

Your president and executive recommend affiliation with CUPE



The President and Executive Members of Canadian University Employees recommends to the membership that CUE affiliate with the Canadian Union of Public Employees.

As you know, our two-year Service Contract with CUPE ends at the end of February. Sometime during the next few weeks we must decide whether or not we will formally affiliate with CUPE.

Your executive considers this a very important matter and has called a General Membership Meeting for Thursday, February 26 to discuss the issue in full. Following that information meeting, a ballot will be sent to each member of CUE giving you the final say on affiliation.

This issue was discussed at length by your executive and in this short report we share with you the major reasons why we consider it in our best interest to formally affiliate with CUPE - Canada's largest union.

Our Autonomy Will be Respected. CUPE is unique among unions for the autonomy it allows its local affiliates. As a local union of CUPE we will still be referred to as Canadian University Employees. In addition, however, we will be assigned a CUPE local union number.

As members of CUPE, we will continue to make our own decisions, set our own priorities and chart our own destiny.

However, we will have the additional clout of a large national union assisting us whenever we need help and guidance.

Our By-Laws Will Be Altered, Minimally. As a CUPE local affiliate, we will be required to alter our by-laws a bit. But these changes will not lessen our autonomy. The major change will be an increase in the number of our Table Officers. We will change our by-laws to accommodate a second vice-president (instead of the single vice-president we presently have) - with each of the two having specific responsibilities.

We will also be required to have Trustees who will be non-voting members of the Executive. The Trustees' role is to 'police' the Executive and report directly to you, the members.

How we take care of our affairs, what our bargaining priorities are, and other major policy decisions are not altered by being members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees.

Financially, We'll Be Better Off. The union dues paid by each member of CUE will not change whether we affiliate with CUPE, or not. However, for the same amount of money, we will have the resources of a large national union to draw from.

We will enjoy the benefit of having all CUPE's National Departments at our disposal. For example, we'll have experts to assist us with Step-3 Grievances if we so desire--at no cost. We'll have the benefit of CUPE's Education Department to teach our members how to be successful shop stewards, how to handle grievances, how to improve our newsletter, and access to many other necessary courses.

CUPE's Research Department is now computerized and is able to give us up-to-the-minute contract comparisons across the country and cost-of-living data. All at no additional cost to our members, and these are services we enjoyed in negotiating our last contract.

As a small union on our own, we could not afford these services, nor could we afford to retain the experts CUPE has in the areas of Occupational Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, Public Relations, Job Evaluation and Computer Technology.

CUPE also has a massive Defence Fund which provides every affiliated member with strike pay if he or she is forced onto a picket line by an employer. And CUPE's Defence Fund is also used to assist any local union which is under attack. (We recently tapped into CUPE's Defence Fund to pay for research on Ritchie and Associates - the so-called "efficiency experts" on campus.)

Our union presently has a strike fund of \$125,000 which will remain with us even after we vote to affiliate.

Your executive has received budget projections for 1987 to indicate where we will be if we affiliate with CUPE and if we don't. These projections were prepared by Helen Glavina, with the assistance of a CUPE accountant, for the previous executive.

Here's the bottom line: If we affiliate with CUPE, we'll end the year with a budget surplus of \$1943. If we don't affiliate, it is projected that we'll end the year with a budget deficit of \$15,497. (See blue budget projections.)

That's a strong financial argument in favour of affiliation.

In addition, CUPE National President, Jeff Rose, has assured us that we will receive special financial assistance until the end of 1987, to help us overcome the backlog of extraordinary expenses we have incurred over the past year.

We'll Get The Help We Need - Without Interference. Your executive has examined the pros and cons of affiliation and we feel comfortable in recommending that we join CUPE because we're sure our members will receive all the help we need - without someone from the outside telling us what's best for us.

Your new executive is also committed to cutting our unnecessary expenses such as excessive booking-off, overtime payments, and other expenses we consider superfluous.

After we get our own financial house in order (which we expect to do this year!), our union should operate quite smoothly.

We have requested that CUPE give priority consideration to placing a National Representative full-time on the UBC campus to look after the affairs of all the local unions here. This matter is being seriously considered by CUPE's National Officers. Although we have received no guarantees, it has been suggested that an on-campus representative three days per week is another possibility.

Your executive has looked at every aspect of this question. It is our considered opinion that affiliation with CUPE is our best choice.

However, this short report cannot cover every detail of this affiliation. That's why we urge you to be at the General Membership Meeting on Thursday, February 26. At that time, we will be able to answer any additional questions.

Submitted respectfully,

On Behalf of the Executive
Canadian University Employees



ADRIEN B. KIERNAN
PRESIDENT

February 10, 1987

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Canadian
University
Employees

2170 Western Parkway, U.B.C., Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1V6

224-2308

March 5, 1987

Dear Members:

The time has come for us to vote on affiliation with the Canadian Union of Public Employees.

Your ballot is enclosed.

Please mark your vote and return your ballot envelope as quickly as you can. Ballots will be counted on March 26. Please ensure we get your ballot before that date.

Your executive wishes to thank all the members who were present at our February 26th meeting. During our discussions, several questions were raised. We considered those queries to be important and think there may be other members, not present at the meeting, who would appreciate receiving answers to those questions.

Why is the executive pushing ahead with this referendum ballot on affiliation with CUPE?

Two years ago, CUE agreed to a Service Contract with the Canadian Union of Public Employees. This decision was based on the fact that we wanted to take a trial run at an association with CUPE without plunging immediately into a formal affiliation.

At the time of signing that Service Contract, representatives of CUE promised CUPE we would hold a referendum ballot at the end of the two years.

That two-year Service Contract ended on February 28. However, we have extended the contract until March 26 -- the day we count the votes. Your executive is convinced our relationship with CUPE has been a productive one; and we are comfortable in recommending affiliation with CUPE.

That's why we're asking you to vote on affiliation.

Why are CUE members being given so little time to make a decision on this important issue?

We have all had two years to consider our relationship with CUPE. Our previous executive knew of the expiry date of the Service Contract and were in a good position to inform you as the time passed.

Ted Byrne wrote a report on CUPE (it's included in this package).

2.

When your present executive took office in January, we had six weeks to the end of the Service Contract. We were given only two weeks to get all our reports researched, written, printed and circulated. It is my opinion that your new executive is to be commended for the very good job they have done under such serious time constraints.

What decisions and obligations could be imposed on us by our affiliation with CUPE?

The answer to that question is clearly outlined in the CUPE constitution which was circulated to the entire membership recently. (Extra copies of that mailing are available in the CUE office.)

One obligation is the per capita tax which is decided on by delegates from all the local unions who attend the CUPE National Convention. The number of delegates from each local union is determined by the number of members in each local. CUE, with 1300 members, is entitled to send five delegates.

We will not be voting for an increase in the per capita tax and we have stated that the CUE dues will not increase.

We will have our own by-laws, our own executive structure, our own decision-making procedures and will maintain our autonomy. We will have the freedom to decide how we will use the CUPE services, if we will use the services and to what degree we will use them.

Why have CUE members not seen a "contract" or "letter of agreement" with CUPE?

Such a "contract" does not exist. Here's what will happen if we vote to affiliate: A standard application for affiliation will be completed and forwarded to the CUPE National Office. Following that, we will be granted a Charter of Affiliation which we can subsequently hang on our wall, as do other locals.

We are then able to have access to the same benefits and resources that have been available to us under the servicing agreement, but now through the constitution.

The Service Contract was an interim document only to be in effect until we vote whether or not to join CUPE, or until the Agreement expires.

The minute the vote is counted on March 26, the Contract with CUPE is void.

3.

Jeff Rose, CUPE's National President, has also agreed to give us \$3,000 per month (until the end of 1987) to assist us with the deficit caused by extraordinary expenses from the previous year. This assistance is outlined in the CUPE constitution. (Article VII - 7.6)

It is the opinion of your executive that we will be financially stable by year's end.

Did CUPE agree to place a Staff Representative from the National Office on campus full time?

CUPE was approached with this request. We received an agreement that the National Union would seriously review this proposal. It was pointed out that before the union consents to do this, there must be agreement from the other CUPE locals on campus that they too wish to have a full-time staff rep on a shared basis.

The cost of this full-time staff rep would come out of the per capita tax. However, CUPE is a democratic organization and an on-campus staff rep would not be thrust on the other UBC locals without discussion with them and their agreement.

How about the financial feasibility of affiliation?

What would we have to cut to pay the per capita tax?

Would the level of service drop? Would our dues be raised?

Regardless of whether or not we join CUPE, your executive is committed to maintaining services to the membership, improving communication and ensuring democratic decision-making. Your executive pays dues too, and we do not want the dues increased.

We expect that affiliation with CUPE will mean a maintenance of our present high level of services with no increase in costs to members. When we pay the per capita tax to CUPE, we do not need to pay into a CUE strike fund. That's a significant saving. And our legal costs will be covered by CUPE -- unless we choose to hire a non-CUPE lawyer. But CUPE has some of the best legal minds in its employ, and although we have the freedom to hire others, why would we not avail ourselves of this expertise which our per capita dollars will have paid for?

The cost of CUPE's Legal Department is paid by all affiliated local unions. And the truth is that pooled resources and shared costs are most often cheaper. If we remain alone, we may not be able to afford the legal fees, anyway.

4.

We have not included a 1988 budget forecast as we feel there are too many variables to prepare any kind of accurate budget. These variables are: office restructure, whether or not affiliation goes through, etc. We feel we should be at a break-even point in 1988 without the CUPE assistance and without compromising the level of service to our members. If, however, we find that we will require further financial assistance, CUPE have assured us that we can again review this issue with them, under Article VII 7.6 of the CUPE Constitution.

The final question still remains:

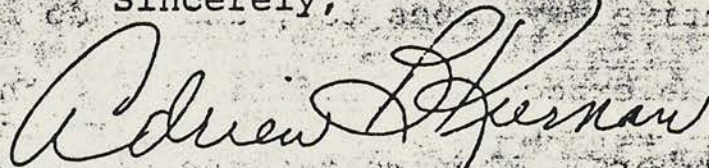
Should we affiliate with CUPE, should we stand alone,
or should we explore other affiliations?

In 1983, an in-depth study was made about the direction our union should take. At that time, 84% of the membership agreed that CUPE was the best choice to try.

That trial period is now up. It is time to vote.

As you know, this executive feels that the best interest of the membership will be served by affiliating with CUPE. I regret that some of our new members may feel pressured by the time constraints. However, we have tried to inform you and have invited debate -- both verbal and written -- to assist you in making an informed decision.

Sincerely,



ADRIEN B. KIERNAN
PRESIDENT
CANADIAN UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES

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P.S. Ballots will be counted on March 26.

Please don't leave your decision until
the last minute.

Return your ballot today.

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CUPE - CUE

REPORT

BY TED BYRNE

(The attached report was written by former CUE Union Representative Ted Byrne. The Report was published in the CUE Newsletter and is reproduced here for your information. Ted left CUE in December of last year and wrote this report to the membership after one year of the CUPE Service Contract with CUE.)

CUPE < > CUE

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For those of you who are new to the bargaining unit, it should be explained that the membership of CUE (formerly AUCE Local One) decided about a year ago to affiliate to the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). We have a two year service contract with CUPE which gives us all of the rights of a Cupe local, including membership in the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). After two years, our members will have to decide whether or not to become a chartered Cupe local.

Affiliation with Cupe also allows us membership in the BC Federation of Labour (BC Fed), the Cupe BC Division, the Cupe Metro Council, and the District Labour Council. Membership in any of these groups would involve per capita payments (this does not necessarily mean a dues increase). Members of the executive have attended BC Fed and Cupe Division conventions, and meetings of the Metro Council, and feel that full participation in these bodies is important to us as a trade union. However, the membership will ultimately have to decide whether or not we take that step, and such a decision should probably not be made until after we have decided on the question of joining Cupe.

The Executive will present a full report on our experience with Cupe over the period of the service contract before a vote is taken in January 1987. In the meantime, I would like to say a few words about our experience so far. I will try to cover the various points that were made by the Merger Committee in its final report of December, 1984.

Local autonomy.

Our greatest fear regarding affiliation was that we would lose our independence. Right no I would say that our relationship with Cupe doesn't seem to threaten this at all. Our internal structure has remained the same, except for those changes necessitated by a reduction in staff. Cupe seems to be more of a resource we draw on than a higher body from which we receive direction. Our main connection to the organization is our staff rep. The staff rep influences the operation of the local, but it is an influence based on experience and access to information, rather than on anykind of structured authority. We are free to accept or reject the advice of the rep, and the only 'power' that the rep has which is actually built into the structure is her or his ability to influence the local's access to the defense fund and other resources. So far, for us, this has been a positive influence. I think we are fortunate to have Joe Denofreo as our staff rep. He has been very available to us, and we've developed a good deal of respect for his opinions. Through him we've also had reasonably good access to expert advice on legal matters, education, contract costing, research, etc. At present, Joe is the staff rep for Cue, Cupe 116 and the TAU, but he is also assigned to several other locals off campus. One of the things that we will try to negotiate with Cupe is the assignment of one staff rep exclusively to the campus locals.

Another thing I've noticed, as regards local autonomy, is the absence of enforced 'caucus discipline'. I've heard representatives of other trade unions criticize Cupe for its lack of 'caucus discipline', but the acceptance of dissention seems like a healthy sign to me. Just to give you an example, Cupe BC was instrumental at the Annual Convention in pushing through the change to a percentage per capita payment to the Cupe National. The BC caucus was very tough, and united on this issue, but there were a couple of locals that voted against it - obviously because the average wage in these locals was high, and a percentage calculation would work to their disadvantage. There was also some division over the election of the National Secretary Treasurer, which was clearly an old guard/new guard type of election. I also remember hearing someone criticize Cupe for being divided over the BC Fed elections in 1984.

Services.

Research: Aside from a multitude of small questions that have been answered, the best examples of our use of Cupe's research services are in the areas of contract costing, and the Ritchie and Associates campaign. As for the contract, the groundwork for costing in our current negotiations was very thoroughly set by Don Cott in the Regional Office, with the help of the National Office and their computer facilities. The Regional Office also help us with some salary surveys. With Ritchie and Associates, the help came from the National Office, and especially from John Calvert and Larry Katz. It was also the National that hired, and paid, Donald Gutstein, the researcher who wrote the Ritchie and Associates report. The National also help to pay for some of the other costs incurred by this campaign - buttons, printing costs, pr, and so on. It should also be mentioned that we received some helpful assistance from the National Office with the setting up of our office computer.

Education: Since we've been associated with Cupe, members of our executive have attended several courses and conventions put on by Cupe or the BC Fed - conventions on coordinated bargaining and health and safety, and courses on contract negotiations, women and unions, and health and safety. Cupe also provided us with two very successful shop stewards courses, which we hope will become an annual event. We still encourage our members to attend the Cap College Labour Studies courses, and the annual Continuing Legal Education seminars, but it looks like Cupe will be able to provide much of our education needs.

Legal Assistance: It looks like we've pretty well weaned ourselves from our lawyers, and most of our legal advice is coming from our Cupe rep, and/or the National's legal services section. Our staff rep has broad experience in arbitration, and we've relied heavily on his advice. Several times he's sent a file to Ottawa for an expert opinion, or put us directly in touch with a Cupe lawyer. So far, in our first year as a 'Cupe local', we haven't yet been to arbitration. This is quite a relief, after several very expensive years in which there were numerous arbitrations. We seem to be settling more grievances, but I'm not sure whether this has to do with the advice we're getting from Cupe, or the fact that the University realized they

were going to go bankrupt before we did! The 20m dollar defense fund has added a little to our self-confidence. If and when we do wind up in arbitration our staff rep will act as counsel, where in the past we would have hired a lawyer. The Cupe National will provide a lawyer if we can convince them of the necessity of it - this would depend on the importance of the case as a precedent. We still have the option of hiring our own lawyer if we feel it is necessary.

Public relations: We've had three press conferences in the past year: one on contract negotiations, and two on Ritchie and Associates. The arrangements in each case were handled by the Cupe BC public relations officer. I believe these conferences were more successful than they would have been had we had to arrange them ourselves. At two of these conferences we had the benefit of the Cupe National President's participation, which certainly increased our chances of press coverage. Even in our own ongoing public relations efforts we've had some useful assistance from the Cupe pr rep.

Publications: One thing we have in our office is a damn good library. Cupe's regular publications have been a welcome and useful addition. We've been sending some of these publications out to our stewards, so hopefully they get some circulation amongst the membership. Jeff Rose, the Cupe president, is a compulsive writer, and his frequent reports to his Executive have been an excellent source of information on Cupe across the country.

There are also regular reports, handbooks, etc. on particular issues that have been of use to us. The Cupe 'wish book' is a good example: model language on which to draw for contract negotiations.

Defense fund: As noted above, we have already had some benefit from the defense fund - the money for research on Ritchie and Associates came from this fund. Otherwise, it's just somewhat comforting to know it's there.

Women's issues: Since we don't belong to the BC Division of Cupe, we are not currently involved in the women's committee, or any other Cupe committees for that matter. Cupe has taken a strong position on women's issues, as evidenced by some of the reports and resolutions discussed at the Annual Convention last October. According to the report of the Equal Opportunities Office, women's committees have been set up in all of the regions, and in many of the union locals. The first annual Women's Conference was held in March 1984, and the first regional conference in May 1985. Courses have been developed in the area of women's issues, including the week-long 'Women in the Union' course at Naramata, to which we sent a member of our executive. A quarterly 'Equal Opportunities Bulletin' has been established. A 'Compendium on Women's Policies' has been published. The Cupe National Task Force on Women has been very active, as evidenced by their report to the Convention, and Cupe participates in the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund, and the CLC's Women's Committee. The following activities have been planned: a second national women's conference, a second regional conference, a 'Bargaining for Equality' binder for use

by local negotiating committees in furthering Cupe's policies on equal pay and other issues, and other information packages for local union members around specific equality issues. There seems, then, to be a fair amount of activity in this area, and our task, obviously, is to tap into it. This may be one strong argument for joining the BC Division, since that's essentially where our representation is located. Currently, we have no women's committee, and our response to women's issues is on an ad hoc and somewhat sporadic basis. I'm ashamed to admit it's minimal, and this should be a serious concern.

The Convention passed positive resolutions on child-care, equality, technological change, sexual harassment, and abortion (the resolutions calling for a deletion of policy on this issue were defeated), and constitutional amendments on child-care at conventions and percentage per capita dues. Documentation regarding the above is available from the Union office.

Education Sector: Comparisons with other Cupe locals in the post-secondary education sector have been useful to us in relation to contract negotiations. Cupe also has a large number of locals representing library workers, both here and across the country. We had an opportunity to meet with these locals at the Convention, and will have another opportunity at an up-coming regional conference of library sector locals.

Affiliation: We sent a couple of our executive members to the Harrison Winter School this year, and several of us attended portions of the BC Fed Convention. Although we don't belong to the BC Division, we have been included in several conferences, including one on joint bargaining, and one on health and safety. We also attended the BC Division Convention last summer, and have attended the Metro Council. The whole question of extending our affiliation will come up once we've decided on our membership in Cupe, and there will be a full report on this aspect of our potential membership before a decision is made next year.

Cupe at UBC: I would say that our relationship with the other Cupe Locals on campus has improved since our association with Cupe. We all have the same service rep, and so there is a constant line of communication open. We have cooperated with the other locals on specific issues - with the TAU on contract negotiations (joint press conference last Spring), and with the Cupe 116 on the Ritchie and Associates issue. Cupe 116 and CUE have recently both had representatives elected to the Staff Pension Board, and we look forward to a good working relationship there. We can only hope that the solidarity between the three locals continues to grow to the extent that it will have some real and positive effect on our relationship with the employer.

To sum up, we feel quite positive about the relationship at this point, and have every reason to expect that things will continue to go well in the second year of our service contract.

- Ted Byrne

MERGER COMMITTEE FINAL REPORTRecommendation

In April of 1984, after the membership had decided to leave the AUCE Provincial and merge with a larger union, an ad hoc Merger Committee was struck at a general membership meeting. The Committee was to consider the various options available to us, conduct whatever meetings it felt necessary, and return to the membership with a recommendation. We considered the three options that were given to AUCE in 1980 by the Canadian Labour Congress: the OTEU, the BCGEU, and CUPE. In addition, we considered two independent (non-CLC) unions put forward by members of the Committee: the VMREU, and the HEU. After careful consideration, the Committee recommends to the membership that we enter into a two-year service contract with the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). A discussion of the other options investigated follows at the end of this report.

Service Contract with CUPE

A service contract with CUPE will allow us to operate as a CUPE local for two years, at the end of which time we can decide whether to officially become a local of CUPE, or to return to the status quo. During those two years we would pay the full CUPE per capita (\$11.25 per full-time member per month), and enjoy all of the services provided to CUPE locals — legal assistance and research of the sort we now obtain from lawyers and professional researchers, education of our stewards and committee members, assistance with public relations, access to the larger resource and political lobbying arms of the trade union movement (ie. the CUPE Metro Council and Provincial Division, the CUPE national, the district labour council, the BC Federation of Labour, and the Canadian Labour Congress) and, finally, access to a large defense fund.

The Merger Committee, or its representatives, have met repeatedly with Joe Denofreo, who is currently the staff representative assigned to CUPE locals 116 and 2278 on campus, and would likely be our staff rep if we decided in favour of a CUPE merger. In addition, we have met formally with the CUPE Regional Director (Len Stair) and the Director of Organizing and Servicing (Pascal Ingenito) and, on another occasion, with the Regional Director and the Assistant Director of Organizing and Servicing (Barry Davis). (There have also been informal discussions with executive members of several CUPE locals.)

Merger Committee report, p. 2

A tentative service contract has been negotiated. The contract allows us all of the services provided to CUPE locals, full access to the CUPE defense fund, and voting representation at the various levels of the organization. The contract also allows for a rebate of \$35,000 on our annual per capita to CUPE. This amount is meant to help us pay the wages of our own office staff.

Funding

In May of this year, before the Merger Committee was struck, the AUCE Local One Executive decided that a dues ~~increase~~ *formula* to 1.25% was necessary for the maintenance, and hopefully the improvement, of our current operation (see the May, 1984 newsletter for an article on this necessity). It is our proposal that such a dues increase be put to referendum ballot, and that the added revenue be used to help pay our CUPE per capita. The question of merging with CUPE would be on the same ballot. It is clear, however, that even with that additional revenue, some other measures will be necessary in order to make affiliation with CUPE possible.

There are certain savings arising from a service contract with CUPE. The contract will provide for a \$35,000 annual rebate, as mentioned above. We will not spend as much in the areas of legal, research and educational services. We will also no longer have to put 10% of our dues into the AUCE strike fund. Nevertheless, we would still have a large annual short-fall if we attempted to maintain our current operation as is. It is our proposal that over the two years of the service contract we cut back our local expenses to the point where we can operate satisfactorily on the revenue available. This could be done gradually, and carefully, if we use our current strike fund to cover some of the transitional deficit. A full financial projection addressing this proposal, and covering the two year period of the service contract, is attached.

Rationale

The Merger Committee believes that the time is over-ripe for this local to join a large public-sector union, and thus gain access to the kinds of resources necessary to ensure

our future well-being and growth. As a public sector union caught in a rapidly changing political context, we are faced with more than just our immediate employer. What we face, more and more, is a concerted attack on the public sector. As we learned last year, when the very legislative basis of public sector labour relations in the province came under attack, there is very little that one isolated union local can do on its own when the problem is greater than one isolated intransigent management. In terms of our own specific interests, we have much to gain from the organized efforts of trade unions representing the education sector. We also worry that continued isolation from the trade union movement will weaken our ability to negotiate (a big strike fund would help!), and leave us vulnerable to union-busting tactics on the part of management (lock-outs, expensive arbitrations).

The reasons we have decided to recommend CUPE are as follows:

1. Local autonomy. CUPE is unique in that it somehow managed to develop into a massive national union, and at the same time maintain an unusual degree of local autonomy. CUPE is really a mosaic of individual locals, each with their own personality and varying degrees of independence. In some, usually small, locals the CUPE staff reps handle grievances and contract negotiations. But any local can handle as much of its own servicing as it wants. Everyone we spoke to seems to be proud of this structure. They admit that it leads to a certain amount of inefficiency and confusion, but the locals themselves seem to be fiercely protective of their autonomy, and it is unlikely that CUPE will become more centralized and less democratic. We feel that this structure will allow us to maintain the kind of union local we now have, while at the same time gaining the benefits of membership in a powerful national union (over a quarter of a million members).

In CUPE we will have the benefit of a professional staff rep. with a high degree of experience and expertise, but we will not be dominated by the staff rep, which is something that does happen in some unions. We will still be running our own show. The staff rep can be included or excluded to the degree that we wish. Obviously much will depend on the individual staff rep that we are assigned, and on the relationship that we develop with that person. This is necessarily an unknown factor, but we are optimistic, and have been impressed by what other campus CUPE locals have had to say about their rep. We expect that this person, Joe Denofreo, will also be our rep, and we have already established a good rapport with him. The staff reps do not seem to be over-committed — there are about 20 reps in the province, and each one services about 2,500 to 3,000 members.

2. Services. CUPE offers a full range of services in the areas of research, legal assistance, education and public relations.

Research. There are national and regional research officers in the areas of contract negotiations, job evaluation, benefits and pensions, technological change, arbitration and labour law, and health and safety. It should be possible for us to get thorough research, and hopefully access to more information than is currently possible since there would be no cost involved. In most of these areas we currently pay for a certain amount of research to be done by a lawyer or a professional researcher.

Education. Education for union members is offered in the areas of shop steward training, job evaluation, contract negotiations, executive officer training, parliamentary procedures, labour law, grievance and arbitration, women's issues, local communications (newsletter production), public relations, benefits, technological change, and health and safety. Special courses can be arranged within the local (we would pay only the cost of booking people off work, and refreshments). Weekend and week-long courses are available, including an annual school at Naramata. CUPE also offers a 6-level certificate program which culminates in an eight-week residential program at the Labour College of Canada (CLC). As well as scholarships to the Labour College, where courses are taught at first-year University level, we would have access to scholarships to the annual CLC Winter School at Harrison.

Legal Assistance. The CUPE staff reps are fully trained and experienced in the area of arbitration. We would be able to use our staff rep as counsel in arbitrations — something we now pay a lawyer to do. We would also have access to the legal department in Ottawa (three lawyers), and would be able to use CUPE lawyers in situations where we could prove that the particular case was precedent setting — ie. a win would be beneficial to other CUPE locals, or to the trade union movement in general. We would also have access to the defense fund in extraordinary situations — for example, where we could demonstrate that management was trying to break the local by forcing us to go to arbitration on every issue. There is a likelihood that the BC office of CUPE will have an in-house lawyer in the near future. We would also be perfectly free to hire our own lawyer whenever we felt the situation merited it.

Public relations. The public relations department of CUPE would be of some assistance to us when we felt it necessary to go public with our complaints or, for example, to produce a leaflet to distribute to our own members or to the University community. Full scale public relations campaigns can be mounted if necessary, and they are on a 50/50 cost sharing basis, CUPE's half of the cost coming out of the defense fund.

Publications. There is a constant flow of information from CUPE to its local officers and members. Several newsletters and journals are published regularly, each aimed at different needs within the union. These are useful for keeping abreast of recent developments in all areas of interest to trade unions. Articles of special interest can be reproduced in our own local newsletter.

3. Defense fund. The defense fund will pay \$75 per week to each member after the tenth day of a strike. The CUPE Division will supplement this — ie. if we decided to belong to the Division (an added per capita cost). There is currently between \$15-20 million in the fund. Recent changes in the administration of the fund attempt to ensure that it does not drop below \$10 million as it did a few years ago. The fund can be used, as already indicated, for some purposes other than a strike. In order to qualify to use the defense fund for strike pay, we would only have to be on a legitimate strike. The actual decision to strike would be entirely our own, as it is now.

4. Women's issues. The Women's Committee of the BC Division of CUPE was established eleven years ago. It was probably the first union women's committee in the province, and definitely the first CUPE women's committee in all of Canada. The Committee has the right to submit resolutions to the CUPE convention (the ruling body of the Union). Probably the most important of such resolutions was in 1980 when a resolution was passed at convention that the equalization of base rates would be a major issue in all CUPE collective bargaining. This subsequently became an issue in the majority of CUPE local negotiations (the degree of local autonomy in CUPE would prevent such a resolution being imposed absolutely). Equalizing the base rates means bringing the entry level rates of pay for clerical and labourer positions into line with each other. This has the result of equalizing the pay rates all the way up through the classification schedule, and virtually amounts to equal pay for work of equal value. CUPE in BC was quick to take the issue to their bargaining

tables, and managed to achieve their objective in about 14 locals throughout the province, and to go some distance toward achieving it in all CUPE locals. This was a major issue in the Lower Mainland municipal strike of 1980. Unfortunately, the Compensation Stabilization Program of 1982 — extended indefinitely in 1983 — has made more progress in this direction almost impossible.

CUPE has a policy of affirmative action recommending that affirmative action hiring programs be negotiated into CUPE contracts. Such a program has been introduced within the Union itself — ie. in the hiring and promotion of CUPE staff.

There are Women's Committees in every province now, and they continue the work of pushing for women's issues to be brought to the bargaining table. Sexual harassment articles have been negotiated in many locals. Parental leave is another area that is being promoted, and has been achieved in some locals. A whole set of standards for bargaining language on technological change has been developed, and CUPE has been successful in bargaining clauses that allow pregnant women release from VDT work. They have been particularly successful with this in libraries where the new technologies have been in place for a decade. Child care is another issue of concern, and work-site child care has been negotiated in Ontario.

CUPE has a National Task Force on Women, which concentrates largely on educating women within the Union, on aiding women to become more active within CUPE itself. The Task Force has been responsible for special conferences, and courses on women's issues. It is chaired by a BC woman, Maxine Zurbrigg, and its members are drawn from the provincial divisions, with representation from every province, and in addition from every department within the Union itself.

CUPE develops and institutes at convention policies on social issues not related to collective bargaining. CUPE has policy statements on such issues as abortion and pornography. CUPE is also active in making representation to various Federal and Provincial task forces and commissions. For instance, CUPE made submissions from both the BC and National offices to the recently concluded Federal Task Force on Child Care.

Half of the CUPE membership are women, and CUPE has a full-time equal opportunities officer (Cynthia Wishart).

5. Education sector. CUPE represents a large part of the education sector workers in the province, and across the country. This includes many universities. In BC, CUPE has locals at UVIC and UBC, as well as at several community colleges. We feel that through CUPE we will have easier access to information about other unions in post-secondary educational institutions, and increased opportunity for contact with other trade unionists who have similar problems and similar goals. Because of the large number of education sector workers it represents, CUPE is also likely to be well attuned to our needs. For example, CUPE produces and regularly updates a SALAD (System for the Analysis of Labour Agreement Data) comparing contract clauses and wages across all CUPE locals, with further breakdowns by sector. So we could find out very quickly what contract articles, and what wages are current in a couple of dozen universities across Canada, and for CUPE-represented clerical workers in general.

6. Affiliation. Belonging to CUPE will give us immediate affiliation to the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), and allow us to affiliate to the BC Federation of Labour (BC Fed) and the Vancouver District Labour Council. Both of the last two would require us to pay an additional per capita tax amounting to about \$1.00 altogether. Membership in these bodies would increase our access to research and information, education, and the support of other trade unions. Membership in Operation Solidarity has already given us a taste of how useful this can be. The major function of these bodies is to coordinate the struggles of the trade union movement in general, and to deal with the various levels of government in the interest of the trade unions.

7. CUPE's structure. The biennial Convention is the ruling body of the Union. (we would have 5 delegates). A 17-member Executive Board elected at Convention governs the Union between conventions, and meets at least four times a year. Only two members of the Board, the President and the Secretary Treasurer, are full-time with the Union. A smaller committee, the National Executive Committee, meets twice between Board meetings. Regionally, the Union also has Provincial Divisions and District Councils, but membership in these bodies is optional for the locals, and also involves an additional per capita tax. Membership in the Provincial Division would allow us access to a supplementary defense fund which would increase strike pay.

8. CUPE at UBC. There are already two CUPE locals on campus. Our relationship with these locals is fairly good at the moment. We should be working closely together and giving thought to each other's interests. Our becoming a CUPE local would hopefully draw the three locals more closely together, and the possibility of coordinated bargaining on certain issues (wages!) is attractive. All three locals would remain autonomous, but the possibility of a closer informal, or even formal, relationship would be to our advantage.

9. The service contract. The willingness of CUPE to offer us a two-year trial period went a long way to persuading us. This gives us a good long time to assess the actual value to us of such a merger, and allows us the luxury of changing our minds if we discover that CUPE is not what we thought it was. At the end of two years we can become a chartered CUPE local, or return to the status quo.

Report on the other options investigated

OTEU.

Members of the Committee, and the AUCE office staff, met frequently on an informal basis with Bert Mitchell, staff rep for OTEU Local 15. Local 15 has three small bargaining units on campus. The Committee itself met formally with Mr. Mitchell, and also with Ann Harvey, the President of OTEU's other BC Local (378).

The Office and Technical Employees Union is a large international union. There are about 70 locals in Canada, but at this point only two in BC. If we joined we could become part of either of the existing locals, but we would more likely decide to enter as a third autonomous local. As such we would be able to retain our present structure, and our relationship to the other locals would be fraternal (sororal?). The combined membership of the three locals would be around 10,000, which is close to half the Canadian total.

We were assured by both locals that there is no interference in local matters by the international (OPEIU). All funds from Canadian per capita dues are banked in Canada. There is one international representative in Western Canada, and that person is essentially responsible for organizing new units. Locals have one representative on the board of the international, and an international convention is held once every three years. The international also holds educational conferences annually.

The governing body of the union is, as in most unions, the convention. A Canadian convention is held every two years. Between conventions, the governing body in Canada is the Canadian Consultative Committee (the Canadian Director, four vice presidents and seven regional officers).

If we affiliated through a separate OPEIU charter, as we would probably do, we would pay \$2.75 monthly per capita to the international. On top of that we would have to pay \$.50 per capita to the CLC and a similar per capita to the BC Fed (CLC is mandatory, BC Fed is optional).

The defense fund would be available to us only for the purpose of strike pay. We would be able to draw \$35 per member per week after two weeks. The only condition is that a strike vote has been taken, and proper notice given. The locals we talked to told us that there has never been any problem drawing on the defense fund in

the event of a strike. We would undoubtedly want to maintain our own local strike fund to bring the \$35 up to a more reasonable amount.

At the moment there are virtually no services available through the OTEU — the locals are entirely responsible for their own servicing. A Western Regional Council is being established, and it would be responsible for some servicing of the locals. That body will have two or three staff people, one paid by the international who would be responsible for organizing, and for providing research and educational seminars. The other one or two staff would be responsible for helping with servicing the locals (grievances, arbitrations, negotiations). If there is one staff person, we would pay an additional \$.50 per capita to the Council, if there are two the per capita would be \$1.00.

It is our feeling that a merger with OTEU would really only accomplish one objective, and that is our entry into the 'house of labour' — it would allow us affiliation to the CLC, BC Fed, etc., and the support of our sister locals. The defense fund would certainly be an improvement on what we have now and, the cost of affiliation to OTEU being as low as it is, we could still maintain a strike fund of our own. In OTEU we would have a lot of influence on the organization, at least provincially, and would be able to play a role in the development of the Regional Council. It could be exciting, but we feel that CUPE has more to offer.

BCGEU

The BCGEU vies with the IWA for the title of biggest union in the province. They have a master agreement which is negotiated with the government (through the GERB). This agreement covers the majority of their members. In addition to this group, the BCGEU has a large number of small locals which constitute individual bargaining units, and have their own separate contracts. A few years ago these small locals became sub-locals, grouped together into larger units now constituting locals of the BCGEU. There was some resistance to this move as it tended to decrease the autonomy of the individual bargaining units. If we were to merge with the BCGEU we would become a sub-local of Local 59 (support staff in colleges). We would still have our own bargaining unit, and our own collective agreement. The Local would act as a coordinating body for BCGEU bargaining units in the post secondary education sector.

We made our decision regarding the BCGEU before actually holding any formal discussions with their administrative directors. It appeared, from informal discussions, very

unlikely that we would be able to maintain, within the BCGEU, anything like our current structure — ie. full-time officers, the union office itself. Currently no BCGEU locals or sub-locals have such an arrangement. The maintenance of our structure, of our identity, was important enough to the Committee that we did not pursue our discussions with the BCGEU beyond informal talks with the Membership Secretary, and the Assistant Director. We found the few local executive members that we approached unwilling to give us very much information, and we were always referred to headquarters. The few people that we spoke with did seem satisfied with their union.

In many ways the BCGEU is a strong, effective union. The staff are very highly trained and competent. The BCGEU waged a long struggle to achieve public sector bargaining rights in the province, and all provincial public sector unions owe them their support. However, we felt that the structure of the BCGEU is too incompatible with what we have been used to. The structure is top-heavy, and the power flows for the most part from the top down. We feel that within CUPE, even though it is the country's largest union, there is less bureaucracy and greater democracy.

VMREU.

The VMREU 'represents...clerical, technical, professional, administrative and support employees of the City of Vancouver, its boards and regional boards and of other public bodies within the...Lower Mainland.' The VMREU has around 5,000 members, and in terms of the kind of work done is reasonably compatible with AUCE. The Union is divided into thirteen bargaining units, all serviced by a central office and staff (three staff reps and one business manager). They are currently attempting to change their structure in order to accommodate the affiliation of other locals such as us. We were assured that if we came into the VMREU we would be able to maintain our own structure pretty much as is. The proposed changes to their structure are not yet implemented, and there could be room for negotiation. These changes are as follows:

The VMREU, as it currently exists, would constitute one local (bargaining units of the VMREU would not be locals). Other locals would be allowed to affiliate. There would be an

Executive Council, elected at convention, with proportional representation from all locals. Each local would have its own executive, and its own bylaws. There would be a provision in the constitution allowing locals to be put under trusteeship, if their members so decided in referendum, or to withdraw from the Union altogether, also to be decided by referendum. There would be an annual convention. All locals would pay a per capita amount to the Union, and then be reimbursed the amount necessary for the administration of the local, the amount of the per capita and the reimbursement to be established at convention. The locals could charge their members a greater amount in dues than the per capita paid to the Union, if circumstances required it. There may be centralized support services, but essentially the locals would be responsible for their own servicing. The Union would be responsible for 'administration of finances, Executive Council expenses, defence fund, Members' Voice (newsletter), stewards' education, P.R., etc.'

The majority of the Committee felt that it would be a mistake to affiliate with an organization more or less similar to the one we just left. The VMREU is an 'independent' union, and hence attractive to those members of the Committee who would like to see AUCE remain independent. Independence in this instance means non-affiliated to the CLC, the BC Fed and the district labour council. The majority of the Committee feel that such affiliation is paramount, and in fact a large part of the purpose of this whole exercise. The VMREU, like the AUCE Provincial, is barred from affiliating to the CLC and the BC Fed because of a jurisdictional problem. To affiliate to these labour bodies the VMREU would have to become part of CUPE.

HEU

The Committee had a report on the Hospital Employees Union from one of its members, but no direct talks were held between the Committee and the HEU. We spoke with, and wrote to, the HEU rep responsible for organizing a couple of months ago, but have as yet received no response. We were told that there might be a problem of jurisdiction in that for the most part AUCE does not represent hospital workers. The HEU is involved in a jurisdictional dispute with CUPE at the moment, and would be unlikely to want to antagonize CUPE by discussing a merger with us, since CUPE is seriously interested in us itself. HEU, like the VMREU, is being blocked from affiliation to the CLC by CUPE. CUPE and the HEU are currently negotiating over this issue.

"Now, I've made up my mind..."

A personal report from CUE's new Vice-President, Alannah Anderson, on why she decided that CUPE is the best choice for Canadian University Employees.

When Adrien asked me, five weeks ago, whether or not I supported affiliating with CUPE, I replied that I did not have the information to make an informed decision.

Assuming that many of you are in the same boat I was, I will share with you the results of my research.

I began by re-reading the debate as printed in the 1983 CUE Newsletters. I then compared the 1983 financial statements with the ones for 1986. I was looking for the impact on costs that the CUPE service contract may have had on such variables as lawyers, professional fees, arbitration costs, etc.

After that I spent a few hours analyzing the CUPE constitution and comparing it with CUE's.

I asked questions. I talked with the president of Local 116, Ken Andrews. I spoke with Cam Masse from CUPE's National Office and Joe Denofreo.

Adding the responses of all these people to the information I gleaned from my independent research, I believe that we cannot afford to stay out of CUPE.

CUPE is a union of unions. Each local is an autonomous body that is in partnership with the large union, pooling resources and therefore reducing expenses.

We, as a CUPE local, will have access to the Legal Department, research facilities, Occupational Health and Safety data and what is called the CUPE Defense Fund. This fund is not only used as a strike fund, but is also available for other, less drastic measures, like lobbying, public relations campaigns and other means of promoting the cause of the workers.

It is important to note that we, the Canadian University Employees, will not change our name. We remain the same union but we get a number which designates membership in CUPE.

Although we will remain autonomous, we must adopt the CUPE constitution which is enclosed in this package. At first glance, it is much larger than the CUE constitution - seventy-seven pages to our four - but the organization is larger.

For those of you who do not have the time to study the CUPE constitution in depth, I'd like to highlight a few articles that interest me.

The objectives of both unions are similar: To work to improve working conditions, wages and living standards of the work force, to defend civil rights in the community.

Here are three samples from the CUPE constitution:

Article 2.1.d The improvement of the wages, working conditions, hours of work, job security and other conditions affecting public employees, including retirees pension benefits.

Article 2.1.e The promotion of efficiency in public services generally.

Article 2.1.f The promotion of peace and freedom in the world, and the cooperation with free and democratic labour movements throughout the world.

The objectives are to be accomplished by:

Article 2.2.a Establishing cooperative relations between employer and employee.

Article 2.2.b Promoting desirable legislation.

The next question that arises is: Will we have to change the structure of our executive?

Appendix B.2.2 A CUPE Executive Board consists of:

President
Vice-President(s)
Secretary-Treasurer
Recording Secretary
and other officers that we decide we need, except
Three Trustees who are elected, but are not on the executive board.

The Trustees attend meetings, but are not entitled to vote. The function of a local union's trustees is to act as watch-dogs on the operation of the executive and report to the general membership on the condition of funds and assets, number of members initiated, withdrawn, admitted, etc. The trustees ensure that the local union's books are audited bi-annually.

Another question which I needed an answer to was: Are we required to HIRE a business agent (or 'union representative' as we have traditionally termed them)? And, if so, who does the hiring?

The answer is simple. We do not need to hire a union representative. However, if we choose to do so, we may hire or elect whom we choose. We do the hiring or electing.

Here's what CUPE's constitution has to say about Business Agents:

Appendix B.3.14 Whenever a Business Agent is employed or elected by a local union, it shall be at a regular meeting of the local union ... such duties and conditions of employment shall not be inconsistent with the provisions of this constitution or the by-laws of the local union ... Business agents, other than from the bargaining unit(s), may have voice but no vote at meetings of the local union...

In the past, we have elected members to represent us in negotiations for new contract provisions, settling grievances and to run for office, not on who has the expertise we need. Although there is nothing wrong with learning on the job, having no pre-requisite skills is very costly to the union membership.

I like the idea that paid staff have a voice but no vote at executive meetings because the membership is the employer and the staff member should be answerable to the membership.

However, this decision on hiring or electing a union representative (or business agent) is a separate issue and not dependent on, nor related to, our decision to join CUPE.

Will our contract be valid if we join CUPE?

Will our by-laws remain intact?

Our contract is a document outlining the employees' relationship with the employer and therefore is not affected by our vote to join CUPE. And we have the right to our own by-laws as long as they don't contradict the CUPE constitution.

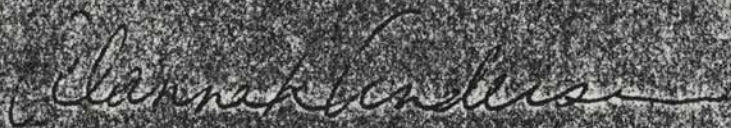
In conclusion, I feel we must join CUPE because:

- We need the added strength of being a part of a large organization;
- We will not lose any of the autonomy or individuality we have;
- We will be buying a valuable asset because there is a wealth of expertise, research and professional skills we will receive from CUPE as members;
- We will be part of a larger democracy (the National Union); and,
- We will have recourse by petition or a majority vote of our membership to receive assistance if there is a suspicion that the executive is not adhering to our by-laws or not serving the membership in an upright and honest manner.

Those are the major reasons why I am now able to say, after researching the matter, that CUPE is our best choice.

- 4 -
I hope you will join me in voting in support of affiliating with the Canadian
Union of Public Employees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alannah Anderson".

Alannah Anderson
Vice-President
Canadian University Employees