

WE MUST NOT LIQUIDATE AUCE IN ORDER TO JOIN THE CLC!

LET'S BUILD AUCE INTO A DEMOCRATIC, MILITANT AND PRINCIPLED TRADE UNION!

As activists in AUCE we oppose those who insist that our union dissolve itself as a pre-condition for joining the CLC. Here is our reply to some of their arguments:

1. We must join the CLC at all costs or we'll be isolated from the "labour movement."

The CLC and its affiliates are run more like a multi-national corporation than a workers' union. Wealthy and privileged officials, lawyers and bureaucrats in this "labour movement" have actually become one with the employers and government to prevent workers from fighting against inflation, unemployment, speed-up, health hazards and other ills of the economic system. Dennis McDermott, who earns \$55,000 a year salary plus expenses as CLC president, openly betrayed striking postal workers in November 1978. John Fryer, general-secretary of BCGEU, denounced the nurses winning a general wage increase. Yet this well-paid bureaucrat can sit cheek by cheek with representatives of Alcan, Weston, Cancel, Noranda etc. on the Skeena Manpower Development Committee in order to facilitate the super-profits of these multi-nationals. Those who make up the bureaucracy and set the policy of the CLC are the enemies not the friends of the workers. Their apparatus is an "anti-labour movement."

2. AUCE is too small and will collapse. We need to be in a "big union".

Those who predict our collapse have been the most active in undermining our union. For example, was it not John Fryer invited by the "support committee" who led the workers on to the street during the SFU strike and then conveniently left the scene minutes before the police made their arrests? Was it not Fryer who promised financial support and ended up putting our union \$20,000 in debt? Those who posture behind revolutionary phrases are pushing us by words and deeds into the arms of the most reactionary labour aristocrats.

Size can be important. But there can never be substitution of quantity for quality. The IWA is big. Their union bureaucracy has just built a \$12 million luxury office-apartment complex in downtown Vancouver complete with a \$16,000 "negotiating table." But rank and file IWA workers suffer from speed-up, increasing accidents, unemployment and inflation. The \$12 million luxury offices are being paid with the "big" strike fund accumulated because the "big" union has succeeded in keeping class peace in the wood industry to the joy and profit of MacMillan-Bloedel, Crown-Zellerbach, etc. SFU even awarded one of the IWA "labour statesmen" with an Honourary Doctor of Law degree. Treason to the workers is highly valued by "official" society.

CUPE is also big. But our contracts are better than theirs. CUPE talks good and passes fine resolutions. But in deeds they too act as firemen to put out any flames of class struggle. This spring in Toronto the executive of CUPE rushed to end a one-day strike of Toronto civic workers. For their "labour peace" they sold out many demands of the workers.

AUCE is big enough. We need to improve the quality of our union so that its members and leaders become more effective fighters for the just cause of working people.

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3. If AUCE joins a "big union" this will unite the workers.

Big business unions which make up the CLC and AFL-CIO are the worst splitters of the working class. They are all empire builders. Today there is a dog-fight between the industrial and building trades unions for jurisdiction over in-plant construction work. There are constant raids between affiliates and non-affiliates. Trade union "politics" are based on splits, narrow-minded and selfish interests, personal opportunism and pragmatic considerations. But there can be no unity without principles.

Unity of workers is achieved in actions, especially political and economic actions when the workers take to the streets and picket lines for democratic rights, economic security, peace, etc. We need trade union leaders who are not afraid to lead workers in appropriate actions in order to unite and temper the people for the difficult times ahead. Economic crisis, fascist violence, political tyranny, world war are all grave dangers to the well-being of all working people. AUCE should aspire to be an effective organizer and fighter to tackle any issue, small or large, on the principle: One for all, all for one. An injury to one is an injury to all. An AUCE built as a fighter for principles will contribute far more to the unity of Canadian workers than to surrender itself to a "big" but hypocritical and bureaucratic union like CUPE or BCGEU. Let the militants in those unions fight to re-make their organizations into what they should be. We have our work here to make AUCE into a democratic, militant and principled trade union.

4. The CLC and its affiliates are linked to the "workers' party", the NDP.

NDP politicians have consistently opposed workers whenever they went into battle that seriously threatened the profits of the owning class. NDP MPs voted to force striking railway workers back to the job in 1973. In 1978 they helped break the postal workers' strike. In BC it was an NDP government which passed the Labour Code into law. The Code prohibits farm workers and domestic workers, most of whom are women, from the right to collective bargaining. This same BC NDP government passed a law to break the strike of wood, propane, food and railroad workers in October 1975. The Saskatchewan NDP government passed its own "wage freeze" law, and attacked the union of Saskatchewan civil servants. During the last election the NDP took up the war hysteria promoted by the Carter administration and tried to reverse its stand to oppose Norad and Nato.

In short both NDP and "trade union" politics are the same: unprincipled, crooked, hypocritical and two-faced. The marriage of convenience between the labour aristocrats and the NDP parliamentarians is an effective means of keeping Canadian workers passive and incapable of fighting for their own interests against the wealthy and powerful owners and their state.

Let AUCE give rise to politicians of integrity, whose words and deeds are consistently on the side of the workers, the poor and the oppressed against the rich and privileged. A union that fights with integrity for principles can give rise to such leaders. AUCE does not need the CLC or NDP to impose their brand of cynicism, cowardliness and self-seeking corruption on AUCE. Nor should we tolerate such things in our own ranks.

Members of AUCE, we call upon you, never liquidate AUCE in order to join the CLC. Let us take pride in what we have built to date. Let us work hard to: 1) build an active shop steward's system; 2) make our executive effective and accountable to the members; 3) create a democratic, militant and principled union which opposes all forms of exploitation and oppression anywhere in the world. In our view this is the best answer we can give those who are bent on liquidating AUCE.

Committee of AUCE activists