

MINUTES FROM MEETING BETWEEN AUCE AND OTEU, HELD ON  
JANUARY 17, 1980, 8.00 - 10.30 p.m. at AUCE PROVINCIAL OFFICE

PRESENT:           AUCE:       Lid Strand, Local 1  
                      Jet Blake, Local 1  
                      Helen Glavina, Local 1  
                      Vicki Nunweiler, Local 5  
                      Carol McQuarrie, Local 4  
                      Sarah Diamond, Local 2  
                      Star Rosenthal, Local 2  
                      Anne Gilbert, Local 4  
                      Suzanne Marria, Provincial Co-ordinator  
                      Joan Wood, Provincial President  
                      (Chair) Sheila Perret - Provincial Sec.-Treasurer  
                              Mary Mabin, Local 6  
                              Susan Knutson, Local 6

                      OTEU       Fred Trotter - Pres. Local 378; International  
  Vice-President for BC & Alberta  
                              Opal Skilling - Sec.-Treasurer, Local 15  
                              Bill Evers - International Rep  
                              Anne Harvey - Business Rep, Local 378

Fred Trotter (FT)    I'm not going to go into the benefits of joining the labour movement. I have given you copies of our International Union Constitution, and our master agreement for trade union offices in B.C., and I prepared a document setting out the highlights of OTEU. Our structure gives maximum autonomy to locals. You would become a local, separate unto yourselves. This is reflected in our low per capita structure. Per capita is worked out on a scale. If you have about 2300 members, per capita would be \$1.64 per member per month. In addition a contribution of 30c goes to the International Defence Fund - which stands at about \$900 000 now, I think.

A low per capita tax represent autonomy. The less money you pay, the less control you give away.

Each local has different structure - as I'm in local 378, I will describe that local.

Local 378 has 6700 members, and 11 business representatives - 1 per 600 members. There are 7 clerical workers in the office. You would determine how many workers you needed yourselves. Our international constitution just sets guidelines regarding officers and structure. There shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, Recording Secretary and 3 Trustees. If you want additional officers, that is up to you. Within our union there are approximately 12 contracts. We have an Executive Board of 12 people. The executive is made up of a President, Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer who are elected by the membership at large, through a referendum ballot. We have presently 5 directors from BC Hydro, on a membership strength formula; 3 directors from ICBC, and 1 director from all small units.

After the officers are elected - for a 3 year term - the Executive Board elects one of its members recording secretary.

In addition we have an Executive Council, with 1 councillor per 100 members - the council has presently 76 members.

FT 50 plus members in one bargaining unit get a representative. Smaller groups combine to elect a rep.

The Executive Council meets at least 5 times a year.  
The Executive Board meets once a month.  
We have designed our own structure, and you could do the same. Our structure covers the whole of BC, and we bring people down from Prince George, Fort St John, Fort Nelson etc for Board and Council meetings.  
It would be entirely up to you to determine your own structure. We would only give advice and any assistance we can. The same would apply to officers. If you look at the international constitution, you'll see it only gives very sketchy descriptions of duties - this is to allow you to draft the descriptions you want to, for the positions. The constitution is a little more specific with regard to finance and financial accountability, sending financial reports etc.

The international constitution only sets out minimums in terms of initiation fees and dues. Initiation fees are a minimum of \$2.00 to a maximum of \$50.00. We operate on \$25.00 in 378. (Local 15 is same). Minimum dues are \$5.00 per month. Beyond that, it is not specified. For dues and initiation fees it would be up to you to set your own fees. Local 378 and 15 dues are 1 1/8% (one and one eighth). We operate on 1% and 1/8 goes into the defence fund. We would recommend to you, whatever you decide in terms of affiliation, that you work on the percentage dues principle. This allows you to budget better. Your revenue goes up according to what you negotiate.

Any local constitution must be approved by the International, and any subsequent changes must be approved. There has never been any problem with this, and shouldn't be, provided the proposed changes incorporate good union and democratic principles. I'm sure AUCE would have no difficulties.

The International has about 100 000 members - 200 local unions in Canada, U.S. and Puerto Rico. Canada has about 21% - about 21 000 members, in about 60 locals.

The International constitution has a clause recognising the right of local unions in Canada to establish their own autonomous national union if the majority of Canadian members wish to do so. This was achieved at the international convention in 1974. Conventions are held every 3 years, and since then we have held a Canadian convention a year before the international convention, also every 3 years. Since that time, we have found no problems in being affiliated to the International Union.

At our last (and also our first) Canadian convention a resolution to separate was almost unanimously defeated by delegates to convention.

This was done for the following reasons:

1. We have more autonomy within OPEIU than do many locals in national unions;

FT

2. It would cost more to operate an organisation with only 21 000 members, with no additional benefits;
3. Being in an International Union can be helpful at times. We represent workers in some international companies - e.g. Greyhound, Rent-a-car. On occasion, the International President has been able to help us with difficulties in negotiations, etc. The same applies to other international unions. If disputes arise - e.g. with IBW or Teamsters, the International President is close to the Headquarters and can be helpful.

International has 14 Vice Presidents. They are not full time, but meet for two weeks in each year - in spring and fall - between conventions, as an Executive Board. 3 Vice Presidents are elected from Canada, and these are elected only by Canadians. Only the President and Secretary-Treasurer are elected by all members of the union.

We receive each year from the International a financial statement setting out the revenue and disbursement of funds in Canada. Only 2 executive positions are full-time paid -i.e. President and Secretary-Treasurer. The current Secretary-Treasurer is Bill Lowe, who is Canadian, and a past president of Local 378.

I think our structure is quite unique, and as good as anything else around. We have always found that although we only represent 21% of the membership, we have a strong voice at Convention, because we get full support within our caucuses. Generally Canadians don't debate exclusively American issues, and our Canadian Convention handles Canadian matters.

That covers the more important elements of the International constitution.

I have brought material which we use for new members in Local 378. You as a local would determine what you needed. We've brought a copy of our local union constitution. Its being completely revamped at present. The same is true of Local 15. At present the constitution is changed through local union meetings. We are moving to having changes made at convention.

Here is a copy of the quarterly statement we receive from the International which may help to put the size of the International into perspective. By the way - we also put into a travel account - a Convention account \$10.00 per month, used by delegates at International Convention. Balance on deposit for International : \$1 389 000. The International budget is very close to ours, as a local union. We have about \$200 000 less in our annual budget than the International. Our defence fund has about \$650 000; the Int. has \$900 000. With 2300 members you would not be a small union either.

I'll leave one copy of the quarterly statement, and a similar quarterly statement on the defense fund.

OK - now you can fire away.

Sheila Perret (SP) .. Sarah?

Sara Diamond (SD) Please outline your strategy for public sector unions in the future. What kind of issues they will face; how to fight against cutbacks. I'm asking because you represent ICBC, and BC Hydro workers are similar to public sector workers, but you have no-one in education. I wonder if you have thought at all about what education sector workers should be doing, and what OTEU could do to help?

FT OK .... I think you're perfectly correct that all public sector workers are under the gun, through the government and the employer you are with. You're aware of the Public Sector Employers Council of BC - which represent Public Sector Employers. The president was Norm Wilson from BC Hydro. We see his handwriting on proposals in negotiations, and CUPE and BCGEU have the same thing. They are forcing unions to pick up the cost of day to day administration. 8 + 8 has almost become the pattern for settlements of public sector workers right across the province. All public sector unions must start to get together. There is real benefit in having separate organisations. E.g. within our 4 locals in BC Hydro, the Office and Technical Staff benefits from wage negotiations of electrical workers; and they benefit from us because we have made advances in working conditions, sick leave, benefits etc. As far as how we can help you. About a year ago our local started to set up steward-training, and now we are planning an advanced course. We would be happy to have you utilise our materials. We have a Job Steward training manual. Anything 378 has in our library you could use. But you have to determine your own destiny.

Suzanne Marria (SM) How are delegates to convention decided upon?

FT Each local may have a different system. At our local its done by our Executive Council. The Executive Board makes a recommendation. Might be : 2 delegates from staff  
3 delegates from the Board  
2 delegates from the Council  
and we take 5 alternates. We're the second largest local in the International. We usually take our full five delegates, plus 5 alternates.  
But you would decide as a local - delegates can either be elected by the membership or by the executive. Delegates can be elected to a maximum of 5.  
Under the Canadian constitution, for Canadian conventions delegates can be elected to a maximum of 10.

Opal Skilling (OS) Local 15's delegates are elected by the membership.

SM How many of the delegates who are elected would be rank and file members?

FT Those who make the decision in our local are all elected by the membership. We, as the Board only make a recommendation to Council.

SM Is there any way of saying approximately how many are rank and file members as opposed to staff members, or office holders?

FT I would say it depends on Convention. When we were presenting a

FT resolution on Canadian autonomy, I made the recommendation that 2 or 3 of our most experienced business reps to that convention. In debate and lobbying it was very important, in order to achieve what we wanted. In our local we would generally have 2-3 staff people out of ten.

OS In our local its quite open - its whoever gets elected at the membership meeting. It could be no staff.

FT You would make the decision about that. I think there are benefits in having a cross-section .

SD I have a question about women in OTEU. Do you have a women's committee? what kind of interesting clauses do you have for women, and have you done any work with equal pay for work of equal value?

OS In local 15 - I've been in Local 15 for 20 years - It was started by 15 women. The majority of members have always been women. In our contract all employees are paid in terms of their job responsibility, regardless of sex. There are no different rates. Equal pay for work of equal value has always been a firm principle. We have won several LRB cases on discrimination in newly organised bargaining units. Without a contract this would be difficult. One eg : we had a woman who was doing acocunting work, and being paid \$700.00, while her male counterpart, doing exactly the same work was being paid \$1000.00. None of our contracts have separate clauses - its just straight equal pay for equal work.

FT 378 has the same thing. No distinction between males & females. However - we made a mistake in pursuing equal pay too soon. Initially we had separate scales for men and women. on the same job evaluation system. We were going for equal pay, and we went for binding conciliation. This tells you something about binding conciliation. The decision was made by (Ray Herbert?), and he decided that it was too expensive. So he made women's scale one step less - Group C, which was third step on the women's scale was made equal to Group 2 - second step - on the men's scale. In the subsequent set of negotiations, we got all but the four lower groups equalised - those differentials were reduced by half. Then Hydro started hiring men and women in the lower groups, so it was hard to prove discrimination. After that the law recognised equal pay for equal work - which made negotiating much easier. We are still overcoming that set back. In promotion our clauses are good. Promotion is based on seniority and ability. There is no question, however that discrimination still exists. and will continue to exist while so many women workers are unorganised.

Anne Harvey (AH) Our women's committee is new, but very active. Local 378 is a very paternalistic organisation, with very set attitudes. We also have an employer who rates engineering as the foremost science in human knowledge - so for anyone who is not an engineer, it is very difficult to get promotion. Our women's group is doing well - we are getting people involved. We are working on contract clauses - examining existing c lauses, and those from other contract. Trying to find out what women want in the contract. We have 52.48% women in the local. The situation is better at ICBC; partly because it is a newer corporation.

AH

But the insurance industry is very paternalistic. If you look at OTEU's history, you can see that we have been fighting for women, in 1949 we were fighting for equal pay. When the first equal pay act was introduced in 1953, local 378 was one of the first union's to fight a case, and won equal pay for draughtswomen. I think you would find no problems in that regard. We all have the same fight.

FT

What proportion of AUCE is female?

SP

A little over 70%

FT

Then within your organisation, you should have many more active women than we do. We found that when we negotiated the 9 day fortnight, the numbers of people interested in the union seemed to diminish.

OS

Local 15 was about 99% women until about 1962. Our organisation has been completely female. We have followed the lead from the BC Fed. of Labour. They have a full time women's co-ordinator, Astrid Davidson. They want participation, and have a very worthwhile program.

SP

How did the number of men come to increase?

OS

We started organising. First in shipyards; neon products - they had draughtsmen and artists, and so did we. And each unit brought in more men. Local 15 began representing the office workers of various unions.

SM

What is the role of provincial and national and international executives in case of a local strike? Who directs the strike?

FT

Any strike must be authorised by the Canadian director, in consultation with the international president. This is to ensure that local unions follow the law. If everything is done properly approval is granted. International Defence Fund benefits are not high. At present it pays \$20.00 starting in the 3rd week of the strike - but if the fund is depleted, there could be no money at all. When our local was on strike at ICBC, the Intern. put in \$250 000 (for a 15 week strike) and our own local added another \$250 000. There are no benefits for respecting picketlines. picketlines.

SM

Has there ever been a strike which was not authorised, and why? And does the national director play a role in advising a local on how to conduct their strike?

FT

We have International Reps - such as Bill, here. The Intern. Rep is paid by the International, and if a local gets into a strike situation, his job is to give assistance and advice. That's all we can do. Deciding how long to go on, and what tactics to use etc must be decided by the membership. I am not aware of any union being refused permission to strike.

SM

What is the incidence of strikes, say in the BC locals?

FT

Local 378 has been certified since 1944. We have 12 companies now. In our history we have had 2 disputes with BC Hydro; strike iwth Rent-a-Car and with Dominion Glass - both on first contracts. One with ICBC, on first contract. Can't think of any others. BC Hydro - we had our first strike in 1976.

- FT We used a selective job action system. One of our members challenged our right to levy, and we laid the legal groundwork for the right to do that.  
There should be no difficulty, and Bill would go in and advise any local on strike as best he can.
- OS Before we go on strike, we follow a firm BC Fed policy - of holding a meeting of all affiliates, to try to put pressure on the Employer. If we were to go on strike at UBC, we would call a meeting of all campus unions and try to impress on management that all unions are solid. BC Fed averted a strike at Van City in a first contract by having President, Secretary Treasurer etc visit management.
- FT You have to remember that going on total strike is the last ditch. Other systems can be tried first. Overtime Ban, work to rule, etc are regarded as strike activities, to validate a strike mandate.
- SM What is the incidence of strikes at Local 15?
- OS Local 15 has 164 bargaining units. Last year we had 5 strikes - 2 were respecting another union's picketlines. We had to take action against the Teamsters and against the Nurses. 1979 was our worst year ever. The reason we had to take action against Nurses was that we had negotiated a higher base rate than that of a Junior Apprenticeship Nurse.
- FT You have to be careful of comparing different bargaining units. Every employer is different.
- SD Could you tell us what gains have been made in contract negotiations locally recently? For example - wage gains, maternity benefits, etc.
- OS Our highlight of the last couple of years is the 32½ hour work week. It was negotiated for about 400 of our members, with an option of 4 day weeks, or a nine day fortnight. That was a major breakthrough. Building Trades had said they would lead the way in that regard, but in fact we did. One unit - CUNC - has had a 4 day workweek for 4/5 contracts now - and they won't give it up. Supervisors were put on to a 5 day week, in order to pressure union - so the supervisors joined the union.
- AH We have a new maternity clause at Hydro. People returning after 2 years retain their seniority, whether they indicate their intention to return or not.
- FT They can use their seniority to apply for jobs.  
I would not suggest to you that affiliation would guarantee you good contracts. It comes down to the strength of the employer. We have some lousy agreements too. Our Rent-a-car is a lousy contract. You have to determine your own strength. BC Hydro has a good contract. The emphasis is negotiating is changing. Hydro has a 9 day fortnight, good wage increases, 3 week vacation, 75% benefits paid, dental plan - all those things. Now 4 day workweek is going to be the next goal, job security, job evaluation, tech. change etc. The same is true for many unions. Benefit programmes are already good.
- SP Our Local 1 at UBC is looking at changing Pension Plan. I wondered if you are doing anything iwth Pension Plans?

H We started on Pension Plan in Hydro, because that is our major contract. We had a good pension plan. It paid 70% of the average of your best five years, for 2% service up to 35 years. It was not perfect, but it was a good plan. Its a public sector style plan. Hydro had always refused to bargain pensionplans with us. We complained to Minister of Labour in 1975. He told us to take it to LRB - we did, and won, Hydro appealed to the Courts, that because it is covered by the Power Act, it couldn't bargain Pensions. We had to go right to the Supreme Court - it cost us \$30 000 - and we won. 3 days at the end of legislation June 1976, government amended Power Act, making it illegal to bargain Pensions. That's where we stand. It is a political fight.

SM Do you have educational programmes other than Job Stewards?

FT Anne does our publications. We are trying to put out a newspaper every 2 months. It is a difficult thing. I don't know the answer. People now think that the benefits they enjoy are a result of employer benevolence. They don't realise the fight behind them.

AH This is one of the benefits of joining a larger organisation. Education is very expensive. If you are affiliated, you can use the BC Fed programmes - Winter School, job steward training, courses for women. There is a very good course on Women in the Workforce - basic union organisation, speaking, rules of order etc. Also national programmes - Candian Labour College. There are scholarships available, too.

Anne Where is the Labour College?  
Gilbert (AG)

AH I'm not sure ..... Montreal.

SM Where were the 250 job stewards whom you mentioned, as having been trained?

AH From our local, in batches. We are running that internally. Using reps to teach basic stewards skills. It is useful also for reps to be available to stewards in their bargaining units. We go through the contract; use role play. We have some kind of basic assertiveness training. Advanced job steward training will just begin this year, and I think we are going to use outside speakers to some extent for that. You would be able to use the winter school. The only limit to that is cost, and there are scholarships available.

FT You shouldn't overlook the CLC's weekend conferences, which are very good. We are learning through doing ours. There are people within our organisation who can advise. Bill will be available, and reps in Local 378 could give advice.

OS You shouldn't forget that for people out of town, we are affiliated to all the Labour Councils, and they get together in the Spring and Fall to put on seminars. Vancouver, New Westminster and Prince George definitely put them on. CLC takes their instructors to Prince George, Nanaimo, etc.

SM Locals pay for these educationals themselves. What does the International spend their money on?



FT Your per capita will be about \$1.64. This is used to maintain the international office - paying President, Secretary-Treasurer and secretarial staff, and also to pay International Reps. Canada has three reps, one of whom is Bill. In addition they will provide subsidies .. in general to councils of unions. Local 15 has had subsidy, because they have been very active in organising. There is also a Research Director, and there are educational seminars. But when you work on a very low per capita, you don't have as much money for services. You should set up a good financial structure within your own organisation so that you can afford to do those things.

SM There are 3 International Reps. How many staff reps are there in BC?

FT Local 378 has 11  
Local 15 has 4  
How many there are depends on the local

SM Do they come from the membership?

FT Within our organisation, we once had a lawyer on staff. This was not entirely bad, but lawyers don't necessarily come with the kind of trade union dedication you are really looking for when you hire some-one. We might look at it again. We are examining training some-one to be a legal rep.

Lid How do you select your staff?  
Strand (LS)

FT Staff positions are advertised in the bulletin which goes to our members; applications are received, and a short list developed. Generally I set up a committee to go through and screen applicants and reduce group - generally from 15-20 down to 3-5. Then I get involved in the process, and finally make recommendations to the Executive Board, who makes the decision.

LS You have a large bargaining unit. Would you have a person working directly with a bargaining unit, or do you have a large pool of people and if there is a problem, say - well, George knows about arbitration, so we'll send George?

FT Within our organisation, we would have 4 reps working with Hydro, 3 with ICBC; one with construction, we have Anne specialising in publication and training; and we distribute the smaller units around amongst the staff as well. But we do have certain individuals now who have had exposure in the larger units, so if we get stuck - we try always to have one rep plus a back-up with experience in those areas.

LS I have one kind of messy question. What happens if a situation develops where there is a conflict between American interests and Canadian? For example, the Birk Hartkey bill over tariffs. From what I heard, some unions in the US said this is a good deal for American workers, and they forgot about the Canadian workers. What did your union do about that - or how would it deal with such a situation?

FT If it was a resolution on the floor which was contrary to Canadian interests, I'd say the mikes are going to be going pretty good. The

Canadian point of view would be well expressed. We would attempt to get the resolution amended into a form we could all live with, first.

LS This is particularly crucial, for example, in the Chrysler Corp. where the American government wanted to cut the wages of all the Chrysler workers, and they wanted to include the Canadian workers, but the Canadian workers voted not to do that. I wondered if a similar situation were to develop, how the International would handle it?

FT Well, in that case there would be some very lively debates. But that wouldn't really change anything, except that, in our organisation we have a Canadian convention, and if we felt strongly enough about anything, we could pass a motion which is contrary to that passed by the International. We haven't really had that problem.

AG Do you hire a lawyer, on retainer?

FT Yes. We try to deal primarily with 2 legal firms. Its a good idea to associate yourself with one - you get a lot better service than if you start running all over the place. We deal with McTaggart Ellis and with Begin, Germaine and Jackson.

AG Could you please explain how your wage indemnity plan works?

OS Our plan at Local 15 is:  
First day of accident; 8th day of illness for 39 weeks.  
There are other possible plans. We have 1 - 8 - 39, and that provides 75% of earnings.

AG Is there maternity leave payment?

OS Maternity is covered under the UIC maternity coverage.

AG Do you pay the difference between UIC payments, and full salary?

OS In this agreement we use a fully paid system, which sets the base. Not all agreements are the same.

FT Before people leave I'd like to say a few things.  
After the committee makes a decision, if you were to go to the membership recommending affiliation with the OTEU I can guarantee you that we will give you whatever assistance you need. If you need material printed to assist you with that, then we will certainly do that. In addition we would be prepared to meet - if you wanted anyone to attend meetings with your members, we would be prepared to do that.  
The other thing I would say is this - I don't know your financial situation I don't know your structure, I have heard that you have a bit of a case hanging over you at the moment which could cost you some money if it went the wrong way or something. I don't know any details about it... But I would say this. If AUCE decided they wanted to join the OPEIU as a local union, and upon looking at your finances, and knowing what route you were going having a good organisation, depending upon that situation, I would personally be prepared to make a recommendation

to the International Executive Board to financially assist you in the first years - you know, over a period whatever was helpful, maybe a year. I'd be prepared to make a recommendation to the international on that basis depending..... I would have difficulty assisting any organisation who wanted to affiliate with us, who were going to stay on a very low dues per capita and not do a lot of the things themselves. You set a good sound dues, and try and do things for yourself, and you required some assistance getting off the ground and organised for the first while - I wouldn't mind making a recommendation to the International to the extent that maybe your per capita for the first year would be refunded to you to a large extent. The International does pay certain direct costs out of percapita which is the 25c to the CLC. I wanted to tell you that I would personally make that recommendation,

SM Does the Local pay the affiliation dues to BC Fed

FT Yes, you pay your affiliations to BC Fed, and to the District Labour Councils, to which you are affiliated.

AG How much is the per capita tax for BC Fed

OS BC Fed is 25c

SD We have may temporary workers and part-time workers in our bargaining units, and I wondered what kind of experience you have with bargaining for them. We generally try to win contract clauses protecting them, but have had some difficulty.  
A second question is concerning technicians - do you have separate wage scales and benefits for different kinds of workers?

FT First of all, about temporary employees. I think your employer is playing games with that sort of thing, just as ours is. This is an ongoing problem for any union, especially in the public sector. We did win one gain - we got 22% in lieu of benefits that they weren't receiving - we were hoping that would cure the problem - but it didn't cure the problem. Now we have brought in a new definition of what temporary is, and everything related to it, and we are hopeful that its going to assist us is resolving it. I would say that we have gone through this fight ever since I've been in the union. Its not quite as bad when you look at the proportion of the membership which is temporary - but it is a real problem.  
As far as wage rates are concerned - we have a job evaluation plan in effect with both of the large employers and that job evaluation plan evaluates all the jobs. You might find a technical job in group 9 - you might find a clerical job in group 9 depending on the factors in the evaluation. We had great difficulty with Hydro on job evaluation and in 1974 we set up a committee to establish a new job evaluation system, fully paid by the employer. Hopefully by the end of this year, that plan will be something we can recommend to the members. If that comes into existence it will provide that there be two people working full time on behalf of the union, appointed by the union, working on job evaluation, paid out of payroll deduction out of the employees cheque. And the chairman is shared.  
You mentioned before the wage indemnity plan. I would think that you would have a similar short-term sick leave and a long-term disability plan that you have integrated?

SP It depends on the local. At Capilano College we get full salary after 30 days - that's for part-time and full time

FT Well, you know there are all kinds of different plans in different places and I wouldn't want to say that one is far superior to another. For example, the Government Employees - I believe that they get 10 days a year that they can build up - but if they use it, they reduce their bank. In Hydro we have 5 days a year, which builds up - but if you use them, you don't reduce the bank. Say you have 10 years of service. and in the 10th use 50 days - the next year you will still have 55 days. It's a different application. Our long term disability plan kicks in after 30 days - 50% of your salary. If you have unused sick leave, you can augment that to give you the full 100%. In ICBC we have a different plan. Provides for 15 weeks at a combination of 100% and 75% then you go on to the long term disability plan which is basically 66%, but it's non-taxable. Premiums on dental, medical - all those things, but the employees pay the long term disability premium, which makes that tax-free, but also creates other problems.

OS Most of those things are negotiable. You must decide what you want, and we will try and make it available to you.

FT I would suggest to you that you must look at the nature of your bargaining units and what you can achieve, and we can point out to you some of the different options and methods you can use.

AG Why do you have different names?

FT The international has changed its name several times - it was Office Employees International Union. In BC in 1956 they changed the law to make it illegal for professionals to belong to unions. And somebody in our organisation at the time made a decision that we should not have the word "professional" in our name. So we became Office and Technical Employees Union. Now the law is changed again and there are discussions about changing it back again. I don't know that there was a really valid reason for changing it.

OS It was an organising gimmick to use the word technical. All the other locals in Canada are OPEIU - it's just us in BC.

FT After many years with one name, to change your identity is hard

SM What positions have your locals taken with regard to the CUPW strike; and to the remarks that McDermott has made recently?

FT Nothing has come up on McDermott. We have been really busy. We had quite a difference in opinion in our local about CUPW - on the executive council and between Delegates to the BC Fed convention. Some pro-McDermott, some pro-Postal Workers. That split was pretty 50-50, and as a result we didn't take a position. My support was primarily with the postal workers. I think that although they may have made mistakes, McDermott should have bigger than coming out and doing the things which he did do publicly. I had the young staff rep from the Postal Workers come to one of our Council meetings and he did an excellent job in pointing out their difficulties.

OS There is their film - the struggle continues - which is an excellent film.

SP AUCE is concerned about the use being made by the government of student employment. I wondered what obstacles OTEU has come up against in this regard, and how you are dealing with it.

FT BC Fed has done more than we have as a local union. They set up a Committee, and one of our reps was on the Committee, which reported to Convention. There are a lot of difficulties. We have allowed students to work, provided the agreement is worked out between us and the employer. We will accommodate certain programs.

AG Do the students get paid a lower rate?

FT No. We determine the value of the job within the ranking of our other jobs. On construction projects they have had student make-work programs. That presents problems - especially if we have unemployed workers.

AG Have you turned such programs down?

FT We assess programs on an individual basis, before turning anything down. I don't think we've ever turned down a legitimate request.

LS There's a similar project sponsored in some highschools - where they have business students working for free, for experience. What is your feeling on that?

OS They should be paid.

AH The BC Fed's education committee struck a sub-committee on that. A number of local unions feel very strongly about that.

LS At Local One we agreed to have students only if they were paid on the same basis as any other union members

AG At Local 4 the employer wants to pay students less - their rationale being that they can then provide employment to more students.

Star Rosenthal (SR) What kind of Health and Safety structures do you have? Do you have committees in your bargaining units, are you doing research, especially in the area of clerical work.

FT You have to look at this internally. We have a staff rep who has an A ticket.. Anything that comes in of that nature, I channel to him. I have just recently given him some info on video terminals.

AH Our international is doing some work on that, too.

FT We got a copy of instructions and warning letter in a crate, and Bud Scott will take a look at that.

SM What would the procedure be, if AUCE were to decide to join OTEU?

FT I don't really know. We would need information on AUCE; we would have to look at what sort of a charter would be involved. I don't know anything about that. But I would make the contacts for you, in terms of finding information.

OS The earliest anything could be done would be June, because it would have to go to convention - that is where new Charters are done.

SM What would happen if we missed the Convention or something?

OS I don't know. Perhaps they would call an emergency meeting. It could be done.

FT I will get you that information if you want it now.

AH What is the process from your side - in your members voting etc. How long does that take?

SM Well, we'll be having a convention in the spring to discuss affiliation and out of that its most likely that there will be a referendum mail ballot to all members on whatever options seem to come out of the convention. And then it would depend on the outcome of the referendum.

AH How long does your mail ballot take?

SP 4 - 6 weeks

FT You are 5 separate locals, are you?

SP Yes

SD I think we should wind up, but have one more question - what would OTEU think if we were to affiliate separately, as individual locals?

FT I don't see a problem, but I think your organisation would benefit by staying together and using your collective strengths. If you form a third local, there may be a time when all three locals would want to do things collectively.

OS I'd like to see a Joint Council.

FT That will come. What you'll have to do is work it out to satisfy each union. The Canadian Director has set up councils in Eastern Canada. By joining together, the smaller locals were able to hire staff, and do things they wouldn't otherwise be able to do.

SP We have one local - the Teaching Support Staff Union - at SFU. They have been certified for a year, and are still negotiating their first contract. Could OTEU offer them any assistance?

FT How many in the unit?

Mary Mabin (MM) There is significant turnover from semester to semester. It is in the region of 500 during Spring and Fall. Only 250 in summer.

FT What is the problem in the contract? Just the employer? Have they taken strike action?

SM No. We are still in the process of negotiating. I don't think strike action is imminent. We just had a nice victory over the university through an unfair labour practice we won. LRB ordered the university

to pay a 4% wage increase to our bargaining unit, retroactive to January.

OS Have you been to mediation or the LRB yet?

SM No

FT We taken as long to negotiate renewals. It all depends in your first contract what you started from. Are you using one of your other contracts, and trying to get that across?

SM No, this is all original. We are the only local in AUCE representing teaching support staff. What we did was to study other TA unions and faculty associations contracts and then those of other unions, to get wording down. It took a while to get wording on the table. We have been making progress, but it has been slow.

FT Well, it seems to me that Bill might be a little busy for a little while. Bill would be available to go in and give you a hand with negotiating that contract.

SP Well, its getting late. Thank you very much for your time. I have a lot to reflect on, and I'm sure others do too, before we have our convention.

FT Well, whatever you want at any time, just give us a shout, and we'll see what we can do.

SP OK, thank you.

General good nights...

\*\*\*\*\*