

MINUTES OF THE MEETING BETWEEN THE AUCE PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE AND CLC REPRESENTATIVES LARRY WIDEN AND WILLIAM SMALLEY. SEPT. 14th, 1979.

NOTE: The minutes are largely taken from notes by Hester Vair during the meeting. Where the speaker was identified in the notes it is included here. The 2nd time the speaker is mentioned initials are used.

CLC: gave a brief outline of the CLC history and explained the Congress structure.
(William Smalley) said that 'there is an agreement that the few overlaps of jurisdiction are o.k.' and 'under the CLC Constitution OTEU, CUPE & BCGEU have that jurisdiction' He explained that 'the policy of the CLC is that there are too many unions and too many jurisdictional disputes' this results in a situation where "all unions are warring with each other' He also mentioned that the "question of efficiency is involved.' The CLC 'tries to encourage mergers and amalgamations to that there will actually be fewer unions.' He said that 'it is unlikely, not saying impossible, but the only way is to negotiate a merger with one of the other unions' Smalley said he had met with Ray Mercer, the Regional Director of B.C. area of CUPE who is 'willing to talk with AUCE'

AUCE asked if all 3 unions mentioned were in the CLC separately when it formed in 1956.
(Suzanne Marria)

CLC (WS) 'OTEU & CUPE were, but BCGEU was not.'

AUCE "How did BCGEU get in separately?"
(Joan Wood)

CLC (WS) Responded by explaining that there are a number 'of Provincial Government Employee Unions all across Canada' 'The Executive Council recognizes that direct civil servants of the Province could be taken as a group, that is the best I can do, it was a decision made by a Council of 40 people'

AUCE 'Why didn't they join CUPE?'
(Jenny Somero)

CLC explained that CUPE members are mostly Municipal and BCGEU members are Provincial
(Larry Widen) said that BCGEU's tie to the CLC is through the National Government Employees' Union.

AUCE (JW) asked if there were other alternative ways to join the CLC

- CLC (WS) suggested that we join CUPE
- AUCE asked who made the decisions at the CLC about affiliation.
- CLC (WS) 'The Executive Council.' He repeated that it would be unlikely that we would be accepted as AUCE. He went on to suggest that we look at the example of the Fishermen's Union who were refused affiliation status by the Executive Council. It took 'huge lobbies and years of work at Convention before they were accepted, eventually they swayed the opinion of the Convention, now if you think you have that kind of support'
- AUCE How do we affiliate with CUPE?
(Colleen Bostwick)
- CLC (WS) 'CUPE is willing to be flexible. They will look at one big local or several' He offered to set up a meeting with CUPE.
- AUCE (CB) said she had understood that the ferry workers are affiliated to BCGEU and then to the CLC via BCGEU. She asked if that was possible for AUCE.
- CLC (WS) 'that depends on BCGEU. Possible.'
- AUCE said that under the CLC Constitution a union of the same jurisdiction as a CLC affiliate could join intact if they got permission of the already affiliated unions.
(Lid Strand)
- CLC (WS) 'You can do that if they (OTEU, CUPE, & BCGEU) let you, probably the Executive would o.k. it. But it is unlikely that they (the other unions) would allow it.'
- AUCE asked about the benefits of joining the CLC.
- CLC (WS) 'you would be at one with the majority of organized workers in BC' and 'entitled to affiliation to the BC Federation of Labour and to the Local Labour Councils' He mentioned that 'affiliation as a provincial organisation does not entitle AUCE to maintain it's Constitution' Cost would be 25¢ per member per month and this goes to CLC in Ottawa. Regarding legal assistance we were told that 'an affiliate would not expect the legal fees to be paid unless the case was of interest to more than one affiliate'
- AUCE asked if there would be any chance of being refused because of protest of an existing affiliate.
- CLC (LW) asked if we meant 'Could BCGEU, for instance, cancel that decision at a BCGEU Convention', he said he had never heard of this happening, although 'some unions have been turfed out by larger unions'
- AUCE asked about the possibility of strike fund support
- CLC said there was no strike fund in the CLC, however the BC Fed has a Defense Fund which AUCE could request help from (if it became a member of the Fed.)

AUCE (Lisette Nelson) asked if the next step would be to meet with the unions and discuss terms of merger.

CLC (WS) 'yes.' He again offered to set up the meetings if that would aid us.

(LW) 'You should decide if you want to keep your 5 local structure before you meet with them'

AUCE (LN) 'What would be the difference?'

CLC (LW) 'Now you are all autonomous'

AUCE (JW) asked how likely it would be that AUCE would keep it's own structure.

CLC (WS) 'your structure would be negotiable'

AUCE asked if it would be possible to join BCGEU and keep our own constitution as the ferry workers did.

CLC (LW) explained that the ferry workers are a 'special case' and that they have a separate constitution and by-laws and a letter of agreement with BCGEU dealing with things like money matters.'

AUCE (LS) asked if we could join BCGEU and 'have a guarantee that the Convention could not swallow us up'

CLC (LW) 'You can affiliate with BCGEU and set up a contract such that if the terms of the contract were broken the contract would be void, but the CLC could forbid BCGEU to affiliate with you'

AUCE asked about education resources.

CLC told us that shop stewards' manuals are published by the CLC, but the affiliate must purchase them from the CLC, but most of the educational material is free; films and pamphlets are available to the CLC affiliates. There is 1 week-end seminar each winter on general issues in the labour movement. There are several more during the year on special topics. In addition there is a week long school at Harrison Hot Springs. No request to go to labour school is refused as long as finances can be arranged. The local arranges to pay/ or not to pay for room and board and lost wages. At the present time the CLC provides scholarships of 100% for every second member sent by any local. The number of scholarships varies with the demand. If the popularity of the school were to increase dramatically the CLC could not continue such a generous scholarship system. The schools are about 75% rank and file attended. The rest of the students are either business agents or elected union reps. The % would vary with the subject material. 'in a course on arbitration you will find mostly business agents, it depends on interest'

- AUCE (Hester Vair) said that in AUCE stewards are encouraged to do a great deal of the work in grievances up to and including the arbitration.
- CLC (WS) said that in most unions the steward does a great deal of the work 'when expertise is needed for arbitrations they turn to people who know about these things'
- (LW) 'CUPE uses the National for arbitrations and contract work of course you can use your own if you have the treasury'
- AUCE asked how to become a member of the Fed
- CLC told us that Fed members are affiliates to the CLC and then apply for membership to the Fed. 'application is a formality, once you belong to the CLC you can join the Fed if you wish'
- AUCE asked about directly chartered locals in the CLC
- CLC (LW) told us that directly chartered locals are intended to aid unions with problems. 'it is a transitional stage' an area is particularly difficult to organize then the CLC will organize it as a directly chartered local because it has the finances to organize in areas where other unions cannot. 'Normally when the new local is strong it is expected to merge with another affiliate in its jurisdiction. It is not meant to be a permanent jurisdiction' The Optical Workers are at present a directly chartered local. No one else but the CLC could organize them, 'the employer is archaic and they never would have been organized if an affiliate had to do it'
- AUCE questioned CLC about the problems CUPE is having at UBC where the local there is under trusteeship.
- CLC said that 'under most circumstances the CLC does not get involved in internal affairs of affiliates, CUPE will work it out for themselves'