

AUCE Local One

for Jeff Rose

History

- union certified 1974 - was attempt to organize by CUPE and OTEU, but independent/feminist group managed to organize here and then at SFU - feminism key to early history: equal pay for work of equal value the founding principle - traditional male dominated unions seen as not active in this area - also ultra-democratic: office staff 6 mo. term, no re-election, paid same rate as they earned in their bargaining unit job...
- Local One first contract 1974, half day work stoppage, excellent first agreement - only major strike in 1975, second contract, two weeks, successful - level of militancy, participation has declined since then - only other strike 1982, rotating, a disaster, members accepted settlement against recommendation of contract committee
- AUCE Provincial had six locals at its height - Notre Dame (became DTUC, became CUPE local), SFU, Capilano College, TAU (SFU), UBC, College of New Caledonia - in 79-80 attempt to affiliate to CLC - CLC would only accept us through merger with CUPE, BCGEU or OTEU - long debate within AUCE, ballot on all options: remain AUCE, CCU, CUPE, BCGEU, OTEU - remain as AUCE won out, but AUCE essentially decimated by the internal struggle - very quickly we lost all locals except SFU (2 and 6) and UBC (1) - 1984 Local One voted to leave Provincial and 'merge with a larger trade union' - vote was very narrow (about 20 vote margin) between merger and independence (ie. outside of the Provincial)

Current Situation

- 5.5% wage increase last year negotiated in '82 - now facing 0% increase for at least two years - fighting with Univ. even over payment of increments - wages extremely low, having declined slowly over the past 8 years approx. - level of militancy, participation low - although: participated in Solidarity strike, at height of which a motion to defy LRB injunction only very narrowly defeated by meeting of 700; also recently won Nov. 11 stat. holiday arbitration, meant about \$80 per member, membership wonderfully defiant in forcing Univ. to pay (they offered time); current mood combination of anger and abject depression
- very high legal costs - arbitration invoked on almost everything - two or three major arbitrations (stat. holiday Nov. 11; Word Processing Operator classification; payment of increments (before CSP))

Composition

90% women - clerical workers the majority - clerks, secretaries - Library workers (clerical) - a few quasi-technical classifications - and a few semi-professional, semi-admin. at top end (Admin. Clerk, Buyers, Computer Operator, etc.) - some strong trade-unionist/feminists, but mostly fairly conservative group

Staff and procedures

- evolved from one 6-mo. position to 3 full time officers and one full time clerical - very efficient, but has shifted from volunteerist to staff-run organization - grievances handled by office staff or stewards at first two steps, third step handled by staff - staff do some preparation, but always a lawyer used for actual hearings - staff currently handle negotiations together with contract committee - research done by lawyer and Trade Union Research Bureau - union office has good research facilities, and complete files kept on every member - computer being installed shortly

Merger

- intention is to increase dues from \$12 to approx. \$20 - getting membership agreement to this is biggest hurdle - would mean cut back to 2 full-time officers and a 1/2 time clerical worker - executive insistent on maintaining as close as possible current level of service - would hope to be able to cut back our expenditures further depending on actual services forthcoming from CUPE - we want to maintain highest degree of autonomy possible -
- referendum to be held probably late January
- full report of Merger Committee and financial projection to be forwarded by mail
- there will be considerable resistance to this merger - ~~who can afford to go on strike and live on \$75 per week~~ the whole question of merger versus independence will have to be refought

Questions you will be asked

~~are CUPE and the BC Fed really worth \$150,000 to us -~~
- are CUPE and the BC Fed really worth \$150,000 to us - wouldn't the money be better spent in our own local, hiring the best lawyers, building up our strike fund (\$90,000 currently)
- is the defense fund really going to help us negotiate - who can afford to go on strike and live on \$75 per week
~~CUPE members have better~~

- how much ~~xx~~ control over our local will CUPE national and CUPE staff have
- will this merger really lead to better contracts, better wages - are we any worse off right now than most CUPE locals
- we had a taste of affiliation last year - we put ourselves on the line in Nov. 83 and what did we get - sold out by the BC Fed - the situation for post-secondary education workers is worse now than it was then

Hints

- schedule a couple of hours before the meeting and we'll arrange lunch with some of the executive (it will pay off)
 - be careful about Local 116 - bad blood - we are getting along better now than in the past - but reassure ~~fx~~ people that we will be separate - but it's ~~xxxx~~ alright to talk about the long term possibilities for bargaining councils, one big local, etc.
 - don't bring too many people with you - in fact just you, Joe Denofreo and Jean Errington would be ~~xxxx~~ sufficient (it would be wise to bring a woman)
- ~~xcjndgionqchpxhxxwhakcxcxexhaxdxpuxdckchaxexncxmagccpccablc~~

Ted Byrne
Union Coordinator
NOV. Dec. 3, 1984

Staff: Patricia House - Secretary Treasurer
Ted Byrne - Union Coordinator
Fairleigh Wettig - R Union Organizer and President
Rosemary Rising - ~~xxxx~~ Clerical worker