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1. Background that Led to Strike

Negotiations between AUCE and the University began August 8, 1975. By the end of November no progress towards a settlement had been made. Over 50% of all the items in the contract still had to be settled. Most of these were non-monetary items, such as seniority rights, grievance procedure, working conditions.

An offer, including a 19% salary increase, but excluding many important rights and benefits won in 1974, was rejected by AUCE members on October 9, 1975.

After three months of stalling, the University unilaterally called for a mediator. Even with a mediator present, the University continued to talk about old and irrelevant issues, such as the processing of current grievances which had nothing to do with contract negotiations.

Union members, tired of waiting for the University to begin serious bargaining and fearing that the University was trying to destroy their Union, passed a strike vote in the week of November 20-26, 1975.

Strike notice was served on the University early on Friday, November 28. Finally under threat of strike, the University agreed to renew most of the Union's rights and benefits which would not cost the University money.

Unfortunately, the University remained intransigent on issues such as an equitable wage scale, equal pay for student assistants, vacations, etc. At the last minute, the University repeated their 19% offer of October 9 with an added proviso that the Union recognize federal wage controls that do not apply to AUCE since we are provincial employees.

AUCE membership again voted to reject the offer, but also voted to reduce wage demands to a minimum increase of 10% on a restructured wage scale. This proposal would cost the University only 2% more than their 19% offer. But the University negotiators rejected it and allowed the strike to take place.

AUCE IS ON STRIKE BECAUSE THE UNIVERSITY REFUSED FOR FOUR MONTHS TO  
NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY.



## 2. Setting Up of Strike

### (a) Picket Locations

Early in the organization of the strike, a group of three people toured the campus by car to examine all entrances and determine which gates to picket and where to place the picket line at each location. In consulting CUPE's map for their planned strike in 1974, we found it used roughly the same locations we chose. We then drew up for distribution to picketers a map showing and numbering each picket location. We considered picketing some main buildings on campus, such as the Libraries, Computer Centre, New Administration Building, etc., as well as the gates.<sup>\*</sup> However, there are several problems associated with picketing the gates: its the maximum action that can be taken, and once it is taken, there's no going back. This means that if we picket the gates as the first recourse we may find ourselves picketing there for quite a while, i.e. for the entire duration of the strike. If the strike is long, this leads to other problems; namely the fact that other workers would have to respect our lines. While other unions showed themselves exemplary in this respect and probably would do so again, depriving them of their pay-checks is not something we should do lightly, but rather only as a last resort.

Next, we established a rough estimate of how many picketers we needed at each gate. The original plan was to cover all gates during the day, withdrawing picketers from lesser-used locations through the evening and night, but we found that in order to protect other unions on Campus from being called back to work, we had to cover all points 24 hours per day. As the minimum number of people to cover all outside gates around the clock was 480 out of the 560 people who handed in picketing forms, no picketers were left over to cover buildings, except on the basis of enthusiasts volunteering for extra duty.



2. (b) Picket Scheduling

A week before the strike began in December 1975, the Strike Committee sent out picket forms via divisional level, on which we listed thirteen overlapping, four hour shifts. This system proved unsatisfactory in several ways:-

- (a) The Strike Committee was left with the tremendous task of organizing a schedule and informing picketers. This had to be accomplished in only a few days\*.
- (b) The overlapping shift times only created confusion instead of being a hoped-for communications link between the shifts. Sub co-ordinators encountered difficulties in keeping track of their particular shift as there were in fact two shifts on duty at all times.
- (c) The four hour shift was too long, especially during rain and cold weather, and proved disheartening to picketers.
- (d) We also had problems with the night shifts due to a general unwillingness on the part of picketers to fill these shifts. In addition, a further dissatisfaction was created when picketers on night duty were unable to attend membership meetings which were always held during the evening.

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\* Picket packets were prepared for each picketer to give them their locations and basic information on how to conduct themselves on the picket lines.



2. (c) Setting Up of Office

Before the strike, not much thought was given to the office space required by a strike except to organize a coffee area and a table with files of all picketers, picket captains, and main and sub-coordinators. A large map of picket locations was available in the office. No one imagined that the union office would be too small to handle all the types of activities needed to co-ordinate a large strike.

The Publicity Committee began preparations about a week before the strike. (Not nearly enough time to prepare what should have been done earlier.) The job of the publicity committee was to inform both the membership and the rest of the university community what the outstanding contract issues were and that there was a possibility of a strike.

2. (d) Finances

The purpose of the Finance Committee was to obtain, synthesize and collect information on the procedures and interest rates used by banks and credit unions in processing loan applications.

The limited time for preparation and the small size of the committee (three members) made it difficult to provide immediate financial aid to individual members. It was decided that the committee would restrict itself to information relating to loan procedures and interest rates - how and when to apply for a loan, what collateral was needed, what constituted a credit rating and the difference between credit unions and banks and their interest rates.

2. (e) Publicity - Posters

With the approval of the membership, we planned to distribute a poster the morning after a positive strike vote was taken. This was tricky as we had to find a printer who would be able to print the posters at night to be ready for the next morning. We were very fortunate to find a willing printer.



The strike vote was taken on Thursday evening and at 10 p.m. we told the printer to go ahead. At the meeting we arranged for members from each division to stop by the union office in the morning to pick up posters. In the union office we had a large map of the campus and shaded out areas as posters were taken, to eliminate having many posters in one area and none in another and to assure us that the whole campus was posterred by 9:30 a.m. (We had approximately 500 posters printed for this initial posterred.)

The effect of these posters, especially on the membership itself, was great. It was really morale boosting to arrive at work and see that the strike machinery was already working and that we were capable of handling a strike. The University was also more aware that we were serious.

The poster said:

A.U.C.E. LOCAL #1  
will be on strike

December 3rd

We have no choice  
Please support us

Information Meeting  
for Staff, Students,  
Faculty  
S.U.B. Ballroom  
date

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2. (e) Publicity - Leaflets

We also prepared a leaflet for distribution at that meeting and at well travelled areas on the campus.

The purpose of the leaflet was to acquaint students, other union members and faculty of the reasons for the impending strike; our contract demands, the University's reaction to them, a short history of AUCE, why we needed their support and to inform them of the meeting we were planning to answer their questions, etc.

Distribution of these leaflets was through volunteers standing at strategic points ( eg. SUB, Library, Buchanan, BUS Stop, etc.) at lunch, in the morning, and in the afternoon. Leaflets were also left with the residence associations for distribution to those students living in residence.

Due to the lack of time we printed these leaflets ourselves. It would have been nice to have these leaflets prepared ahead of time but until a positive strike vote is taken and money is approved for printing, only the writing of the leaflet can be prepared beforehand.

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2. (e) Information Meeting

The posters and the leaflets were partially to inform everyone of the information meeting in SUB. Members of the Contract Committee and the Executive were present to answer questions and to give our side of the outstanding issues. I think it was fairly evident that we had not done enough work beforehand in informing students of what the issues were and why we were contemplating a strike. We would be disrupting exams and for reasons many students did not understand. How could we expect to make them understand in a couple of days what had taken us months to comprehend? Why had we not gone on strike when our contract expired? Partially because it was a slow learning process before we realized that it was necessary to strike in order to settle our contract.

(f) Liaison With Other Unions and LRB

During the 1975 strike, we had little liaison with other unions before going out. We did notify the other unions when we gave strike notice, and consulted CUPE Local 116's map for picket locations from when they were planning a strike. We informed the B.C. Federation of Labour of our intention to strike but did not involve them in our planning.



2. (g) Organizing Passes and Security

When we had originally planned on taking strike action and decided to picket all entrances to the University, we realized that some members of other Campus unions would have to be permitted access because they could be deemed "essential services" i.e. firemen, nurses, hospital workers. As the University operates with all the services of a small city and residents of the Endowment Lands and students in residence are dependent upon the services provided, we could not prevent these people from going to work without the University or concerned groups successfully applying for injunctions to stop us picketing certain areas. Indeed, this was done by the CLRA just prior to the end of our strike.

We decided, naively, that the best way we could handle this situation was to institute an "Official AUCE Picket Pass" signed by the President and bearing the Union seal. These passes would be issued to those personnel the Union deemed "essential." The passes were made and a close list was to be kept of all passes issued. Little did we know the can of worms we would be opening.



## 2.(h) Student Support

### 1. Alma Mater Society Meetings

AUCE members attended two meetings of the Alma Mater Society Council to explain the Union's position in the strike. The first meeting, one week before the strike began, was almost entirely taken up by another contentious issue. No action was taken after a brief presentation by members of the Strike Committee.

The second meeting was held off-campus after the strike had begun. Because of the time of year, a week before Christmas exams, a quorum was not present, but A.M.S. Council passed unofficial motions in support of AUCE.

Had the Ubyyssey been publishing at the time of these meetings, the efforts of the Strike Committee members in attending might have resulted in some favourable on-campus publicity. As it was, however, only the student "elite" was reached without the benefit of actual motions being passed in our favour.

### 2. Mass Meeting for Students

The Strike Committee arranged a mass meeting of non-AUCE members on campus. The meeting was advertised by hundreds of posters and leaflets across campus, resulting in an attendance of several hundred.

A number of representatives of the Union were to explain AUCE's position and the mechanics of the strike, but many were not prepared to answer the difficult questions of students or to deal with the hostility of a vocal minority of the highly partisan meeting. Some



of the speakers addressed the meeting as if it were a Union meeting, alienating some of the audience.

The meeting was the best means of reaching a large number of students at one time and to demonstrate AUCE's concern for the students. With some better preparation, it could have been a good source of word-of-mouth publicity.

### 3. Attempts to form a Student Support Committee

In the last week before the strike some committee members compiled a list of sympathetic students with the hope of forming them into a committee to assist in organizing student support. One small and generally unsuccessful meeting of the committee was held which degenerated into a debate on the relative merit of picketing student residences.

The lack of success in this area was, again, largely due to the time of the school year, just before exams. There was also little leadership from AUCE members who were too busy with other preparations for the strike.

However, a Student Support Committee, if better organized well in advance of a strike, could be a powerful force in mobilizing support of sympathetic students.

### 4. Concerns of Students in the Strike

By far the most important point of contention among students was the timing of the strike. To most, the threat of losing their "privilege" of writing exams was more important than the issues of the strike.



Especially to those students sympathetic to the Union, the picketing of the whole campus so that 3,600 residence students were left behind the lines was particularly distressing.

In dealing with these complaints, the Union was generally unsuccessful in placing the blame for inconveniences to students where it belongs, with the University.



### 3. ORGANIZATION DURING STRIKE

#### (a) Injunctions

After the picket lines went up, various injunctions were brought against the Union by the management of construction companies working on various projects on Campus at that time. On Monday, December 8, an agreement between the Construction Labour Relations Association and AUCE Local 1 was reached, and after the Letter of Understanding was signed settling the dispute over access to work sites, the picket line at Gate 14 had to be moved to behind the New Administration Building, and the line at Gate 9 to behind the Student Union Building, to permit work to continue on the Biological Sciences Building, the Civil and Mechanical Engineering Building, and the Aquatic Centre.

Procedure for handling an injunction is usually as follows. A company outside the labour dispute comes to the Union and asks for access to a working area inside the picket lines. The Union usually consults a lawyer at this point. Upon being denied access to its work site by the Union, the company prepares a brief and presents it to the Labour Relations Board, presenting its case for being granted access and asking for a hearing. At this point, the outside company and the Union may come to a compromise agreement, or the hearing may proceed. At the end of the hearing, the L.R.B. rules whether or not the pickets have to be moved, and when the move is to be made. During preliminary discussion and the hearing, the B.C. Federation of Labour can, and during the 1975 AUCE U.B.C. strike did, put a lot of pressure on an independent union if it is not pleased with the union's tactics.

See attached:

1. Letter of Agreement between AUCE Local 1 and the Construction Labour Relations Association.
2. Report on AUCE and the Labour Board by Nancy Wiggs.
3. Map of picket locations.



3. (b) The Role of the Strike Committee Chairperson

In particular, the duties of the Chairperson are to view the entire strike body as a whole and function as a liaison person between the Executive and the Strike Committee body. This should be his/her sole responsibility. The Chairperson spent most of her time acting as a Main Co-ordinator. She was forced to take on this job because she knew the structure and function of the task, and we couldn't find anyone else willing to fill this position. In addition, there was no time during the hectic hours of the strike to drop this position and find a new recruit. As it was, people dropped out of this job because they were already assigned to other duties, (i.e. Executive members), and had become overloaded with responsibility. This was a problem which developed within the entire structure of the AUCE strike. Other areas which impinged upon the role of the Chairperson during the strike was acting as Executive rep. in the Union office. Frequently there was not an Executive person in the office to refer questions to on items of concern, i.e. passes, information on contract negotiations, etc.

It is essential that in the event of a strike the duties of the Chairperson should be clearly defined. The Chairperson should only be responsible for such specific duties as:-

1. Distributing and accounting of strike funds.
2. Liaison with Executive and Contract Committee.
3. Injunctions and locations.
4. Liaison with the sub-committees within the strike body.



3.(b) 1. Finances - Strike Funds

The Chairperson of the Strike Committee and the Executive Treasurer should be responsible for funds during the strike. As soon as the strike vote is taken, the Chairperson should open up a bank account specifically for strike funds. It will be the job of one member of each of the sub-committees to submit their budget to the Chairperson. At that point, only the Chairperson and the Treasurer will be authorized to issue funds.

2. Liaison with Executive and Contract Committees

The Chairperson must be made aware of any executive meetings - to enable him/her to be fully aware of the day-to-day strike situation. Attendance at such meetings is essential in providing up to date information and feeding the executive as to what is happening out there on the lines, i.e. what is the morale of the picketers.

3. Injunctions

The Chairperson of the Strike Committee should be fully educated on the problems with injunctions. Any meetings with AUCE's lawyer or the Labour Relations Board should be attended by the Chairperson. It will be the responsibility of the Chairperson to carry out the task of informing the main co-ordinators as to new areas of concern. A good starting point would be to have one large map of the entire campus, marking out the picket locations and beside this a detailed area of each picket site.



3. (b) 3. Continued

If any changes were to be made due to injunctions, the Strike Committee Chairperson would inform the Main Co-ordinator who could make the appropriate change on the detailed map. This would immediately inform not only the picketers of that particular shift but would provide this vital information for the next shift due to arrive on the scene.

4. Liaison with the Sub-committees

This would involve having an overall bird's eye view of the entire Strike Committee, such as supplying feedback to the various committees as to what decisions have been made at the Executive level, i.e. how negotiations are going.



3. (b) Role of the Main Co-ordinator

The Main Co-ordinator is responsible for setting up the files necessary in the event of a strike, for co-ordinating the phoning of the membership, for assigning duties and making the necessary changes, and for advising anyone involved in the strike operation of problems, changes and policy relating to the picket lines. The Main Co-ordinator is responsible for making sure that people are assigned to cover the phones, reception desk, files and information area in the relief centre, and making sure the necessary bulletin boards are set up and up-dated. The Main Co-ordinator should attend Strike Committee meetings, and read minutes and logs of the previous 24 hours to keep posted on the latest developments. While on strike, she/he should brief the entire shift as to the latest developments one-half hour before picket duties, assign members on the shift to picket locations, and arrange a day, or days, off for people on shift. She/he should move people around picket locations as problems arise and deal with change of locations as injunctions arise, advise other co-ordinators of any change, keep an attendance record of the shift, and handle any problems dealing with picket lines and pass on any major problems to the Strike Committee Chairperson, or any other person involved. The Main Co-ordinator is not responsible for Executive duties, such as dealing with the press, other unions, loans, etc.



3. (c) Office Organization

During the 1975 strike, we had only one office from which to handle the co-ordination of strike duty, refreshments and restrooms for picketers, and co-ordination with other unions. The resulting noise and confusion was indescribable; while the co-ordinators were trying to organize and handle the problems of their shifts, the Gestetner was running and creating a din, picketers were milling around with coffee, committees were trying to meet to produce leaflets, decide policy, etc., and members from other unions were listening in.

In terms of staff, there was a first no one assigned to do typing and duplicating jobs if they were needed. Volunteers were eventually brought in, but often the only time there was quiet and space to handle clerical-type jobs arising from the strike was during the night shift of strike duty, and the only people available at that time to do the tasks were the Main Co-ordinators and the refreshment organizer.

This situation created confusion, lack of concentration, misplacement of files and a lack of security. Anyone, member or non-member, had easy access to our strike operation and strategy. This led to criticism from other unions and allowed for a sifting of vital information to leak out. One shift was phoned by an unknown person, who said that the strike was over and that it was not necessary to report for picket duty. This happened on the last night of our strike and could have been disastrous if we hadn't voted to go back to work.

The office space was divided eventually into an area for the Main Co-ordinators and an area for other business. Rudimentary bulletin boards were set up in the Union office, one listing names, telephone



numbers and addresses of both the Executive and the Strike Main Coordinators, the other carrying newsletters, paper clippings reporting on the strike, minutes of meetings, etc.

3. (d) Finances - Office Expenses

During the strike, there was often difficulty in finding someone to authorize funds for such items as felt pens for making impromptu picket signs, office materials, etc. Individuals often bought supplies out of their own pockets and waited to be reimbursed. In the area of coffee supplies, different people bought from different stores, often at a higher price than necessary, and often duplicating supplies already on hand.

The actual expenses for the strike were as follows:-



3.(d) Finances

Posters		\$ 128.12
Coffee		52.55
Rent (Meetings during the strike)		292.00
Audio Equipment (re Meetings)		42.50
Petty Cash (Minor expenses)		150.00
Petty Cash (Taxi re return of walkie-talkies)		7.00
Buttons		680.27
Sheraton-Plaza (re Rent for executive meeting)		51.75
Lawyer (re Injunctions)		507.05
Newsletter		577.89
Posters and Labels		1,120.73
Walkie-talkies		27.00
Negotiation Meetings		<u>222.56</u>
	Sub-Total	3,859.42
Credit (Coffee donations)		<u>9.77</u>
Strike Auth. Expenses	TOTAL	\$3,849.65
Expenses not from strike fund (Rent Lutheran Centre)		99.99
TOTAL STRIKE EXPENSES		<u><u>\$3,949.64</u></u>



3. (d) Finances

No set of rules was formed to decide upon a member's need and/or eligibility, as the committee felt that the membership was generally aware of our financial predicament concerning the Union's assets and would not ask for assistance unless he/she felt it was really necessary. From a financial standpoint, such a statement is irresponsible - there should be an objective set of criteria used in determining an applicant's need and eligibility. The committee did not feel that it was knowledgeable enough at that time to decide who should receive assistance and who should not. Fortunately, the committee did not have to deal with this problem as no applications were processed. This was the result more of the membership's unawareness of the availability of help than of their financial needs.

Finding out about loan procedures was a matter of systematically contacting all charter banks and credit unions, and asking them a set of questions. It was felt by the committee that no AUCE member should suffer severe financial hardship because of our strike; however, because of the large size of the Union and the slenderness of its assets, it was impossible to institute a strike fund in which members doing strike duty would draw a specific strike allowance. The committee felt that the hardship could be reduced for those members only in dire need of financial aid. By allowing a member to obtain a loan from his/her bank and having both the member and the Union repay such a loan. The member would be responsible for the principal (repaying the amount actually borrowed) and the Union for the interest (repaying the accumulated interest on the principal amount). This procedure was approved in a membership meeting.



3. (e) Publicity

Picket Bulletins

Once the strike began, the major focus of the Publicity Committee was to prepare daily picket bulletins for the membership. This was the only way we could effectively communicate progress in negotiations, meetings, good news, picket safety procedures, etc., to our membership. The information for these picket bulletins was based on the previous day's Executive or membership meeting and written at about midnight. The person on the midnight shift in the Union office would type and Gestetner these bulletins and have them ready for distribution to the morning picket group. These bulletins were the most successful means of communication. (See Appendix #2.)

Bulletins were also prepared every other day for distribution to students and faculty who approached the picket lines. These bulletins were prepared in the above manner. (See Appendix #3.)

3. (c) Picket Signs (Posters)

Picket signs were not made up in advance. This resulted in an insufficient supply, and misprinting. Because they were not water-proofed, they rapidly dissolved in the winter rain.



3. (f) Relations with Other Unions

For the duration of the strike, all unions on Campus supported our strike by not crossing our picket lines. Most outside unions were very supportive, although there was one case of a delivery truck waiting all night in case our picket lines came down.

On Campus, the firemen were very anxious to respect our lines, especially as this would help them in their attempt to gain the right to strike. (We were forced by injunction to move our lines to behind their work area.)

There were rumors that other unions on Campus were almost ready to start crossing our picket lines by the time we ended our strike. CUPE was very critical of our way of handling our strike, and often watched carefully at night in case any of our lines came down, forcing us to leave small numbers in isolated spots on night shift.

In order to support both unionized and non-unionized non-AUCE workers, who respected our picket lines, we resolved to sign no agreement with the University while any worker was under disciplinary action for honouring our picket lines.

After the strike, letters of thanks were sent to the unions who supported our strike.



3.(g) Organizing Passes and Security

During the first day of the strike, passes were issued to the Health Sciences Department (Psychiatric Hospital and Student Health Service). This entailed about 200 passes. Next we were approached by members of CUPE 116, who claimed it was essential for them to be allowed access through our picket lines to tend experimental animals who had to be fed, etc., and horticulture workers to tend exotic and valuable plants. This unfortunately led to a confrontation with the executive of the CUPE Local who claimed passes were being issued to Physical Plant Supervisory Personnel (no official passes were ever issued to these people and we were not able to obtain one of the disputed passes to check their authenticity). We finally acquiesced to CUPE's demand that they should decide which of their members were essential and they would issue those passes. This entailed having one of their members in our strike headquarters all during our strike.

Now that it was known that we were issuing passes to get across the picket line, we were approached by all sorts of people looking for passes: the AMS came to us for passes for technicians to maintain the ice surface at Thunderbird Rink (if the ice melted, they claimed, it would cost approximately \$30,000 to resurface the concrete floor of the rink before a new ice sheet could be put down); a representative from the Student Residence Council came to us to see if there was some way for the students in residence to have their Christmas dinner (as we were actively seeking student support we reluctantly agreed to issue these passes but CUPE refused to do so); the Red Cross approached us for passes as they were scheduled to hold a blood donor clinic in one of the residences; a driver of the Easter Seal Bunny Buses came to us for passes for their drivers to deliver crippled and retarded children to the Special Unit; Speakeasy came to us for passes for their



crisis volunteers to maintain their phone centre; the firemen were also receiving passes and we ran into an inter-union squabble within their union (BCGU). The firemen were trying to get the right to strike and complained that we were not allowing them the ordinary worker's right to refuse to cross a picket line (!); I even had some of our own members come to me for passes so they could meet friends inside our picket line.



### 3.(h) Student Support

#### Information to Students

During the five days of the strike, five different leaflets primarily addressed to students were distributed on the picket lines. Four of the leaflets were devoted to presenting AUCE's position in the strike and explaining our contract demands. The other admonished students for crossing picket lines and "demonstrating support for the University against the workers."

The main value of the leaflets was to maintain contact with students and the arguments actually did gain the Union a small measure of support. While the University's slick, expensive UBC Reports suddenly became a daily propaganda sheet presenting their side of the dispute, the leaflets served to somewhat counter its effect. Many picketers found the leaflets a good tool in approaching people on the picket line.

Unfortunately, distribution of the leaflets was not always adequate and not enough people were allocated to produce a new leaflet for each day of the strike. Many students disregarded the leaflets as one-sided propaganda - the Union's equivalent to the UBC Reports.

#### Actual Student Support

Unquestionably, the majority of students crossed our picket lines but some students actually walked the picket lines with AUCE members, notably those active in student politics. A group of about forty law students printed a statement of support and were prepared to picket their own faculty building during exams if the strike had not ended before law exams began.



It is important to remember that student support for the strike was not non-existent, it was often simply invisible. Those students who respected our picket lines simply stayed home.

### 3.(j) Meetings

When the strike vote was taken on December 2, we voted to hold a general membership meeting on Sunday, December 7, to decide on further strike action. Meetings were also held on Monday and Tuesday nights to re-assess the strike situation and to discuss developments in negotiations. All meetings were held from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m., which always left the same people on picket duty and unable to attend the meetings. On Tuesday night, the ballot for the vote on whether or not to continue the strike was taken out by the office staff to the picket lines, but this system didn't allow the picketers to hear debate on the issue, so that they didn't have the best possible basis for deciding how to vote.

Meetings of the Union Executive were held daily, usually in someone's home. Often, Strike Committee representatives couldn't come, and communication between the Executive and the Strike Committee, especially the Main Strike Co-ordinators, suffered as a result.

Meetings were occasionally held with all picketers coming on to their shift to inform them of major new developments in the strike, but this was not done on a regular basis.



3.(k) Role of the Executive

During the strike in December, we encountered difficulties due to lack of communication between the Executive Committee and the Strike Committee. There were also problems with keeping members informed of current negotiations and meeting times. Because of revolving shifts for all workers involved in the strike, it was impossible to get everyone together at one time.

There is an absolute need to have a tightly-knit working relationship with the Executive and Contract Committees. The failure of such a relationship was clearly evident in the AUCE strike in December, 1975. At one crucial point during the strike, members of the Strike Committee were ready to resign because they felt they were the 'workers' of the Executive, unable to make decisions and carry out their duties with confidence and assurance. This feeling was compounded by the fact that we felt forever working in a fog, which I believe could have been lifted if we could have received the needed guidance from the Executive.



#### 4. OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY OF 1975 STRIKE

##### No Contract - No Work

Our single greatest mistake in negotiations last year was our allowing the University to stall us for more than two months after the term of the previous contract was up. This put us in the somewhat untenable position of striking just before Christmas.

One reason for this is that we mistakenly believed that more time in negotiations would, per se, lead to more items being negotiated and settled. Nothing is further from the truth. The number of clauses settled is not a function of the time spent in their negotiations: rather, it is a function of the pressure put on the University by the membership. Negotiations and job action are two aspects of the same process. Let us once again recall that in the three days immediately before the strike began, we got more settled than in the previous three months.

It therefore follows that there is no point in letting them stall us beyond September 30 before beginning job action. Otherwise, the membership is wasting its own time, not to mention the time and energies of the Contract Committee. We should probably be carrying out (non-strike) action even before September 30. We should begin negotiations July 1, which is the earliest we are allowed to. Three months is quite long enough to negotiate a contract, providing the University negotiates in good faith. By the time September 30 rolls around - and if we still have no contract, we should be talking about NO CONTRACT - NO WORK!



### The Role of the Strike Committee as a Whole

What in effect was the role of the Strike Committee in the first AUCE strike? Reflecting on the Strike Committee's position, it was unclear and undefined. In general, some of the reasons for such mass confusion were due to several factors:-

1. The AUCE report of 1974 did not and could not provide this year's Strike Committee with the information we needed.
2. AUCE had never been on strike before. (It was a matter of the blind leading the blind.)
3. The roles of the Chairperson and other Strike Committee members were not clearly defined.
4. The most inhibiting factor was the shortage of time. There was simply not enough time to get this strike organized and running effectively.



## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

### (a) Picket Locations

It is recommended that for any future strike action we adopt a policy of escalating action which could eventually culminate in picketing the gates.

We would therefore recommend the following as general policy for any future strike action:

1st Step: A series of well-timed demonstrations. These could coincide with events such as Board of Governor meetings, and/or take place at appropriate places, such as the Administration Building. The purpose would be to create public awareness and sympathy, and thus put pressure on the University.

2nd Step: A series of rotating strikes. These would be somewhat difficult for a union of our character to pull off, but could be done. People would walk out in certain areas on certain days, with no advance notice of just when and where. People in isolated offices could not directly participate - rather, we would pull people out of larger centres, such as the Library and the Administration Building. In order to avoid the problem of some people working and receiving wages while others are on strike, we would levy a special dues assessment, (approximately a day's pay, say - a By-laws amendment would be necessary here) and pay all members for any time lost. Unused assessment would be returned.

3rd Step: Pulling everyone out indefinitely, but only picketing major buildings. No time limit could be set or even implied, as this tends to weaken our position. Rather, membership meetings would be held twice a week.



4th Step: Moving our pickets to block all gates 24 hours a day.

There should be a Picketing Committee specifically responsible for picket locations, to consider strategy and necessary changes, and also to post a general map of locations and specific maps of changes at injunction locations in the Union office.

The Picketing Committee should be aware of construction sites on Campus and the possibility of injunctions against picket lines which block their access to sites; also of any other situations that could give rise to injunctions, such as lines blocking off an essential service or a residential area. Contingency plans should be prepared for these situations.

In case of an injunction, it is best to consider in each case whether to face a hearing, stall for time, or reach a compromise agreement.

During hearings or negotiations on injunctions, it is best to have two or three Union members together for support and consultation as well as the lawyer, who has a less clear idea of the needs and wishes of the Union membership.

The longer a strike lasts, the more injunctions come through, and the more our picket line is weakened by letting people through to go to work in the heart of the Campus.



5. (b) Organization of Picket Duty

Recruiting of picketers must be started at least one month in advance of a possible strike date. Picket forms should be sent out at this time. (See sample picket form attached.)

The form would ask the membership to fill out their preference as to picket time or duties, whether they have a car, and whether they are willing to act as a Sub-coordinator. These forms would then be returned to the Union office well before the possibility of a strike, to be processed. Each member would then have a card with the appropriate information on it. Each shift would have a card file. The amount of people on each shift would be calculated and then filled starting with the night shifts first. After confirmation the cards would be filed in the right shift. In each file there would be additional people assigned for relief and absenteeism. We should give everyone at least one day off from picket duty if not at least two. Each shift would have the required number of Sub-coordinators for telephoning and being responsible for any picket line assigned to. Any changes in shift for a person would mean changing the card to the right file, correcting the master list so we can trace them at a glance and advising the Sub-coordinator in charge of telephoning and assigning the telephoning to a new Sub-coordinator. The files can be colour-coded depending on the duties involved, such as office work, refreshment area, running off of material, picket line, organization, etc.

The Executive and Contract Committee should not be assigned any picket duties. No one person should have more than one function to perform.

A revised picket schedule with shorter shift times should be enacted.



During the strike, picketers should meet one-half hour to twenty minutes before their shift to receive picketing information and news of negotiations and strike happenings.

5. (c) Recommendations

There should be two areas completely separated from one another, one for the co-ordinating of the strike and another for relief and refreshments. The office for co-ordinating the strike should be set into four areas. There should be a total of five phones, three outgoing and two incoming. The office should be set up with a reception area, an Executive and Strike Committee meeting area, an Executive area, and a strike co-ordination and work area. An area for running off material relating to the strike could be set up in this office but it is recommended that it be in the relief and refreshment area due to the noise it creates.

The reception area should be near the door and have an incoming phone. This is to stop any unauthorized people from going beyond and to direct them to the right person or place. The receptionist could be responsible for distribution of strike material to the right people, for keeping files on the scabs, record of incidents of crossing picket lines by other unions and trouble on the picket lines. They would be the liaison between the refreshment area and would be responsible for notifying the R.C.M.P. in case of trouble. They could also be responsible for taking messages and changing any bulleting boards that need changing or updating. They would also have the main file of all telephone numbers and members' names as well as those of all the committees. A file with all press releases, bulletins, newspaper clippings should be kept by the receptionist.



The meeting area is used for Executive and Strike Committee meetings, which should be held daily and the times should be rotated so that everyone involved has the opportunity to attend and doesn't have to come in when she/he should be home resting or working on their shift.

The Executive area should have someone on duty at all times. It would have an incoming and outgoing phone, and the Executive on duty should be responsible for handling injunctions and passes, setting up membership meetings (which should be rotated), answering general inquiries, and dealing with the press, other unions, and the University Administration. The Executive representative would also relay any Executive decisions and information to the right people to be acted upon.

The strike co-ordinating area should have the working files consisting of picket lines, picket schedules and membership files. Any changes should be dealt with immediately and the proper people notified. There should be at least one outgoing phone, preferably two. This group should have access to the names, addresses and phone numbers of the entire membership to work from at any time of year in case we or any other union go on strike.

Bulletin boards should be posted with the Executive, Contract and Strike Committee members phone numbers. Also the main duties of the key people should be posted with times they are on duty. Minutes should be posted of all meetings and distributed to the people who require them. A mail box system should be set up in the office so that messages and related information can be passed on and picked up by those who require it. A log should be kept.



Office Co-ordinators. There should be a minimum of four, and preferably six, office co-ordinators working on a 24-hour basis daily. The responsibility of these co-ordinators should be to maintain refreshment supplies to all concerned, to assist picket co-ordinators in providing refreshments to individuals at designated picket stations, and to direct all enquiries to the persons responsible for answering these enquiries. There should also be assistant teams who will provide back-up services to the office co-ordinators - people who are willing to drive around to the picket lines, bringing refreshments to the picketers and taking people to washroom facilities, etc.

5. (d) Finances - Office Expenses

There needs to be centralized responsibility for buying bulk office supplies (paper, Gestetner ink, etc.), posters and coffee supplies so that we buy in bulk and get the best possible price on goods. Also, there needs to be someone on hand at all times with access to petty cash for small emergency purchases.

As noted under 3.(d) in this report, the Chairperson of the Strike Committee and the Executive Treasurer should have overall responsibility for funds. A sum of money, for the purchase of refreshments, should be obtained from the Union funds prior to the strike actually becoming effective. This sum should be controlled by one individual and that individual should be responsible for all purchases of coffee, tea, milk, sugar, cups, stirrers, etc. The cost for providing refreshments can then be kept within reason.



5. (d) Finances - Loans

The Financial Committee needs to do thorough research to really delve into the types of loans and corresponding interest rates that are offered to individuals and/or organizations. Because of the lack of sources of outside help, we need a healthy strike fund.

5. (e) Publicity

It is essential that information be circulated throughout the membership sufficiently in advance of a strike situation. Through this media, the membership will clearly understand the reasoning for their right to take strike action and the potential of support and of winning a strike. The importance of an informed membership, lots of participation in the entire strike process, cannot be stressed enough.

As well as being able to provide the membership with information on strike situations, it is also able to involve people in practical preparatory levels of the strike. This would not require great organizational commitment but would be a concrete way of involving people who support strike action with other people in planning for it. The form we envision this taking is postering parties, leafletting, picket and banner parties.

Recommendation: That when the Strike Committee is formed, the Communications Committee automatically becomes a sub-committee of the Strike Committee, responsible for publicity. The Chairperson of the Communications Committee would also be the Chairperson of the Publicity Committee. The members of the Publicity Committee need not be elected representatives of their division - anyone interested in helping will



certainly be a welcome addition. The point of this recommendation is to eliminate duplication of work and to give the Publicity Committee a good start as the members of the Communications Committee will already be familiar with layout, printers, etc., and will have some members to get the publicity rolling.

: That the Chairperson of the Publicity Committee be present at Executive meetings and Strike Committee meetings in order to make sure that the most up-to-date and correct information is made available to the public.

: That, before the strike, the publicity group work with the Communications Committee to ensure that there is no duplication of the function and that sufficient information gets to the membership as a whole. (See Recommendation #1.)

: Determine the number of strike posters already in the Union office and have more printed if necessary. (Make sure they are waterproofed.) As long as there are 250 on hand, this should be adequate as the printing company we used (Alpine Printers) was really great about printing posters once the strike began. All estimates and printing arrangements should be prepared in advance.

: Support Buttons. Many students were willing to wear "I Support AUCE" buttons and stickers. There should still be a supply in the Union office. These buttons can be distributed at the booth in SUB as well as on the picket lines.

: That leaflets be prepared and distributed to the University community at large, beginning at least a month before the strike begins.



: That an information table be set up in SUB, twice a week at lunch time (from whenever we start distributing the above leaflets), to inform students of our issues, answer questions and attract support for our various committees.

The preparation of information bulletins should be done in the Union office, preferably at the end of each day so that the amount of information distributed is the maximum and costs of production can be kept to a minimum.

: That as soon as our contract expires (before, if we set the contract expiry date as a strike date as well), articles should be submitted to the Ubysey and leaflets distributed at least bimonthly around Campus, and an information booth in SUB, presenting our contract demands, outstanding issues and the University's attitude (use minutes from the Contract Committee meetings if necessary) to the University community. Choose a central theme (e.g. wage parity) and continue this through all the issues.



5. (f) Contacting the B.C. Federation of Labour and Affected Campus Unions

The B.C. Federation of Labour should be contacted as soon as negotiations begin to break down. Their policy is that they must have at least 72 hours notice before picket lines are set up. This is, of course, mainly for their affiliates as they plan and execute the strikes of their affiliates. But as we expect support from all organized workers during our strike, we must respect their needs for information to ensure no misunderstandings exist between us and them.

The B.C. Fed will contact all affected unions, i.e. B.C. Hydro, Construction Unions, CUPE, etc. They will call meetings of all the affected unions which we will attend to disseminate information to them.

As an act of courtesy we should personally contact all the unions on Campus, who will be affected by our strike. The Campus unions are: CUPE, OTEU, BCGU, Operating Engineers, Health Sciences, Postal Workers, B.C. Tel, Nurses, Firehall.

For contacting the B.C. Fed and other unions, the liaison person should be our local president to ensure clarity of our position and continuation of information.



5. (g) Union Security

The strike co-ordination area should be "off limits" to all but essential personnel in order to maintain security and to control information going forward to the news media, etc. Liaison with other unions should take place in the office reserved as a rest area for picketers and a reception area for outside organizations seeking information.

We should never again try to let people cross our lines for any reason except serious risk to human life and health. When we set up picket lines we are asking for the support of all organized workers. They are off the job, too, and it is frustrating to them to see some workers going to work while they are losing their pay. The sanctity of the picket line is total and the use of such a weapon must be kept intact. For this reason, we must set up our lines carefully to avoid trapping any operation, such as hospitals or residences, behind our lines.

5. (h) Student Support

The Publicity Committee should work more directly with support-oriented groups, (e.g. student support committee), to arrange production aspects for those groups. The student support committee should start getting information to the students as soon as possible (during negotiations). If we expect their support, they should know what issues are causing the delay in our negotiations. The issues must be clearly defined.

In discussions with students, the Strike Committee found that most like to assume the guise of objective liberalism, weighing the relative



merits of the cases of the Union and of the University. If, in any future dispute, the Union decides that it is worthwhile to actively cultivate the support of students, it is best to keep that attitude in mind. Students should be approached neither as committed trade unionists nor as necessarily hostile. It is essential to be direct and straightforward in our presentations to students and not to try to hide or gloss over any uncomfortable facts, as they will immediately pick up on this and become hostile and suspicious. We should stick to facts and present them in a clear and logical manner. Questions should be answered clearly and directly, not evasively.

5. (j) Meetings

Membership meetings should rotate to different times, so that people on different picketing shifts are affected each time. Perhaps membership meetings could be spaced a bit instead of being held daily. Meetings of the Union Executive and those of Main Co-ordinators should be rotated and held in the Union office to facilitate better attendance and communication. Regular briefing meetings should be held by the Main or Sub Co-ordinator with each oncoming shift before they go to their posts, to keep them informed of developments.



5. (k) Role of Executive

There should be an Executive member available in the strike office at all times (with the possible exception of the late night shifts), whose responsibility is to inform the Strike Committee representative of events taking place in negotiations, scheduling of meetings, and any other important information. The Executive member should handle all matters of meeting with the press and media, and of deciding policy in working with other unions, the L.R.B., and outside groups.



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