

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD DECEMBER 11, 1979 AT O.T.E.U. #15 OFFICES RE AFFILIATION

Present

Anne Gilbert  
Carol McQuarrie

Rosemary Butcher

Bill Evers  
Opal Skilling

The meeting began with Opal Skilling giving a background on O.T.E.U. She stated that it is an International Union, with a yearly International Convention which next year will be held in June in New York City. Last year the first Canadian Convention was held. A Consulting Committee was formed, which reports directly to the Canadian Director, Romeo Corbeil in Montreal. The Canadian sector has complete autonomy and the Canadian Director is elected at the International Convention by Canadian delegates only.

In Quebec, there are Locals in each Pulp Town, while in B.C. there are only two locals - #15 which has 164 Bargaining Units, and #378 which is the old B.C. Electric Trade Union office employees. There are Bargaining Units in the Okanagan, Northern B.C. and Vancouver Island. There are Freightways Agreements (Federal Certificates) extending into Alberta but no Trade Union sector in Alberta.

The total membership in B.C. and Alberta is approximately 2050 with about 50 members in Alberta. Membership in Canada is about 60,000 and the International has members of under 200,000. A book on the history of the Union is available to AUCE. *(Local 4, Anne Gilbert & Carol McQuarrie)*

The Union is a "White Collar" Union of Office and Technical employees covering up to, and including, some professionals. They do not feel they have any overlapping jurisdictional problems in regard to their membership in B.C. Federation.

O.T.E.U. is directly affiliated with the C.L.C. through the International who pays this Per Capita Tax. B.C. Federation tax is paid directly by Local #15 who collect their own dues and submit the Per Capita Tax to B.C. Federation for their total membership. O.T.E.U. is also affiliated with the Vancouver & District Labour Council with the Per Capita Tax being paid locally, and being paid to the various Labour Councils throughout the Province in Communities where the Bargaining Units are operating.

There are three Canadian Vice-Presidents; B.C. and Alberta come under the jurisdiction of Fred Trotter who is the International Vice President and also the President of Local #378. There was a discussion at the Convention to set up a Western Council but this seemed to be a bit premature. There is a Council in Ontario.

Delegates to the Convention are elected by membership. There are 5 membership meetings per year, held in a rented hall, at which time elections are opened for delegates.

Bill Evers is a full-time Organizer for Local #15 and is paid directly by the International. Staff are hired by the Executive Board and are covered by the Master Trade Union Office Agreement, not a signed contract.

It was recommended by O.T.E.U. that, if A.U.C.E. were to become Affiliated with them, it would be more beneficial to join as one local rather than 5 separate ones as exist now. They suggested that A.U.C.E. members would sign Local #15 cards and become members of Local #15 until presentation could be made to the International Convention in June, at which time it would be recommended by Local #15, #378 and the Canadian Council that A.U.C.E. be given their own Charter and own Local.



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When asked how it was possible for O.T.E.U. to service 164 Bargaining Units they responded that they have 3 Business Agents, one International Representative, and Office Stewards in each Bargaining Unit. Steward training is provided and they feel that their Stewards are their most important link with their units, and in many cases are taken into actual bargaining sessions. Scholarships are awarded to further Steward training, and a Stewards Manual is presently being developed.

The percentage ratio of female/male in O.T.E.U. is 80/20. The average base rate is over \$1000 per month, with the exception of Mail and File Clerk Trainees.

O.T.E.U. emphasized the fact that they have constantly negotiated shorter hours - from 32½ - 37½ hour weeks down from a maximum of 40 hour weeks. The statistics negotiated on contracts are analyzed by International. They follow closely with the B.C. Federation, under the direction of Astrak/Davidson, in putting great emphasis on the Women's Program, with resolutions sent to the B.C. Federation Convention being endorsed. They are presently negotiating with B.C. Federation on family responsibility leaves. Most of the clauses negotiated are directed toward the area of women.

Regarding paid Maternity leave, there is a Wage Indemnity Plan with CU&C whereby workers receive 75% of their wages. However, through Letters of Understanding the worker is paid 100% of their wages, and deposit the 75% received through CU&C back to the employer. (This, however, is not included in the Collective Agreement. *not clear*)

Temporary and Part-Time employees receive top wages under the Trade Master Agreement to offset the fact that they receive no other benefits.

When asked what the most progressive contract gain in recent years has been, they replied that it was the Binding Arbitration Contract negotiated for the *workers in the Registered Ass'n office*. Arbitration clarified that there is a Master Trade Union Agreement, and Nurses received retroactive pay back to April 1, 1978. *Reg. Nurses Assoc. Employees*

O.T.E.U. stated that the "elite" companies (those who are willing to lead the way in paying higher rates) are the ones who actually set the rates, and then O.T.E.U. tries to raise the other base rates up to those rates. Sometimes the Union will negotiate for "across the board" dollar raises, to bring the pay rates closer together, and other times will go for the straight percentage raise. They do not have great gaps between their "high and low" wage structure.

O.T.E.U. has a strong, International Strike Fund to offer. This would pay \$20 per week. Local #15 tries to match this if possible, with other members being asked for a voluntary contribution. The local ~~Strike~~ *Emergency* Fund is \$10,000. They also pay Health and Benefit Plans while people are on strike, if the employer does not continue to do so.

Stewards are elected by their own unit. Negotiating Teams are elected. There is a Negotiating Committee and a representative from that committee is always present at contract negotiations. Business Agents are from the Local, they are elected and go before the Executive Board to be interviewed, a selection is made with the person being put on a 3-month probationary period, and then goes before membership for final approval.

When asked where progressive political thinking originates in the O.T.E.U. they responded that there are 6 committees through which new ideas enter; Political Education Committee, Women's Committee, Constitutional By-Laws Committee, Social Committee, Office Stewards Committee and Newsletter Committee. They feel the Office Stewards Committee is the most important of the six committees.

B.C. Fed. of Labour

PROV. →  
Provincial  
level or  
Loc. 15 Exec.  
level  
Negotiating  
Team



When asked how much support could be expected from B.C. Federation in the event of a strike, they stated that they can call on their affiliation with B.C. Federation and Vancouver & District Labour Council. The policy is if there is a strike pending the Union must go to the B.C. Federation who in turn calls in all the Unions involved and in some cases a strike is averted through the B.C. Federation using pressure.

Regarding Policies and Rules of Order re A.U.C.E. and O.T.E.U., they stated this would be negotiable. A.U.C.E. would have to form their own Constitution, making certain that it did not conflict with International.

In summation, O.T.E.U. stated they are prepared to offer A.U.C.E. a local of their own. They will give as much time as necessary to organize, assisting with finances and any other way they can. The dues structure would be at the discretion of A.U.C.E. with the Per Capita Tax structure on a graduating scale. All Canadian money sent to the International is put in various banks in Canada for the purpose of organizing and negotiating contracts in Canada.

When asked if O.T.E.U. provides Union education they responded that Vancouver & District Labour Council offers Spring and Fall Labour Seminars usually held at Simon Fraser. O.T.E.U. can also draw on the resources of its bargaining units for films, etc.

The Union's largest local <sup>unit</sup> ~~member~~ is CU&C with 100 members and Burrard Shipyards with 85. ICBC has been absorbed into Local 378. They also have organized the U.B.C. Physical Plant (60 people).

Bill Evers suggested a meeting between A.U.C.E. and Fred Trotter, Romeo Corbeil and himself. He stated that the Board Room of Local #378 at 960 Kingsway would probably be available for such a meeting if A.U.C.E. did not have a large enough facility.

It was suggested by O.T.E.U. that if A.U.C.E. wished to retain autonomy they would be better off with them rather than with one of the other Unions being investigated.