

# ACROSS CAMPUS

**Assoc. of  
University &  
College  
Employees**

Local 1 (UBC) Newsletter Box 11, SUB, UBC

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 6

APRIL 29, 1974

## WE DID IT! OURSELVES!

On April 11, the Association of University & College Employees was certified by the Labour Relations Board as the legal bargaining agent for library and clerical workers at the University of B.C. Finally! It's been a long wait ... our application was before the LRB for almost 4 months. And then they wanted a vote just to make sure! Well, 820 of us sure told them!

A big 'feather in our cap' is that we did it ourselves! It was a difficult job - over 11000 people spread all over a huge campus. We operated on a shoe-string budget. We had no paid staff. But the word got around ... in the offices, during lunch hours, on coffee breaks, U.B.C. employees 'talked union', wrote leaflets and newsletters, fought grievances, and gnawed through red tape. We have built one of the most democratic unions in the country. Congratulations, us!

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Notice is hereby given for our general membership meeting which is to be held on Thursday, May 9 at 5:15 in the Graduate Student Union Building. We urge you all to come!

### AUCE SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

A special meeting for all AUCE members will be held WEDNESDAY, MAY 1 at 5:15 in the Garden Room of the Graduate Student Union Building. The purpose of the meeting is to vote on the contract committee's recommendations on benefits.

### THE STORY OF THE VOTE

For 3 days, April 8, 9 and 10, the phone in the AUCE office rang continuously. For those of us in the office, the days were a flurry of activity. The biggest job was to keep as accurate and up-to-date account as possible of exactly who of our union members had voted. Our scrutineers did an incredible job of writing down a list of all those people who had voted and passed this on to the union office. These names were then sorted into divisions and relayed to the appropriate division steward so that they knew exactly who to prod out to the polls. The result of this was that some divisions got every single member out to vote.

The first day we received phone calls from members who had difficulty finding the polling station and we rushed out with VOTE HERE signs (with arrows) to put up in the appropriate places. Another complaint we received was due to what seemed to be an army of official looking men

clustered around the entrance to the poll which some women felt to be intimidating. On the last day, voting wasn't quite as heavy and our scrutineer managed to write down and pass onto us a portion of the list of part-time workers.

We had been quite anxious to get hold of this list as we had no idea of who the 241 part-time workers were and thus no way of informing them that they were eligible to vote. As soon as we got hold of the list we started checking out as many names as possible. To our horror, we discovered that many of these people were people who had quit a long time ago and others who had not yet begun to work here, plus a number of students. We were furious. We had constantly been denied a copy of this list and now at the last minute we found it to be full of "padding". Had AUCE support been less than overwhelming, we might have lost the vote



because of this phony list. When this was brought to the attention of the Labour Relations Board, they were angry at us for not telling them sooner and threatened not to count the vote immediately if we wanted this list checked out. Needless to say, the matter was temporarily dropped. However a criticism of our treatment during the vote is being prepared.

As everyone knows, the vote turned out to be a statement of strong support for AUCE. According to the Dept. of Labour there were 1212 eligible voters; of these 928 voted - 820 in favour of AUCE, 108 against and 15 spoiled ballots.

It was most encouraging in the office at this time to find so many people ready to help and anxious to know the exact progress of the vote.

People whose names were not on the voters' list but who wish to be a member of our union should phone the Union Office - 224-5613 - from 11:00 to 3:00 weekdays.

#### SHOP STEWARD SEMINAR

A seminar for Division and Shop Stewards is being organized for early May and will probably be on a day during the weekend. The emphasis of the seminar will be on grievances. As soon as more information is forthcoming, division stewards will be notified. For more information call the office or Ann Hockey - [REDACTED].

#### PROGRESS OF THE CONTRACT COMMITTEE

The following is a progress report of the Contract Committee by its Chairperson, Emerald Murphy:

The first meeting with the Administration will take place sometime in the first few days of May. At the time of this writing, final arrangements have not yet been confirmed.

The Contract Committee will be meeting for a weekend long seminar on April 27th and 28th in the Fishermen's Hall between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The purpose of the seminar is to:

1. Formalize those sections of the contract which have already been decided by the membership;
2. To review the contract as it stands, and compile 'articles' which are necessary to the contract but don't have to be discussed specifically by the membership (i.e. introductory paragraphs, management rights clause, etc.); and
3. Discuss tactics and how to conduct the negotiations.

Please note: the more extensive and up-to-date our research is, the better the chances for us at the bargaining table. Please help if you can.

#### HELP WANTED

We need someone to act as a recording secretary during our negotiations. This would involve attending the actual negotiations and meetings of the Contract Committee. We don't expect one person to be able to do this job throughout negotiations. We need three or four people to take it on for 2 or 3 weeks each. If you have experience as a recording secretary, and would be interested in doing this, call the union office or Emerald - [REDACTED].

#### HOW NEGOTIATIONS WORK

Basically, negotiations consist of proposals and counter-proposals between the parties. After initial arrangements such as procedure, duration, etc. of the meetings have been agreed on, the Union will present an "agenda" which is actually the proposed contract in total. Discussion will then take place and agreement arrived on about the agenda.

The Union will make a proposal on a specific item, the opposition will present a counter-proposal (or counter offer) and discussion will ensue, each party trying to bring the other around to accepting her/his point of view, or a compromise closer to her/his point of view.

This is accomplished by the use of 'tactics'. Tactics include research material presented with careful timing and personal strategies, that is, understanding and anticipating the behaviour of the individuals on the opposing team. By using carefully researched arguments, by finding the psychological weaknesses of the opposition, and by careful self-discipline, negotiations will be quickly and successfully completed for the Union.

#### MORE PROPOSALS DECIDED

At the April 18 special membership meeting, AUCE members voted overwhelmingly in favour of negotiating for a \$250 monthly across-the-board salary increase.

The motion received such strong support for various reasons. The cost of living has risen greatly in the past year and will continue to rise indefinitely. Also clerical and library skills are underrated in importance by society at large and at U.B.C.



The University has fallen, salarywise, behind both organized and unorganized places of work, despite its commitment, as a leader of the community, to actively work towards eradicating discrimination on the basis of sex at the university, including wage disparities between traditionally "male" and "female" work.

Also passed at the meeting was a motion that "probationary employees be entitled to all the rights and privileges of this agreement, including the grievance procedure".

#### HOURS OF WORK

As we "go to press", we don't know the outcome of the vote on the hours of work proposal. Nevertheless, the following is the motion that the contract committee recommended to the April 24th meeting.

Be it moved that:

Each employee will have an established working shift falling within the hours set out herein:

- a) Hours of work shall be 32 hours per week consisting of either: i) 4 consecutive days, or ii) 5 consecutive days;
- b) Maximum hours worked in any one working day shall not exceed 8 hours, which are to be worked between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.;
- c) Each working unit under the guidelines of parts a) and b) shall decide which form of week it will work.

By initiating discussion on the shorter work week, both in days and in hours, we can start our fellow union members thinking about its implications, particularly in regards to their personal lives. The Contract Negotiating Committee can both justify and support the proposal and is confident that a shorter work week in hours with flexibility in the number of days worked can be negotiated.

Flexibility and shorter hours are the key points of our position. Each working unit is to decide the form of week it will work. If problems are encountered with its implementation then we have recourse to our grievance procedure. Within a working unit, one can foresee some people working a 4 day week, others a 5-4 schedule, and still others working the regular 5 day week (with fewer hours of course).

The Library's modified work week has almost run its one year experimental course. It was implemented in three diverse Library divisions, and it has succeeded from the viewpoint of the supporting staff concerned. It has also proved to be a success for the Admini-

stration: measurable production has risen in all 3 divisions (an argument we will use to justify fewer hours).

The implementation of the modified/flexible work week was a relatively tame move; it involved no shortening of the number of hours worked. The present results were predicted when the project was still at the research stage. Where we are breaking new ground (in regards to this university) is our strong desire for a modified/flexible work week composed of fewer hours.

#### TIME OFF FOR UNION MEETINGS?

The Contract Committee is recommending that AUCE's first contract should include provision for a general two-hour lunch break on a specified day each month (i.e. the second Thursday of each month) to enable everyone to attend union meetings.

Many of our members find it difficult to attend meetings after work. The geographical isolation of U.B.C. means that many of us have made transportation arrangements that require us to leave right at 5:00. Most of us are women and many have family responsibilities.

Noon-hour meetings are frustrating because we have so little time - only about 1/2 hour - by the time we get to and from the meeting place.

To build a really democratic union, with full membership participation, we need a meeting time which makes it possible for nearly every member to attend meetings. This proposal would allow us to have a meeting long enough to really accomplish something, at a time and place convenient for everyone.

#### THE NEWSLETTER

The union would appreciate some help in putting out the newsletter. We're trying to get it out every 2 weeks, and its importance for our members will increase as negotiations begin. There is not a lot of work involved, particularly when we have lots of volunteers. You can do as much or as little as you want. We need people to write articles, type, help run it off on a gestetner and collate. Honestly, you're not signing away your life if you volunteer some time. Call the office! 224-5613.

#### DUES

We finally made it! Now that we're legit folks, here's the bad news. According to our constitution, we have to start collecting union dues. The relevant section on page five reads:



- g) "Any member failing to pay her/his monthly dues including per capita tax for a period exceeding 3 months while working within a bargaining unit shall be automatically suspended.

The foregoing does not apply to members of a unit pending certification."

This means we have to go to all the trouble of collecting dues ourselves until a dues check-off is negotiated. The monthly dues are \$4.50 for full-time employees and \$2.00 for part-time staff. They are due in May, and your division steward will get you if you don't get her first.

And remember, keep your receipts, union dues are tax deductible.

Even though we haven't got a contract yet, AUCE has already achieved many good measures for its members. We have acted on behalf of members with grievances; an employee who was fired got her job back; and since we applied for certification, the university has had to conform to such laws as the Minimum Wage Act.

#### EXECUTIVE MEETINGS

Remember that every Tuesday at 5:15, the Executive meets in the back of the SUB cafeteria. These meetings are open to the membership at large and all members are encouraged to come and participate.

Sometimes the place of the meeting will change. However, the new location will be posted on the door of the AUCE office (SUB 228).

#### LOCAL #1 OFFICE

Room 228, Student Union Building  
Monday-Friday, 11:00-3:00  
224-5613