

Minutes

Lid Strand, a member of the Affiliation Sub-Committee, was in the chair. Ray Galbraith, the Secretary-Treasurer, was taking minutes - on instructions from the Chair he was to get the gist of the speakers' presentations and any motions.

Lid Strand then presented a brief outline of how the meeting was to be structured. He then introduced the five invited speakers: Fred Trotter (OTEU), Jack Adams (BCGEU), Dick Larsen (CLC), Bernice Kirk (CUPE), and Jess Succamore (CCU).

A question was then asked from the floor as to why SORWUC was not present on the panel. Lissett Nelson replied that SORWUC had not been considered as a viable alternative. As no representatives from SORWUC at the meeting no motion was forthcoming to seat SORWUC was presented.

Lid Strand then opened up nominations for the Affiliation Convention in April. The following members were nominated: Maureen Gitta, Cathy Agnew, Heather MacNeill, Kitty Cheema, Suzanne Lester, and Valerie Pusey. It was announced that nominations would remain open until March 20, 1980.

Carole Cameron moved: THAT THE MEETING SEAT SHEILA PERRETT, THE PROVINCIAL'S SECRETARY-TREASURER. The motion was seconded by Ann Hutchison and CARRIED.

Dick Larsen (CLC): Dick Larsen was the first speaker.

-he indicated that the CLC represented some 75% of Canada's unionized workers and then he proceeded to reiterate much of the information contained in the Affiliation bulletin

-he outlined the CLC structure and stated that of the CLC alternatives he would not push any one of them

-he said that the CLC was now showing more interest in organizing clerical workers and that for the past five years they were more conscious of women's rights and clerical concerns -of particular interest to the CLC was the organizing of the bank workers

-Mr. Larsen said that the CLC was aware that we as clerical workers are on the lower end of Society's pay scale and this issue needs to be addressed by organized labour

-to this end the B.C. Fed has set up committees to try to establish total equality in the work place

-in summary, he urged us to follow the rout of affiliation, to give the idea close consideration, and to participate actively with organized labour

Jack Adams (BCGEU): Jack Adams followed Mr. Larsen on the speakers' list.

-Mr. Adams outlined the structure of BCGEU and he re-traced the history and the items presented in the Affiliation bulletin

-he spoke about the roles of the locals and the components (structured on occupations), indicating that all have reps on the governing bodies

-he then spoke of BCGEU's "innovative" form of bargaining with master and component agreements

-union dues were set at 1% of basic salary per month - there were 12 provincial offices and 76 people on staff specializing in all aspects of trade unions

-Mr. Adams dealt with bargaining gains that BCGEU had achieved, especially in the area of health and welfare benefits, family leaves, no lay-off clauses

-he indicated that comparable wages in BCGEU ranged from an Office Assist. I at \$1101 a month to an Admin. Assist. at \$2556

-he stated that hundreds of grievances were processed monthly, mostly at the lower levels and that the win ratio in arbitrations was 75-80%

-the BCGEU strike fund totalled \$6,000,000 and strike pay was set at 70% of basic pay up to \$200 a week. Furthermore, it was union policy that picket lines be respected

-according to Mr. Adams BCGEU had yet to lose a strike

-it was stated that BCGEU was non-partisan in the political sense, but that positions were taken on issues. Freedom of political action was possible for all members

-education courses, with wages and expenses paid, are offered, and they cover all aspects of trade union life

-Mr. Adams said that if AUCE were to affiliate with the BCGEU it would probably be structured into a component

Bernice Kirk (CUPE): Bernice Kirk was the third speaker on the list.

- at the outset Bernice ran through some of the information contained in the bulletin
- she indicated that Provincial Conventions were held each year
- Ms. Kirk said that CUPE was actively concerned with women's concerns and that a CUPE goal was equal pay for work of equal value
- she outlined CUPE's structure saying that there were servicing reps in B.C. from the National level who helped service the needs of the locals - each local being autonomous and having control over their Executive, Committees and finances
- Ms. Kirk stated that all locals were bound by the National Constitution
- if AUCE chose to affiliate with CUPE then as an independent local we would have control over our destiny
- she then dealt with the steward structure and the grievance procedure; on the subject of bargaining she reported that there was no master agreement and that individual bargaining was the rule
- Ms. Kirk indicated that the Servicing Rep provides access to all departments at the National level and that liaison with other locals and unions occurred through the District Labour Councils
- she went on to say that conferences were organized for different occupational groups
- she listed a number of locals in various colleges across the province and stated that a Clerk-Typist will now be paid, after a strike in the Alberni region, \$9.57 an hour
- Ms. Kirk outlined the financial aspect of CUPE; she talked about the strike fund and dues which were pegged at 1% of gross pay
- she said that CUPE members received several publications: the PUBLIC EMPLOYEE once every two months, a booklet every two months, a Research Bulletin for B.C., and a monthly newsletter
- in conclusion, she said that CUPE encouraged support for the NDP both provincially and federally, in fact it was a CUPE policy and that CUPE was active at the municipal and School Board levels

Fred Trotter (OTEU): Fred Trotter was the last speaker for a union affiliated with the B.C. Fed and the CLC.

- at the beginning Mr. Trotter isolated a couple of areas of concern as being quite important
- he stated that he was President of Local 378 which included BC Hydro and ICBC and that the OPIEU was designed to promote complete local autonomy within the International Constitution
- he said that dues had to be pegged in excess of \$5.00 and that each local was responsible for electing its own Executive, passing its own by-laws and constitution; furthermore, each local would decide upon the responsibilities of all Union officers
- Mr. Trotter reported that OTEU worked on a low per capita tax basis; for AUCE it would \$1.64 for each member a month, with the remainder of the dues being dispersed at the local level
- he then stressed the international aspects of his Union; he felt that OTEU was not top-heavy with its elected President and Secretary-Treasurer, 14 Vice-Presidents, and limited resource staff at the International level
- he stated that OTEU has the right to establish its own Canadian body, but that it had not chosen to because of the advantages and the fact that there had been no past interference
- in the area of collective bargaining he said that OTEU could make no promises - each local has to deal with their own employer
- he said that the issue of political involvement was decided at each local and that OTEU had been successful in its dealing with the LRB
- he indicated that common grievance problems in his local were concerned with job evaluation and job selection
- Mr. Trotter completed his presentation with some remarks about strikes and OTEU's strike fund; he said that strikes were few in number and that OTEU's choice was a selective job action approach and that the "out onto the street" approach was the last alternative

Jess Succamore (CCU): Jess Succamore, the Vice-President of CCU, was the last speaker.

- he indicated that the CCU was a small organization and then he commented on the accuracy

of the information contained in the Affiliation bulletin

-one error that he felt should be corrected was that any affiliate to the CCU names their own member to the Executive

-Mr. Succamore felt that the real issue confronting the AUCE membership was that of affiliation vs. merger; he stated that with the CLC we would be submerged in a greater organization, while with the CCU we could truly affiliate

-he felt that the CLC had told us "to go to hell" by not allowing us to affiliate directly as AUCE with them

-he then went on to applaud the frankness of the other speakers while stating that he was playing the role of the devil's advocate

-the CCU, he reported, believes that Canadian workers should have complete control over their destiny and that no money should go the Americans

-he said that he gave the first lecture in 1972 at the Fishermen's Hall on how and why women workers should organize; from these lectures AUCE and SORWUC were formed

-Mr. Succamore felt that the roots of our founding had not changed and he said that we had to have confidence in ourselves

-the CLC, he stated, "is only a mouthpiece for American unions."

-he spoke on a few occasions of the other clerical union in CCU, that being the York University Staff Association (YUSA) in Ontario

-in concluding, Mr. Succamore suggested that we take control of our own funds and destiny

At this point in the meeting Lid Strand opened the meeting up for questions from the floor.

Questions from the floor:

-one member asked about the existence of "sweetheart deals" between Canadian locals affiliated to the CLC and business

Fred Trotter denied any knowledge of the existence of such practices.

-another member asked what CCU's policy on clerical workers was and what they can do for us

Jess Succamore answered that the CCU was concerned about the plight of clerical workers and that affiliation with CCU would allow us to control our destiny and preserve our identity.

-yet another member requested that the CLC further expand on what they can do for AUCE

Dick Larsen stressed the accomplishments in the areas of women's studies and rights and spoke of the CLC's efforts to come to grips with the problems of clerical workers.

Jack Adams replied by indicating that BCGEU's strike fund payment record was the best in Canada, and that their record for respecting picket lines was excellent

Jess Succamore added that the CCU would respect any picket lines.

Neil Boucher then made the suggestion that we have the delegates/representatives leave so that we could discuss the issue of affiliation in private.

Further questions came from the floor.

-one member asked about Ken Andrews and his recent support for a Liberal candidate in the last Federal election

Bernice Kirk replied that Ken Andrews was unfortunately no longer under her jurisdiction and that things would have been different.

-another member asked why couldn't AUCE affiliate to the CLC as AUCE

Dick Larsen answered by stating that the Congress had decided that the union movement should not splinter itself further and that the policy was to get unions working together in larger groups.

Jess Succamore then raised the issue of the accurateness of Mr. Larsen's statements.

-a member then asked Mr. Succamore what the CCU had to offer us should we affiliate with that body

Jess Succamore proceeded to question the format of the meeting indicating that he was at a disadvantage in presenting his case. He stated that the CCU does all the things in

practice what the CLC says in theory. He once again raised the example of YUSA. Mr. Succamore said that the CCU had adopted the concept of equal pay for work of equal value. Furthermore, the CCU had acted immediately in relation to the AIB instead of waiting for a year as the CLC had done.

-the last question from the floor was in relation to the existence of any "reverter" clauses in the constitutions of CUPE or BCGEU and of any support from the three CLC unions present in regards to AUCE coming into the CLC as AUCE

Fred Trotter responded by saying that we could maintain our identity as AUCE should we decide to affiliate with OTEU.

Jack Adams spoke about the proliferation of unions in the public sector and the reasons why AUCE would have to affiliate with another union. He stated that there was no reverter clause.

Bernice Kirk said that with CUPE it was extremely difficult to disaffiliate.

Neil Boucher then moved: THAT WE EXCUSE THE GUESTS AND EXTEND OUR THANKS FOR THEIR ATTENDANCE AT TODAY'S MEETING. Before the motion was seconded and voted on, the panel excused themselves amid applause.

The floor was then opened for informal debate.

Several members present availed themselves of the opportunity to state their opinions, feelings, criticisms, whatever. The discussion which ensued for approximately 15 minutes was intense and covered the spectrum of the affiliation issue.

The meeting adjourned at 2:18 pm.

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