

November 21 meeting

PSAC LOCAL 70125 - FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING OF OCT. 18/94

1. The President, Eunice Dubé, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

2. PRESENT: Eunice Dubé, Corrie Pyl, Peggy Coupland, Les Cundell, Jim Davidson, John Kruithof, Jacques Quinn

ABSENT: David Delaney and Gary Doherty, due to personal reasons.

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA: M/Quinn S/Cundell
Carried.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF JUNE 21/94 MEETING:
M/Cundell S/Quinn Carried

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES:

Equal Opportunities Rep:

President Dubé advised that Laura Burgess has resigned from this position and that therefore a rep and alternate must be found. There would be 3 or 4 meetings to attend during the year. P. Coupland said she would consider and would advise by next meeting.

FSD Committee Report (FSD 50.06):

J. Kruithof felt that things must be clarified before advising members, otherwise a confusing message would be sent out. He felt that as things stand now, members would be confused and deceived: Although there is the dollar value attached to a certain amount to be shipped, there is the impression that members would have to scout around on their own to see what agent would ship the most for that set amount of money. Brother Kruithof feels embassy administration should be responsible for this, not the members themselves. The other difficulty is that Member X gets good deal from Company X, whereas Member Y does not. This could lead to members fighting with each other.

President Dubé mentioned that we would be sending out a fax on who is on the Executive and the Committees. We, would also provide our fax number so that they could fax their concerns to us. Time frame for sending out the fax is by the next meeting.

Computer:

J. Davidson stated that he had spoken with H. Brooker's husband and had obtained specs from him. He also attended a couple of computer shows. Various prices were mentioned and discussed. It was agreed that the software chosen must be compatible with what is at Foreign Affairs (WordPerfect, QuattroPro, not Microsoft Word). L. Cundell said that he would like to make a purchase in December if possible, or at least before the next Annual General Meeting. We on the Executive would then make greater use of the office. Also, we are very healthy financially, so now is the time. C. Fyl said that a statement on specs, costs, and various options would be done up. He said that the system must be compatible and up to date. He felt a modem would be necessary since we are faxing around the world and that faxes are costly. E. Dubé suggested that if desired, tips and advice could be obtained from her husband who is in the computer business. She also mentioned that the computer should be encompassed under insurance because of the possibility of break-ins. It was promised that the report would be ready for next meeting.

Office Location:

In response to a question as to whether Anna Sipos' proposal for a new location had been examined, L. Cundell reported that he and E. Dubé had seen the proposed locale. He felt that the meeting room would not be big enough to hold a meeting. E. Dubé mentioned that we would use it at night for our meetings, but at the same time, the space is shared and is used by the musicians all the time. Location is a little further away and may discourage some members. We are accountable to our members re any costs incurred - e.g. phone would be shared, and since the musicians go in and out, it would be hard to tell which are our costs and which are theirs. At the moment, our rent is \$795.00 plus GST and that we don't have to worry about an increase till spring 1995. It was felt by both that we should stay at our present location unless the rent gets very exorbitant. If we must look again, try to get a location closer to work. P. Coupland expressed the concern that shared space would mean a lack of privacy.

Honorarium Report:

President Dubé mentioned that the report was compiled based on the list of the new executive, not the old list. She felt that two individuals who had made

considerable contributions to our Local were overlooked: Neil Clarke and Bob McVicar. She mentioned that Brother Clarke had been instrumental in handling hardship cases during the strike in a very discreet manner, with regard for humanitarian aspects. She also stated that Bob McVicar had done a lot of work on our Membership Committee and had handled BICO grievances.

MOTION: M/Dubé S/Cundell Carried

That Brothers Clarke and McVicar should receive a letter of appreciation and an honorarium of \$50.00 each for their many services over the years.

6. EXECUTIVE REPORTS:

President's Reports:

There were two reports: a written one dated August 19, which was deferred since there was no quorum for the September meeting; and one verbal, covering the period from September to October.

Written Report: M/Dubé S/Coupland Carried

This report was carried without discussion.

Verbal Report: M/Dubé S/Coupland Carried

President Dubé reported that harassment cases are on the upswing. She also mentioned incidences at the Passport Office where in some cases there was difficulty in getting supervisors to sign grievance forms. She is also getting a lot more phone calls. Most of these concern unhappiness in the workplace. It appears that people are getting more and more discontent and that morale is getting even lower.

She attended, along with Mary Ramsay, our Service Officer, a meeting of Rotational Secretaries. She had received an invitation, for the first time, to attend. The Local had been previously not been invited to attend. She received positive feedback from several of the secretaries for the information that was provided. It was felt that even though most secretaries in this group are management excluded, that all should have the kit on Workforce Adjustment since it is everyone's right to know, even if in certain instances, employees might not be covered by it. The kit also gives them ideas on how to protect themselves if they are "next in line". During the meeting, direction was given to the group with respect to the memo they are planning to send to our new DM, Gordon Smith. Their memo had

started out positively; they were asking for recognition for all the additional duties they had assumed. This was contradicted later on in the message; they were saying that they could do more!! Their president is Frank Morris who said he would keep in touch. President Dubé mentioned to the group that we have the expertise and would provide it.

P. Coupland mentioned that secretaries are notorious for trusting management and for seeing unions as "dirty", out to destroy the economy through all their strikes, etc.

President Dubé also mentioned that Passport Office is trying to detach itself from us, so that they would not have to be held accountable via the same grievance procedure that we use. There is the desire to deal with things through regions - e.g. if someone in Halifax is kicked out, Ottawa would not be aware of it. Right now, all grievances must be dealt with via Staff Relations since these employees are considered to be a part of Foreign Affairs and therefore answerable to the Department. President Dubé felt that the current grievance procedure must remain in place. She mentioned the poor treatment that employees at Passport Office are receiving: being forced to go faster and faster like rats on a treadmill, shorter hours, and one attempt to resolve a harassment complaint by getting the two people in question together and having a big screaming match.

There was discussion as to the question of reviving the EAJC Meetings (they were stopped after the strike). President Dubé sent a letter to Daryl Bean asking for guidance/solutions to issues in general. She expressed her concern and annoyance at the fact that President Bean did not reply in writing, but instead passed it down to Doug Chalk, who in turn passed it to Gary Doherty. She felt that President Bean must point out to management (via a letter to ADM of Personnel) that PSAC is the sole bargaining agent. She also mentioned that a lot of things were learned by participating in these meetings. J. Kruithof agreed that today there are difficult issues that need to be dealt with and is now in a different mindset re the EAJC. E. Dubé mentioned that if there are meetings concerning changing the classification of SCYs to Administrative Assistants, there must be union people at the table. She also mentioned that P. Coupland had volunteered to sit on the SCY committee previously, but was screened out. J. Davidson mentioned that the new S branch had compulsory orientation days in which different things were covered - e.g. how to accept change. He also stated that there were no job descriptions or procedural manuals. Management keeps promising they

would be done. In response to a question from J. Kruithof as to how other staff associations felt about absence of EAJC, President Dubé said that ESSA felt they should be revived and that IBEW did not care one way or the other. Brother Kruithof also said that if management-union meetings are to be productive, the union side must get its act together; all staff associations/unions are going in the same direction. President Dubé mentioned that there have been some successful meetings held regarding health and safety. At the same time, she mentioned that PAFSO, working with officers, can make deals with management to eliminate our members' positions via spousal employment and LES. There was some discussion as to wording that President Bean could use in a letter to the ADM of Personnel: "we have heard from 70125 that you are holding meetings with consultative groups and we wish to remind you that in connection with any decisions made with these consultative groups, you must sit down with us and bargain at some point".

Second VP's Report:

M/Pyl S/Coupland Carried

Discussion was held re distribution of stickers that mention how vital civil servants are to business, that if jobs continue to be cut, businesses will suffer.

Third VP's Report:

M/Coupland S/Cundell Carried

P. Coupland reported that there is still lots of contracting out going on. She mentioned that she had seen 3 or 4 more ads in the paper since her last report. The Department does not stick with the same agency and does business with different ones.

She mentioned that another issue is the question of morale and the stress level in the Department. She heard from a term that SBDA is trying to get permission to hire another counsellor or two. The workload seems to have gone up considerably for them; P. Coupland reports that since she herself has seen a fair number of employees going in and out of SBDA, that there may perhaps be some truth to this story.

Treasurer's Report:

April, May, June, July and August financial statements were dealt with at this meeting. Although the April one was passed at the May meeting, it was brought forth again here since there was a transposition error in one of the figures. This mistake was detected by the Treasurer. The figure in question has been indicated by an asterisk and the mistake rectified.

In response to a question, the Treasurer indicated that the figures for the strike welfare fund (Item 04) are what is on deposit in that fund. The minus sign indicates that the fund takes away from revenue. Full amount (\$5892) goes into membership dues account, then is divided by 4 because it is one dollar for each member and it is then transferred to strike welfare fund. Actual net revenue is thus \$4419, not \$5892.

In response to a question as to whether figures for Employers Share are paid out to members, the Treasurer replied yes, that this concerned the Convention.

The question of moving our accounts to the Royal Bank in the L.B. Pearson building was raised. President Dubé felt that this should be done since the accounts would be more accessible. She also mentioned that we all bank there, so the staff know us. The Treasurer mentioned that we could go to any branch of Canada Trust and that the accounts were kept there under the premise that the Royal Bank (and the other banks) are not unionized. President Dubé mentioned that the National Component does its banking with a nonunionized institution and said that there was a good rapport built up with the Royal Bank during the strike. The Treasurer indicated that he would be willing to move the accounts, but that this must be recommended to him, since he would be in a conflict situation if he initiated this himself. C. Pyl offered to look into this issue and the question of preferential treatment from both the Royal Bank and Canada Trust, also protection of funds from bankruptcy of any of these institutions. The following motion was therefore put forward:

MOTION: M/Kruithof S/Quinn Carried

That a report be tabled by the Second VP as to whether it would be more feasible to leave our funds where they are now, or move them to the Royal Bank in the L.B. Pearson Building to make it more convenient.

FS Directives Committee: NIL to Report.

C. Pyl reported that both committees at Place Vanier and Pearson Building are now functioning smoothly and that he is now officially the co-chair for the one at the Pearson Building. He will be attending a Health and Safety Conference sponsored and paid for by Foreign Affairs. Another person on the committee will also attend. He mentioned that the last meeting went well. President Dubé expressed concern that in the minutes of these meetings, things are taken out of context and she must then straighten things out - e.g. Management says that the roof was repaired, when in fact it had been an ongoing matter for 6 weeks. C. Pyl also mentioned that he plans to do a major inspection of the various BICOs and that he will take a course on inspections at the conference.

Membership Committee: NIL to Report.

7. **CORRESPONDENCE:**

June 1994 to SEPT. 14/94

This had been deferred from the September meeting since there had been no quorum.

AUG 1 From J. Kruithof to E. Dubé thanking her and the Local for their support in his nomination for the position of Director, Outside Canada. Since it had gone astray, it was not on this list, and is now included.

J. Kruithof also supplied to the Local two binders of correspondence re employment issues.

SEPT. to OCT. 3/94

No questions were raised.

8. **NEW BUSINESS:**

Employment Policy of the Department:

J. Kruithof gave an update on this question. On Nov. 15/93, the Department had made it very clear that if it was less expensive to hire LES, they would hire LES. Brother Kruithof mentioned that he wrote a position paper on this and has been actively communicating with relevant parties to try and get this reversed. In July

1994, he sent a follow-up letter to the Department, stating that he disagreed with the current policy. He felt that the first priority ought to be jobs for Canadians, not foreigners. In this letter, he asked management if they had reconsidered their position. Management (ADM of Personnel, Bill Clark) in OCT 6 letter said: "I reaffirm our position on staffing practices as communicated in our response of NOV. 15/93. I regret that ongoing budget constraints will not provide for greater flexibility in the application of our current policies". The Department is thus intent on pursuing policy that states in effect that if employees of the Departments, as Canadians, can be underbid for jobs available at missions overseas by LES, jobs will go to LES. It was felt by all present that there must be limits put on cost-saving measures; Brother Kruithof said for example, that if E.B. Eddy in Hull wanted to hire Pakistanis because it was cheaper, they would not be able to get away with it. Canadian Embassies are extensions of Canadian territory, so Canadian laws must be applied. Department is not honouring sacred policy to protect Canadians. P. Coupland mentioned that if we keep hiring locals, there will be no Canadians left, so why call it a Canadian Embassy - Why not call it a branch of Nigerian Embassy, for example. President Dubé said that embassies are supposed to represent a certain country abroad and expressed the concern that since LES don't know about Canadian law, how can they tell you your rights as a Canadian citizen. She also expressed concerns about confidentiality and security.

Brother Kruithof stated that he had raised this matter with PSAC Legal Division, and the Office of Minister of Immigration asking specifically whether this policy was legal. PSAC Legal Department replied that nothing is being contravened and that there seems to be no law protecting us. There is no answer yet from Immigration. He has also approached his MP (John Manley). Brother Kruithof also mentioned says there is also Lawrence Greenspon who has worked for us before, and he thinks that this policy may not be kosher. Greenspon has indicated that for retainer of \$1500, he will review and offer advice as to how this can be countered. PSAC lawyers are on very flimsy grounds saying Charter of Rights does not apply since we are not disadvantaged minority. That is contrary to finding of Greenspon when we were pursuing accreditation matter that rights of every Canadian are included under the Charter, not just disadvantaged minorities and any organization not following spirit and intent of constitution will be held accountable. President Dubé said that there is no problem with certain jobs going to LES because they do have certain unique talents, but jobs held traditionally by

Canadians should not be given en masse to LES. P. Coupland stated they aren't Canadians citizens, they are off the street. Brother Kruithof said that the Department will respond only if the law on our side. We must therefore come at the Department from another angle and make it untenable for them to continue this policy.

Insurance:

Brother Cundell stated that insurance will cost more, almost double in fact. The rate now is \$375 and is expected to rise to almost \$800. The age of the building and its roof are some of the factors being used to justify the increase.

XMAS Party:

MOTION: M/Cundell S/Pyl Carried

That the Local put aside \$2000 for the XMAS Party to pay for food and alcoholic beverages plus costs of reimbursing any employee who must take the day off.

It was suggested that the Party be held the week of December 12.

9. **ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT Submitted by E. B. Dubé

Well, it has been a long hot summer! Instead of things quieting down they have picked up in certain areas. More classification grievances and appeals as well as more Members calling for advice on how to proceed in these situations. Attended several meetings with Brother Doherty, Mr. L. Fucile and Mary Ramsay at the Passport Office and liaised regarding follow up on Deployment Policy and Employee Orientation Guide. Our comments were forwarded by the National Component. There is some concern about the grievance process. Numerous calls also received from Members of the Passport Office seeking advice on how to proceed in certain difficult and stressful situations. I have been in touch with several Members and, hopefully, we will soon have representatives in place who are aware of what goes on a daily basis as they are employed there. It is a trouble spot right now!!

Attended two Health and Safety meetings and went on an inspection tour last week. We were given explanations on how the air conditioning system works and inspected the drip pans. I must say that the situation in that area has greatly improved -- the water was clear and the filters seemed to be in good shape. We asked a multitude of questions and were satisfied with the answers. Any question that was not completely resolved during our inspection will be addressed at the next Health and Safety meeting. Items of concern were bacteria level of water and if continual tests were conducted on a regular basis and whether or not tests were administered regarding possible mould and fungus buildup. I feel that we are on the right road to ensuring a healthier working environment.

It will seem strange to no longer see Anna sitting at the table for our monthly meetings but, we will keep in touch with Hong Kong and the good Sister. It is with regret also that I must announce that Brother Gloss has stated he will no longer be attending our monthly meetings as his future position will fall in the excluded range. A fond farewell Brother and many thanks for your contributions in your capacity as National Director, as Member of our Executive and as a stalwart soldier during our strike. We have lost a great number of very good people over the past few years but they are never forgotten. I sincerely hope, for those of you who remain to carry on, that you had a good rest this summer, as our work is well cut out for us. I thank you for your attendance and for your support and assistance and take this opportunity to remind you that I could not do it without you. **WELL HERE WE GO AGAIN -- ALL FOR ONE AND ONE FOR ALL!!!!**

August 19, 1994



Proposed Computer System For Local 70125

1. The system proposed is an entry level system with a minimum configuration. This is to ensure maximum expandability and minimal cost.

2. The system should consist include the following:

- A). CPU subsystem consisting of 486 processor with a minimum speed of 33 MHZ and 4 Megs(required) to 8 Megs(recommended) of RAM.**
- B). 3 1/2" and 5 1/4" floppies**
- C). 210 Meg Hard drive**
- D). Super VGA monitor and card**
- E). Mouse**

The price of the above should be approx \$1700 - \$1900

3. In addition a Laser printer is required. Considering the cost of Dot matrix printers and the cost of ribbons and paper and the quality of output and the ease of acquiring supplies, the cost of a laser justifies itself. Approx cost \$800.

4. Also the following software is required:

- A). Dos 6.2 \$60**
- B). Windows 3.1 \$50**
- C). Wordperfect for Dos or Windows (whichever is preferred) \$250**
- D). Dbase for Dos or Windows (available this summer) \$250**
- E). Avery Label Pro \$90**
- F). Lotus 123 for Dos or Windows (whichever is preferred) \$250**

5. A tape backup unit with associated software for automated backups is preferred but is optional and could be added at a later date. Approx cost \$300

6, Keep in mind that it is always cheaper to upgrade while purchasing than to upgrade at a later date. There is no resale value in obsolete equipment. The above configuration while still an entry level system should provide many years of compatability.