down the FCM's request for federal funds. One cabinet minister went so far as to tell an FCM conference earlier this year that municipalities should pay for infrastructure renewal by raising the price they charge homeowners for water!

CUPE has been cooperating fully with the FCM in promoting this very important and necessary program. We must continue to lend support to their efforts and to lobby for federal participation, both directly and together with the CLC.

At the same time, the long-term solution to the financial problems of our towns and cities lies not just in increased federal and provincial support, but also in a generally stronger economy and a reformed tax system. CUPE supports the development of a new municipal tax base that is more responsive than the current property tax to the increasing costs of municipal services. We further support the implementation of a "progressive" tax system at the local level, so that the rate of taxation corresponds to the taxpayer's ability to pay. The creation of such a revenue base would make it possible for municipalities to cope with increased demands on existing services, as well as to respond to the need for new and expanded programs.

CUPE is committed to ensuring that citizens receive the best possible public service from municipal governments. That is the basis of our members' daily efforts on behalf of the community. At all levels of our union, therefore, we must continue to fight and lobby against municipal underfunding. And together with our trade union and community allies, we must work to promote the development and adoption of a reformed tax system that will generate the funds municipalities need to provide Canadians with high-quality and comprehensive municipal public services and facilities.

# POLICY STATEMENT

## A FAIR REFUGEE POLICY

Refugees are people forced to flee for their lives from their homeland. They seek sanctuary from governments of countries where freedoms are curtailed, persecution is real, and physical security is threatened. The reasons? Religion, politics, war, race, or trade unionism. Many refugees are trade unionists who face imprisonment, oppression, and even death because of their struggle for better conditions for workers in their country.

Most migrants are not refugees (though some claim to be). Yet the federal government seems unable (or unwilling) to distinguish between the two. After years of bureaucratic bungling, suddenly refugees are being blamed for taking advantage of this country. Migrants of all kinds are being lumped together with refugees and are being used as scapegoats for deficient government policies and planning. And government ministers are seen pandering to negative public opinion every time a desperate migrant makes the headlines.

CUPE believes that all refugees who come to our borders seeking a haven should be welcomed. They need us, and their presence enriches us. As trade unionists, we fight for a society based on dignity, justice, and equality for working people. By opening our doors to refugees, we lend support to those who fight for similar causes, and we condemn countries for policies which create refugees. Entry by other kinds of migrants must be controlled; but entry by refugees cannot be. The only important process that migrants claiming to be refugees should be made to submit to is one that speedily, objectively, and democratically decides whether their claim is credible or fraudulent. Yet Canada has no such process. So refugees are all made to look like abusers, and the racists in our midst rejoice as the rules are steadily toughened.

Canada needs a sincere and proper process of refugee determination. The process must be accessible. It must be speedy. It must be open, welcoming, fair and unbiased. Most important, it must be safe for the refugees. The present system fails to meet these criteria. And recent actions and proposals by the Mulroney government, anxious to "play to the gallery", will make matters even worse.

Existing regulations have made it increasingly difficult for refugees to apply for status in Canada. Refugees must either apply to a Canadian immigration office overseas, or come directly to the Canadian border and ask for refugee status here. Canadian offices overseas are few and far between. There are long lineups and lengthy delays for interviews. Often applicants are never seen personally, but simply rejected. Even if one can reach an office, it may be closely watched by secret police — the same people from whom the refugees are fleeing. Canadian offices in Chile and Guatemala are known to be extremely dangerous in this regard.

The Canadian government has also imposed automatic visa restrictions on people coming to Canada from certain countries. These restrictions regulate the type of person who enters Canada. But in the process, the restrictions make it even more difficult for refugees from those countries to get to the Canadian border. Those who do arrive in Canada are then assumed to be illegitimate from the start. And they become caught in a process which can take years to complete. Currently, there is a backlog of about 20,000 refugee applicants. Many are undoubtedly legitimate. Yet only a fraction are processed each month. It is as if Canada wanted red tape to discourage refugees from bothering us, as if we wanted refugees just to go away. Yet the last thing these people deserve is a "get tough" policy!

Instead of implementing much-needed reforms to deal with these problems of administrative processing, the Mulroney government has taken actions and tabled proposals to further restrict and clog up the system. First, it has recently cancelled the "B-1" list of countries. This list provided special treatment for refugees from nineteen countries with poor human rights records, such as El Salvador, Guatemala, Iran and Sri Lanka. The list recognized that no one should be deported to any of these countries if they belonged to a persecuted minority. With the cancellation of the list, many refugees are dissuaded from applying through fear of deportation back to these countries. No doubt such dissuasion is as deliberate as it is contemptible.

Second, the government's proposed emergency Immigration Acts (Bills C-55 and C-84) represent a drastic step backward, concentrating on excluding people rather than providing sanctuary. They deny refugee claimants the right to a fair hearing and automatic appeal within Canada. They deny refugees the

right of entry if they passed through a country considered "safe" (such as the United States) before arriving in Canada. They deny refugees the right of entry if they do not immediately claim refugee status upon reaching the border. (Yet if they do so, the refugees will probably be thrown out.) Again, red tape is being used to slam the door and send the message: stay away. Little wonder that church and humanitarian groups, whose members may face severe penalties if they continue to assist refugees who enter Canada without the "required" documentation, have strongly condemned the proposed legislation and have indicated that they will continue to aid refugees despite such unjust laws.

Third, the government continues to exacerbate the problem by giving aid to some countries (such as El Salvador) which persecute their own citizens, thereby increasing the refugee flow.

But nowhere in the Conservative government's approach is the urgent need for improved and expanded services for refugees addressed. Most refugees do not know their rights under Canadian law. Often, they do not speak English or French. They often experience difficulties adjusting to a different culture, and may face ongoing discrimination. Some live with the psychological legacy of physical persecution or torture. They need employment opportunities, housing, schooling and social support. Yet the organizations and services which help them have very limited resources and are unable to give adequate assistance.

The voiceless and the persecuted of the world need our help, our tolerance, and our humanity. CUPE must respond at all levels of our organization. We must join with other trade unions, the CLC, the NDP, the churches, immigrant and refugee organizations, and human rights organizations in supporting an "open-door" policy for refugees. We must demand a new and sincere refugee determination procedure that provides for a fair, unbiased, and expeditious oral hearing, including the right to an appeal, for every person coming to Canada seeking protection from oppression. We must demand a guarantee from the federal government that no applicant will be deported to a country known for human rights abuse. Finally, we must demand increased financial support from all levels of government for organizations and services which fight for refugees' rights and provide them with much-needed advocacy and other services. We owe all this to our heritage of compassion as Canadians and to our own immigrant roots. And we owe this to our heritage of struggle as trade unionists.