

## REPORTS SUBMITTED TO 1982 AUCE PROVINCIAL CONVENTION ON LOBBYING:

### Part One

#### IN THE LOBBY OF THE HOUSE OF LABOUR - The report of the Lobbying Sub-committee of the Provincial Executive

##### I. Some Background: How the sub-committee sees its tasks.

Some months ago, the members of AUCE decided that they that wanted to "lobby the CLC affiliates to admit AUCE to the CLC intact as AUCE." At convention, the Provincial Executive was given the responsibility for carrying out this decision and reporting back to the membership. A Lobby Sub-committee of the Executive was set up which presented a report to the last Provincial Convention.

The first thing the Sub-committee had to consider was how to go about the lobbying process. We were fortunate in that AUCE had previously been given some expert advice on lobbying by Jack Nichols, head of the United Fisherman and Allied Workers Union (UFAWU). Nichols was involved in the struggle of UFAWU to be re-admitted to the CLC. In a situation similar in many respects to AUCE's, the CLC executive refused, at first, to re-admit the UFAWU since there was at the time a CLC affiliate which represented fish workers, and demanded instead that the UFAWU merge with that affiliate. The UFAWU managed to affiliate intact to the CLC by gaining the support of other unions and forcing the CLC executive to change its decision.

The lesson to be learned from the example of the UFAWU is that we must lobby the CLC affiliates, not the CLC executive. It is the CLC executive who has refused our requests to affiliate. The member unions and federations have never voted on our request, nor has any union, to our knowledge, formally objected to our joining or formally claimed jurisdiction over university and college employees - which is just as well, since there would be at least four CLC unions fighting over this "exclusive" jurisdiction! We can continue to send our request to the CLC executive, reminding them of our presence, as long as we understand that if it is left up to these entrenched labour bureaucrats, AUCE will never get into the CLC as AUCE. The purpose of lobbying is to ensure that it is not left up to the men at the top, but that it is heard and decided by the member unions, labour councils, and provincial federations of the CLC.

The Lobbying Sub-committee is talking to people in those CLC unions which we feel would be sympathetic to our cause. These unions could present resolutions to District Labour Council, the B.C. Federation of Labour, and the CLC urging the admission of AUCE to the CLC.

The 26th Annual Convention of the B.C. Federation of Labour, which was held in Vancouver on November 30, 1981, provided us with an excellent opportunity to lobby a large number of potentially sympathetic trade-unionists. AUCE lobbyists attended the convention as well as social functions held for the delegates.



## II. Lobbying at the B.C. Federation of Labour Convention

At the convention, we attempted to make delegates aware of our desire to join the CLC, and to engage their support. To accomplish this, we distributed a leaflet and talked to delegates from a variety of unions. Hundreds of our leaflets were taken, and some delegates sought us out after reading it in order to discuss the issues we raised. A delegate from the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Transport and General Workers (CBRTGW), while addressing the convention from the floor, discussed some of the issues mentioned in our leaflet, and called upon the B.C. Federation of Labour to support the admission of AUCE and other non-affiliated unions to the CLC.

We had conversations with members of both industrial and public sector unions. Most of those people were supportive, and urged us to continue our fight to get into the CLC. Many made some concrete tactical suggestions, and these are included in the end of this report.

We observed the proceedings of the convention from the visitors gallery. Several of the resolutions considered could have an effect on our attempt to join the CLC, and upon our participation in that organization if we do get in.

One resolution, which came from a local of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), called upon the B.C. Federation of Labour and the District Labour Councils to "begin an affirmative action program to affiliate all public sector unions which are not in the CLC." This was passed unanimously, with no discussion. It would seem that the effect of this resolution is to enlist the support of the B.C. Fed in our affiliation campaign. We will certainly pursue this further.

The Vancouver local of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) submitted a resolution, which was passed unanimously, which called upon the B.C. Fed to "continue to support morally, organizationally, and financially any union fighting for equal pay for work of equal value." As this issue is fundamental to us, we should find out what sort of support the B.C. Fed would give those of our locals who will be entering negotiations soon.

One of the more hotly debated resolutions called for the B.C. Fed and the CLC to "immediately adopt a merger policy of one industry, one union." It was supported by the largest, most aggressive unions - for example, the IWA, BCGEU, and the United Steelworkers - and opposed by small and medium sized unions - UFAWU, CUPW, etc. Many of the speakers opposing the resolution spoke of workers having the right to the union of their choice. This, in fact, has been one of our arguments to the CLC. The resolution passed, though with widespread opposition, and its ramifications are unclear at this time. We were assured later by various delegates that this policy was unimplementable.

The main issue was the attempt to change delegate representation at convention so as to give more power to the large unions. Since this would be a change in the constitution, it required a two-thirds majority to pass. The first attempt failed, but a "compromise" resolution was eventually passed. The latter effectively doubled the representation of each union at convention, without changing the percentage distribution of delegates. Given the high cost of sending delegates to convention (lost wages and \$75 registration fee for each delegate) this change works to the advantage of the large unions.



### III. Conclusion and Future Lobbying Activities

If we were an affiliate of the CLC, AUCE would be the nineth largest in the B.C. Federation of Labour - about the same size as the international Longshoremen and Warehouse Union (ILWU) - with a large representation at convention. So much for the "poor little AUCE" myth.

The next convention of the CLC is being held in Winnipeg in May 1982. Delegates have offered to submit resolutions calling for AUCE's admission to the CLC to this convention. This is contingent upon our ability to meet with them and draft resolutions in the short time remaining before the deadline for submission of resolutions. Sending an AUCE lobbyist/observer to the CLC convention is also under consideration by the Lobby Sub-committee. In the meantime, we are keeping up our contacts with sympathetic trade-unionists.

Submitted by J. Gegenberg  
S. Rosenthal



## LOBBYING REPORTS: Part Two

### On the Road to Winnipeg or Lobbying the CLC

The Provincial Executive authorised Kathy Chopik and myself to attend the CLC Convention. The Mission: to investigate and report on the CLC Convention and to weedle an invite to join the CLC.

Armed with a suitcase full of 9 by 12 glossies of the Provincial Executive, Provincial Constitutions, Local Contracts with the "good clauses" underlined in red, and thousands of leaflets, I arrived in Winnipeg.

On Monday morning I registered as a guest and ran into Michele Pujol, one of the founding members of Local 6 who was covering the Convention for Canadian Dimensions Magazine. She was extremely helpful in our Lobbying and deserves our wholehearted thanks.

At noon that day I handed out the first leaflet on affiliation. There was a very positive response from the delegates. The majority seemed to be in favour of accepting AUCE as an affiliate. Michele and I talked to Marion Pollack of CUPW who told us that she strongly supported our admission to the CLC and who promised that she would introduce us to delegates who would actively support us.

That evening, Michele and I attended a meeting of the "Open Rank and File Caucus". When we explained who we were, what AUCE's history was, and the kind of union that we were, they agreed to support any motion that would come to the floor on admission of non-affiliates to the CLC. The "Open Rank and File Caucus" broke down into small organising groups to develop action and strategy around the topics that Resolutions were grouped in.

To explain, all affiliates and locals of affiliates, plus provincial federations and local trade councils would submit motions to the Convention. Committees would be set up to discuss and group the resolutions. These committees have the power to rewrite and amalgamate motions and they make a recommendation of concurrence or non-concurrence to the Convention. The Convention only votes on the concurrence or non-concurrence of the committees - the resolution cannot be amended. If the Convention desires to change a resolution they must refer the motion back to the Committee with the suggested changes. Referrred motions rarely make it back to the floor. There were over 500 resolutions submitted of which perhaps 75 were debated at the Convention. It is highly unlikely a resolution not favoured by the Committee would make the floor and if it does make the floor, that it would pass. The two resolutions dealing with admitting non-affiliates did not make it to the floor and one of them was rewritten to authorise "an affirmative action program to admit non-affiliates through the affiliate in their jurisdiction (amendment underlined) to the CLC."

The Lobbying was quite successful in spite of that. Both of the opposition caucuses - the "Open Rank and File Caucus" and the "Action Caucus" told us that they would support us if a motion came to the floor. A fair number of delegates indicated support for our admission and many others were interested. However, the issue of admission of non-affiliates was a very minor issue at the Convention, even to those who supported us.

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The Convention was very interesting. It is quite clear that the CLC is being politicised. The majority of motions passed authorised the Executive to take strong stands against attacks against labour. Concessions were condemned and all unions agreed to hold firm against any concessions. The Executive was empowered to initiate discussions around developing a general strike if wage controls are implemented. A comprehensive Economic Paper was approved (the "crown jewel" of the approach developed by the CLC Executive). All in all, a significant improvement over previous Conventions.

However, it must be recognised that the Executive is free to implement or not implement these resolutions. With the exception of Jean Claude Parrot, the previous Executive was reelected. The economic policy is a moderate analysis of the economic situation of Canada that even the Liberal Government could largely implement. It is at odds with some of the other policy adopted by the CLC.

The two opposition caucuses were quite effective in pushing the CLC Executive to take a more hard nosed, political position. On a number of instances they almost overturned recommendations of the CLC leadership. The most embarrassing instance was when a lengthy and effective debate on changing the CLC's long standing policy of unilateral support for the NDP was almost changed. It took an emotional speech by Dennis McDermot who was chairing the Convention at the time, and who then cut off debate immediately after he spoke, to swing the vote behind the policy of supporting the NDP.

Various delegates who supported our bid for entry to the CLC, and some of whom were members of CUPE, told us bluntly that we would not be admitted to the CLC, regardless of how effective our Lobby was, because of the adamant opposition of CUPE to the admission of affiliates in their jurisdiction. We were informed that the union that CUPE wanted to keep out was the Hospital Employees Union - a union that had broken away from CUPE.

To sum up: If we wish to Lobby to join the CLC we would have to use all of our resources for at least two years, and even then we would probably fail. If we were admitted, it would open the door for other non-affiliates, and current affiliates would have their exclusive jurisdiction. It is possible that we might get in, but it would entail a fundamental change in the structure and policies of the CLC. This just ain't very likely.

I strongly recommend that we cease our efforts to Lobby CLC affiliates for admission to the CLC. I recommend this for three main reasons: 1) I don't think that we can put enough resources into lobbying to make it effective; 2) I don't think that we would be successful in the foreseeable future even if we did a first rate job of lobbying; 3) I don't think that we have the resources and energy to spare. We must spend the next year rebuilding AUCE and that will be a full time job in itself.

Attending the CLC Convention was valuable. It enabled us to learn more about the CLC and the issues that are affecting it. It made me more aware of the common interests that all union and all workers have. However, I feel that at this time it is important that we concentrate on the important task of building AUCE and making it into a strong, effective and principled union.



CLC CONVENTION REPORT - K. Chopik

Two representatives of AUCE attended the CLC Convention in Winnipeg in May. Our goals were to lobby for AUCE's entry into the CLC and investigate the processes and potential of a lobbying effort. This report will deal with the various alternatives for continued lobbying, and also evaluate AUCE's position should we ever be affiliated to the CLC.

Over 600 resolutions were submitted to the executive of the CLC for consideration at convention. The resolutions were segregated according to topic, i.e. health and safety organization, constitutional amendments, and turned over to aggregate committees comprised of representatives of various unions. The committee's function was twofold: they combined those resolutions which cover essentially similar motions, and they recommended concurrence or non-concurrence to the convention body. The delegates to the convention do not vote on the resolution, but rather to agree or disagree with the committee's recommendation. This means that resolutions cannot be amended from the floor. If the committee's recommendation is one of concurrence, meaning they suggest that the convention pass the resolution, the wording of the resolution can only be changed by a motion of referral. If the majority of delegates are in favour of referring the motion back to the committee for review, it is withdrawn. Theoretically the amended motion will be presented to convention at a later time; however, since the convention deals with less than two-thirds of the resolutions originally submitted referred motions do not return for consideration.

Also, the CLC is not bound by the resolutions passed at convention. While statements of policy, i.e. condemning wage controls, stand on their own, resolutions entailing financing or action must be dealt with within the budgetary and manpower constraints of the CLC. Thus a resolution calling for a committee to examine an issue may not be implemented.

This procedure directly affects our attempt to affiliate to the CLC. There were two resolutions submitted to the convention which would have allowed non-affiliates into the CLC. The Alberta Union of Provincial Employees submitted resolution 26, which came under The Committee on General Resolutions:

WHEREAS the purpose of the Canadian Labour Congress should be to represent all workers in Canada; and

WHEREAS representation should logically involve active participation of workers in the CLC; and

WHEREAS some worker groups and certified unions are presently excluded from membership in and participation in the CLC;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that membership in the CLC be open to any Canadian union.

Delegates from the Alberta Fed said the resolution was submitted in an attempt for the nurses in Alberta to join the CLC. The resolution did not make it to the floor.

The second resolution, also in the general category, was submitted by the B. C. Fed. Originally it read:



BE IT RESOLVED that the CLC undertake a comprehensive affirmative action program to affiliate to the CLC, the B. C. Federation of Labour and local labour councils all public sector unions located in the Province of B. C.

The Committee, in a supplementary report, amended the resolution to read:

BE IT RESOLVED that the CLC undertake a comprehensive affirmative action program to affiliate to the CLC, the B. C. Federation of Labour and local labour councils all public sector unions located in the Province of B. C., through the recognized affiliate representing such unions.

This resolution was submitted specifically to deal with HEU. CUPE National has informally stated its position that non-affiliates such as HEU and AUCE should not be allowed to affiliate without going through an existing affiliate. Resolution 53 did not make it to the floor. If it had, and if the speakers had been able to convince the delegates to reaffirm its original intent (a major feat), it would have been referred to the committee and buried. An attempt to convince other major unions to support an open affiliation policy is masochistic - while CUPE is the one union with the jurisdiction which theoretically deals with most unorganized workers, all major unions are protected by the CLC policy. Any attempt at affiliation is destined to be vetoed beyond the local level.

The UFAWU were expelled from the CLC in 1953 (then the TLC). The B. C. Federation of Labour called on the CLC to readmit UFAWU every convention after 1956. Over forty local unions and labour councils submitted resolutions favouring direct entry of the UFAWU to the 1970 convention in Edmonton. In 1972, after nineteen years of lobbying, the UFAWU was formally readmitted to the CLC. It is immediately apparent that AUCE has neither the time nor energy to lobby for possible entry in the the CLC in 2004.

It is possible that CLC policy on affiliation may change in the future, or that an umbrella organization of cross-provincial non-affiliates may lobby collectively for entry. These are the only two possible avenues for AUCE to affiliate intact to the CLC that have any hope for success.

