



Canadian
University
Employees

2170 Western Parkway, U.B.C., Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1V6

224-2308

March 5, 1987

Dear Members:

The time has come for us to vote on affiliation with the Canadian Union of Public Employees.

Your ballot is enclosed.

Please mark your vote and return your ballot envelope as quickly as you can. Ballots will be counted on March 26. Please ensure we get your ballot before that date.

Your executive wishes to thank all the members who were present at our February 26th meeting. During our discussions, several questions were raised. We considered those queries to be important and think there may be other members, not present at the meeting, who would appreciate receiving answers to those questions.

Why is the executive pushing ahead with this referendum ballot on affiliation with CUPE?

Two years ago, CUE agreed to a Service Contract with the Canadian Union of Public Employees. This decision was based on the fact that we wanted to take a trial run at an association with CUPE without plunging immediately into a formal affiliation.

At the time of signing that Service Contract, representatives of CUE promised CUPE we would hold a referendum ballot at the end of the two years.

That two-year Service Contract ended on February 28. However, we have extended the contract until March 26 -- the day we count the votes. Your executive is convinced our relationship with CUPE has been a productive one; and we are comfortable in recommending affiliation with CUPE.

That's why we're asking you to vote on affiliation.

Why are CUE members being given so little time to make a decision on this important issue?

We have all had two years to consider our relationship with CUPE. Our previous executive knew of the expiry date of the Service Contract and were in a good position to inform you as the time passed.

Ted Byrne wrote a report on CUPE (it's included in this package).

2.

When your present executive took office in January, we had six weeks to the end of the Service Contract. We were given only two weeks to get all our reports researched, written, printed and circulated. It is my opinion that your new executive is to be commended for the very good job they have done under such serious time constraints.

What decisions and obligations could be imposed on us by our affiliation with CUPE?

The answer to that question is clearly outlined in the CUPE constitution which was circulated to the entire membership recently. (Extra copies of that mailing are available in the CUE office.)

One obligation is the per capita tax which is decided on by delegates from all the local unions who attend the CUPE National Convention. The number of delegates from each local union is determined by the number of members in each local. CUE, with 1300 members, is entitled to send five delegates.

We will not be voting for an increase in the per capita tax and we have stated that the CUE dues will not increase.

We will have our own by-laws, our own executive structure, our own decision-making procedures and will maintain our autonomy. We will have the freedom to decide how we will use the CUPE services, if we will use the services and to what degree we will use them.

Why have CUE members not seen a "contract" or "letter of agreement" with CUPE?

Such a "contract" does not exist. Here's what will happen if we vote to affiliate: A standard application for affiliation will be completed and forwarded to the CUPE National Office. Following that, we will be granted a Charter of Affiliation which we can subsequently hang on our wall, as do other locals.

We are then able to have access to the same benefits and resources that have been available to us under the servicing agreement, but now through the constitution.

The Service Contract was an interim document only to be in effect until we vote whether or not to join CUPE, or until the Agreement expires.

The minute the vote is counted on March 26, the Contract with CUPE is void.

3.

Jeff Rose, CUPE's National President, has also agreed to give us \$3,000 per month (until the end of 1987) to assist us with the deficit caused by extraordinary expenses from the previous year. This assistance is outlined in the CUPE constitution. (Article VII - 7.6)

It is the opinion of your executive that we will be financially stable by year's end.

Did CUPE agree to place a Staff Representative from the National Office on campus full time?

CUPE was approached with this request. We received an agreement that the National Union would seriously review this proposal. It was pointed out that before the union consents to do this, there must be agreement from the other CUPE locals on campus that they too wish to have a full-time staff rep on a shared basis.

The cost of this full-time staff rep would come out of the per capita tax. However, CUPE is a democratic organization and an on-campus staff rep would not be thrust on the other UBC locals without discussion with them and their agreement.

How about the financial feasibility of affiliation?
What would we have to cut to pay the per capita tax?
Would the level of service drop? Would our dues be raised?

Regardless of whether or not we join CUPE, your executive is committed to maintaining services to the membership, improving communication and ensuring democratic decision-making. Your executive pays dues too, and we do not want the dues increased.

We expect that affiliation with CUPE will mean a maintenance of our present high level of services with no increase in costs to members. When we pay the per capita tax to CUPE, we do not need to pay into a CUE strike fund. That's a significant saving. And our legal costs will be covered by CUPE -- unless we choose to hire a non-CUPE lawyer. But CUPE has some of the best legal minds in its employ, and although we have the freedom to hire others, why would we not avail ourselves of this expertise which our per capita dollars will have paid for?

The cost of CUPE's Legal Department is paid by all affiliated local unions. And the truth is that pooled resources and shared costs are most often cheaper. If we remain alone, we may not be able to afford the legal fees, anyway.

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4.

We have not included a 1988 budget forecast as we feel there are too many variables to prepare any kind of accurate budget. These variables are: office restructure, whether or not affiliation goes through, etc. We feel we should be at a break-even point in 1988 without the CUPE assistance and without compromising the level of service to our members. If, however, we find that we will require further financial assistance, CUPE have assured us that we can again review this issue with them, under Article VII 7.6 of the CUPE Constitution.

The final question still remains:

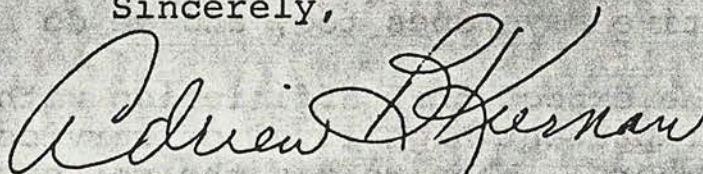
Should we affiliate with CUPE, should we stand alone,
or should we explore other affiliations?

In 1983, an in-depth study was made about the direction our union should take. At that time, 84% of the membership agreed that CUPE was the best choice to try.

That trial period is now up. It is time to vote.

As you know, this executive feels that the best interest of the membership will be served by affiliating with CUPE. I regret that some of our new members may feel pressured by the time constraints. However, we have tried to inform you and have invited debate -- both verbal and written -- to assist you in making an informed decision.

Sincerely,



ADRIEN B. KIERNAN
PRESIDENT
CANADIAN UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES

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Encl.

P.S. Ballots will be counted on March 26.
Please don't leave your decision until
the last minute.
Return your ballot today.