

Minutes

Executive Meeting - Thursday, April 23, 1981
2:30-6:55 pm.
Union Office

Present: Sharon Newman, Marcel Dionne, Wendy Bice, Suzan Zagar, Helen Glavina,
Carole Cameron, Joan Treleaven, Wendy Lymer

Before turning to the agenda, a discussion took place on the issue of the University's proposal regarding reclassification of the Computer Operators. Carole stated that we have known for a long time that this was coming. As there was a lack of Job Evaluation Committee members at their own meetings, it was decided that a back-up was required to handle such aforesaid proposals. Suzan Zagar pointed out that computer operators at SFU are being paid \$29,000 per year. As a comparison, UBC pays computer operators about \$22,000 per year.

Marcel Dionne commented that committees have always reported to the Executive who in turn have always reported to the membership. This situation has never and should never be reversed. The Computer operators properly used the reclassification procedure to better their positions as any concerned employee would have done. The Job Evaluation Committee should not be permitted to overturn Executive decisions.

Suzan commented that Eric De Bruijn admitted that the level of qualifications and responsibility did not play a part in the University's proposal for computer operators. He favoured a letter of agreement which could be removed once computer operators were no longer marketable. He indicated that a few duties had been added to the job descriptions to make the proposition more justifiable. Mr. De Bruijn added that clerical staff could never be considered for a similar upgrading because of their abundance.

Carole Cameron suggested that the Executive shouldn't make a decision while the computer operators were in attendance at this meeting. She stressed that the reps must be allowed to make their points. Marcel expressed opposition to the Job Evaluation Committee's stand on the University's proposal. Carole read article 31.03 of the collective agreement which provides that Committee with the opportunity to bring problems and proposals regarding reclassifications to the University's attention. Carole added that the membership is composed of many intelligent people who are very capable of making a decision in this regard. Neither the Executive nor the Job Evaluation Committee are required to make decisions for them. Helen Glavina commented that intelligent people can be swayed by a biased questionnaire. Carole felt that the questions which appear on the questionnaire were expressed exactly as they were presented to her by members of the bargaining unit.

Helen stated that she was curious to know what the membership felt about reclassification on the basis of marketability. She suggested that everyone should apply for an increase, not just one group supported by marketability. Marcel expressed concern as to the basis on which pay grades are assessed to jobs. Why were SFU computer operators paid a greater amount? Are they worth it? How are people to be upgraded if not on the basis of their job duties? Carole stated that duties performed by theatre assistants don't even remotely resemble any job description in our bargaining unit. The Executive then turned to the agenda.

1. Adoption of agenda:

Moved by Carole Cameron
Seconded by Sharon Newman

THAT THE AGENDA BE ADOPTED AS CIRCULATED.

The motion was CARRIED.

2. Adoption of minutes of the April 23, 1981 Executive Meeting:

Several corrections were made. On page two, under the Union Organizers's report, the second paragraph was changed to:

Sheila Porter recently submitted information on a Day Care Conference which was to be held at the Hotel Vancouver from March 20-23, 1981. Carole suggested that if Sheila was willing to attend, she should be reimbursed for fees and related expenses. The Executive were in agreement on this matter.

On page two also, under the Secretary-Treasurer's report, the third sentence of the first paragraph was reworded to

Helen Glavina suggested that Wendy try the Trade Union Research Bureau.

Moved by Carole Cameron
Seconded by Wendy Bice

THAT THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 23, 1981 EXECUTIVE MEETING
BE ADOPTED AS AMENDED.

The motion was CARRIED.

3. Business arising from the minutes:

Carole reported that she had had a response from the Premier's Office on the B. C. Projectionists Union licensing issue. Premier Bennett indicated that Allan Williams was looking into the matter.

Carole also reported that Linda Cairn's arbitration dates had been set for July 8, 9 and 10 at the Cecil Green building. Kitti Cheema's arbitration was scheduled for September 9 and 10 on the fourth floor of IRC in the Board Room. A report on Local 5 was expected from Suzan Zagar during the Provincial report.

With regard to the motion given on page six of the minutes, the questionnaire was drawn up but was not sent out due to dissatisfaction expressed by members of the Job Evaluation Committee. There would be further discussion on the issue at this meeting. At this point, computer operators Peter Roberts and Daryl Wallace joined the meeting.

4. Business arising from the correspondence:

Nancy Wiggs resigned from her position as shop steward. She intended, nevertheless, to testify at Lissett Nelson's arbitration hearing. Carole had received letters from James Chabot and from the Premier on the issues of co-op development on the Endowment Lands and the B.C. Projectionists Union licensing requirements.

^{Harry} Henry Lowe, another computer operator, joined the meeting at 3:45 pm. Peter Roberts stated that it was in the hands of the Union as to whether their reclassification went through. Elizabeth Brock arrived at 3:50 pm.

Carole Cameron commented that the University's proposal would be implemented after sixty days if the Union did not respond to it. She suggested that if the University had changed the computer operator title to Chief Computer Operator, there would have been no problem with the reclassifications. As a group, the computer operators were the first to be offered such a proposal. Word processing operators, buyers, and medical secretaries could very well be next in line. We want the membership to view the other groups as well so that prejudice will be deleted.

Peter stated that the computer operators had been attempting to upgrade themselves since February of 1980. Carole felt that the biggest reason in support of the University's proposal was "marketability." Peter asked how such a proposal could harm the other members of the Union. Harry Lowe understood that the money to cover the upgrading would come from a vacant operator position. He indicated that their work load was being increased to justify the upgrading. Joan Treleaven asked if we were then to give up our philosophy of equal pay for work of equal value in order to satisfy a marketable group in the bargaining unit. Where will the money come from next year if marketability exists then? When we sign our next contract, computer operators will be making even more money if this proposal were accepted. Helen felt that the proposal was divisive in terms of the monetary recognition given to certain groups. Peter stated that this union was losing members every day. Suzan Zagar commented that this union was losing many positions to professional staff. Library Assistant IVs are gradually being replaced by librarians. Peter felt that the University was, at last, recognizing the special training computer operators are required to have. Wendy Bice pointed out that librarians, who also require special training, but who are abundant in number, will probably never receive such an offer. Peter suggested that perhaps computer operators should be placed in another, more technical, union. Joan reminded Peter that the Executive had not yet made a decision on any part of this issue.

Elizabeth Brock felt that if the computer operators were more familiar with the constitution which governs this union, that they would probably understand the questions being posed by the Executive. Peter asked if, then, it was the constitution which was preventing this reclassification from being implemented. He stressed that the operators wanted to know where they stood right now in terms of the reclassification. Carole responded that sixty days had not expired yet according to the letter received March 6, 1981 from the University which enclosed the revised job specifications. The Union has to discuss the proposal with the University.

Marcel felt that it was very difficult to equate a position with a higher pay grade. Peter said that operators have new duties as a result of technological change. The general feeling was that it would not be fair to the membership at large if this proposed upgrading was implemented. Peter said that he could not understand or agree with the effect this proposal might have on the other members.

Helen stated that the membership will very likely be reduced by 35 or 40% due to technological change. The remaining positions will become highly specialized. This Union will be much stronger if the members stick together should the ranks be depleted. CUPE has demonstrated what divisive tactics such as this one can do to a union.

Peter pointed out that the present pay grades show that some people are paid more than others. Suzan said that recognition for responsibility and qualifications required of the individual was the purpose.

Harry suggested that if this offer was turned down by the Union, the University would cease its proposals for other groups as well. Carole said that in a conversation with Jane Strudwick, it was disclosed that the University was forced to accept less superior applicants for computer operator positions due to budgetary concerns. In essence, the University had no more feeling for the operators than for anyone else in the bargaining unit.

Peter stated that experience and qualifications were equally important and vital to the University with respect to an operator's position. Carole said that Jane Strudwick's statement was not a reflection on a person's abilities or educational background. A degree is essentially inconsequential as far as clerical workers are concerned.

Harry Lowe asked who would make the final decision on this proposal. Carole responded that no one in an official capacity, such as the Executive members, makes a decision without first consulting the membership and obtaining a directive. Peter felt, that, theoretically a vote should be taken.

Anne Hutchison joined the meeting at 4:30 pm. A discussion ensued on the formation of a new questionnaire which would give the membership background information but at the same time would not reveal the particular groups involved. Anne stressed that the membership must be informed of the implications of this proposal. The marketability argument was offered at the last set of negotiations and the University's plan was turned down. The classification structure is based on the work performed, not on the aspect of marketability. Can we a-cede to marketability considering the other pay grades? The fact is that the majority of clerical workers are not recognized due to "female job duties."

Carole stressed that the questionnaire had to address the problem, not the group. Marcel said that the issue should be presented to the membership in May at a two-hour meeting. Carole added that the questionnaire should be dealt with separately and apart from the pro and con statements to be published in the newsletter. The intention was to send the questionnaire after the newsletter was mailed out.

Irene McIntyre arrived at 4:40 pm. Anne asked what the purpose of the questionnaire was. Carole responded that the questionnaire would provide the Executive with the feelings of the members on all sides of the issue. She continued that the University could have handled the problem without consulting the Union. The University seems intent on fragmenting this bargaining unit by appeasing themselves and the particular group they wish to satisfy.

Harry felt that the operators couldn't be used as a lever for the Union because the University would probably drop the proposal if there was too much opposition. Helen asked if the Union should back down on a principle in order to satisfy the computer operators. Marcel requested that submissions for the newsletter had to be sent in by May 5th. Wendy Bice added that the areas which referred to the proposed upgrading would be removed from the agenda for the April meeting and would be placed on the May agenda instead.

5. Secretary-Treasurer's report:

Wendy Lymer reported that all the documents which were necessary had been gathered and taken in to the auditors. At an interview with the auditor, Mr. Vandervoort, the estimate for the audit and the time factor were discussed. The cost of the audit would probably be less than previous years because the auditor was familiar with our bookkeeping system. We could expect to publish the auditor's report in June as per by-law requirements. The income tax return was sent in recently and the Union could expect a small refund.

6. Union Organiser's report:

Carole indicated that all the documents she received at the Microtechnology and Canadian Pension Conferences were available in the Union Office for any member who was interested. Carole has written a letter to the Trade Union Research Bureau requesting more information on Dr. Wassily Leontief's idea of reducing work hours and offering no annual wage increases in order to combat reductions in jobs. We have subscribed to a newsletter produced by the Comparable Worth Project which addresses the issues which are affecting us today. We are expecting a manual produced by the Coalition for the Medical Rights of Women which is entitled "Radiation on the Job."

It is hoped that this manual will provide information on health and safety problems resulting from technological advancement. Carole has also written letters to the various school boards on the lower mainland, urging that the existing educational system be altered to encourage young people away from traditional work and traditional education, stressing that education plays an essential part in preparing students for changes in the work force.

An inquiry has also been made into a union in London, England (i.e. Association of Professional, Executive, Clerical and Computer Staff or APEX) which has successfully negotiated into its collective agreement clauses on the amount of time per day a person can work on word-processing equipment. Carole requested a copy of the respective clauses. Carole stressed that the membership must be made aware of all aspects of technological advances and that a little time must be set aside at future meetings in order to do so.

At the Microtechnology Conference, Carole was part of a group of women who produced seven resolutions which were presented on the last day of the conference. Government officials in attendance warned that changes were coming but had not prepared any legislation and had not set up any studies to discover the effects of these changes as yet. Thus far, the Union has not investigated the issues either and Carole urged that we must start our investigations now.

At the Pension Conference, much more information was made available and is available in the Union Office.

Bob Grant recently spoke to Carole, expressing concern as to Wendy Bice and Carole's future as employees of the University. Carole attended the University's annual pension meeting where portability was discussed which enables employees to transfer contributions from one private pension plan to another if a change in employers is made.

Wendy Bice and Carole have successfully managed to obtain 399 job specifications from Employee Relations which are now filed in binders chronologically by classification in each department.

Labour Canada was once again offering a financial assistance program for labour education. The program is directed at independent Canadian trade unions who are interested in educating their members in various facets of labour activities. In the past, shop steward seminars have been financed through this grant. An application has to be made and Carole requested assistance in order to do so. Carole offered a suggestion for a project which would involve a health hazard study to be conducted by a representative of the Occupational Health Resources Service at Simon Fraser University in conjunction with representatives of our union. Helen was asked to contact the Ph.D. student who would conduct the study and arrange a meeting.

Isabelle MacCaughran's case has been settled. She had applied for a reclassification to a Secretary III and was successful in obtaining it.

A meeting was held here yesterday with a CUPE representative, an OTEU representative and an inspector from the Occupational Environment Branch of the Ministry of Labour who offered to speak at a membership meeting on health and safety as it related to our working environments. He requested examples of poor working conditions on campus for investigation purposes. He suggested that lobbying the government on these issues was very important. He indicated that there was no legislation governing safety standards in commercial buildings; in other words, a commercial building such as the Library Processing Center does not have to meet any inspection standards.

Moved by Carole Cameron
Seconded by Wendy Bice

THAT A LETTER BE WRITTEN TO THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND TO THE
OPPOSITION CRITIC WITH REGARD TO LEGISLATION WHICH SHOULD
COVER THE INSPECTION OF COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS.

The motion was CARRIED.

Helen Glavina offered a brief report on the imminent hazard section of the Workmen's Compensation Act (Section 8.24). An employee working in an area with a hazard can refuse to do the work. She intends to obtain a WCB interpretation of this article. Helen will prepare a report for the newsletter on the VDT seminar where imminent hazards were discussed. "Imminent" doesn't necessarily mean immediate danger.

7. Union Co-ordinator's report:

Wendy Bice and Carole planned to attend the Benefits seminar at CU&C tomorrow morning. Wes Clark phoned to say that UBC's medical and dental contracts had been mailed out to the Union Office. The new dues authorization form will prevent the present problem of obtaining the initiation fee from occurring because the fee will be included in the first dues deduction.

Section 96.1 of the Labour Code has been filed on Article 23.01 (Employee Files) of the collective agreement. The University claims that they can put anything in an employee's file with or without the employee's knowledge. Section 96.1 has also been filed on Article 21.01 (Tuition Waiver). An interpretation of the "12 months" stipulation in the existing article is required.

The VMREU (Vancouver Municipal and Regional Employees Union) have requested, in a letter, that we pass the following resolution at a membership meeting. If passed, copies of the resolution would be sent to mayors and councils of all municipalities involved in the GVRD negotiations.

Moved by Wendy Bice
Seconded by Carole Cameron

THAT THE FOLLOWING MOTION BE MADE AT THE NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING:

WHEREAS federal wage controls imposed several years ago affected public employees more harshly than other workers;

AND WHEREAS public employees have continued to be denied fair wage increases since the lifting of wage controls;

AND WHEREAS clerical workers are not now receiving a fair living wage which recognizes the value of the skills they must bring to their jobs and WHEREAS the increment system undervalues the work performed for several years until the full rate is reached and WHEREAS manual workers receive the full rate for the job from the first day or immediately after the probationary period;

AND WHEREAS paid sick leave, retirement and severance pay benefits were secured in lieu of wage increases over the years;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT we, AUCE Local One, support the municipal workers in the following points:

1. That they receive increases in wages which are required in order to keep up with the steadily rising cost of living and cost of housing in the Lower Mainland;
2. Acceptance of the concept of "equal pay for work of equal value" and the setting of a common base rate for both inside and outside municipal workers;

3. Maintain present employer-paid sick leave, retirement and severance benefits."

The motion was CARRIED.

Wendy next reported that Sheila Rowswell wished to be a participant in a rally involving the VMREU. She also hoped to organize a meeting with VMREU reps to discuss "equal pay". Elizabeth Brock stated that Aphrodite Harris could be approached for a speech on union matters. She is an accomplished speaker, having recently participated in the GVRDEU labour dispute.

In a phone call, Wes Clark discussed a letter from Lissett Nelson's husband with regard to her return to the Math Dept. with Wendy. The University maintains that if a person leaves a position, that individual cannot pursue a grievance.

8. Communications Committee report:

Wendy Lymer indicated that the deadline for submissions to the May newsletter is May 5th. She suggested that there should be more reports from members of the Executive who represent various committees. Carole said that a complaint has been received on the situation with L.A.IV's where professional staff (i.e. librarians) are taking over vacancies. A series of motions will be published in the newsletter with regard to retraining, hazards to health, etc. These motions were passed at the 1981 Annual Meeting of the National Action Committee of the Status of Women. Carole then read the proposals to the Executive.

BE IT RESOLVED that AUCE Local I use its influence to see that Government(s) ensure that each organisation or company and the manufacturers of high technology equipment be responsible for applying appropriately upgraded standards of Health and Safety, the Employment Standards Legislation, and all such similar legislation so that workers are employed in safe working conditions.

BE IT RESOLVED that AUCE Local I attempt to join forces with other bodies or develop policy alternatives to deal with potential employment effects of technological change on women's jobs through joint research, policy proposals to government and a massive publicity campaign to inform workers who are most likely to be affected of the changes, layoffs and other potential adverse effects, and to educate employers on the issues and impact of technology on women.

BE IT RESOLVED that AUCE Local I request the Secretary of State to supply funding to the National Film Board Studio D, so that they can do a film which can be used to alert women to the issues and concerns related to office automation and the associated computer-technology change.

BE IT RESOLVED that AUCE Local I supports the idea of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women to undertake discussions with member organizations to collaborate on a major conference on women and micro-technology to take place within the next two years and further that AUCE Local I express to the National Action Committee on the Status of Women its willingness to participate in such a conference.

BE IT RESOLVED that the foregoing resolutions be forwarded to the Resolutions Committee of the Provincial Association to be passed at its annual convention June 13 and 14, 1981.

9. Grievance Committee report:

The Isabelle McCaughran grievance has been settled. The Lissett Nelson case is going to arbitration. A leave of absence grievance will go to arbitration in September. An employee in the History Dept. can't be transferred, according to the University, because she is under discipline. Wendy Bice reported Robert Grant's stand on transfers;

individuals could not be transferred if being disciplined if their ability was in doubt. Jane Strudwick, has, however, agreed to the transfer. Another case has gone to Step 3. A probationary employee was fired because it was claimed that she did not meet the standards set up by Employee Relations in conjunction with the Dept. of History. The Labour Committee was upholding the University's decision that the employee did not measure up.

The Clair Copp case was being pursued because of the University's policy to disallow a grievance if the individual has left the position.

Carole reported that a decision had to be made on the Pension Plan grievance. To what step was the Grievance Committee prepared to take it? There are problems with the pension plan's constitution. The grievance was based on the fact that when the employer deducts the monthly premium from an employee's paycheque without permission, that employee is not being paid the wages promised. An award has been found which supports the grievance.

Anne interjected to say that executive members who work in different buildings could prepare reports of Executive meetings and circulate those reports to the members which they represent. Helen suggested that such reports could be published in the newsletter rather than placed in a public area.

10. Provincial report:

Suzan Zagar submitted her resignation with regard to the position of Provincial Representative for Local One because some AUCE members questioned her right to hold two Executive positions at one time.

Local 5 has a two-year settlement which offers 14.5% in the first year and 13% in the second. The Provincial lent \$5000 to Local 5 during the dispute. The Provincial also offered a grant of \$1500 and an additional \$500 for legal expenses arising from that dispute. The use of the Provincial Strike fund was in question due to the fact that the fund was intended to cover the operating costs of a strike; it was not intended to be used for strike pay purposes. On the issue of Local 5's affiliation with the CCU, Suzan referred to a letter which was sent to the other AUCE Locals. A lengthy motion to affiliate with the CCU was presented by Lauma Avens at a Local Five meeting; Suzan felt that manipulation was very evident in the issue. Essentially, Local 5's position sets a precedent for each Local to do as it pleases. Suzan firmly believes that no analogy can be drawn from Local One's decision to not pay the increased per capita tax immediately. She suggested that a recommendation be given to the delegates who will attend the Convention.

Suzan also asked that a letter be sent to Local 5 and to the CCU expressing opposition to the affiliation and proposing that Local 5 withdraw its application. Carole questioned Local 5's right to belong to both organizations when the mandate indicated by the referendum approved of the CLC. Suzan pointed out that we couldn't lobby the CLC because of the dilemma created by Local 5's position.

Marcel suggested that we could, in protest, withhold the per capita tax as it was intended to enable the Provincial to assist other AUCE locals only. Carole reiterated her concerns: how can an AUCE local also belong to the CCU when the mandate favoured the CLC? and can we be assured that no portion of AUCE's funds go (directly or indirectly) to the CCU? Suzan stated that Local 5 has previously been opposed to the concept of affiliation. Helen suggested that a letter be drafted and sent to the Provincial listing our concerns on this issue. If we received an unsatisfactory response then we could withhold the per capita tax. It was decided that Suzan and Marcel would draft the letter.

The assessment is slowly drifting in from the other locals. Money has been received from Local 2 and Local 6.

Suzan touched briefly on the outstanding per capita tax issue. The subject will be discussed at the Convention. There will probably be a recommendation from the Provincial Executive which will ask that Local One pay the arrears.

The destruction of convention tapes was also discussed. The Convention has never directed the Provincial to destroy or re-use the back-up tapes. Suzan reiterated her concern that those tapes had a definite historical value and should be kept in tact for that reason.

Local 2 is now out of debt. It did not proceed with a referendum for a special \$10 assessment in order to attempt another dues increase. Consequently, their dues remain at \$9 per month for full-time members.

Capilano College will be the location for the 1981 Convention. Constitutional amendments will appear in the next newsletter. Submissions must be sent to the Provincial Executive 28 days prior to the Convention date.

The Provincial Auditor is preparing a report at this time.

The format for the Convention's activities will include one-hour committee seminars on Discovery Parks, Health and Safety, and the VDT issue. A recommendation to hire members off the recall list will provide additional part-time help in the Provincial Office. Sheila Perret, Lid Strand and Roger Perkins now constitute a committee which authorizes short-term hirings. Suzan added that Sheila Perret has cut back on her overtime hours.

The Grievance/Arbitration seminar is to be held this weekend.

Capilano College Labour Studies has asked AUCE to be represented on the Labour Studies Programme Users Advisory Committee. A recommendation will probably be taken to the Convention that we be represented.

The Provincial made a \$250 donation to the Canadian Farmworkers Union. A representative of this local will be asked to address the Convention.

New locks have been installed at the Provincial Office. There would be a limited number of keys available to Provincial Executive members.

Lastly, Suzan reported on the death of a Local Two member. Joan Wood was the President of the Convention in 1979 and was greatly involved in SFU's labour dispute two years ago. She was killed in a car accident on Friday, March 20, 1981. A wake was held in her honor. Carole Cameron attended.

12. Job Evaluation Committee report:

Carole Cameron suggested that the questionnaire be sent out shortly after the newsletter which will contain articles on the issue. Anne stressed that this would be a contentious issue at the May membership meeting. The membership will have to make a decision. Arguments against the proposal will be brought forward in the newsletter. Carole commented that Marcel had made it quite clear to the computer operators that they could submit proposals for the format of the questionnaire. Those proposals may or may not appear on the questionnaire. There will definitely be a long-term effect resulting from the decision on the University's proposal. She added that an extension had to be requested from the University.

Marcel asked for how long should the questionnaire be postponed. Carole stated that a decision would be determined as a result of the response to the questionnaire. In addition, the newsletter, the membership meeting and the questionnaire should be inter-related. Wendy Bice suggested that the questionnaire be redesigned and that it should be more specific as to the groups involved.

Moved by Joan Treleaven THAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE BE SENT OUT AFTER THE MEETING.
Seconded by Helen Glavina

It was suggested that a memo be drafted and sent to the Job Evaluation Committee proposing that its members participate in the creation of a new questionnaire.

12. Executive report:

Carole Cameron proposed that for each membership meeting, a different member of the Executive take responsibility for this report. She added that it was unfair to expect the same person to prepare the report each time.

13. Next Executive meeting:

The next meeting of the Executive was scheduled for May 7th where by-laws would be discussed.

14. Next Membership Meeting:

The next Membership Meeting was scheduled for Thursday, May 21, 1981.

15. Other Business:

There was no other business.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm.