

UNION

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?



WAGES

An assistant mail clerk in the campus mail room starts at \$629 per month. A Secretary II -- in many cases running an office, composing letters and reports, taking shorthand in several languages -- makes from \$466 to \$551 per month. Is our work really worth that much less than sorting mail? Try to get reclassified. The obstacles Personnel sets up are horrendous. So we stay in the same slots year after year while the work load and responsibility increase. The yearly increase we get is less than the rise in the cost of living in Vancouver. Try going to Personnel with a grievance. At most you will get transferred somewhere else on campus. The same situation is left behind in that office for others to face. We need a voice at U.B.C. But what voice, and how?

OTEU

The word "union" scares many people -- and with reason. Most Canadian workers are in "international" (American) unions which have removed from Canada an average profit per year of \$11 million from the dues of Canadian workers. These unions are undemocratic both in structure (see, for instance, the powers of the American president of the OTEU international constitution) and in practice. An example of how little effort they actually make for the workers is the current contract under OTEU for the workers in the Physical Plant. The following table gives the rates in the OTEU contract with the current rates for clerical

staff at U.B.C. With \$7.50 per month dues plus a \$15 initiation fee, one can see that many of the Physical Plant workers are actually losing money. And OTEU achieved **absolutely no benefits** for these secretaries (vacations, working hours, pension, etc.) beyond those U.B.C. staff had anyway.

OTEU Receptionist (December 1972) \$370
(after one year) \$390

U.B.C. Clerk I (current range) \$353 - \$403
OTEU Secretary (December 1972) \$480 -
(after one year) \$508

U.B.C. Secretary II (current range) \$466-
\$551

U.B.C. Secretary III (current range) \$503-
\$600

CUPE

Is CUPE an alternative? CUPE's leadership is on this side of the border and thus at least geographically more accessible. But the CUPE constitution is almost as undemocratic as those of American unions. Also this 180,000 strong organization is a member of the B.C. Federation of Labor and the Canadian Labor Congress, both of which are dominated by representatives of American unions. CUPE's national leadership is publicly supporting the American unions and opposing the Canadian workers who want to get out of those unions and be independent. CUPE has divided the members which belong to it at U.B.C. into units which

must compete with each other for contract benefits, and CUPE contracts create an even greater differential between male and female staff workers than already exists at U.B.C. (in 1972 a differential of \$2,096 in CUPE as compared to \$1,632 for unorganized employees). In the current CUPE contract: a "housemaid" (janitor) makes \$2.82 per hour, a "houseman" (janitor) makes \$3.13 per hour; an experienced waitress makes \$2.55 per hour, an experienced waiter makes \$2.90 per hour; chief "chef" (male) makes \$672 per month, chief "cook" (female) makes \$624 per month. And so on. No, CUPE is not for us.

AUCE

The Association of University and College Employees is a new, independent union founded by workers at U.B.C. We have a constitution and structure which guarantee democracy and full participation by everyone. First of all we have limited the size to which we can grow so that we will not become a bureaucratic organization divorced from its members. We are a provincial, not a national or international union, and we include only employees of universities and colleges in British Columbia. The constitution ensures that workers at each university in B.C. will comprise a completely autonomous unit which determines its own

structure, negotiates its own contracts, decides what its own dues will be and how they will be spent. At U.B.C. the employees in each area of the campus (as Arts, Academic Services, Medicine, etc.) will elect officers to negotiate the contracts and deal with the grievances. Every officer in AUCE must be elected by secret ballot each year, and no person can hold an office for more than three years so that no matter how popular, no person will become "cemented" into leadership. The contract we negotiate for will be based on the specific problems and issues at U.B.C. All of us who pound the typewriters and do the filing and cataloging and crank the machines will vote to decide what kind of job classification system and procedures we want to see established, what salaries, how grievances should work, and so on. In short, who will run this union? We will, **all** of us who work here!

Where We Are

According to law over half the full and part-time clerical and library workers at U.B.C. must join AUCE before we can bargain for our first contract. We are over half-way to that goal. But time is getting short, and therefore, we urge you to sign up now. This is **the** chance to create a just and human work situation for staff at U.B.C. Let's not lose it.

If you are interested in information, detach and send this form to Box 11, Student Union Building, and we shall contact you. (Replies in strict confidence.)

NAME _____
DEPARTMENT _____
ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____