



Canadian Union of Public Employees - Syndicat Canadien de la Fonction Publique

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613 — 237-1590

13th February 1974.

Ms. Heather MacNeil,
Association of University
and College Employees,
Box 11,
Student Union Building,
University of British Columbia,
Vancouver, British Columbia.

Dear Heather:

Your letter of January 19th arrived on the 28th January. I regret that I have not had an opportunity to reply before this time, even though I did try to reach you by telephone on two occasions.

Firstly, I wish to congratulate you and the others on the establishment of the bargaining unit for employees of U.B.C. I am sure this was no easy task considering the numbers involved, and the way they are scattered through many departments and sections of the University.

The request outlined in your letter places me in a dilemma. As Research Director for CUPE I have always taken the position that within our resources, we should provide whatever assistance is possible to any group of workers who are prepared to organize and better their conditions of employment. On many occasions in the past I have provided research material to organizations who were even fighting us in organizing drives. However, the nature and extent of your request places this matter in another context.

In essence you have requested us to provide your Association with all the research materials and services which we would normally make available to a very large CUPE local. To put together the kinds of material requested in your letter would take two weeks of staff time of the Research Department. (And this does not include the etc.etc. part of your request). The \$25.00 limit which you suggested would not begin to pay duplicating costs, let alone the very much more expensive staff time.

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The kind of request that you have made has also been made on numerous occasions by other CUPE locals across Canada. For example, the Research Department of CUPE spent considerable time in assisting our U.B.C. local in drawing up the bargaining proposal, providing research backup for the requests etc. This is the kind of service which we try to provide for all our locals, but particularly large locals like the CUPE local at U.B.C.

We do have a great number of requests of this kind from our locals but we do have a limited staff to provide this service which is very costly.

In fact, your request would require the Research Department to drop our work which we are providing to our dues paying membership and to provide the service to non-members. I think you can appreciate the resentment that would be generated by our members who are paying for this service, and may have to wait considerable time to receive it, if they knew we were busy providing research material to a group that they would refer to as "free loaders".

I think the enthusiasm that has been displayed in the organization of your group is commendable. However, after the initial enthusiasm, there is certain technical information and experience that is necessary to see a group through to a worthwhile collective agreement. This is the type of service and experience that can only be provided by an organization like CUPE. Frankly, I hope that your group will see the wisdom of affiliation, so that all university employees across the country can work together towards a common goal of betterment.

We have just completed a detailed analysis of collective agreement provisions in the one hundred university collective agreements across Canada. We are in the process of having this material reproduced and it should be available in approximately one month. Copies of this material are available in our Area Offices across Canada and to major university locals. I would suggest that you contact Mike Kramer the CUPE Representative who services university employees in Vancouver about this material. I am also sending copies of several library and office university agreements to Mike Kramer. I would appreciate it very much if you would work through him regarding any requests for collective bargaining research material. His telephone number is 291-8415.

I hope that you will understand why it is not possible to provide the kinds of services that you have requested to non CUPE members. However, should your group sometime in the future agree to seek affiliation with CUPE, the research, education, legal, job evaluation and other specialized services would be made available to you, as it is made available to all CUPE locals across Canada.

Fraternally yours,



Gilbert Levine,
Research Director.

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c.c. M. Kramer, R. Deaton.