

For melody

Initial Position Paper on Our Relations with A.U.C.E. Local #5
("Non-Teaching" Staff) for Discussion.

Range of options

There are a number of possible options which will be considered along with advantages and disadvantages:

- 1) One single union for all employees of CNC

Advantages: Such a structure would guarantee a complete shut-down of the college in the event of a strike and so would increase the power of such a technique. A large union would also increase the economic base of the organization to meet its expenses.

Disadvantages: The non-teaching staff union is a local of a larger organization, so this would amount to "raiding." The needs and issues of concern to the two groups may not overlap to any great extent; e.g. A.U.C.E. is unlikely to give up the strike option which we have negotiated away for binding arbitration. Such a union would probably shift away from the professional nature of our Association to a more traditional trade union model.

- 2) Council of trade unions under the Labour Code (Sec.57)

In this model we would bargain jointly with our college board. Such a council can be formed only with the approval of the Minister of Labour (it can also be imposed by him to "secure and maintain industrial peace").

Advantages: Similar to above, i.e. strike power. Joint bargaining would eliminate attempts to play off one group vs. the other and so rationalize (from our perspective) the allocation of resources while acknowledging that our common interests lie primarily in bargaining issues.

Disadvantages: Similar to above i.e. differences in goals and tactics. The divergence of jobs would entail writing a complex contract as well as perhaps preventing the agreement of issues because of this complexity. The likelihood of ministerial approval is low.

3) Federation of unions

Advantages: Such a structure would provide for greater cooperation in areas of mutual concern to college employees while not requiring common positions on bargaining issues. This would allow for exchange of information on such matters as contract negotiations, college policies, administrative structure and operation, etc.

Disadvantages: Divergent interests may limit the "areas of mutual concern" so that the close relationship a federation implies would be inappropriate. Any such formalized association would reduce the impact of the separate constituencies and could result in alienation within the individual unions.

4) Cooperation on particular common issues

Advantages: Such cooperation would arise on specific issues which both organizations were concerned about. Limiting to an ad hoc basis would protect the integrity of both groups. A specific area of concern to both unions might be contract bargaining: both unions would profit by having a representative resource person from the other union on their negotiating team.

Disadvantages: Lack of formal structure will limit the development of common positions on college policy. A closer association may reveal areas of shared concern not readily visible on an ad hoc basis.

5) Status quo

Advantages: "The way it has always been done" and "it has worked o.k. so far" (my heart just isn't in this one!).

Disadvantages: The government appears to be moving toward a unified approach to "public service" employees and unless we keep up with their treatment of non-teaching staff it may be too late for us. The provisions of the Act have produced some awareness of common fate among college employees which should be nurtured, e.g. A.U.C.E.'s pledge to support our certification drive.