

TRANSCRIPT OF TAPE NO. 7 FROM AUCE CONVENTION, 1978.

- Richard?

*Richard*

- Pursuing that, wouldn't you feel that perhaps, AUCE for clerical & Cupe for technical?

*(male)*

*from local 3*

*Steve  
Geller.*

- That's come up, many times, that was a real nightmare. That idea proposal came from uh.., that idea's been expressed by people in our local and by people over there. In other words that everybody should get the best of both worlds. Their maintenance staff makes a little more than ours. Our clerical staff makes a lot more than theirs. That's the financial situation. And so it was bandied about when all this first came up that maybe we could all do a deal and that our maintenance people would go into them and their clerical people could go to us. Well there's no reason why they should entertain such a (deal) - they would lose their entire .. they'd get five people and we'd get 130 or something. Although it sounds nice on paper. But of course they'd never entertain something like that. I wouldn't. They don't want to impose on management the terrible difficulty of having to deal with one more union. What we've also had a kind of interesting discussion about with CUPE - not with the business agent who refuses to have anything to do with us he's just going by the book - but with the President of the local and various members, is what happens when all of this is concluded. Either way, the vote goes for them, what happens to our clerical people - are they all going to get cuts in pay, or does our contract get honoured or .. who knows what happens. And the same if we win .. what happens to their maintenance staff are they red circled for 20 years, while we catch up to them, or what ?? Our line has been, and I am corroborated by (Phil?) that you can't guarantee anything. They have been trying to tell us, and its just pure b.s. as far as I'm concerned, that they are in a position if they win the vote, or if we by mutual agreement - which was their first proposition, that we mutually agree to merge into CUPE - they will protect all the provisions of our contract especially ..... Well, I think most of the stuff in our contract is against their CUPE constitution anyway, ... but the stuff on wages - well its a pretty interesting idea that they could guarantee that they could protect our wages, but they can't, and what it boils down to is that no matter who wins, the first thing we have to do is go right to the table and with management and negotiate everything all over again. Even if you've just finished a contract, or are in the middle of negotiations, its a whole new ballgame and you must bring management to the bargaining table. And we've told Cupe that many times - if you want to guarantee our superior wages if we should be merged into you, then you're going to have to guarantee to us that you're going to call management to the table the day you win. You have to send them a letter, and you'd better send us a letter to that effect right now because we're going to hold you to it. Its the only protection we will have. And its the only protection they'll have - if we win we'll have to do the same thing. And we're quite prepared to send a letter to their members to that effect.

Sheila - Just a simple question - in what month of the contract is CUPE?  
Are they anywhere near the 7th or 8th month?

*Sheila*

- They just concluded last year's contract about 3 weeks ago, so they have no contract for this year, so we're O.K. in that respect.

*Grant*

- In view of the time we should break for lunch, and adjourn again at 2.00

Sheila

- ..... and I'm going to call ..... they're waivers, for Youth Employment programmes, Work Study projects, Language Immersion Projects, I think we get a request at the rate of once a month for various kinds of waivers, in the interests of helping out the impoverished student. Its been really difficult because there are people on our executive, and in the general membership who have been former students and figure that they knew what the life was like, and our first consideration should be for the welfare of the student, and not necessarily for the contract or working conditions so there's quite a split there over what priorities are in terms of that. For the department of Education with the work-study programme we did get a lump sum amount and people were paid at a union rate. They were also members of the union with the provision that they were not to accumulate seniority over people who were already on some kind of seniority list, that they were in obedience, they could not accrue seniority.

We've just got a new office, we've hired somebody to set it up, for a month, with financial assistance from the provincial, we've had a major reorganisation of the internal government structure. What we have right now is 3 separate divisions, there's Community Education, Academic and Career Vocational. There's going to be a new Dean structure, set up, called the "Super-Dean", who's going to be in charge of ..... all instructional support services and under that will come Community Education services, and right now we're having to worry about carry-over of jobs that are already in existence and how those jobs are going to be negotiated in one way or another to protect people. We have an increase in provincial funding of 14 3/4%, but interestingly enough, a major portion of the money is going to create new vocational courses, i.e. commerce and business things which I find really interesting, because they're training people for commerce jobs, which are crummy jobs and they're still perpetuating the whole thing of sending out in the work force where first of all there aren't very many jobs, and if there are, they're commercial-type clerical class jobs, they're really poorly paid.

The other thing is, some of our people are worried, the people who work on computer systems are worried that with the B.C. System Corp. taking over College and University Computer systems, what's going to happen to our computer workers because B.C. Systems Corp is an essential service, so if B.C. Systems could not have any kind of job action the our workers wanted to know what implications did that have for us crossing or not crossing any kind of picket lines.

The other thing - in the last year there was an unprecedented move to pay the negotiating team an honoraria. In the contract they provided for wages for negotiating time - say they work from 8.30 - 4.30, and they negotiate from noon to 4.30, they'll be paid for that time, but if they negotiate in the evening they're not, its too bad. So, most of the time, until the end, negotiations took place during the day, so they were paid a lot, but it was felt by a majority of the membership that they had put in more than their share of the work so that they were paid an honoraria.

The campus is expanding to Squamish and Seashell, so I think we're going to have some similar problems with you folks over there, (Sue?), The other thing we have is a request by the Art Models to become part of our bargaining unit, they are presently being paid at the rate of \$5.00

an hour, and they haven't cometto us in the last couple of months, I think we're going to wait until the Fall to see if we might even create another unit, for AUCE - Local 7, or include them in this bargaining unit.

We have an issue that is coming up for arbitration, June 14 or 15, in regards to a native speaker, and we rely on Nanay Wiggs for a lot of information. She's working through Legal Aid Clinic, where this woman who is concerned has gone for help. She didn't feel the Union was properly representing her. She was hired as a Native Speaker two years ago, it was at the end of her second term of hire when the issue came up. She was led to believe she would be hired for the following fall term, and in August she was told funds wouldn't be available to hire her again. 3 weeks later, or how ever many days later they promptly hired 2 other people, so she's grieved that, for one reason or another, for lack of communication, or whatever, the union didn't move too quickly on it, so its just not moving right along at all. Its taken 2 years to get straightened out to this point. Do want to explain this at all??

- Nanay.*
- Sure. She came to our Legal Clinic in .... Law, at UBC, and we interviewed her and I reneged because I was active in AUCE, and what we decided to do was threaten to take AUCE to the Labour Board, under Section 8, which would be saying that the union had violated Section 7 of the Labour Code, in that they didn't represent one of their members. The Code is very vague about what the rights and obligations of a union are, but that's the one thing they're very sticky on. So we did that, and Local 4 decided that they would in fact take up the grievance. What's happened so far, is we have a lawyer who is going to be presenting. We're finally at the stage that its actually going to go to arbitration on it, and that's scheduled for June, and we've averted the Section 7, but its interesting to keep in mind because it would have been the first that AUCE had had, and one of the few that have happened in the Province, and I think its important that people realise the legal obligations that a union does towards every single one of its members that it purports to cover, and that every union member has the right to take this action against the union if they feel they are not being represented, and that the reason that we wanted it brought up, because its a good illustration of the bind you can get in, and its solving itself, but that it may even be settled before arbitration. But it could have been sticky for us.
  - We have an issue before the LBB on our old contract, on a contracting out issue, in terms of janitorial work. That's been another 2 year cliff hanger. We don't know what's happening there. Right now there's a provision in our contract that when the service or maintenance contract is to be renewed the Union and the College will consult each other as to who regards who as a better deal in terms of wages and service. A lot of the maintenance work is probably done by AUCE Workers, somethings like waxing floors, and washing windows our people don't do, but feel they have a right to (reject?). Because the contracts only stipulate that we have to only converse and trade information, there's really nothing in the contract that says we are entitled to include them in our bargaining unit or that we can act on contracting out grievances. They have to all be contract. The native speakers who are really instructional associates on the languages programmes are going on a transfer bid from AUCE to the

Faculty Association. That's been part of the confusion with the Arbitration case.

Another waiver idea - we've been approached by a community formed by the United Way under a training programme, called Volunteers in Transition, What they want to do is put people in a community, who have either been mentally or physically or emotionally ill, for some length of time, people who are lacking in self-confidence, or other kinds of social skills, I guess, they want to put them in group training sessions for 5 weeks, then send them out into communities various resource centres, or colleges or wherever, to spend up to 3 hours a week. So that's another thing that we've been asked to waive, and people have ideological problems with respect to volunteerism. Its going to be another thing like the students that we've been stuck with.

- Nancy - I'd like to know how much <sup>you're paid</sup> in negotiating for committee work?
- Sheila - Three of them were paid \$250; another was paid ..... The problem with the negotiating team was that we elected three people and five people got in on negotiations and then came back to the unit and said that they wanted to be paid. I think it was 3 @ \$250; 1 @ \$350 & 1 @ \$450.
- Nancy - I've known about this for a long time, but really it never ceases to get my ire. I find it really horrible, I know that we've never paid our own people who happen to put in their own time and since they weren't losing any money anyway, since they were being paid for the time when they would have been at work, I think its a really bad thing to see happening. I know so do you, I wonder why do you think that the membership went for it? Was it the negotiating team that initiated it, and pushed for it, and then did the membership feel guilty so that they had to go along or what do you think happened?
- Sheila → I don't know. The emotions were pretty mixed. First of all they came to a membership meeting saying we have done X number of hours of work, in excess of what we <sup>thought</sup> we would have to do, and we think it would be a good idea if you helped us out. One person's marriage breakdown was cited, and all sorts of things happened. It was a really heavy issue. It was originally passed without a lot of information coming to the fore in terms of what kind of finances we had, and did people understand we had only elected 3 people in fact, and not 5, It was really hard. You see I think people felt that they had done a really super job, and sure, why not. We can afford it. There was a challenge actually to the original (provision) and what happened is after a long and heavy fight, and discussion, there was the 50% + 1 voted in favour of it.
- Nancy - Do you think that it would happen again? Do you think that the membership would learn? Are the same people negotiating again this year?
- Sheila - One is. I'm not sure. When the argument came up the idea of an incentive to be on the negotiating team was brought up, and people said, oh no, they're doing it for the union. I really don't know how much that did play as an incentive or not when people were elected to the team. The people who are the team are the only 3 who are nominated.
- Neil - First of all I'd like Local 1 to know that I'm submitting my bill ... I wanted to know - you mentioned you got a really good sickleave

thing - what did you get?

- Sheila - You can be sick any number of days upto 30 days, and after that you get your long term disability, which is 2/3 of your salary tax-free, If you come back to work for just one day, you can commence 30 days sick leave again. So you don't have just a bank of 30 days in one year. You can be working one day and off 30. The good thing about it is that it really hasn't been abused.
- Neil - Is there a minimum seniority before you can receive your 30 days, or if people are on probation?
- S - Temporaries have it.
- N - Every body?
- S - If you're hired for two weeks and you're sick the first day, you're guaranteed your (\$200).
- N - How did you get your disability thing, then ? Is that part of your ....
- S - Its an insurance.
- N - Did you negotiate a separate disability insurance through your contract? Our administration is always saying you can't
- S - I should correct something here. If you are a regular employee with 4 months behind and 6 months service ahead, then you are entitled to sign up for long-term disability.
- N - How do you know if you have 6 months ahead?
- S - Well, if you hired for 10 months, and the end of your 4th month, if you realise you have 6 months ahead, you can sign up for long term disability. Then if you are sick you have a guarantee of that 2/3. But you don't have that guarantee if you are a temporary.
- N - What was your disability item in your previous contract?
- S - It was still the 2/3 of your regular salary, after 30 days.
- N - Can I work there ...
- Joan - I'm not sure if Nancy asked the same question, about whether a precedent was set about the amount paid to the contract committee?
- Sheila - Its not down in the books that this will happen hereafter. I have an idea that something similar might come up.
- ? - How did they decide on the amount of money? Did the people on the contract committee figure out the number of hours that they had spent extra and how they thought they should be paid, and present it to the membership? Because some were 300, some were 400 or 450?
- S - some people felt they put in more work than others. Well .. it might sound rather slanderous, but one of the people who stood to gain was part of the committee who was to decide how much money there was to be. On the first time around. When the challenge to the whole issue came up, that person just took off like a shot, and some other people decided on the amounts. Quite similarly.
- Close friends ...?

- Anne - I'm interested in two things. 1) The arbitration that's coming up; 2) the Youth Employment, United Way, etc. I'd like to know more about the details about the union's not adequately representing this person. What precisely happened?
- S - I wasn't around when this happened, so its difficult for me, but I'll do as much as I can. When the woman realised she had a grievance, she went to some-one on the executive, who said don't worry about it, and we'll sort it out for you. And they never properly took it to a grievance committee, or the executive, and it was never dealt with properly. And she started to get frantic, because she thought she had a job, then she didn't have a job, then she tried to get legal help.
- A - And I assume then the grievance committee took action ultimately? OK. Then the Youth Employment Programme, and United Way and any approaches to you such as this. What has been your response to management when they ask you to waive?
- S - Well, this year for example they came to us and said "Look, we've got \$3000. If you want somebody to work under a youth study or youth employment programme, submit some kind of proposal, a work proposal, and a committee of staff and administration and faculty will sit down and decide and prioritise applications. Twenty-five were filed, and they were prioritised, 1 - 25, and 7 or 8 were passed, and then (Mr Dean) phoned up and said hey look, the government's come through with another \$30 000, how about (sending a rep). So the original staff member couldn't deal with the second lot, so some other people sat in on it, and found some really contentious jobs, where there were direct infringements on other people's rights, and we at first rejected them, and then the faculty who supported them came flying down saying you're denying students jobs, you have no (ethics) if you don't spend this money; you're denying students 2000 or how ever many .. peanuts a month, or whatever, and so what are you going to do? So we said OK, take out the AUCE stuff, and we'll pass it , which we did.
- A They took out the AUCE ..
- S - They took out the AUCE function. The trouble is that so much of it is so fine, that its really hard for us to go around and check all the 25 workers and find out - are you doing AUCE or are you not ? Because we are bombarded with a waiver every six or eight weeks. Its just getting really draining. Its hard for us to keep up. Especially because people here - a lot of people - share the sentiments that we should be students. (That question can be hard to deny)
- Michele - I was just wondering about the art Models - why did you feel that a separate local should be created for them? Could you explain that? What's underneath? What's behind both alternatives?
- S - Part of it is because of their demands. Some of them come for a two hour class, and they want to be paid for a minimum of four hours, and we don't have a minimum hours of work thing in our contract. I'm sorry - I'm not really sure .... Because you cannot discriminate on sex or appearance in our contract, when they want a lean hunk to come in for a particular class .. I mean how are you ... there are black models, white models, there are men there are women, short, fat they're any kind of dimension, so that was another thing that we felt we'd have to negotiate.

- Les - I was going to make a sort of statement about the Student Works Programme, because it is a major thrust of our Union, as to any other public sector union, and we are in the unenviable position of being in a (nowhere)-situation. Either we accept these jobs and then we find that there's less money and less jobs for our people, or we reject them and we get the reputation of being big, vicious, heavy handed anti-student people, where as we know that our function as College employees is to serve students. So we've really got to come/<sup>up</sup>with some kind of policy and a way of counteracting this problem, either by ourselves, or with other people, because this is a really major area and it looks like the provincial government is going to be investigating into the whole problem and who knows what they might do. They might come up with some policy where you will be forced to accept these kind of jobs, and there'll be not much you can do.
- Chris - Yes, I wanted to ask about the sick leave for temporaries. Was this extended to part-time temporaries?
- S - Everybody.
- Chris - and do part-time temporaries get any other benefits?
- S - Seniority.
- C - Could you send us a copy of your contract? Thanks.
- (Sigried)- Could we have a definition of what temporaries are?
- S - I'll get a contract to you.
- Sigried - (Do you ever have a very extended period - even up to 2 years)
- Chris - That's not supposed to happen at Simon Fraser, but it does also.
- Steve - Have you ever had any formal or informal discussions with students on Union policy (.....)
- Sheila - That's what I was talking about. I went to the Student Society executive and said that some of us really disagree with you being paid these rotten wages; plus its union busting, plus, plus, plus. And they said yea, they know, but until they can get the students to mobilise there's no way that a handful of student executive will speak out on their behalf, until they're sure that the students know, because the students have been submitted to such arguments as Doug Collins has been perpetrating. It hasn't been formalised at all but I know that its in the works, and I did tell them that the next time it comes up, or in the Fall, before it comes up, we want some kind of forum with the students to get some kind of decision from them on what they feel.
- Steve - This is not a question, but we've been thinking about that lately, (n)-temporaries, non-student-temporaries, casual labour, all those other things that plague all our houses. The student worker is a (no-work) situation, I agree with (Les). I was just wondering what, since its a situation, how we can lose the least and win the most out of it. And the only thing I can think of that extricates us at all, is that we think about insisting on union wages for student jobs - period. And we lose there, because they'll say it cuts the number of jobs. And we'll say yeah, but at least the people working will be getting a decent wage. And we won't be cutting the ground .. First of all we won't be teaching students that the only way to make a profit is to take away somebody else's job, (or the better neighbour's work ethic) which is not very good for their years, we all good citizens, and all that kind of thing. It seems to

Steve

- to be the best of a bunch of bad options, is to head in that direction of union wages for all student work. And on temporaries and casual labour, it seems to me that we have to head in the direction of - not just us, all public sector unions - in the direction of time limits. Severe ones. And also we were thinking of percentage of the workforce limits. Not that you can make any big argument that isn't purely based on self-interest but at that point if you face the prospect of having 25 or 30% of your workforce on campus composed of temporary or casual labour, you have no choice but to argue self-interest. And we're inclined to think that the only way you're going to stop it is to say that this kind of labour can't be ... Well, they're forever setting up the structures and then you have to try and accommodate yourself, how about we set up the structures and say no more than (27.2% ? 7.2% ?) of the workforce shall be casual, temporary or student labour. Now you fit it in. You fit your needs and your grants, and your this and your that into our appreciation of the necessities of the situation for a change. And that would be a negotiating thing, and one that I'm sure we'd win. I mean, they'd set a great wall up, but it would be worth fighting about. Because otherwise we just forever ... in fact, after all is said and done, I think these issues are .... Aside from getting you to go out on strike when it serves their pocketbook interests, I can't think of anything else that they have more of a field day with. Than casual labour in one form or another. And we have had the situation at various moments where 30% of the workforce was not being covered. For one reason or another. I'm not saying that was a permanent state of affairs, but when you sit down and realise that you're being manoevered out of existence - that's what happens. And we're going to have to, somewhere along the line say no, no more.

Judy

- About work-study programmes again. I wrote quite a bit about it in my executive report, but maybe I should elaborate a bit. When all the (PSECC.) went over, and Melody & I were there, to speak our representatives in the Ministry of Labour, who were administering the program. All unions had essentially the same problem. I mentioned the report. It was the first time that any union had heard this notion interpretation that the programmes are considered subsidies, and incentives to create employment for students, and nobody had ever heard that before. And one of the bureaucrats was uncool enough to actually be really honest and say that they were concerned with unemployment statistics - so we blasted him and said we're concerned with job security, and is it right to hire students to do work at lousy wages - that's exploiting them just for the sake of statistics. They weren't training their own so-called field workers very much, train my foot - they didn't care on bit, to make sure the thing was supposedly administered properly. Because they assured us that the intent was never, never (which was baloney too) to undermine contracts. That the employer should continue to honour contracts. And that wasn't the intention of the thing. So great - that's wonderful, but do something about it. So they made some verbal commitments to try and do this kind of (baloney). So the proposal that (PSECC) put to them - and all locals should get more directly involved and start reporting to one another and putting more pressure on - was to try and get the government administrators themselves to take more responsibility for the administration of their own programme because they're just dumping it - like the unions are the ones who are getting the black eye and being left to deal with the mess

- Judy - that they've created. I don't know if you read in the papers recently, but the Hospitals/<sup>Employees</sup>Union just got a couple of black eyes over that. Dirty old Hospitals Employees Union doesn't let/<sup>poor</sup>students work. And I feel sorry for students, but God, you know. That's where ( PSECC ) at right now, to try and get them to set up this procedure where they take more responsibility to see that things are done. But we obviously cant count on that. So I think Steve's idea of negotiating is one idea, and I think maybe AUCE should start doing that as a possible solution, but other public sector unions have got to start doing the same thing. You still have the problem of publicity. But that may be a way round it. The government will win anyway - it doesn't matter which way it goes. If they're allowed to create a lot of these jobs, they'll look good even if its lousy pay, for hiring students, and the statistics go down. If the Unions refuse the ... and it does also undermine the security of the union already. But if you turn them down, they still win because unions look like lousy rotten rats who just
- As a member of the Steering Committee, I've been through this with ( PSECC ) but maybe we should consider setting up a more solid sort of committee, because I think this is going to get to be more and more of a problem, as time goes by - its not going to get any better. I think we should consider that, at any rate.
- Jan - I'm really confused - have they changed their guidelines in the Dept. of Labour, for non-students? I've seen the application form and I didn't think the application or anything had drastically changed from last year. Because our office used to administer it, and this is the first year that we haven't. And I know that the union sat down and reviewed the proposal that we had, and it was made very clear in letter form to Victoria that no student worker would be taking jobs away from AUCE personnel. And unfortunately I don't have access to the files anymore - they've been taken out of the office and sent over to the person who is administering them now. But at one time it was in black and white, at least in our office, and this was from Victoria, and what we used to do when they .. this is common with the department of Labour - you get X no of dollars, and then 2 days before their deadline and say guess what - we've got \$50 000 so show up some students. We used to short-list as many as possible, and then if projects suggested were definitely unacceptable, we would send out notices to Departments, saying its up to you. If you want this money, you come up with a non-union job. And instead of this bit where they're coming down on us and saying you have to do this, poor students ..... we just fought right back, saying if you want this money badly enough then you find another project to give your student. They didn't like it, but we found a ( pretext )
- Les - I was just going to comment to what Steve said. I'll try to state it quickly. First of all the problem is, as you said, a lot of casual people not part of our bargaining unit. What we should be moving towards is every person in our bargaining unit area should be members of our union as a condition of employment. That should be one area we should be looking at. Secondly, the whole idea of forcing students to work in order to save enough to go to school to get training - I think thats just (rot). What we should be ... I think it should be set policy that students are people, who for the benefit of society are getting training to do jobs and to perform a function for society and the major part of that burden should be bourne by society to ensure that they get that training. Why should students

- Les - be working nights, evenings, vacations, just to get enough money together to live on peanut butter sandwiches for a year. We should be taking a strong position on this. And thirdly we have to go strongly to the public and say look what they're doing to our job security; look what they're doing to students, and make a public case to counteract this thing that's being done to us.
- Kathy - This is really going to be a summary. I agree with what a number of people have said, and I think we often fall down in not taking enough public stands on issues which affect students in our own institutions. I think it was Local One that passed a very strong resolution about the tuition fee increases? That kind of thing I think is really important, and we often forget to do it and people may be thinking all kinds of things about students, and they don't take enough public ~~stands~~ positions. I think what we can do is with more publicity point out that we are the ones who are most in favour of students getting better treatment; we are also against unemployment; ; exploitation of students; we want them to be treated as well as we are, by getting paid decent rates; and as Judy said in her report, turn it against management - make them come up with the difference between flat rates and your union contract. And in general I think we should be trying to take more public stands on things that affect students. And trying to counteract this splitting of students from us.
- Michele - I really agree with what Les and Kathy just said. The thing is that the unemployment question is part of the whole economic crisis, and this is hitting everybody in different ways. Including people in AUCE as employees of universities which have been cut back, and students as users of these universities, and what the government is trying to do very often is to pit against each other every group in the community which uses social services; or the employees - and the unemployment problem is used for that - if you can't get a job you have to rely just on yourself. You can't blame it on the government - or else you blame it on a neighbour, but you can't blame it on the government. And I think it would be important at this point and given this economic situation, that people start working together to fight this and put more pressure on the government, (and they need to be aware) rather than to train people for their own little thing - the students fighting for their jobs, the staff fighting for their jobs, in their way, and then fighting each other, as the government makes them do that. And I think for one thing, anyway at the provincial level there is a student association and it would be good if AUCE could get in touch with them - its called the BC Students Federation, or something like that - and start talking with them about how both organisations could start working together to situation. And students are upset about the unemployment; students are upset about being paid lousy wages , and being forced to do jobs that they don't really want - they would much rather have other opportunities than that, and I don't think it's very often their fault. So I think the important thing is that AUCE starts dealing with students, and trying to work with them in trying to get the government ....

Rujol