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ISBN 0-315-55433-9

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

LABOUR EDUCATION IN ALBERTA

BY

CAROL ARNOLD 

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL 1989

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MASTER OF EDUCATION

1989

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled LABOUR EDUCATION IN ALBERTA

submitted by CAROL ARNOLD

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of EDUCATION

.....
(Supervisor)
.....
.....

Date October 10, 1988.....

Dedication

To my working class parents, Vi and Norm,

and to my long suffering family, Stephen, Safi and Stefo.

ABSTRACT

Labour education is an important influence on the union activist in Alberta. Teachers and students involved in an Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) school participated in this study which describes the labour education process. This study determines that labour education is a unique variant of workers' education which concerns itself more with the social-political awakening of union members than in imparting skills. It attempts to transmit the traditions of the labour movement by utilizing a committed teaching staff. Teachers in this context are very aware of their goals and endeavour to achieve them with enthusiasm and concern for the student. The labour school classroom is a laboratory for unionists to link their experiences to at least a rudimentary theory. This process aims to awaken the members to both understand and act in their immediate work circumstances as well as begin to recognize the inequities of political and economic power in Canada. It aims to dispell the myths not only of unions but of those which portray Canadian society as a meritocracy.

Leaders of the labour movement are "graduates" of the education process. The force and conviction they convey can be both intimidating and awe-inspiring. Few institutions in today's pragmatic world ascribe themselves such an ideologically coherent role as does the labour movement. Labour leaders tend to exhibit a force of conviction drawn from labour history, traditions and societal visions.

Yet, the success of unions in conveying their world view is a qualified one. Labour education only reaches a small percentage of the

total labour force. It is generally assumed that this activist core of unionists will in turn educate the rank and file so that they too may identify with the goals of the labour movement, and respond to "labour's call" when issues arise.

Acknowledgements

The writer wishes to gratefully acknowledge the many people who assisted in the completion of this thesis. Sincere appreciation is extended:

To the executive and staff of the Alberta Federation of Labour for their complete support and cooperation.

To Sandra Ubelacker for her support and leadership as my advisor.

To Art Deane and Larry Beauchamp, my committee members, for their advice.

To my husband, Stephen, who encouraged me daily.

To my mentors: Winston Gereluk, Jim Selby, Ron McDonald, and Carol Anne Dean.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER PAGE

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

In June, 1984, I attended the Convention of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) in Toronto, the theme being "Peace and Social Justice." During the course of the week, there were eloquent speeches but the "star" attractions were Bob White, Canadian Auto Workers' (CAW) President, and Jean Claude Parrott, President of Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW). After one of Bob White's speeches, a fellow delegate commented, "White is amazing! He speaks so well, and yet he never finished high school. His whole education has come from the labour movement--and he's been well educated at that!" I have often marvelled at the number of individuals who have commented that unions had given them opportunities to develop their abilities. In their everyday work roles, there rarely would have been occasion for growth and development of leadership skills.

This experience formed the kernal of my inspiration to study labour education in Alberta. Labour education has stimulated very little research. In general, literature about the "working class" is extensive, yet the educational practices of unions have been largely overlooked. What do unions do to recruit and educate ordinary people and provide them with leadership skills?

Background to the Study

For nearly ten years I was active in the labour movement and participated in many education-related activities. I recognize the influence that education had on many "ordinary" workers. Some work in manual occupations but develop good speaking and organizational skills. Some become chairpersons or vice-presidents and travel the province and Canada representing their unions. Janitors and secretaries are elected delegates to conferences and conventions and participate in making policy decisions. Unions provide many opportunities for learning and personal growth. The educational opportunities are often generously funded and are plentiful. My decision to return to study in the field of education was a "natural" opportunity to develop my interest in labour education.

Significance of the Study

In the course of my library research, I discovered very little reference to labour education in Canada, but extensive research completed in other countries. The literature which deals with the Canadian labour movement focuses on the legal or economic aspects of its activity. The "cultural" endeavors of the labour movement are treated as historical.

Labour education programs are experienced by hundreds, if not thousands of working Albertans. This research is an attempt to begin

exploratory research and add to the literature of Canadian labour education.

Statement of the Problem

Unions recognize the necessity of providing their memberships with education services. They depend on networks of workplace volunteers for their very existence. These volunteers are the union stewards and officers who are recruited in order to explain and uphold the purpose of the union among the "rank and file" members. Thus they must learn how to perform union duties and know what the union stands for. This forms the basis of the basic research questions of this study:

1. What do unions teach?
2. Who do the unions teach?
3. Who teaches the labour education programs?
4. Does labour education achieve its stated objectives?

Limitations and Delimitations

This study is limited by the accuracy of interpretation of the student questionnaire. It is also limited by the accuracy of the analysis of the interviews of labour school teachers.

The study is delimited to the students attending the Alberta Federation of Labour/Canadian Labour Congress (AFL/CLC) School held in Red Deer in 1985; selected labour school teachers who were interviewed

in 1988; and documents collected from the Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) and Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE) offices.

Definitions

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are defined.

AFL stands for Alberta Federation of Labour.

AFL/CLC Labour Schools are organized from time to time as decided by the Education Committee of the Alberta Federation of Labour. The Canadian Labour Congress helps fund these schools through monies received from the federal government (Labour Education Program (LEP) grants). These schools are five-day residential schools.

CLC stands for Canadian Labour Congress.

Grievance refers to a dispute between a member and management which is processed through a series of meetings until resolved by either party.

Labour courses are categorized into three types (Waldie, 1985).

1. Basic leadership courses concentrate on the development in the individual of personal qualities for union officer effectiveness.

2. Tool courses are the practical "how to" courses. They focus on the mastery of techniques for the attainment of specific goals and tend to be technical in nature and oriented towards immediate, practical use.

3. Issues and awareness courses are general application courses. They broaden appreciation of the wider social-political context in which unions function. (p. 58)

Labour education refers to the program of studies offered by unions or affiliates to their members.

Labour school student is a member of a union whose attendance at a labour program is sponsored by his/her union.

Labour school teacher is a union staff or member who is chosen by the Education Committee of the Alberta Federation of Labour to plan and instruct a designated course.

Member is any worker who belongs to a labour organization usually referred to as a union.

Program refers to the topic, content and materials used to deliver a course. This term is often interchangeable with "course."

Rank and file are union members who have no special status either as officers or stewards in the worksite.

Steward is a union member usually elected to represent workers in a particular shop or department of a workplace. His or her functions may include collecting dues, soliciting new members, announcing meetings, receiving, investigating and attempting to resolve grievances, and education of rank and file members.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Literature

Historical Context of Labour Education

Except for very few aspects, labour education is not, nor has it ever been, institutionalized nor permanently established. Like the labour movement of which it forms an integral part, it is a dynamic process, constantly adapting to the changing nature of the workplace and the historical-specific challenges and demands facing organized workers. Thus, labour education is defined here by its history, which exists for the most part in the statements, activities and dreams of the members and organizations at its head.

The majority of the explicit aims and objectives of labour education occur in writings and speeches of labour leaders and union staff, which have been preserved in a disparate collection of brochures, occasional manuscripts, policy papers and proceedings from conferences and conventions of the labour movement. By far, the most outstanding feature of these statements is the manner in which they reveal the majority of these aims to be identical with the aims of the labour movement itself. In this respect, a 'philosophy' of labour education would be closely analogous to a Deweyian pragmatism; the view that the aims of education are those of life itself (Dewey, 1963).

In this case, the clearest available expression of this view may be

found in the introduction to the Catalogue of Educational Programs, 1983-84, produced by the education section of the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE), the largest affiliated union within the Alberta Federation of Labour. It states:

> The objective of the Union Education program is to build the Union. It is the program through which active members--Stewards, Officers, contact persons, and interested members--are developed. These active, educated members are not only the strength, the bedrock of the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees, they are the means by which the Union involves all of its members and grows stronger. (AUPE, 1983)

This view of labour education dictates that it can be defined only by describing the labour movement of which it is a part. However, the labour movement is certainly not a singular, fixed entity; it can only be understood through its history. Since its origins, this movement has been constantly changing. At times, it has been a process of slow, evolutionary transformation, but, more often, the process has been radical and drastic, even "revolutionary," as working people would seek new responses to political and economic conditions in their workplaces and their communities.

The premise employed in this study is that the labour movement has developed thorough a process or "logic" of reaction to changing socio-economic conditions. It is a construction proposed by historian E.P. Thompson, in his landmark publication, The Making of the English Working Class (1968). In his detailed account, he develops the history of unions as concomitant with the history of the working class. According to Thompson,

> . . . class happens when some men, as a result of common experiences (inherited and shared), feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as

> against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs. The class experience is largely determined by the productive relations into which men are born--or enter involuntarily--we can see a logic in the responses of similar occupational groups undergoing similar experiences . . . . (1968, 9-10).

This logic is particularly evident in responses to major changes in the nature of the employment, which is the dominant relationship determining these people, their life at work and at leisure. From the beginning, this response has been markedly political, as collective action has challenged the power structure conferred by the common law interpretation summarized in the concepts of "Master and Servant" (Glasbeck, 1982). In his recently-completed history of the Canadian labour movement, Craig Heron encapsulates the essence of this relationship:

> This highly personal bond of service, loyalty and mutual obligation--based on the scarcity of labour (and of jobs) in the colonies--has been called "paternalism." We should be wary, however, of conjuring up images of kindly father-figures patting the heads of respectful workers. It was a system ripe for cruelty and abuse. There is evidence that in the early nineteenth century masters were toughening up the contracts of indenture to get more work out of their workers, and to discipline them more closely. Small wonder so many apprentices were reported to be running away. Under a cluster of legislation known as the Master and Servant Acts, English employers could have recourse to the courts if a worker absconded or was wilfully disobedient. Nova Scotia and Canada West (Ontario) added their own legislation to enforce these contracts of employment in 1765 and 1847 respectively. It is also clear that the owner's control over all community institutions, especially housing and company stores, could be used to keep the workforce under control in the more isolated resource communities (1989).

The "logic" of union development requires therefore a conception of the nature and structure of the contextual society, a task which is beyond the capabilities of this study. Put briefly, this context is supplied by capitalism, a mode of production characterized by private

ownership of resources, including capital and the means of production. The significance for working people, determining their response, is as follows:

1. The private ownership of means of production provides the employer with a distinct power advantage vis-a-vis the individual worker, who depends for a livelihood upon the resources owned by the employer.

2. The market dictates that the employer make a profit in order to survive; this has produced continual changes in the organization and design of work, direction of investment, and a search for new products, markets and technologies.

3. The primary interests of employers and workers enmeshed in this relationship will be in opposition, i.e. the employer's interest in maximizing profits runs counter to the employee's interest in maximizing wages (and other "costs of labour").

Finally, underlying this "logic of collective action" is the understanding that, in the process of being brought together under these conditions, workers become linked, and they discover both their common goals, and the value of united action. From the beginning, then, the raison d'etre of unionism "is the recognition that only by combining can workers hope to mitigate the power imbalance, achieve a measure of control over their conditions at, and rewards from, work, and reduce their vulnerability to the worst excesses of management. Unions are 'first and foremost a source and medium of power' " (Hyman & Fryer, 1979, 152).

Because of this logic, the trade union movement has been characterized by constant change, as well as a marked heterogeneity, as different unions have developed distinct structures, styles and traditions in response to unique demands of specific workplaces, communities, and historical periods. The term "labour movement" therefore, refers to a remarkably diverse and fragmented range of entities, and organizations, representing a variety of occupations, skills, trades, services and industries. To the outside observer, it can only appear to be a confusing network overlapping and interlocking bodies of all shapes and sizes in a constant state of re-configuration.

These problems notwithstanding, a considerable body of scholarship and popular writing has been produced in recent years on the history of the Canadian labour movement, led by such writers as Irving Abella (1973), Charles Lipton (1978), Eugene Forsey (1982), Desmond Morton (1984), Jack Williams (1975), and Bryan Palmer 1983). Considerable ground has likewise been broken in the history of the labour movement in the Canadian West by authors such as Warren Caragata (1979), David Bercuson (1987), Alvin Finkel (1983), and Stewart Jamieson (1979). Unfortunately, in this study, it is possible to produce only the barest sketch of this history.

A Sketch of Canadian Labour History

The nature of production in colonial North America bestowed a character and direction on the earliest manifestations of unionism. It was a period dominated by independent commodity production, in which

those who worked for wages were the exception rather than the rule.

Early unions, such as those which arose in the Halifax, St. John and Quebec harbours during the War of 1812 made the most of labour scarcity. Others, such as the craft unions formed by Montreal shoemakers or Toronto printers, reflected a concern by skilled workers to prevent their craft or status from being undermined. A common feature in most early formations was the "benevolent society" against such disasters as unemployment, illness or pauperism. For the most part, however, unionism was restricted to the lucky few (Williams, 1975).

From the beginning, unions were compelled to adopt a style of a secret fraternity due to their inherent illegality. Indeed, much early "education" was really an initiation into the rites and secrets of the organization, as simply by joining workers were liable to legal prosecutions. Under common law, these "combinations were prima facie "conspiracies in restraint of trade" (Forsey, 1982, 13). In addition, numerous specific statutes existed in all jurisdictions modelled on the English Combinations Acts of 1799-1800. For example, a "Master and Servant Act" passed in the old Province of Canada "declared the persuasion of labourers 'to confederate for demanding extravagant or high wages' to be unlawful" (Forsey, 1982, 101). For the most part, only the craft unions could depend on the exclusive skill of the members to stay "above the law." This was the state of affairs until 1872, when the government of Canada finally passed a Trade Union Act, freeing unions from common law liability of being in restraint of trade simply by existing. Of course, laws restricting both specific purposes

and the means for achieving them continued to exist in the statute books (Forsey, 1982, 5).

The growth and consolidation of the labour movement in Canada was concomitant with the growth of the industrial working class in the period of economic expansion between 1850-80. During this period, unions were transformed from small, local, and "illegal" organizations into national or international bodies with legal status. The movement to amalgamate and spread, even beyond national boundaries, became a necessity as the expansion of railroads linked local markets into a national and international system. As well, locals were no longer a match for increasing centralization of capital and employer organization which occurred during this period.

The first "internationals" were British as both Canadian and American unions gained their original organizational methods and consciousness from English sources. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASIE) established its first branches in Hamilton, Toronto and Brantford in the 1850's, to be followed by the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners in 1871. American unions were recruited somewhat later, led by Iron Moulders, Locomotive Engineers, the Typographical Union and the Shoemakers (Knights of St. Crispin) in the 1860's. The pattern they established for the labour movement during those formative years has persisted to the present day (Forsey, 1982).

Political Unionism

Competitive capitalism spread throughout Canada in the 1880's, and in so doing, engendered a new era of political unionism, vested primarily in new broad-based organizations which stood in stark contrast to the exclusive and "elitist" traditions of the craft unions. The driving force behind this organizational boom was the Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labour, which originated in Philadelphia and established its first assembly in Hamilton in 1867 (Palmer, 1983; Forsey, 1982).

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, organizers for the Knights spread through the industrial and railroad towns of the Canadian Northwest, organizing all classes of worker. As Finkel explains,

> The Knights arose as a protest movement against the increasing scale and mechanization of business operations and the accompanying attack against craft privileges. Both workers whose jobs had already been deskilled and workers who feared that such a fate awaited their own jobs responded to the call for cooperation of all workers in a struggle against the entire economic and political system (Finkel, Unit II, 1983, 37).

Overcoming many of the religious, ethnic, gender and occupational divisions which had historically separated working people, the Knights were the first to create a national spirit in the labour movement. At their peak, they had over 700,000 members internationally; with 12,000 in Canadian assemblies. However, by the time the twentieth century was only a few years old, they were dead. They fell victim to state repression in the U.S.A. following the infamous Haymarket Incident of 1883. In Canada, they were effectively choked out of existence by a

Canadian labour central dominated by American "international," mostly craft unions (Williams, 1975, 92).

Another dominant feature of the labour movement was likewise born in the 1880's. Trade union councils committed to establishing local areas or industries arose first in large eastern industrial centres. It was with these that education first emerged as an explicit aim of the labour movement. Forsey describes the role played by the Toronto Council in this way:

> Through lecture and a TTA library, it undertook workers' education. It listed union and non-union shops, and organized boycotts. It carried on correspondence with labour organizations in other parts of Canada, in Britain, and in the United States . . . . It started a labour paper, organized demonstrations, picnics, concerts, and moonlight excursions. It encouraged co-operatives. It made representations to government on immigration and on prison labour. It discussed apprenticeship and the incorporation of unions. It published a history of its own activities. (Forsey, 1982, 95).

The first of several Councils in what was later to become Alberta was formed in Calgary in 1901, followed closely by Edmonton and Lethbridge. For many years, they would provide the local point of regional solidarity and organizational structure at the centre of our fledgling labour movement.

The new country's first labour central, the Trades and Labour Council of Canada (TLC), was formed in Toronto in 1883. In many ways, it cast the mold for the coming of age of the Canadian labour movement, and certainly for its great grandchild, the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). As Williams argues

> It was decided that membership in the new Congress should be open to both craft unions and the Knights of Labour, and the primary purpose was defined as ". . . the united of all

> labour organizations in order to work for the passage of new laws or amendments to existing laws, in the interests of those who have to earn their living, as well as to insure at the same time the well-being of the working class" (Williams, 1982, p. 66).

An unmistakable feature of the TLC and all subsequent centrals was the rivalry between the American-dominated craft unions and the newer "political" industrial unions, such as the Knights of Labour and their successors. This split would continue to produce heated debate and conflict a century after the formation of the TLC, as the American-based construction trade unions finally leave the CLC in 1981 to protest its "political" directions.

Western Canadian Unionism

The turn of the century in Canada was accompanied by a burst of militant unionism. This was especially true in the Canadian West, where the spread of monopoly capitalism combined with the aggressive settlement policies of the Laurier administration to produce unprecedented expansion. Between 1897-1902 alone, this "new unionism" resulted in a 250% increase in the number of Chartered international locals across Canada, raising the number of Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) affiliates to over 1,000.

In the West, the mantle of radical unionism was passed from the Knights of Labour to the International Workers of the World (IWW), popularly known as the "Wobblies," and to the Western Federation of Miners (WFM). As explained by Warren Caragata in his study, Alberta Labour, organization of the IWW was devoted to propagating an analysis

which linked workers' problems to the capitalist economic system. In Caragata's words:

> Haywood, speaking at the IWW founding convention in 1905, urged members to "confederate the workers into a working class movement that shall have for its purpose the emancipation of the working class slave bondage of capitalism.
>
> "The working class and the employing class," said the preamble of the IWW constitution, "have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people and the few who make up the capitalist class have all the good things in life." The IWW had some of the most colourful working class leaders on the continent and some of the best strike strategists the labour movement has ever had. Its long-term interest was the overthrow of capitalism, but in the years from 1905 to 1920 when it was at its peak in North America, it went where the American Federation of Labour feared to tread, and with determination, commitment and imagination brought the ignored underclass of unskilled and immigrants out of the gutter (Caragata, 1979, 49-50).

In a similar vein, the Western Federation of Miners organized the coal fields of Southern Alberta, an area which would provide the venue for some of this country's most militant unionism during the first three decades of this century. Finkel provides a number of explanations why the West would be so receptive to this brand of radical unionism, termed "western exceptionalism" by historiographers.

Firstly, the growth of the West was made possible by a large influx of immigrants who, by virtue of their background and high expectations, were willing to rebel against deplorable living and working conditions. Secondly, many immigrants from Britain and Europe brought with them direct experience with syndicalism. Thirdly, mining towns and construction camps provided the objective basis for worker solidarity, which protected union activists against employer actions. Fourthly, many of the institutions which effectively constrained radical activity

in the East had yet to be fully established in the West (Finkel, Unit III, 1983).

The process of labour education, as propaganda, was a primary aim of the Wobblies, who went to great lengths to overcome ethnic, religious and other longstanding differences separating workers in an effort to build a consciousness of the "working class."

> Wobbly halls functioned as mail drops and dormitories for itinerants. Most locals provided job information, and Prince Rupert's hall even functioned as an employment agency for unskilled workers. The Vancouver local appears to have furnished some medical services . . . Camaraderie was an important dimension of the IWW's appeal, and Wobbly halls were one of the few social centres, apart from bars and brothels, that were part of the itinerant's experience. At the Vancouver hall workers could swap tales about life on the road in the club room, read Marxist classics or copies of 'nearly every Socialist and revolutionary paper of the world' in the library, or listen to regular lectures on revolutionary industrial unionism . . . If the IWW was fighting ultimately for revolution, it never lost sight of the need to secure immediate improvements in the working conditions of its members . . . . Wobblies believed that workers would join a union which promised them immediate benefits; once members, the itinerants could be indoctrinated with revolutionary propaganda. In addition it was valuable to fight for immediate improvements because each strike trained the workers for the general strike . . . . (McCormack, 1983, 252).

For a variety of reasons, protracted wars appear to have had a radicalizing effect on the labour movements of Western countries. In the years ending World War I, the One Big Union (OBU) emerged as a coalition of largely western unions and federations who united around the objectives of worker's control, formation of syndicalist-type unions, and the concept of the the general strike. As can be expected, the organizers of the OBU came into conflict with the AFL-bodied TLC, and this appears to have increased their determination to engage in

radical action on behalf of working people.

The political orientation and militant nature of the OBU exceeded even that of the IWW, as the "Preamble" to the Constitution drafted for their founding convention in 1919 reveals. It states

> Modern industrial society is divided into two classes, those who possess and do not produce, and those who do produce and do not possess. Alongside this main division all other classifications fade into insignificance. Between these two classes a continual struggle must take place. As with buyers and sellers of any commodity there exists a struggle on the one hand of the buyer to buy as cheaply as possible, and on the other, for the seller to sell for as much as possible, so with the buyers and sellers of labour power. In the struggle over the purchase and sale of labour power, the buyers are always the masters, the sellers always the workers. From this fact arises the inevitable class struggle. As industry develops and ownership becomes concentrated more and more into fewer hands; as the control of the economic forces of society becomes more and more the sole property of imperialistic finance, it becomes apparent that the workers, in order to sell their labour power with any degree of success, must extend their forms of organization in accordance with changing industrial methods. Compelled to organize for self-defence, they are further compelled to educate themselves in preparation for the social change which economic developments will produce whether they seek it or not. The One Big Union, therefore, seeks to organize the wage worker not according to craft, but according to industry; according to class and class needs; and calls upon all workers to organized irrespective of nationality, sex or craft, into workers' organizations so that they may be enabled to more successfully carry on the evey day fight over wages, hours of work, etc., and prepare themselves for the day when production for profit shall be replaced by production for use (Williams, 1975, 134-5).

Not surprisingly, the OBU would be quickly and brutally crushed, following a year of growth which culminated in the Winnipeg General Strike of May, 1919, which was followed by a further setback in the Crowsnest Pass later that year. Though organizers continued to withstand state suppression, employer intransigence and TLC's hostility, their numbers shrank drastically, and the last vestiges of

this movement disappeared in the 1950's.

Western socialism had a rather direct and (for labour organizers) unwelcome result. The government of labour would become a provincial matter for all employees except those involved in "federal works and undertakings." In 1907, the canny William Lyon Mackenzie King, while he was yet deputy minister of labour in the Laurier government, caused the passage of the most interventionist labour relations legislation to date, the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act (IDIA). Essentially, the Act prohibited strike in "essential industries" until conciliation was completed, setting the pattern progressively greater restrictions (Caragata, 1979, 36-38).

IDIA remained the dominant Act until 1925, when a court decision (Toronto Electric Commissioners Vs Snider) held that provinces should have the majority of these rights. Since then, depending on local conditions and the political stripe of the party-in-power, provinces have been free to go their own ways, resulting in a patchwork of provincial legislation and conditions, and, it follows, further divisions within the Canadian labour movement (Arthurs, 1981, 34).

Changing economic conditions, together with changes in ownership and organization of industry and the public sector continued to produce new configurations in the labour movement. During the Great Depression, for instance, Communist-backed organizations such as the Workers Unity League (WUL) produced new unions of the unskilled and semi-skilled workers. They even made significant inroads into the organization of the unemployed. Adverse reaction from the increasingly conservative TLC resulted in the establishment of new labour centrals,

such as the WUL, the All-Canadian Congress of Labour (ACCL) and the Canadian and Catholic Confederation of Labour (CCCL), the combined membership of which equalled that of the TLC by 1935 (Abella, 1973, 3).

By 1940, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIL) had emerged as a force; in that year it joined with the ACCL to form a new central body outside the TLC, the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL). The two centrals would not merge until 1956 when the Canadian Labour Congress was formed. That marriage, unhappily, would not survive its third decade.

Legalization of the Labour Movement

With the revitalization of the Canadian economy in the late 1930's, the focus of Canadian industry shifted towards the manufacturing centres of Central Canada, and with it went the active centre of the Canadian labour movement. Coal was replaced by oil as an energy resource and with this change, a whole new style of labour relations imported from the oil fields of the United States typified by the "company association" and the "independent union" (Caragata, 1979, 132-6).

The major victories for industrial unions in the West during this time would be won by the United Packinghouse Workers of America, who won national bargaining rights after a major strike in 1947. Meanwhile, the sun would set slowly on the United Mine Workers and the Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers would face an uphill fight just to get established (Caragata, 1979, 132-6).

With the 1940's and the Second World War came another major development, the "legalization" of the labour movement. In 1944, following unprecedented labour militancy and alarming growth of left-wing political parties, the government of William Lyon Mackenzie King passed a Wartime Measures Act, PC 1003, which finally extended legal recognition to properly certified trade unions. Modelled on the American Wagner Act, which had been enacted nine years earlier as a part of President F. D. Roosevelt's New Deal, PC 1003 was essentially a "peace pact," in which organized workers were expected to exchange their major weapon, the strike, for mandatory recognition and a number of procedural guarantees from the employer (Panitch & Swartz, 1988).

The pattern was established for a new system of collective bargaining which emphasized legal and technical strategy in preference to job action. Union development subsequent to 1944 would bear the unmistakable imprint of this system, and that would be reflected in its education programs.

The 1950's brought new pressures on the labour movement. One was "McCarthyism," which led to the expulsion and repression of much of the militant, aggressive portion of the labour movement (Caragata, 1978, 137-8). Another was the introduction of both technological change and advanced techniques of scientific management. Introduced were the now-familiar divisons affecting blue- and white-collar work, specialization of work, and the growth of management functions. Major new classifications of employees who characterized themselves as "professionals" provided further challenges (Esland, 1980). Finally, there was a sharp increase in the participation of women in the labour

force, most in occupations not yet unionized.

To a large extent, the labour movement has yet to recover from these developments. One breakthrough was in the unionization of the public sector (government employees). Workers in the federal service finally gained full legal collective bargaining rights in the late 1970's. They were followed closely by Alberta government workers who formed the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees, after being chartered as a union in 1969 (Caragata, 1979, 144). With their inclusion, most of the features of the modern labour movement were finally in place.

Another was the formation of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) in 1956, a marriage between the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL) and the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC). In Alberta, the Industrial Federation of Labour (IFL) had been established in 1949 as the rival CCL labour central to the Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) (Caragata, 1979, 136). With the marriage of the two central bodies at the national level, the two provincial bodies were free to join into a single federation. Neither was able to avoid the walkout of the building trade unions in 1981; since that time a few of the trades have re-affiliated.

Comparative Labour Education

Apart from the history of labour, a few additional areas of literature have helped give definition to this study. Readings about union education practices outside of Canada, particularly that of Great Britain, showed how Canadian practices have come to differ.

In the first place, workers and union education have received a great deal more attention in other countries. It is noteworthy that in 1972, Canadian historian Irving Abella chided

> A distressing aspect of the trade-union movement in Canada is that few people seem to care enough to write about it. There are well over two million Canadians who are, or at one time were members of a trade union--many times the number who have ever belonged to a Canadian political party. Yet, while there are scores of books on Canadian political parties and politicians, there is but a mere handful dealing with Canadian unions and labour leaders. Not only have academics consciously ignored the labour movement, but the actual participants themselves, the union leaders and organizers, have been inordinately reluctant to write about their experiences. Not one Canadian labour leader of note has ever published his recollections. This stands in stark contrast to the American and European experience where there exists a vast union literature made up almost equally of books from the academic community and from the labour movement itself (Abella, 1972, p. 71).

It is true that since 1972 a great deal more has been added to the general treasury of Canadian labour history, and at least "one Canadian labour leader of note," Bob White, has since published his "recollections" (1987). However, the subject of labour education has been slow to receive recognition and has been scantily acknowledged. This fact is repeated here, in order to contrast Canadian attention to labour education with that of other countries.

By contrast, British literature is abundant on the subject of "workers" or "trade union education" (Cosin, 1976; Backhouse, 1982; Coffield & Goodings, 1983; Griggs, 1983). Unlike Canada, Britain's unions "surrendered" their education function to the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) at the turn of this century. British educationist S. G. Raybould (1959) describes this unique feature of British unions:

> This feature is that unlike, for example, many American and German trade unions, the British unions do not themselves directly provide educational facilities for their members,
>
> but co-operate with specifically educational organizations, principally the WEA and the NCLC [National Council of Labour Colleges], which do (1959, 30).

Canadian, like American and German trade unions, developed and controlled labour education themselves.

Another feature which shaped the British system of trade union education came from the influence of the adult education movement. Most literature tends to regard trade union and adult education as interchangeable. One of the best sources of historical information on the WEA and Trade Union Education is in a collection of essays on Trends in English Adult Education, edited by S. G. Raybould (1959). Raybould describes why Albert Mansbridge first saw to the establishment of the WEA:

> It is not, perhaps, so widely appreciated that one of the factors impelling [Mansbridge] to this action was concern about the union leadership in the Taff Vale dispute in 1900, which led to the most serious legal threat to trade unionism that had been known for three quarters of a century. Rightly or wrongly, Mansbridge thought that the railwaymen had been unwisely led, and he attributed the fact to the 'hard veneer' of elementary education which was all that most working men received (31).

Thus, the WEA was founded to withstand the threat to unions but with more of a concern about raising the general education levels of the workers. Workers' education assumed the character of humanist education; an education Mansbridge had decided to be a " 'wise and free' education, of kind and quality associated with universities"; or what Raybould further describes as "the 'liberal' adult education characteristic of the British movement in this century."

This "liberal" education is precisely that which another British adult educationist, Peter Jarvis, extolls. For Jarvis (1983), education of working adults must be student--and not teacher--centred. Labour educators tend to agree with this view but in the British experience, adult education seeks no control over learning "end products." The teacher simply acts as a facilitato By contrast labour educators in Canada may behave as facilitators but are committed to achieving well-defined union and political goals (See Appendix E).

The British concern with liberal, humanist and general knowledge education is mainstream adult education thought. Australian adult educator, John R. Whitehouse, goes to great length to define labour education as distinct from adult education in his essay, "Labour Education: Developing Concepts and Dimensions" (1979). He summarizes:

> In this search for definition and identification of labour education I further suggest that it is useful to reiterate points of difference in objectives that distinguish labour education from the more traditional objective of general adult education. I offer the view that these differences may be found in aims and activities of a collective nature, using collective approaches and techniques, rather than the personal development, including upward job mobility goals of traditional fields of education, though both may result from a labour education experience (3).

This contrasting definition is crucial for understanding how the Canadian practice of labour education has differed from the British. Because the emphasis in Canada has historically emphasized the collectivist orientation it has placed little value on education for career advancement and, since World War II, little attention has been given to provision of basic skills education. The emphasis instead has been on forging collectivist thinking and increasing the levels of participation by the rank and file.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

All enquiry starts from some "puzzlement" (Lofland & Lofland, 1985, p. 53). This study began in a complex of observations and experiences of labour activists and leaders both national and local. Bob White and Jean Claude Parrot have become "household names." As Presidents of their respective unions, the CAW and CUPW, they are both admired and reviled. My puzzlement began by wondering how these and other men and women became the leaders they are.

This study began in early 1985 after discussions with various union staff and teachers in Alberta. No known surveys had been conducted concerning the union's local education. A mail survey of all former students was considered. It was decided to survey students attending a labour school rather than a mail survey because the survey could be distributed to approximately 150 students and returned in a convenient length of time.

Authorization for AFL Assistance

Formal approval for conducting research on the Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) schools was given by the President and Secretary Treasurer in March, 1985. They granted unconditional access and

support. The executive expressed interest in receiving my research findings.

Selection of the Labour School

Through discussions with AFL teachers and administrators, responsible for programs, I learned that labour schools were conducted in the Spring and Fall in 1985. A cross section of students from different unions across Alberta would attend these schools. The 1985 Spring Labour School to be held in Red Deer was chosen. This offered a setting of students and teachers as possible subjects for survey by questionnaire.

The Students

In the course of discussion with teachers from the Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) and a teacher from the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE), many questions arose. Very little data had been systematically compiled. Student information was restricted to where they came from, which union sponsored them and which type of accommodation was needed. Teachers were unable to provide information about the students, their educational backgrounds, their levels of union involvement, their level of activism, and their response to union programs. This lack of basic information provided the rationale for developing a questionnaire, one which would attempt to profile the students.

The Pilot Test

While drafting the questionnaire, one of the teachers contacted me and offered to pilot test the questionnaire. This AUPE teacher suggested the questionnaire be given in April, 1985, at the conclusion of her two day Steward Seminar in Red Deer. Thirty-five students attended the seminar and all completed the questionnaire. Examination of results indicated that questions should be improved in terms of format.

Two weaknesses were identified. The second section of the questionnaire attempted to solicit evaluation of the courses, teachers, and methods of teaching. These were presented in a multiple choice format. Three choices were provided for each question. An example of this type of question was:

> What do you learn the most from?
>
> a) the instructor
> b) the films, tapes and handouts
> c) discussion involving other students

It was felt that by providing a list of choices, students would be accurate. However, providing only three choices was limiting.

The second weakness was the attitude-opinion survey. The pilot questionnaire posed fifteen open-ended questions that solicited "yes-no" answers. Two examples of this type of question were:

> Have you become more active in the union since you took an education course?
>
> Do you participate more actively in political affairs since you have taken courses?

This section was replaced with twenty-four statements using a Lichert agreement-scale format.

After further discussion with the AUPE teacher, it was revealed that data received from the pilot was too similar to the information collected in the routine course evaluations. It was decided that an attempt should be made to interview a subsample of Spring school students to complement the questionnaire.

One week after the pilot test, two teachers discussed the pilot and helped revise the questionnaire. Six questions were generated during a brainstorming session involving these two teachers. An example of the revised question is:

> Identify the union activities from which you have learned the most?
>
> a) meeting other union members
> b) travelling to conferences and conventions
> c) attending union courses
> d) being involved in worksite issues and problems
> e) reading union literature mailed to my home
> f) dealing with management

Four questions in the same format as this example were included, and respondents were asked to rank order all answers from first to last choice. Providing more and varied answers would reduce the likelihood that respondents could anticipate the "right" answers (See Appendix A).

Participant Selection

Students registered in the 1985 AFL/CLC Spring Labour school in Red Deer were selected for this study. One hundred and forty-seven students organized into eight different courses attended the five-day

school. The revised questionnaire was distributed to the students in their classes and various times were allotted for its completion.

Teachers reported that the questionnaire took approximately half an hour to complete. Questionnaires were completed between the first and fourth day of the school. One question asked students to check off the courses they had previously taken. The student may or may not have included the Spring school course. Information was not collected as to whether the questionnaire was completed at the beginning or the end of the course. One class set of eighteen questionnaires was "lost." These and an additional seven were not returned. Therefore, a total of 122 or 83% of the questionnaires were returned for analysis.

Analysis of Data

All responses were manually tallied and converted to percentages. The 25 attitude opinion statements are presented in tables. (See Appendix B.) The survey responses were also converted to computer records. The chi-square test was used (SPSS, 1988). This analysis provided a variety of one-way frequency distributions and cross-tabulations. Variables were created for subgroups based on sex, age, educational background, union education experience and activity levels. These subsample variables were cross-tabulated with a few selected evaluative question responses and all of the attitude-opinion statement responses. Only a few significant differences were found. The male-female rate of attendance and the age ranges reported by males and females both showed significant differences. These differences were

females both showed significant differences. These differences were reported and discussed in the findings.

The questionnaire data were organized into tables. Discussion of each table centred around those items with more than 50% response or very low response.

Student Interviews

Interviewing selected students was abandoned. Four problems were evident in the first two interviews.

1. The tape recorder made students self-conscious and nervous.

2. The students seemed suspicious about the questions they were being asked.

3. The students seemed to be looking for the expected answers (they would answer a question and asked, "Don't you agree?).

4. The demanding school schedule limited time for interviews to less than forty-five minute sessions.

The Teachers

Teachers provided background information and assistance in drafting, distributing and discussing the questionnaire. In Roy Shaw's words, "Education's real home is the place where teacher and student meet" (Shaw, 220). Any study of labour education had to include the teachers.

The second stage of this research evolved well after the questionnaire data had been compiled and examined. One of my AFL teacher contacts offered to identify other labour educators who could provide material for reporting the teacher's view of labour education.

Teacher Selection

In 1988, individuals were chosen for interview from the list supplied by the AFL teacher. Teachers are drafted from unions both locally and nationally to teach at affiliate schools. The teachers on the list were chosen primarily on the basis of their teaching years, availability, and contact with the AFL labour schools.

From an original list of nine possible subjects, five were chosen and interviewed. These five were chosen because each had at least four years teaching experience and an area of specialization. Also, each had taught at one or more AFL labour schools. Having taught at AFL schools, even though some worked for other unions, provided a basis of experience in common with that of the student questionnaire. Five teachers were contacted and agreed to participate in the study. One teacher summed up the typical response by saying, "It's about time someone studied what we do in unions!"

Initial Contact

The first meeting with each teacher took place at the end of May, 1988. This meeting permitted me to become acquainted and gain some

teacher was provided with a verbal description of the work already completed. They were also provided with a list of core questions around which the interviews would be organized. These questions focused on the teacher's approach and aims in teaching union members. At this meeting, the teachers supplied books, manuals and an assortment of labour education materials. A mutually agreeable time and place for interviews was established.

The Interviews

Parts of the first three interviews were tape recorded in addition to note taking. My proficiency in shorthand improved, and I stopped using a tape recorder. Its presence seemed to be inhibiting and distracting as the first two interviewees stated that recorders made them self-conscious.

The five interviews were conducted during June and July, 1988. (See Appendix C.) This period was chosen because the early summer months tended to be less hectic and daytime schedules were more flexible. Interviews were scheduled around vacation absences, although the one teacher interviewed at home was on vacation at the time.

In order to direct the interviews along similar lines, each teacher was asked a set of core questions (See Appendix D.) One interview was restricted by time and as a result tended to follow the question format more closely. Interviews were immediately transcribed by me and typed following each interview (See Appendix E.) Each teacher was given a name for a reference. The five interviewees were given copies of the

transcribed interviews. They were also guaranteed anonymity by having their identities concealed.

Analysis of Interviews

Responses were summarized and displayed on large sheets of paper which served as charts. Questions provided the column headings. In order to summarize and compare ideas, responses were abbreviated to key words or phrases and presented in horizontal columns under each question-heading. The questions presented the main organizational principle for analyzing teachers' responses. Discussion of ideas contained in each interview were presented together to facilitate comparison. Similarities were drawn whenever possible in order to generate a general description of what it is to teach the labour curriculum.

Data from the interviews were divided into two parts: background information was organized on a table for discussion and comparison; the second part involved comparing and contrasting answers to the core questions in order to provide a summary of perceptions and practices.

Documentation

A variety of related materials was collected:

1. Policy statements and resolutions from conventions; program pamphlets and brochures; and financial reports.

2. Instructors' manuals.

2. Instructors' manuals.

3. Other references and resources.

Policy statements and resolutions summarize the union movement's stated education goals. Pamphlets and brochures provide course titles and descriptions. Together these present an overview of the labour curriculum and were used for the educational experience question in the questionnaire. Financial data reveal how expensive education services are to provide and revealed the fluctuations in funding them. Instructional manuals focus on adult teaching techniques and present models for lesson planning and delivery. These helped identify a question for the teacher interviews. References and resources supplied by teachers helped identify important political, ideological and technical influences on their teaching practices.

The thesis is written in chapters as follows:

Chapter One - Introduction

Chapter Two - Literature Review

Chapter Three - Methodology

Chapter Four - Historical Context of Labour Education

Chapter Five - The Teacher's Role in Labour Education

Chapter Six - A Survey Profile of Union Students

Chapter Seven - Conclusion

CHAPTER FOUR

Structure of the Labour Movement: Canada and Alberta

The week-long Spring school of the Alberta Federation of Labour is only one educational event within the broad spectrum of activities, functions, protocols and institutions which may be brought under the heading of "labour education" in Alberta. As such, its nature and significance may only be properly appreciated if it is situated within the total program of labour education as it occurs in this Province. It will be the purpose of this chapter to provide such a context.

Labour education as an aspect of the labour movement is carried out by individual unions as well as a variety of labour organizations according to their specific purposes and structures. As can be expected, there is considerable divergence in the nature and extent of labour education depending on the union, industry, region, and in many cases, the orientation and preferences of individual leaders. It is necessary, therefore, to understand the structure of the labour movement as it presently exists nationally and in Alberta. The historical sketch in Chapter Two makes it possible.

The Local Union

The basic building block of the labour movement is the union local, the membership unit of what is usually a multi-local union. The local

is normally organized around the "bargaining unit," that legally-defined group of workers which receives a certificate to operate as a union.

The local is the level in which members directly participate, paying dues, electing officers, gaining and entering into collective agreements, keeping watch on contract administration, handling grievances and implementing the organizational programs, including some education.

Normally, local unions have a good deal of autonomy as most collective bargaining takes place between the local and the employer of its members. There are certain exceptions to this practice in which bargaining is conducted on a national or regional scale, and in some cases by combinations of unions or locals and associations representing employers. Locals may vary in size, depending on the type of unions to which they belong and the size of the establishments in which their members are employed. Local unions usually meet either semi-monthly or monthly to conduct business and plan projects. Delegates and union officers at every level are subject to an election process regulated by the union constitution. In theory, these democratic procedures keep them responsive to the needs and desires of their members. The ability to elect leadership is a key principle in that unions are democratic institutions accountable to their memberships. In workers' earliest involvement with unions, democracy was at work. Even now, workers vote for and certify their union. They elect a negotiating committee and vote on the proposals and demands that the union executive take into negotiations and they vote on the acceptance of the collective

agreement. In short the union members run their own local union and, through the delegates they elect, the parent union and the labour centrals.

The Parent Union (CLC Affiliate)

It is at this level that most labour education takes place within the labour movement. The union is the labour organization that organizes and charters locals in industries and workplaces as defined in its constitution, sets general guidelines for its locals, assists them in the conduct of their affairs and co-ordinates their activities. Often, national or international, the union is financed by its local unions through membership dues which pay for the administration of the union, strike pay, legal fees, staff salaries and activities. Unions hold regular conventions for elected representatives of their locals (called delegates) at which delegates debate and set the union's general policies and programs and elect officers to represent the union.

The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)

In spite of the historical division affecting organized labour, the CLC continues to be the dominant labour central in Canada, bringing together unions, locals and federations on the basis of their common interests and objectives. Besides providing for a full range of services to its affiliates, the CLC provides a national voice for

organized labour in its dealings with governments, other national organizations, and internationally. From time to time, this central body is asked to coordinate relations between unions, including the arbitration of any differences which may arise.

Commonly referred to as the "House of Labour," the CLC is the largest central labour body in Canada and is composed of approximately 85 national and international unions representing about 2.2 million workers. These national and international unions would represent unions such as the autoworkers, steelworkers, postal workers, and public or government employees, etc.

Every second year, the CLC holds a national convention and these gatherings have frequently been referred to as "The Parliament of Canadian Labour." Some 2,500 local union delegates attend and they devote most of their time to discussing resolutions which determine the policy to be followed by the CLC in the next two years. Every local union, provincial federation of labour and labour council is entitled to submit resolutions for consideration by the convention and to send at least one delegate.

The subject matters discussed at these conventions cover a wide variety and illustrate the scope of interest of the Canadian labour movement under today's conditions. They include economic issues, regional economic development, housing, medicare, various forms of social legislation, labour legislation, adjustment to technological change, pension issues, environmental pollution, immigration, consumer affairs, the plight of Indians, Eskimos and Metis, and international affairs.

The growth of the labour movement and the various political and economic demands and pressures placed upon it has created a need for specialized services. The services provided by the CLC include education, organization, public relations, women's bureau, social and community programs, political education, research and legislation, occupational health and safety and international affairs. These services are financed by the affiliate per capita tax levied on unions by the CLC. In addition, the CLC maintains service and education staff and organizers in all regions throughout Canada.

The Provincial Federation of Labour (AFL)

With the determination that labour was primarily a provincial matter under the British North America Act, it became necessary to establish Provincial Federations of Labour to perform the same functions of a labour central as the CLC does on a national basis. The purposes of the Alberta Federation of Labour are provided in the Constitution as follows:

> 1.2.0 - PURPOSES
>
> The purposes of this Federation are:
>
> a) To support the principles and policies of the Canadian Labour Congress.
> b) To promote the interest of its affiliates and generally to advance the economic and social welfare of the workers of Alberta.
> c) To assist affiliated organizations in extending the benefits of mutual assistance and collective bargaining to workers.
> d) To assist wherever possible in the organization of the unorganized into unions of their mutual aid, protection and advancement.

e) To encourage all affiliates to extend union membership and organization in Alberta to workers regardless of race, colour, creed, sex, age or national origin.
f) To secure provincial legislation which will safeguard and promote the principle of free collective bargaining, the rights of workers, and the security and welfare of all people.
g) To protect and strengthen our democratic institutions, to secure full recognition and enjoyment of the rights and liberties to which we are justly entitled and to preserve and perpetuate the cherished traditions of our democracy.
h) To promote the cause of peace and freedom in the world, and to assist and cooperate with free and democratic labour movements throughout the world to that end.
i) To aid and encourage the sale and use of union-made goods and union services through the use of the union label and other symbols; to promote the labour press and other means of furthering the education of the labour movement.
j) To protect the labour movement from all corrupt influences and from the undermining efforts of all totalitarian agencies which are opposed to the basic principles of our democracy and free and democratic unionism.
k) To preserve the independence of the labour movement from political control, to encourage workers to vote, to exercise their full rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and to perform their rightful part in the political life of the municipal, provincial and federal governments. (AFL, 1988b)

The Federation's Annual Convention is perhaps the most significant political and social event for organized labour in the province. It is here that delegates from local unions determine policy, elect officers, and determine the course for the House of Labour in Alberta.

The Labour Council

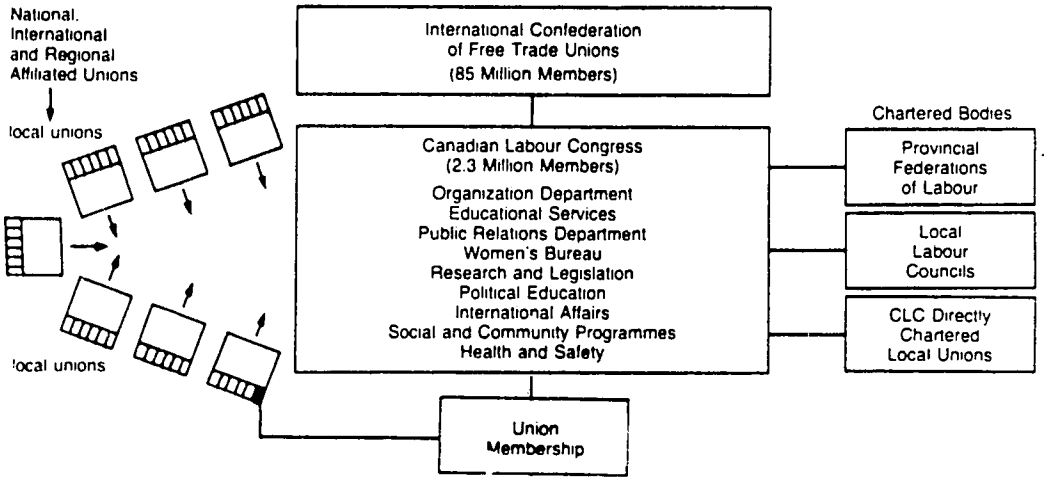
Reflecting the extent to which the structure of the labour movement emulates the structure of government in this country, labour councils will deal with matters concerning local government, municipal councils, boards and commissions. They provide a means of bringing together local unions in a community and enable labour to play a role in local

affairs and are usually the effective agencies at the community level for carrying through the policies of the trade union movement initiated at the provincial and national levels. The range of activities in which the labour council involves itself is diverse--from providing strike support for local unions, to local area organizing, to United Way fund-raising, to hosting local educational schools. Most labour councils across Canada have limited funds and no full-time staff. Their work is carried out by many unpaid elected officers together with volunteers from among their delegates and other union members. Thus, their effectiveness varies from area to area.

Like other levels, they are also financed by per capital assessment on local affiliates.

Figure 1

Structure of Canadian Labour Movement



(CLC, 1988b, p.2)

The Process and Structure of Labour Education

The history of the labour movement may be seen as a record of the struggle for the hearts and minds of the working people. To those who accept such an interpretation, this implies an educational task of the first magnitude and priority for the labour movement.

In fact, it has been common for union leaders to define their educational programs in such a way as to reverse the order of most established taxonomies of educational objectives, placing objectives which belong on the affective or emotive domain far ahead of those that relate to either the "skills" or cognitive domains. Their intention in so doing has been captured in the first verse of the song, "Solidarity Forever," (Chaplin, date unknown) which has become the hymn of trade unionists across the country:

> When the union's inspiration through the worker's blood shall run,
> There can be no power greater anywhere beneath the sun
> For what force on earth is weaker than the feeble strength of one,
> But, the union makes us strong.

When this underlying theme of "union inspiration" is combined with the organizational aims and purposes of individual unions and labour organizations, the result is a configuration of dominant aims and objectives of labour education programs across Canada. There is little evidence of any agreement as to what constitutes the boundaries of "labour education." In many cases, in fact, the educational effort is seen as combining all communication and contact with workers and the public. It, therefore, refers to a range of activities and events

public. It, therefore, refers to a range of activities and events ranging from schools and seminars to newspapers, advertising, rallies and public demonstrations, all of which are described in terms appropriate to educational aims and objectives.

This approach is well illustrated in the Report of the Education Committee to the 1989 Convention of the Alberta Federation of Labour. It defines education as "one of the most important areas of endeavour for the labour movement," under which it includes the following items:

- essay contests in the public school system
- a speakers' bureau
- the Alberta Foundation for Economic Education
- distribution of educational materials on such issues as Free Trade, Workers' Compensation, labour law, international affairs, and the labour movement
- publication of a monthly newsletter
- week long labour schools (Alberta Federation of Labour [AFL], 1989, C-3).

The approach of members of the labour movement to the question of content for education is certainly not homogeneous; it depends upon the individual or organization being canvassed. The literature or proceedings of some union may be replete with statements concerning a social and political agenda for labour. Existing side-by-side within the "House of Labour" are several other unions which are concerned only with subject matter relating to the legal and technical aspects of collective bargaining and contract administration. This latter "style" of unionism is sometimes referred to as "business unionism" (Briskin, 1983, 263).

Differences exist, not only in content, but as well in the extent of attention or commitment to labour education of any kind. While one union may devote the bulk of its resources to education and

common for unions of the latter type to argue that only leadership and staff need have the knowledge, skill, and motivation necessary to provide "service" to the members. Where they lack competence, lawyers, consultants and other experts may be retained.

On a national level, education continues to be a major priority of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). In the CLC's Notes on Unions entitled "The Structure of Labour in Canada" this educational priority is described:

> The CLC conducts an extensive educational program in which some 50,000 trade union members take part annually. The program includes weekend institutes on a community basis and summer and winter schools for larger areas. Advanced training for union staff and members is provided through the Labour Education and Studies Centre, which offers programming relating to the concerns of the labour movement internally and its participation in Canadian society. The Labour College of Canada offers a unique general education program for future trade union leaders.

Also in the CLC Notes entitled "Canada's Future: Today's Challenge" (1988, 4):

> True to its origin and history, political education continues to rank highly as an expressed aim of the Congress. For example, delegates to the CLC's 17th Constitutional Convention (May, 1988) approved a policy paper entitled "Canada's Future: Today's Challenge," which concluded with a Program of Action containing the following:
>
> 109. We must, as a Canadian Labour Congress, increase the pressure until the extreme right-wing, such as the Vander Zalms, the Devines and the Mulroney governments and their right-wing philosophies and friends are defeated.
>
> 110. The successful achievement of these goals will require a continued mobilization of the Canadian labour movement. To this end:
>
> a) The Canadian Labour Congress, its federations and labour councils and its affiliated unions will:

a) The Canadian Labour Congress, its federations and labour councils and its affiliated unions will:

   i) continue to carry the message to evey local, community and region of Canada that the Mulroney trade agreement, and the policies for privatization and deregulation are a fundamental attack on the kind of Canada we have today and on the struggles of progressive people to build a better society; and,

   ii) to put before Canadians the choice they face between competing visions for the future of our country.

b) The CLC, its federations, labour councils and affiliated unions will continue to mobilize against contracting out to non-union firms, privatization and deregulation policies long after the free trade battle is won. These policies represent enormous dangers to our society, our standard of living and our jobs.

c) The CLC will continue to make available material to explain to the union membership and the public at large, the dangers of these policies and the conservative vision that binds them.

   i) labour's educational and video material will be shared with these outside groups and coalitions to assist them in their efforts; and,

   ii) the CLC will reproduce the elements of this policy statement in an attractive format with supporting charts, tables and graphics for use in education and informational efforts.

d) The CLC, federations and labour councils will hold conferences, sponsor seminars and educational schools on labour's vision and against policies promoted within the right-wing vision.

Similar statements of objectives continue to be common across Canada. In Alberta, the following resolution, passed at the 27th Annual Convention of the Alberta Federation of Labour is typical:

> WHEREAS the American "New Right" in its many forms, is being ambitiously promoted in Alberta by influential government and business leaders, and

> WHEREAS this philosophy poses a fundamental threat not only to organized labour, but to the whole concept of a just, caring society at the core of labour's struggle, therefore
>
> BE IT RESOLVED that the Alberta Federation of Labour form alliances with other progressive groups in the province to develop an educational strategy to counter the "New Right" and its policies (1983, No. 91).

In this Province, the Alberta Federation of Labour devotes budget, staff and resources to a program of labour education. Its efforts in this area are focused by the Education Committee of the AFL, which meets regularly to conceive, plan and recommend to the governing Council an educational program for the year. The Committee's mandate is as follows:

> The Committee shall:
>
> a) concern itself with the education of members of affiliated unions, organizing educational activities such as week-long schools, as well as other internal union education schools as required;
>
> b) co-operate with labour council education committees, as well as with the Canadian Labour Congress education director;
>
> c) compile and distribute a list of people and resources available in the province for education purposes; and
>
> d) promote labour education programs to all Alberta education institutions (1980, 3).

Reports of the Committee to the Annual Conventions of the Alberta Federation of Labour provide some of the clearest statements of aim or purpose for labour education, depending of course, on the particular author for that year. The aim statements provided in 1982 and 1983 are particularly lucid. In 1982, the Report began thus:

> To say that labour education is of utmost importance is simply to state the obvious. However, at this particular time, it appears that the obvious needs to be stated.

> Education has traditionally been one of the foundations of this Federation. By its very nature, an educational event builds solidarity. It is one of the visible proofs that a body of labour exists in this province and in a province where only a minority of workers are organized. It is important that those who have decided to become active be given an opportunity to learn, socialize with each other, and generally engage in activities that assure them that they are not alone. For many small unions, the education events sponsored by the Federation are the only ones available to them. For these reasons, it is time we, as delegates to this Federation convention, took a good look at just what is happening to our education program. If we are not prepared to support our organization through the educational events it conducts, then we are in serious trouble, indeed.

And, in 1983, it said:

> The education of the leaders and general membership of its affiliates remains one of the largest challenges facing the Alberta Federation of Labour. We cannot expect success in our endeavors so long as our key people lack training, and certainly not as long as the majority of our 100,000 members believe the arguments and misinformation with which they are incessantly bombarded by employers, governments, academicians, and the media. Because we cannot assume, like business, that our education is being conducted for us by public institutions and the media, we are forced to make education a part of every undertaking.
>
> Educational events serve other objectives as well. Primary amongst these is the social aspect. Much of the efforts of key people, and most recruiting of new activists rests on our ability, as a movement, to inspire, to build the feeling of belonging (or brotherhood/sisterhood) and solidarity. Thus, opportunities for get-togethers remains a major "educational" objective.
>
> Finally, we cannot ignore the educational process taking place in the rest of society. The schools, post-secondary institutions, and the media all have programs that require constant monitoring and, if possible, input from the labour movement. Our record in this area is less than dismal; it is practically non-existent (1983, 1).

In its 1982 Report, the Committee reported on the following activities and events. (Unhappily, similar reports are not consistently provided for other years.)

- Week-long AFL/CLC Labour Schools, Spring and Fall of 1981
- Health and Safety Conference, September 1981

- Film series, in conjunction with the Edmonton Cross-Cultural Learner Centre
- Labour Studies Project, Mount Royal College
- Labour Studies Program, Grant McEwan College
- Participation on Work Experience Program Committee
- Participation on Committees of Alberta Department of Education
- Collaboration with CLC in two week long schools, January and June 1981
- Weekend Labour Schools in Red Deer, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Edmonton and Calgary (2 schools) (1982, 3).

Finally, the scope of labour education according to the Alberta Federation of Labour can be appreciated by examining the resolutions and papers adopted by the annual Conventions. A topical summary of these is provided in a Policy Manual (1988, 14). It lists key words for "Union Education" under the following headings: calendar of events, employee recovery program, labour communication, pre-retirement, programs/education priorities, schools, and strategy.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Role of Teachers in Labour Education

The Teacher Centred Curriculum

The School

For purposes of this study, the "labour school" refers to the week-long residential programs conducted twice yearly by the Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL). All affiliated Alberta unions financially support and utilize this education service. The AFL school thus represents an educational experience that most active union members will come to have.

The AFL labour schools are usually held in smaller centres like Red Deer and Lethbridge, or in resort centres such as Banff Springs Hotel and Jasper Park Lodge. The rationale for avoiding the larger urban centres where most union members live in Alberta is threefold. First, the school is seen as a "retreat" for union members and therefore, these sites are likely to bring students away from their cities. Second, resort settings are used to attract more interest and boost registrations. Host unions assume all costs for students, including meals, accommodation, travel, time off from work and per diem allowances. Many students have reported that they could never afford such accommodations if they had to pay for them. The school is both a

retreat and a privilege. The members feel pampered and are rested--away from the demands of their busy home and work schedules. Program organizers emphasize a third reason for location choice: in Alberta very few facilities which offer accommodation packages and meeting rooms are unionized. All labour school venues are unionized facilities.

The Role of the Education Committee

Most unions which have education departments usually have education committees which guide them. Professional staff are retained as union educators; however, membership committees and executive officers maintain a degree of control, determining what should be taught.

In the AFL, a standing education committee is appointed to serve a two-year term. This committee is central to the planning of the schools. The members decide when, where, what and who will teach the programs. Members are appointed to this committee upon the recommendation of their unions. Affiliates put forward names of their members who are able to contribute some expertise or are highly committed to the educational work of the labour movement. The President of the AFL, together with the Executive Committee decide who will be appointed. Every effort is made to balance unions represented on this committee and to select members who have some known competencies.

The committee work to decide what the curriculum priorities of the AFL and which courses are in demand. Are there issues or policies

which need to be addressed or disseminated through courses? What are the key political or economic issues facing society or the labour movement? Are there courses which are no longer needed? Are there new approaches which must be taken? Which "tool" courses should be offered and are there enough? Are the offerings balanced between "tool" and "awareness" courses? Once these questions are answered, the committee then decides who is competent, desired and available to teach at the schools. Committee members, together with AFL staff appointed to help them, draw up a list of teacher's names. If the expertise for particular courses is unavailable, the AFL staff contact the CLC regional prairie office in Regina and request names. The education committee frequently relies on the CLC network to locate special guest teachers and experts. Sometimes teachers are chosen because they have a particular teaching style and are popular with the students.

Teachers and Course Planning

Once teachers are in place, they are free to plan courses as they see fit. Through preliminary discussions or letters, the education committee conveys its needs and objectives in general terms. For example, "We need a course on Human Rights which emphasizes women's rights." Beyond this guideline, teachers are expected to know best how to teach and what to include. Material support is well-provided for instructional planning. This encourages teachers to vary classroom activities using overhead projectors, audio-visual equipment, flipcharts and chalkboards.

Teachers are at the centre of labour education. Once chosen, they then design the curricula, determine the aim of their courses, and then personify union values and principles to their student. The purpose of this chapter is to examine teacher perceptions as they report their experience as labour educators. The development and history of the labour movement have generated values and principles which Labour is based on. Teaching in this context has unique features and should not be seen as part of the traditional adult education movement (Whitehouse, 1979). Unlike adult education, labour education does not focus on the individual and his/her "personal development." Rather, labour education is, in John Whtehouse's terms, rooted "in aims and activities of a collective nature" (Whitehouse, 3). This is an important concept for understanding how teachers approach their teaching.

One of the interviewed teachers explained the questioning process which he uses to prepare his classes. First, he refers to curriculum and instruction guides prepared by the CLC's education department. He decides which parts he wants to use and selects resource materials, handouts, and A/V titles. He then "works over" those materials until they fit the objectives he has determined. He emphasized the importance of learning from previous classroom experiences. What fails? What succeeds? Does this or that method permit the student to blend his own experience with the course material? Does this approach help students "discover" what unions have known all along? How, in effect, do students learn that collective problems require collective solutions?

The Interviews

The findings from the interviews are presented in two parts: first, the background of each teacher, and second, the key questions are presented for comparison and discussion. To facilitate discussion, each teacher has been given a first name which also conceals his/her identity.

In Table 1, biographical data for each teacher is summarized. The age of teachers at the time of interview, the place of origin, education levels, years of teaching experience and teaching specialties are presented.

The teacher's average age was 38.8 years. The range was from 37 to 41 years, placing all five as "baby boomers." Each teacher identified the "sixties" as having an important personal influence.

> Jesse: It was the late sixties when I finished high school, so I was also influenced by the student and anti-war movement. While at university, I became involved with student newspapers . . . . and was politically active on campus in issue-orientated, left-wing groups.
>
> Wally: Before 1975 . . . there was a certain amount of radicalization both within the labour movement and in my own views.
>
> Rhonda: I did take a lengthy bit of time off from work shortly after high school in order to go hitchhiking across Canada and down to Mexico--those were my hippy days.
>
> Jeff: Primarily because of my background in organizing. During the time I was a student and teacher, I worked as an activist and organizer for different projects which date back to 1968.

Table 1

Backgrounds of Teachers

Teacher	Age	Place of Origin	Education	Years of Teaching Experience	Teaching Specialty
Jesse	38	Rural-West	University -B.A.	7	Labour law, Economics, & History
Wally	40	Rural-West	University -M.Ed.	8	Labour law, History, Health & Safety
Rhonda	38	Urban-East	High school	12	Basic and advanced Union Steward Bargaining Courses
Jeff	37	Rural-West	University -M.A.	4	Labour law, Human rights
Steve	41	Rural-West	High school, Technical Training	6	Workers' Compensation, Health & Safety

Although Steve did not refer to his formative years in terms of the sixties, he did refer to an early work experience which made him an activist in the area of health and safety. In the course of his work at a large industrial plant, he had observed management tampering with workers' health files in order to weaken workers' claims. This instance of "cheating" and the resulting injustices to workers caused him to take their side. As he did not go to university, he was less

likely to come in contact or be directly influenced by the student movement of the sixties.

Three of the five teachers earned university degrees, two with master's degrees. Rhonda had the least formal education but the most teaching experience. Jeff worked and studied outside Canada. This included studying in Paris and organizing in Bolivia among the tin miners. Wally had teaching experience in elementary school.

Two of the five teachers felt they were hired by unions because of the training or expertise they gained through formal education. Two teachers felt they were hired because of their activity as shop stewards. Although Steve was hired by the union as a health and safety coordinator, he commented:

> You might be interested to know that when I was hired here, they [the union] were more interested in my union involvement, in my biases, rather than my experience or expertise. They wanted to know what my attitude to unions was. The interview seemed to take hours and they clearly wanted to know where I was coming from.

Jeff discussed his eagerness as an organizer to get involved with unions. He stated that he was "happy to accept even a temporary contract [since he] had long since decided . . . that every vehicle for change was weak either because labour wasn't involved or was only minimally involved." Evidence from these interviews suggests that the chief criterion for hiring union staff is a clear commitment to unionism. Expertise and education, although relevant to the question of competence, seem to play a secondary role to that of pro-unionism for four out of five teachers. The fifth teacher did not supply details on how he got hired.

Four out of the five teachers were raised in rural, prairie communities. Only Rhonda differed since she was raised in a large urban centre in Eastern Canada.

Pedagogical Orientation

Teaching Objectives

The interview revolved around what the teachers hoped to achieve in their teaching of adult union members. Their teaching goals were described. Specific goals were defined in terms of specific skills or knowledge such as how to process a grievance. More general goals were expressed as ultimate teaching objectives such as raising class consciousness.

Teaching objectives were stated by each and reveal a variety of concerns:

> Jesse: The first purpose of every course is to dispel all the misconceptions that students walk in with--explode the myths about unions; the negative notions that have been created by business, government and the media, i.e., unions are too big, too powerful, cause the problems in the economy.
>
> Wally: In AUDC's much of the seemingly frivolous activity was designed to promote the view the steward had of self as somebody who could stand up and lead, to confront people--not fearing to take risks. I find it fundamental to make learning a rediscovery of one's sociality.
>
> Rhonda: . . . first of all, we provide the basic tool courses--those which help elected members provide assistance to union members on the shop floor.
>
> Courses on political action teach members about social and political issues that directly affect workers and their quality of life.

> . . . what I take pride in is when a student comes to me [after taking a course] and tells me he has now become an elected officer. He might say, "Thanks to you I have done something with what I learned."

Jeff: [Knowing how to differentiate between a freedom and a right because] it is essential to understand these two concepts in order to guide one's actions in the labour movement.

Steve: [Regarding Health & Safety] I use lay terms instead of technical language. I see it as lifting veils of secrecy off the medical world. It's also important to teach the economics of health and safety which may seem more theoretical or political, but I also include time for looking at strategies for change.

I suppose the hidden agenda is getting people excited, then we help point them in a direction where they can do some good. We provide them technically with the basic tools to handle concerns, but not only to deal with problems on the shop floor or on a day-to-day basis but in developing their confidence and expectations--to demand change at all levels and for the future.

The range of objectives thus include "dispelling myths" in order to change minds about unions; promoting leadership and increased levels of union involvement; discovering one's sociality (read: class); learning how to use abstract concepts to guide action (relating theory to practice); and gaining knowledge which helps members challenge the authority of the traditional professions, i.e. medicine.

Both immediate and long term education concerns were discussed. Each program must deliver a certain skill or quantity of information. The teachers all provided examples and insights into the tasks they set for themselves. The following excerpts present some of the more visionary statements:

Jesse: Ultimately union education is to produce informed, active, even militant members who are prepared to take an active role in social and political change.

Wally: Opposed to this was another model of unions which regarded collective bargaining as only one part of a program of collective action whose overall objective was the improvement of the condition of the working class and ultimately social change.
You might say my goal in teaching is to bring about the transformation of the student into a conscious, whole social being.

Rhonda: Programming workers with a set of answers is not going to develop leaders. Building self-confidence, worker identity, etc., that is what is most important.

Jeff: I have always felt that social activism is related to being a good citizen and the first criterion for being a good citizen is that you are connected with your community. What social action or revolutionary activity aims to do is to redefine relationships between people in order to make life more satisfying, and maybe that means creating more equality, or increasing people's economic share, etc.

Steve: . . . they see injustice here [problems in the workplace] and this takes them on to wider areas of concern--again it's this linking proces I started talking about.
It always points to political action.
It boils down to legislation. We say let workers participate in decision-making.

Pedagogical Influences

All teachers readily responded to the question of who or what had influenced them as teachers. Each teacher identified different theories, writers or individuals.

Jesse identified his grandparents as socialists who participated in founding the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) and the Lethbridge General Strike. It was evident from his account of his early years that his political heritage played an important role in his

ideological orientation.

Wally referred to Marx and neo-Marxist curriculum theorists, Bowles and Gintis, and Sennett and Cobb. He cited Marx's Paris Manuscripts as well. Wally was a recent education doctoral student. It was evident that he was reflecting upon these writers' works recently studied. Wally's concern was with the "oppression of workers" both as individuals as well as a class.

Rhonda was inspired by unionists who had both taught and first hired her as an instructor. She was moved by their "integrity" and "extraordinary commitment to working and disadvantaged people." She also cited Brazilian educationist and philosopher, Paulo Freire, as her intellectual "mentor" (Rhonda was the only teacher to refer to Freire explicitly.). She also referred to the "tremendous impact" attending a CLC Convention had had on her. The gathering of 2,000 workers was exciting and impressive.

Jeff's account of his work with the Bolivian tin miners was interesting. Although all the interviewees seemed to have had unconventional experiences and backgrounds, the fact that Jeff had undertaken such dangerous organizational work in a remote place in South America gave his commitment to teaching workers a dramatic force. What had influenced him was the manner in which the tin miners educated their own workers in spite of the fact that most workers were illiterate. This notion of teaching "students" to become the teachers was explained in the context of organizing a National Hunger Strike--a struggle developed to achieve free elections. This is best summarized in the following two-fold realization:

> This experience shaped my orientation which is based on the belief that teaching is more effective in the course of a struggle than outside a struggle. Also, I am very critical about the fact that we produce voluminous materials which are often way above workers' heads and often removed from their real experiences. You have to teach by getting people to learn from their own experiences.

Steve named a well-known occupational health activist and writer named Bob Sass. Sass, a former minister in the Saskatchewan NDP government, is noted as an eloquent and forceful speaker on the subject of working conditions. He has opened up the mental and spiritual dimensions of many serious discussions of worker health. Occupational health and safety is a very technical and highly legislated area of labour relations and activity. Citing Bob Sass as influence and inspiration suggests that Steve probably employs a holistic approach to the teaching of health and safety to union members. Steve's approach to teaching is more of a mission where:

> The first thing is that adults are not prepared to sit in a room and be lectured to like it's done in schools or university. They faced that type of arbitrary authority often enough at school and then at work. It would be especially annoying to experience the traditional approach in the context of an organization which is theirs. I found there has to be at least one-third of the time for group discussion, debate and voicing of opinions. Small group work and working independently on topics is the most effective way of getting active participation.
>
> The instructor has to become an accepted member of the group and would never be accepted as a detached pedagogue or expert. In other words, you have to present your working class bona fides as their instructor; someone with expert knowledge perhaps, but not a superior. Control in an adult setting must be handled differently. There are attention-seekers, people who dominate, and you need to employ skills that don't include any show of force or ridicule.
>
> Another characteristic of these classes worth mentioning is the incredible capacity to work that these students have. We will run six and a half-hours of class during the day and I'll assign small group work that will have to be done for

> the next morning, and it is usually done, and done well, conscientiously--unlike in school [public school].
>
> One of the key elements of schools which is often ignored is the payoff of the after-hour socializing. This provides a time when people can socialize with a group of people whose only link to one another is that they are trade unionists--which can be a real way to teach people more about class consciousness than all the day's course activities. Perhaps it's in the social or play context that all the other stuff comes to be meaningful.
>
> In some of the best run courses I have ever seen, the social agenda was as full as the classroom agenda. AUPE's old [former] Advanced Union Development Course, run in the early 80's, used to include evenings filled with learning and singing union songs, restoring a tradition tragically lost during the McCarthy era. Working people quit singing and celebrating their experiences and struggles. These AUDC activities tapped into a real area of need, judging from the levels of enthusiasm and response they got. The students themselves wrote skits, songs and even composed music to accompany the lyrics. We only wished we had videotaped some of them. You'd be amazed as to how much music and dramatic talent some of our workers have.

Special Concerns

Each teacher identified a special concern which each tried to or hoped to address. This concern was sometimes emphasized by repetition during the course of the interview.

Wally stressed the importance of reaching "the affective domain of the learning experience":

> In union schools that can be summed up in the objective of what we call "solidarity building." All sorts of things inside and outside of the class are employed in order to get the workers to identify with each other, the union movement and with working people around the world, . . .

Wally also referred to "seemingly frivolous activity" which is the way outsiders may describe the social or recreational activities

timetabled into all of the residential schools. Union members are not left to themselves once the classes end each day at 5:00 p.m. Social time is actually organized so that it complements the course work and to allow members to get to know one another better. Music, skits and films with working class themes are all employed to create a cultural experience for the workers so that they may be able to identify themselves as members of the working class.

Rhonda placed emphasis on the inclusion of family members in the labour education process. She praised the "model" experience provided by Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) in their annual family summer schools. As in the residential schools, the unions provided whole experiences, not just simply a set of courses.

Jeff addressed the "sociality" of workers. He explained that the people he encounters in the labour movement "want to connect and find a sense of belonging." Although unions do not fully address this need, he did feel that they did more to "provide something for many workers which is not available anywhere else in society." What unions do supply are opportunities for workers to be together for common and meaningful purposes.

A second point raised by Jesse dealt with how easy it was to teach workers, because they were so highly motivated to learn. Wally found union teaching a "refreshing experience." "For the first time, I didn't have to worry about motivation. I only had to work at providing education experiences that responded to workers' needs, as union activists."

Identification

Identifying workers' needs was deemed an important aspect of teaching. In order to assess the needs, both Rhonda and Steve emphasized the importance of being flexible and listening carefully to students, usually during the "ice-breaker" or introductory period of a course.

> We're dealing with adults and we should be communicating with them, exchanging ideas but especially listening to them and assisting them where they need it. I've learned to be flexible enough to adapt my presentation to meet the need they express and not what we interpret to be their need.

And Rhonda, with more than twelve years of teaching experience, stated:

> At this point I am primarily concerned with being flexible. Each course is different. There isn't always a set of right methods or answers. You can't teach adults in a union setting like you're teaching a set discipline. You never know what people will bring to a course. You have to be able to help people find their own answers. There are specific facts, but in general you want them to become problem-solvers--the process is what you emphasize.

The process is one which most often involves the sharing of experiences, bringing workers together, or for Steve, exchanging experiences so workers realize they are not alone, and that workplace problems are not only in their heads. This process of discussion and exchange, of small group work and social activities, of providing respect, a sense of belonging, of discovering class identity--is what the labour education experience evokes.

Summary

For the teachers, labour education is an attempt to move individuals in a new direction and to help members assume a collective identity. If the socialization process prepared workers to be recipients of rules and orders, the labour educator's task is to undo this "training." Finally the labour educator's purpose is best summarized in their own words: teachers aim to help workers find "strength and confidence"; "to redefine relationships between people"; to promote workers to become "proactive agents of social change"; and to "thereby produce informed, active, even militant members who are prepared to take an active role in social and political change."

CHAPTER SIX

A Survey Profile of Union Students

This chapter describes the participation and opinions of union members in the labour education process. The labour context creates a unique education setting. Labour education differs from other types of education because it is group-oriented and collectivist. How are members drawn from their local unions into the labour education process? Who are they? What do they do with what they learn? Do they reflect the opinions and ideas of the labour movement?

Student Selection Processes

In the province of Alberta, most organized workers are represented by unions which affiliate with the Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL). Total affiliated membership of the AFL as of 1988 was 107,000 members, and these members are represented by different unions (AFL, 1988). These unions vary according to size, occupational groupings (whether single or mixed occupations) and financial resources. These factors determine whether the union is large enough to have its own education department or whether the affiliate bodies provide education services; how many members are sent to courses; and how the union decides who attends the programs. In general, there are three methods of selection of students for union courses.

1) Election. This method is often used when there is a great deal of interest but only one or a few members are permitted to attend a course. This method is an attempt to be fair and permits the membership to make the final decision by process of election.

2) Selection. If budget restraint is not an issue or if interest is low, members may be chosen by local officers, or simply request to attend courses.

3) Requirement. In some unions, courses are compulsory for elected stewards and executive officers. For example, "Table Officer Seminars" provide chairpersons, treasurers, etc. with skills they need in their elected positions. These are frequently referred to as the "tool," or "how to" courses.

In general, union members attend courses and programs because they want to. Since education is a costly item, there are always fewer opportunities to participate than there are interested members (Waldie, 1985).

No accurate figures are available in Alberta about the real numbers of unionists who have passed through the labour education process. Total participation in the Spring and Fall AFL labour schools, such as the one included in this study, is only 300-350. By contrast, the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees has reported course enrolments for up to 2,000 in 1987 alone (AUPE, 1988). Other large unions provide courses internally as well; however, total counts are not compiled by the AFL and can only be surmised.

In the Waldie study of labour education in Canada commissioned by the CLC in 1985, "a crude estimate" of the numbers reached through

union education nationally was provided:

> As noted earlier, 15 CLC affiliates contacted as part of this study reported participation of 35,500 in their own internal programs. This implies an annual participation rate of 3.3 percent of these union's total membership (1.07 million), slightly more than one-half of the CLC's members . . . Combining all of the participation statistics for LEP and non-LEP programs operated by program sponsors, their affiliates, and chartered bodies yields an estimate of about 75,000, or about 2.8 percent of the membership of those organizations for the fiscal year of 1983-84 (Waldie, 1985, 88).

AFL administrators confirmed that a figure of 3% or somewhat less is close to their own approximate calculations.

Significance of Numbers "Educated"

The level of participation overall in union education has conflicting aspects. On the one hand, 75,000 unionists educated annually across Canada does not seem like an insignificant number. However, when we consider this number in percentage terms, it is small.

In Waldie's report, he illustrates what the numbers really mean in the functioning of an "average local":

> Only a small proportion of union members participate actively in union affairs. The average local union in Canada has about two hundred members. Such a local would typically have four officers and two or three shop stewards. Its committees, including the bargaining committee, usually involve many of the same people, so the local might be operated by as few as ten activists. A turnout of twenty people at a local union meeting would be considered good, except where contract ratifications or strike votes are involved, in which case the turnout would be much higher. In larger locals, participation in percentage terms is smaller (1985, 85).

Although the numbers of activists is small, the work of the local does manage to get done, i.e. negotiations result in contracts for ratification and meetings are conducted. Waldie provides a rationale for considering the low education numbers:

> The ultimate purpose of the labour education system is to improve both the quality of union representation and the level of awareness of the rank-and-file membership. Considering the modest resources available, this is most readily accomplished by increasing the participation and effectiveness of the active component of the membership and by providing them with the tools to pass on or implement what they learn. For this reason, the Canadian labour education system has not traditionally attempted to reach the rank-and-file directly [my emphasis]. It is therefore not surprising that those who attend labour education courses make up only a small proportion of total union membership. (1985, 85)

Student Profiles

Age and Gender of Students

At the 1985 AFL/CLC Spring Labour School in Red Deer, more than two-thirds (66.4%) of the participants were males, the majority in the age range of 26-40 (73.2%)(Table 2). Female participants (27%) were evenly distributed across the age range of 26-50. The highest representation of females (30.3%) was in the upper age group, 51-65. There were 10 females in this upper aged group compared to only 4 males.

Table 2

Respondents Attending the 1985 Spring AFL/CLC Labour School (Red Deer)

Gender By Age		Frequency	Percent
Sex			
Male		81	66.4
Female		33	27.0
No response		8	6.6
	Total	122	100.0
Age - Male			
Under 26		8	10.0
26 - 30		22	27.2
31 - 40		37	46.0
41 - 50		7	8.6
51 - 65		4	5.0
No response		3	3.0
	Total	81	100.1
Age - Female			
Under 26		5	15.2
26 - 30		7	21.2
31 - 40		5	15.2
41 - 50		6	18.2
51 - 65		10	30.3
	Total	33	100.1

Discrepancies in Age and Gender of Participants

Program administrators discussed their concern that women were not participating in education in satisfactory ratios. They explained that measures had been taken to assist women including provision of child care expenses. In addition, courses were prepared which would address women's workplace concerns and generated topics such as "Human Rights," "Bargaining for Equality," "Sexual Harassment in the Workplace," and "Affirmative Action."

Union teachers interviewed in 1988 also voiced concern about the low numbers of women participants. They explained how the various unions were addressing this issue by producing policy papers and passing resolutions which made recruitment of women activists a priority. Examples of these efforts included the creation of specially designated executive positions for women in order to provide role-models, as well as provision of special programs described above.

Educational Levels

Education levels are organized into seven categories (Table 3). Most participants tend to be educated beyond high school while only 18% have less than a high school diploma. Program administrators believe the education levels result from the increased participation of public sector unions. They also believe that government workers possess more education than private sector workers. These higher educated workers also tend to value education more, as well as take advantage of

educational opportunities. The percentage of public sector members who were students in the 1985 Spring Labour School was 54%.

Table 3

Education Levels of Union Students

Level of Education	Frequency	Percent
Technical or Trade School	27	22.1
Some College/University	27	22.1
High School Diploma	22	18.0
Some High School (No Diploma)	15	12.3
College/University Graduate	15	12.3
Grade 10 or less	7	5.7
Less than Grade 10 and Some Technical School	2	1.6
No Answer	7	5.7
TOTAL	122	100.0

Levels of Union Involvement

The majority (90.2%) reported that they attend most of their local union's meetings (Table 4). Over two-thirds of the students are either stewards (71.3%) or elected officers (63.9%) and are therefore "active" rather than "rank-and-file" members. Elected roles demand greater involvement due to the responsibilities that go with executive functions.

Table 4

Union Involvement by Type of Activity

Activities	Frequency	Percent
Attend most local membership meetings	110	90.2
Shop steward	87	71.3
Elected Union officer	78	63.9
Union committee member	63	51.6
Participate in campaigns organized by union	50	41.0
Negotiating Team	32	26.2

"Participation in campaigns" is seen as a part of each union's contribution to the broader aims of the labour movement. Forty-one (41.0%) percent of respondents are aware of the goals and activities of the labour movement and respond to calls for action by labour leaders. Members who participate in negotiating activities are charged with an important responsibility. No other elected position is subject to more scrutiny by so many members as is the negotiating team member. One-quarter (26.2%) of these respondents are negotiating team members.

This is additional evidence that union school students are highly active in their unions.

Half of the respondents (50.8%) spend a minimum of one to two hours on union activity per week (Table 5). These numbers are difficult to report since it is not known how the respondents calculated their average union activity on a weekly basis. The union year has a cycle of high and low activity levels.

Table 5

Time Spent on Union Activities in Hours Per Week

Amount of time	Frequency	Percent
One to two hours	62	50.8
Four hours	28	23.0
Ten hours or more	12	9.8
Six hours	7	5.7
Equivalent of one day	5	4.1
Other	5	4.1
No answer	3	2.5
TOTAL	122	100.0

Union Course Experience

The majority of respondents (73.5% and 51.6%) have taken steward courses, basic and advanced (Table 6). This complements the finding in Table 3 which indicates that 71.3% of respondents function as union stewards. By contrast, only 18.9% of respondents have taken "Table Officer Training" although 63.9% reported that they held elected officer positions.

Basic Health and Safety was taken by 42.6%. One of the teachers interviewed in 1988 described health and safety as the "soft-sell to the labour movement" because it is often the first course taken. Although this subject is important for many worksites, it also aids in recruitment of activists. These figures show that, after the steward courses, health and safety is the second most likely course for these members to have taken.

Previous attendance at AFL/ CLC Labour Schools was reported by 39.3% (Spring) and 21.3% (Fall). Only 12.3% of this group have never taken any union courses before. Out of 122 respondents, only one individual reported attendance at the CLC Labour College in Ottawa.

Evaluation of Educational Experience

The preferred response (71.3%) to the statement: "Union education courses are important for:" is "raising the knowledge level of members" (Table 7). The preferred choice in this case is simply common sense. By definition, education implies knowledge gained.

Table 6

Frequency of Courses Attended

Course Completed	Frequency	Percent
Basic Union Steward	90	73.8
Advanced Union Steward	63	51.6
Basic Health and Safety	52	42.6
AFL/CLC Spring Labour School	48	39.3
Table Officer Training	23	18.9
Advanced Health and Safety	19	15.6
Effective Communications	16	13.1
Contract Interpretation	15	12.3
This is my first course	15	12.3
Political Action Seminar	11	9.0
Regional CLC Labour School	6	4.9
Retirement Planning	4	3.3
CLC Labour College (Ottawa)	1	0.8

Table 7

Importance of Union Education

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
1) Union education courses are important for:		
Raising the education level of members	87	71.3
Knowing how to help people	46	37.7
Making the union strong	41	33.6
Making members more active	30	24.6
Meeting other union members	17	14
Learning how to handle management	13	10.6

"Knowing how to help people" is chosen by more than a third (37.7%) of the respondents. This value is consistent with the union emphasis on collectivism; the belief that the strong should help the weak.

The low priorities are "meeting other union members" (14.0%) and "learning how to handle management" (10.6%). Learning how to confront management and socializing are not deemed principal objectives for attending union schools. Students tend to downplay the importance of developing ties among members in the labour movement, yet teachers report as one of the objectives of the school experience.

Students were asked to identify the most important educational objectives in the labour curriculum (Table 8). Sixty-four percent (64%) felt that learning the purpose and activity of the union was most important. The second preferred choice identified the objective of teaching members how "to handle worksite problems" (52.5%). Again, these responses were consistent with the fact that half to three-quarters of students are either stewards or elected officers. Being able to explain the work of the union and dealing with conflicts between members and managers are fundamental union activities.

Many union activities can be described as education and not be "school" based. Students were asked to identify what they deemed important educational experiences. The union courses are identified as the most important avenues of learning by 82.0% of the respondents (Table 9). This may indicate that time spent in a classroom offers more time for thought and reflection. Most union schools are organized in residential format in order to remove members from their busy work

Table 8

The Most Important Things Unions Teach

Objectives	Frequency*	Percent
2) The most important things that unions teach are:		
How the union works for its members	78	64.0
How to handle worksite problems	64	52.5
Making members more confident	39	31.9
Why members should become more active	37	30.4
What the government is doing	17	14.0

* Frequency indicates number of times reason was chosen as either first or second choice.

and home schedules. In this way learning time becomes more concentrated and focused in the absence of daily distractions.

Table 9

Identifying Educational Union Activities

Activities	Frequency	F	Percent
3) Identify union activities from which you have learned the most.			
Attending union courses	100	108	82.0
Involvement in worksite issues and problems	60	79	49.1
Attending conferences and conventions	27	51	22.2
Meeting other union members	25	54	11.5
Dealing with management	14	35	11.5
Reading union literature mailed to my home	11	29	9.0

Frequency measures number of times activity was selected as first or second choice

F measures number times activity ws selected as first, second or third choice

The fifty percent who chose "involvement in worksite" matters may reflect the respondents who are stewards and officers.

Very few (9.0%) consider that the union materials they receive by mail.

The least favored aspect of union courses was "socializing" (4.1%), while the most favored was "acquiring new knowledge and skills" (79.5%)(Table 10). Perhaps this preferred choice indicates the sense of responsibility unionists feel they have when attending schools. Even if they enjoy the social events, their main task is to be conscientious students. But according to the teachers interviewed, social mixing is very "educational" since this is how union members come to identify with one another. In order to broaden their understanding of the whole labour movement, members must come to see the similarities they all share as workers rather than focus on the way they are divided and subdivided into different unions and locals.

Although 79.5% of the respondents chose "knowledge and skills", they did acknowledge the importance of experience-sharing (68.0%). Only 19.7% identify the teacher's methods of instruction as a best-liked aspect of union courses. The interviewed teachers frequently referred to themselves as "facilitators," which often suggests they don't intend to be the student's focus of attention.

Respondents desire to know more than how to simply function as a steward or officer according to responses given for the most preferred method of improving courses (54.1%)(Table 11). "Teach more about social issues" (20.5%) was presented as a slight variant to the "labour issue" alternative. Only this latter group (20.5%) place importance on the larger social context. This might include issues concerned with the environment and peace.

Table 10

Most Liked Aspects of Union Courses

Learning Activity	Frequency	Percent
4) Which aspects of union courses do you like best?		
Acquiring new knowledge and skills	97	79.5
Learning of other people's experiences	83	68.0
Being able to discuss my experience	37	30.3
The way the instructors teach	24	19.7
The films and audio-visual material	18	14.8
Socializing	5	4.1

Table 11

How Courses Should Be Improved

Improvements	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice	Totals	Percent
5) How do you think courses should be improved?					
Do more on issues facing labour today	24	22	20	66	54.1
Provide some form of follow-up	16	16	21	53	43.4
Run the courses more often	21	14	10	45	36.9
Teach more basic skills (speaking and writing)	18	13	9	40	32.7
Have students read and prepare more	8	8	13	29	23.7
Teach more about social issues	5	10	10	25	20.5
Add more variety of course subjects	6	10	8	24	19.7
Have more guest speakers	7	8	8	23	18.9
Screen students for attendance more carefully	1	1	2	4	3.3
Provide more social activities	1	1	2	4	3.3
No answer	15	19	19		

The next areas needing improvement are "providing course follow up" and providing more of the same or additional courses. These answers concur with the Waldie study finding that existing programs are inadequate to meet the demand (Waldie, 1985).

The fourth item in Table 11 identifies provision of skill building, namely "speaking and writing" (32.7%). Lesson plans are usually so full that these communication skills are given little time and attention.

Students were asked to identify their knowledge-gaining experiences from a list of then life activities. Choices included union, family and general experiences. At least 84 participants (68.8%) see their union involvement as a very important learning experience (Table 12). Union members tend to drive personal benefit from their union activity. Almost two thirds (64.75%) attempt to further their education although the particular context for this is not clear.

More than half (52.6%) of the respondents felt that helping other people contributed to their knowledge. By definition, the steward role is a helping one. At least half of these individuals feel that helping benefits themselves as well.

Nearly half of the respondents chose "learning on the job" (49.1%) and "self-motivated" study (43.5%) as important methods of gaining knowledge.

Students were asked how they first came into contact with the union and were provided with ten choices. Space was also provided for

Table 12

Knowledge-Gaining Experiences

Experience	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice	Fourth Choice	Total Frequencies*	%
6) From which of the following experiences have you gained the most knowledge?						
By being involved in my union	28	18	25	13	84	68.8
Taking courses to continue my education	30	23	17	9	79	64.7
Being involved helping people	8	19	15	23	65	53.3
Learning on the job	12	17	16	14	59	48.4
Self-motivated study and reading	8	16	13	16	53	43.4
Keeping up with the news	6	6	15	17	44	36.1
Having a family	10	7	1	7	25	20.5
General school education	8	5	5	3	21	17.2
Having had a variety of jobs	4	5	6	3	18	14.8
Travelling	3	1	3	4	11	9.0
Totals	117	117	116	109		

* Total frequencies indicate number of times each experience was chosen to yield most to least preferred choices

"other" answers. Respondents were invited to select a second choice "if necessary." This provision was made to permit the selection of second factors in the case of individuals who may have difficulty remembering a single reason for seeking out the union.

Responses favored three choices (Table 13). The first choice indicated that 33.7% of respondents took exception to management's treatment of the workers. This suggests that problems at the worksite are caused by management attitudes. This also suggests that for many, the union represents a mechanism protecting the members from "the boss."

Approximately twenty-eight percent (27.9%) of the respondents report that they were chosen by their workmates. Stewards are often picked by their workmates because they demonstrate leadership qualitites. Rank-and-file members tend to seek out individuals who will represent them. They prefer someone that they trust and like, and whom they perceive has the confidence to "stand up to the boss."

Curiosity prompted 25.0% to "find" the union. One individual supplied an additional comment in the questionnaire: "I wanted to find out how my dues were being spent."

Another 17.3% reported that their friends got them involved. Stewards often recruit other stewards. By explaining the union and promoting the positive benefits of union involvement, they often succeed in getting other people to attend union functions or to volunteer to do various tasks.

Table 13

Introduction to Union

Reasons	First Choice	Second Choice	Totals	Percent
7) Identify the most important reason why you became introduced to the union.				
I didn't like the way management treated the workers	24	11	35	33.7
My workmates wanted me to represent them	19	14	33	31.7
I was curious	22	4	26	25.0
A friend got me involved	15	3	18	17.3
Union benefits/programs attracted me	8	6	14	13.5
I had a grievance	10	1	11	10.6
I knew someone that the union helped	3	1	4	3.8
I attended a union social function	0	3	3	2.9
My mother and/or father was a unionist	3	0	3	2.9

Attitude and Opinion Survey

The last portion of the questionnaire presented twenty five statements which asked students to state whether they agreed or disagreed. Results are discussed and smmarized in Tables 14-17.

As expected, committed union members readily supported and agreed with "motherhood" statements. Five such statements are reported in Table 14. Totals indicated that two-thirds (68.0%) or more of the respondents supplied the "target" responses and thus supported the basic statements of principle.

Table 14

Summary of Attitudes Towards Union "Motherhood" Statements

Questionnaire statement	Target Response	Number	Actual Percent
Union involvement has made my job more interesting	Agree	106	86.9
All people should be unionized	Agree	97	79.5
I always try to get my friends to join the union	Agree	93	76.2
People like unions once they know more about them	Agree	86	70.4
Unionists should be their brothers' keepers	Agree	83	68.0

The second group of statements reflect established union policies and their underlying principles (Table 15). These policies have been adopted at annual conventions of the central affiliate body, the Alberta Federation of Labour. The range of support for the four selected statements is from 61.5% to 93.4%. The fourth statement, "At my job, all people are treated as equals," is somewhat ambiguous for respondents to interpret and this may account for the relatively low rate of target response. Overall results indicate that educational efforts are having some impact.

Table 15

Agreement with Union Policy

Questionnaire statement	Target Response	Number	Actual Percent
There is no discrimination in Canada	Disagree	114	93.4
Women are treated equally	Disagree	93	76.2
It is important to teach about "peace" and other social issues	Agree	84	68.8
At my job, all people are treated as equals	Disagree	75	61.5

The third group of statements attempt to determine how much members value education in general, and labour education in particular (Table 16). Education is a costly service and is frequently "cutback" when unions experience financial difficulty. Do the active members see education as a worthwhile priority? Do they value their various educational experiences differently?

Table 16

Attitudes Towards Education

Questionnaire statement	Target Response	Number	Actual Percent
I thoroughly enjoy the union courses	Agree	115	94.3
Union courses have made me want to become more active	Agree	113	92.4
I would like to continue my education	Agree	107	87.7
Education is the most important way unions can spend our money	Agree	106	86.9
I enjoyed going to school	Agree	106	86.9
We need a labour college in Alberta	Agree	97	79.5

There is a high degree of conformity in responses from this group. Education has been and is an enjoyable and motivating activity. Union courses are "thoroughly" enjoyed by 94.3% of the respondents and have inspired 92.4% to greater union involvement. This supports the view that education should be a budget priority for unions.

The final group of eight statements are summarized with a "possible interpretation" (Table 17). These general information questions provide a few more descriptors of the labour student population.

1) Fifty-nine percent would not mind devoting themselves to union activity on a full-time basis by working for a union.

2) Over half (56.6%) feel that they were not properly prepared for the work world. This could indicate that these respondents feel the system of education fails to teach what workers really need to know.

3) Nearly half (47.5%) believe that unions are no longer militant. No matter what reason prompts this belief, it suggests for nearly half of all members that unions are stabilized as institutions.

4) Forty percent (40.9%) agree that the rich are favored by gaining better education. This indicates an awareness of class differences in Canadian society.

5) About one-quarter (28.7%) of respondents used to "hate unions" and presumably, since they don't any longer, this means that they have been won over.

6) About a quarter (28.7%) of the respondents report that they want to change jobs. This suggests that the majority consider themselves in stable work situations.

Table 17

General Information Questions

Summary of Idea	Possible Interpretation	Number	Percent
Would like to work for a union	Union could be my livelihood, i.e. I can devote myself to union activity; I have the competencies	72	59.0
Education did not prepare them for the realities of work	Education system fails to teach what we need to know	69	56.6
Believe unions are no longer militant	Institutionalization of union	58	47.5
Believe only the rich have access to better education	Awareness of "class" differences	50	40.9
Want to change jobs	Job dissatisfaction	35	28.7
No longer hate unions	Have been "won" over	35	28.7
Course related:			
Would like to learn more about economics	Feel it is important and don't know enough now	112	91.8
Unions should teach more about labour history	Understands the importance of history for labour movement, i.e. where would we be today without it?	85	69.7*

* This number could be higher in reality if only responded to by those who have not already taken a course in labour history.

The final questions ask students if learning about economics and labour history were important. Economic courses (91.8%) were preferred much more than labour history (69.7%).

Summary

From this analysis of the questionnaire responses, a general profile can be described. The following characteristics are drawn as tentative interpretations:

1. Students display a degree of commitment to the union based on the amount of time, levels of involvement (assume positions of responsibility) and educational priorities (learning from, for and about the union). They can be defined as labour activists.

2. Courses are taken primarily by males in their thirties and females over forty.

3. Course selection favours the "tool" type courses as first and foremost, but interest is expressed for more "labour issue" or awareness type courses.

4. Education is highly valued and is deemed an enjoyable activity.

5. There is some indication that respondents like "to help others."

6. There are indications that respondents identify with the labour movement and not only with their own unions or locals.

Finally, attitudes toward union principles, union policies and education are positive. Education seems to enhance the enjoyment and commitment of labour activists, provides skills necessary for most in

their roles as stewards and officers, and may have helped shape their unionist values and attitudes.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

My interest in labour education began during my own involvement in the labour movement. For several years I observed union activists and leaders who were recruited from the "shop floors." My acquaintance with labour education programs made me aware of the role they played in the process of recruiting and training future union leaders. These programs became the subject of this study.

In preparing for this study, I soon discovered the paucity of literature on labour education in Canada. In general, labour history itself is somewhat neglected although a number of important works have been added to the scholarship in the last few years. It became apparent that a contribution could be made by providing a general sketch of what labour education is in Alberta. The focus for this examination levelled on the question of who are the people involved in this process.

How Can Labour Education Be Understood?

Labour education provided by affiliates or unions tends to have an "ad hoc" appearance. That is, programs are scheduled at intermittent times, courses can be increased in number or decreased, added on short notice or cancelled. Programs also tend to be organized and conducted

on weekends, evenings, in week-long residential schools, or in a series of sessions. However, study has shown that labour education is a very stable, ongoing service that commands a good deal of union attention and funding. Although education in this context does not have an "institutional" appearance, it does have a history, a purpose and an effect.

The historical context of labour education is the most essential basis for its study. The labour movement has a long and rich history in Canada. It was evident that before any analysis of labour education could be done, it was necessary to describe the tradition from which it was born. The struggles which shaped the union movement have in fact created the labour identity. This identity forms the essential partisan outlook which labour education fundamentally imparts to the union membership.

In the absence of any studies of labour education as it is practised in Alberta, it was necessary to examine the actors--the people who are drawn into the labour education process. Analysis began through a survey of labour school students. This was later followed by a series of teacher interviews. Of the two, the teachers' interviews provide more insight into the labour education process and are presented first in this study. It is in the actual words from the teachers that labour history continues to speak.

The students represented the biggest unknown in the labour education process. Early interviews with teachers produced agreement on the fact that the impact of the education process was poorly understood. Basic statistics had not been done either. It was decided

that a questionnaire could provide both a cross sectional view of who a "typical" student body involved and whether or not union involvement had any measurable effect on the students.

Together these three parts make up the study which attempts to make labour education better understood and to encourage its further investigation.

Summary of History, Teachers and Students

History

Examination of the history of the labour movement shows that unions have been locked "in struggle" with the wielders of economic and political power right from their inception. The first struggles unions had were to gain legal recognition in order to negotiate collective agreements. This period of clandestine organizing was the first opportunity that labour took to educate itself. History has shown that the fledgling union movement was very effective in winning "the hearts and minds" of workers for what were seen as just and humane causes. The movement had its martyrs and it did have its successes, such as the winning of the eight hour workday.

One of the first labour organizations was the Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labour. This group was idealistic, radical, and although shortlived, they were very influential and left their mark on the labour movement. More than any other group at the time, they promoted the idea that the fate of society was in the hands of the

workers. The working class was defined in nearly Marxian terms. The obligation of the international working class was to liberate all members of society, to promote social justice and equality. They had a vision of wise, moral and educated workers playing a leading role in governing Canada. The notion that the labour movement struggles for social and political goals is still alive in labour classrooms today.

Successive 20th century movements periodically rekindled the ideals of working class solidarity. The Wobblies, the One Big Union (OBU), and the Communists were influential and popular in Western Canada at different times. They provided organizational centres around which workers were "educated" in the ideals of the labour movement and of societal reform. The history and culture of the "class" were paramount for workers to know. It was here that the spirit of change and optimism was conveyed to the less schooled and often itinerant workers.

History describes some of the more important events which shaped the labour movement emotionally and organizationally. Assessment of the earlier historical roots of the labour movement reveals the "missionary" nature of the labour movement. Kept alive particularly at times of renewed struggle, the labour movement educates its members into a collective spirit; one which appeals to the worker's sense of duty, heroism, and social responsibility.

The Organizational Context of Labour Education

The organizational context of labour education is complex because of the variety of unions in Canada and the networks of affiliation they

enter into.

The scope of labour education is really much broader than the focus of this study which is a particular labour school in Alberta. Also, the interest that many unions have in education includes activities beyond their own internal programs. They and the affiliates involve themselves in public education on social and political issues such as the Free Trade debate, and the campaign to have the Labour Laws in Alberta changed. They are also interested in public school education policy and have requested inclusion of some labour studies in the Alberta school curriculum. They therefore see themselves as having a role in educating the public as well as their own members.

The Deweyan, politically pragmatic concept of education which the labour movement employs is embued with the idealism of equality and social justice. Education is for the promotion of the ideas necessary to produce social and political change. The message that unions convey is always about vigilance and social duty--people must be wary of the forces which work against "progress" and must unite to prevent them from succeeding.

Internally, labour education is the lifeline of unions. Unions conduct programs to recruit volunteers and activists. These are the "bedrock" or the "cornerstones" of the union. Unions simply depend on the constant supply of stewards and officers to conduct the business of the union at the worksites.

In the specific case of the Alberta Federation of Labour, education is what "builds solidarity." It is also necessary to counter the efforts of "big business" and government who promote "misinformation"

about society and the economy.

The AFL's outlook is much broader in its educational objectives simply because it is the central affiliation for most unions in Alberta. The AFL Labour school takes this fact into account and for this reason, the general goal statement which best summarizes the essence of the AFL's educational objectives comes from the Report of the Education Commitee.

> Much of the efforts of key people, and most recruiting of new activists rests on our ability, as a movement, to inspire, to build the feeling of belonging (or brotherhood/sisterhood) and solidarity. (AFL, Education Committee Report, 1983).

Labour Educators and Union Activism

Teachers interviewed for this study shared many commonalities. In describing their backgrounds, they tended to identify important, even radicalizing, experiences which prompted them to become associated with the labour movement. All displayed enthusiasm for their teaching as well as a commitment to the labour movement. Based on these interviews, the teachers shared

1. the belief that unions have the task of counteracting the education and propaganda produced by big business and government;
2. the aim of promoting class consciousness among the union members through rational (knowledge) and affective (social) means;
3. the objective of making union members active and involved in the labour movement and their communities; and
4. considerable respect and concern for their students.

Teachers demonstrated a consistency with the stated aims and objectives of the labour movement. Overall, they tended to be less pragmatic and more "idealistic." Even skill development presented an occasion for "consciousness raising."

Fundamentally, the essential goal that teachers emphasized was the need to make union members more active. Skill development takes second place to motivating and inspiring the students. This finding is in keeping with the thrust of labour history. Workers must acquire a class identity, adopt collectivist values and feel a heightened sense of social and political responsibility to bring about social change.

The Union Member

A cross-section survey of students attending the AFL labour school produced a profile which showed that the majority of students were males in their thirties. The education levels of the students tended to be fairly high with 56% possessing some post-secondary education. Clearly half of the union members attending this school were identified as public sector or government employees.

Findings determined that the majority of the students could be described as active union members fulfilling roles as either stewards and/or union officers. They displayed varying degrees of time commitment but nearly all reported more than a few hours per week.

Only 12% of the students were "first timers" at union courses, yet this group showed few notable differences from the others.

Conclusions

Evidence drawn from the three main research components provide answers to the four basic questions about labour education.

1. What do unions teach?

The most fundamental "lesson" taught by unions is why unions are necessary to workers and society. This is the first goal of communications with members and, more recently, with the public. Formal programs teach the tradition and history of unions as part and parcel of all courses. Even the most practical skill courses attempt to convey recognition of the "hard won" rights and benefits enjoyed by workers and society in general.

Unions also teach about the necessity for workers to become labour activists at the worksite. Worksite leaders are essential for protecting collective agreements and defending rank and file members. This aspect of union education includes teaching the skills and procedural knowledge necessary for stewards and officers to perform union tasks.

Ultimately, unions teach that members, particularly the activist, must address the broader issues of society. This work of unions includes teaching political activism. "Big business" and government are ranged against the basic interests of workers. This belief promotes the logic that workers must use combine and unite in order to balance the power of money and the law. Collective action is used to defend and advance political, as well as economic interests, of workers.

2. Who do unions teach?

Union education programs reach only a small percentage of the total workforce. In Alberta, labour school students come from the public and private sector unions in about equal numbers. Most members who take courses are union activists based on their assumption of roles as stewards and officers. The majority are males, and most of the females tend to be older than their male counterparts. The members surveyed represent a wide range of education levels and occupational groups.

Members surveyed, whether "experienced" in union programs or not, tend to support the aims and policies of the labour movement. One third of those studied go on to participate in social and political campaigns (i.e. oppose Free-Trade; Change the Labour Laws campaign). This suggests that labour succeeds in recruiting and educating political activists as well.

3. Who teaches labour education programs?

Individuals interviewed for this study present a general profile of highly committed, enthusiastic and informed teachers. Labour educationists emphasize the role unionists play in bringing about social and political change. Teachers see themselves as facilitators, listeners and guides. They teach the requisite union skills but aim to develop collectivist values and thinking. Most are informed by social and political theory which advocates radical action and change.

4. Does labour education achieve its stated objectives?

In general, labour education recruits and teaches rank and file members who are the activists, the stewards and the officers.

Questionnaire results suggest that students reflect a high degree of support for union goals and policies. Most are activists and this fulfills the fundamental objective of union education programs.

Although labour education efforts show a degree of success in this group of students, it is difficult to determine whether "the union's message," beyond its economic objectives, is disseminated to the membership at large.

Recommendations

Union members and activists report that they benefit from and enjoy the educational opportunities provided. Union programs show success in getting their message to and supported by the activists. Direct contact with education programs succeed in winning member's support of the goals and objectives of the labour movement. Unions should recognize the role labour education plays in winning supporters for their work. Education programs should therefore be expanded to provide more opportunities which reach the rank and file members. Also, as recognized by students, more labour issue and awareness type courses should be added to increase the knowledge activists have about labour's role in politics and society.

Recommendations for Further Study

A recommendation for future research is that the history of labour education in Alberta, as well as Canada, should be written. At some

point in the development of the labour movement, education moved from an "informal" to a "formal" system. Documentation of this process would make a valuable contribution to both educational and labour studies in Canada.

A second recommendation for further study is an examination of labour's educational philosophy. This thesis only touched upon the idea that labour education differs markedly from traditional adult education. The reason for this is more philosophical than practical.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of a larger study on labour education. Your answers to these questions will provide a greater understanding of what union members experience as union education and how important these programs are to you in your union life.

There are no "right" or "wrong" answers. You are simply asked to answer the questions as accurately as possible. The questionnaire should take approximately 20 minutes.

The answers will be kept confidential. You do not have to identify yourself but if you would be willing to be interviewed, you are asked to add your name and room number. Providing your room number will facilitate locating you at the school. The interviews will be held in the next couple of days and should take only 15-30 minutes.

QUESTIONNAIRE

GENERAL INFORMATION

AGE:____ SEX:____ MARITAL STATUS:_____

NUMBER OF CHILDREN: ____ AGES: _____

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION: _____

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION: _____

UNION ACTIVITY

Identify with a check mark each of the activities that you participate in:

Attend most local membership meetings ___
Shop steward ___ Elected union officer ___
Union committee member ___ Negotiating team ___
Participate in campaigns organized by union ___

What is the average amount of time that you spend on union activities each week? (Check only one.)

1-2 hours ___ 4 hours ___ 6 hours ___
Equivalent of one day ___ 10 hours or more ___
Other (specify) _____

EDUCATION COURSES

Specify the number of courses you have taken by checking each course you have completed.

___ This is my first course
___ Basic Union Steward
___ Basic Health and Safety
___ Table Officer Training
___ Effective Communications
___ Political Action Seminar
___ Advanced Union Steward
___ Advanced Health and Safety
___ Contract Interpretations
___ Retirement Planning
___ AFL/CLC Spring Labour School (course name) _____
___ AFL/CLC Fall Labour School (course name) _____
___ Regional CLC Labour School (course name) _____
___ CLC Labour College (Ottawa) (year) _____

Other(s) not listed above:

_____

_____

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Rank in order of your preference all of the answers to the following questions. List the answers which most apply to you first with answers that least apply to you ranking last. Please use all of the numbers indicated at the end of the statement.

1) Union education courses are important for: (use numbers 1-6)

____ a) meeting other union members
____ b) knowing how to help people
____ c) making the union strong
____ d) raising the education level of members
____ e) learning how to handle management
____ f) making members more active

2) The most important things that unions teach are about: (use numbers 1-5)

____ a) why members should become more active
____ b) how the union works for its members
____ c) what the government is doing
____ d) how to handle worksite problems
____ e) making members more confident

3) Identify the union activities from which you have learned the most. (use numbers 1-6)

____ a) meeting other union members
____ b) travelling to conferences and conventions
____ c) attending union courses
____ d) being involved in worksite issues and problems
____ e) reading union literature mailed to my home
____ f) dealing with management

4) Which aspects of the union courses do you like best? (use numbers 1-6)

____ a) being able to discuss my experience
____ b) the way the instructors teach
____ c) socializing
____ d) the films and audio-visual material
____ e) learning of other people's experiences
____ f) acquiring new knowledge and skills

5) How do you think the courses should be improved? (Choose 3 items and rank them as before.)

____ a) have more guest speakers
____ b) have students read and prepare more
____ c) run the courses more often
____ d) add more variety of course subjects
____ e) screen students for attendance more carefully
____ f) provide more social activities
____ g) provide some form of follow-up
____ h) teach more about social issues
____ i) teach more basic skills (speaking and writing)
____ j) do more on issues facing labour today

6) From which of the following experiences have you gained the most knowledge? (Choose 4 and rank them in order of priority.)

____ a) learning on the job
____ b) having a family
____ c) self-motivated study and reading
____ d) taking courses to continue my education
____ e) keeping up with the news
____ f being involved helping people
____ g) travelling
____ h) by being involved in my union
____ i) general school education
____ j) having had a variety of jobs

7) Identify the most important reason why you became introduced to the union. (Check one, but if necessary, use number two.)

____ a) I had a grievance
____ b) my mother and/or father was a unionist
____ c) a friend got me involved
____ d) I was curious
____ e) I knew someone that the union helped
____ f union benefits/programs attracted me
____ g) I didn't like the way management treated the workers
____ h) I attended a union social function
____ i) my workmates wanted me to represent them

Other: _____

Place a check mark under the number which best describes your opinion of the following statements.

The scale represents:
1 = Strongly Agree
2 = Slightly Agree
3 = Not Sure
4 = Slightly Disagree
5 = Strongly Disagree

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
(1) Union involvement has made my job more interesting.	—	—	—	—	—
(2) Union courses have helped me understand politics.	—	—	—	—	—
(3) I enjoyed going to school.	—	—	—	—	—
(4) I would like to continue my education.	—	—	—	—	—
(5) Unions should teach more about labour history.	—	—	—	—	—
(6) I thoroughly enjoy the union courses.	—	—	—	—	—
(7) At my job, all people are treated as equals.	—	—	—	—	—
(8) Unionists should be their brothers' keepers.	—	—	—	—	—
(9) I want to change my job.	—	—	—	—	—
(10) There is no discrimination in Canada.	—	—	—	—	—
(11) We need a labour college in Alberta.	—	—	—	—	—
(12) All working people should be unionized.	—	—	—	—	—
(13) I would like to understand economics better.	—	—	—	—	—
(14) Women are treated equally.	—	—	—	—	—

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
(15) Only the rich can get a good education in Canada.	—	—	—	—	—
(16) Union involvement has changed my political views.	—	—	—	—	—
(17) Unions are no longer very militant.	—	—	—	—	—
(18) Union courses have made me want to become more active.	—	—	—	—	—
(19) I would like to work for a union someday.	—	—	—	—	—
(20) I always try to get my friends to join the union.	—	—	—	—	—
(21) People like unions once they know more about them.	—	—	—	—	—
(22) Education is the most important way unions can spend our money.	—	—	—	—	—
(23) School never taught me anything about what work is really like.	—	—	—	—	—
(24) It is important for unions to teach about Peace and other social issues.	—	—	—	—	—
(25) There was a time when I used to hate unions.	—	—	—	—	—

LAST 2 QUESTIONS

What was the best union education course you ever took and give one reason why.

Is there anything that union programs should teach that they don't teach now?

Don't be discouraged by all this brain-picking and please add your name and room number here if you are willing to submit to a short interview:

NAME: _____ ROOM NUMBER: _____

APPENDIX B

Opinion Survey

OPINION SURVEY

	Strongly Agree		Slightly Agree		Not Sure		Slightly Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Union involvement has made my job more interesting.	67	54.9	39	32.0	10	8.2	2	1.6	2	1.6
Union courses have helped me understand politics.	47	38.5	50	41.0	16	13.1	4	3.3	3	2.5
I enjoyed going to school.	82	67.2	24	19.7	5	4.1	6	4.5	2	1.6
I would like to continue my education.	86	70.5	21	17.2	9	7.4	2	1.6	1	0.8
Unions should teach more about labour history.	35	28.7	50	41.0	24	19.7	7	5.7	2	1.6
I thoroughly enjoy the union courses.	90	73.8	25	20.5	4	3.3	1	0.8	2	1.6
At my job, all people are treated as equals.	11	9.0	23	18.9	10	8.2	32	26.2	43	35.2
Unionists should be their brothers' keepers.	45	36.9	38	31.1	25	20.5	10	8.2	2	1.6

OPINION SURVEY

	Strongly Agree		Slightly Agree		Not Sure		Slightly Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I want to change my job.	17	13.9	18	14.8	23	18.9	13	10.7	47	38.5
There is no discrimination in Canada.	1	0.8	3	2.5	3	2.5	15	12.3	99	81.1
We need a labour college in Alberta.	71	58.2	26	21.3	18	14.8	2	1.6	2	1.6
All working people should be unionized.	67	54.9	30	24.6	6	4.9	15	12.3	3	2.5
I would like to understand economics better.	73	59.8	39	32.0	6	4.9	2	1.6	2	1.6
Women are treated equally.	3	2.5	14	11.5	11	9.0	45	36.9	48	39.3
Only the rich can get a good education in Canada.	12	9.8	38	31.1	13	10.7	26	21.3	32	26.2
Union involvement has changed my political views.	43	35.2	39	32.0	15	12.3	14	11.5	9	7.4
Unions are no longer very militant.	10	8.2	48	39.3	32	26.2	19	15.6	10	8.2

OPINION SURVEY

	Strongly Agree		Slightly Agree		Not Sure		Slightly Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Union courses have made me want to become more active.	70	57.4	43	35.2	7	5.7	1	0.8	1	0.8
I would like to work for a union someday.	38	31.1	34	27.9	40	32.8	8	6.6	1	0.8
I always try to get my friends to join the union.	52	42.6	41	33.6	11	9.0	10	8.2	2	1.6
People like unions once they know more about them.	43	35.2	43	35.2	20	16.4	13	10.7	1	0.8
Education is the most important way unions can spend our money.	62	50.8	44	36.1	10	8.2	4	3.3	1	0.8
School never taught me anything about what work is really like.	44	36.1	25	20.5	12	9.8	20	16.4	17	13.9
It is important for unions to teach about Peace and other social issues.	36	29.5	48	39.3	16	13.1	16	13.1	4	3.3
There was a time when I used to hate unions.	12	9.8	23	18.9	11	9.0	35	28.7	39	32.0

APPENDIX C

Interview Schedule

The interviews were conducted at these dates, times and locations:

Subject	Location	Date	Time	Interview (Length)
Jesse	Jesse's home	June	12:00 - 2:45	2 hrs 45 min
Wally	Education Building	June	1:00 - 3:15	2 hrs 15 min
Rhonda	Restaurant	July	12:30 - 2:40	2 hrs 40 min
Jeff	Restaurant	July	12:00 - 1:45	1 hr 45 min
Steve	Union office	June	1:00 - 3:30	2 hrs 30 min

APPENDIX D

Interview Guide

The following personal and professional questions werre asked of the five teachers:

Demographic Questions:

Age, place of birth and upbringing, level of education, relevant work experiences and how subject came to teach for a union.

Pedagogical Questions:

These constituted the four key core questions.

1. What are your teaching objectives?
2. What have been important influences on you as a labour educator?
3. What teaching methods do you favour?
4. Do you have any special observations or experiences about students or teaching that you would like to share?

APPENDIX E

Interview Sample (Steve)

Q. What has influenced you the most as a labour educator?

A. In a name--Bob Sass--especially with regards to the philosophy underlying health and safety. That together with observing members who experience injury and suffer acute or chronic effects from the worksite. They prove on an experiential plane what Sass says on a philosophical plane. He really got me motivated. Another source of inspiration was Ray Senes, an asbestos worker who himself is a victim of asbestosis. He was a mover and shaker in the province on the question of hazardous work substances like asbestos. I understand that he is dying of asbestosis, but is now working on a Ph.D. in Political Science in Regina.

Q. Tell me something about how you approach the instruction of health and safety.

A. We're dealing with adults and we should be communicating with them, exchanging ideas but especially listening to them and assisting them where they need it. I've learned to be flexible enough to adapt my presentation to meet the need they express and not what we interpret to be their need. I mainly see myself as a facilitator and I see my role as bringing them out of themselves, helping them to interact with others and in generally encouraging discussion.

The one-day course usually starts by warming them up by having the group work in pairs to introduce one another. A brief history of the other will include answering questions like why are they there, what are their health and safety concerns, etc. I listen very carefully at this point and then try to tailor my remarks and examples to who the students are, where they are at and what kind of workplaces they come from. This is an effective ice breaker.

Q. Would you say that your programs are very practical or technical in nature?

A. Yes, but we attempt to demystify the technical aspects of health and safety. I use lay terms instead of technical language. I see it as lifting veils of secrecy off the medical world. It's also important to teach the economics of health and safety which may seem more theoretical or political. But I also include time for looking at strategies for change. At the end of the day I ask--so we can't change everything overnight, what can we change? It always points to political action. But we have to assess Labour's responsibility, management's responsibility, and government's responsibility and assess how responsible each party is being. We also stress our own role as a union or steward or worker. What can we, or should we, do? I suppose the hidden agenda is getting people excited; then we help point them in a direction where they can do some good. We provide them technically with the basic tools to handle concerns, but not only to deal with problems on the shop floor or on a day-to-day basis

but in developing their confidence and expectations--to demand change at all levels and for the future. This includes changes that are necessary within the labour movement as well.

Q. Long range goals?

A. It boils down to legislation. We say let workers participate in decision-making. They start with issues pertaining with conditions of worklife--be it job stress, shift work, environmental hazards, cancer, etc. Once they have an awareness of the three R's: the right to know, the right to participate, and the right to refuse [unsafe working conditions], and you have presented them with an alternative viewpoint, they will start to demand changes.

I should add here some general observations. I see changes happening since I first started. This upcoming generation is quite different. The older generation stayed quiet and didn't want to rock the boat, not with M.L.A.'s, nor with their doctors, nor with their managers. The younger workers make me think we're heading into a period of great political action. People don't expect status quo--they're nominating people at the local union level and the political level who are more in touch with the grass roots. Education is a key to it all and these younger workers are more in touch with the issues, are better educated overall, and more confident. And too, unions don't have as bad a reputation as with the older workers. Maybe we're doing something positive in that regard. In health and safety for example, we actually do something for workers and by word of mouth it spreads. We don't

merely use rhetoric and pound the table--I like to call it--principles in action. When somebody gives me an issue I use it to get on the worksite to show them that the union is interested enough to do something about their problems. Fundamentally, we teach people that they aren't alone in their misery and they aren't the cause of the problems. Then they don't accept management's accusation that the problems are all in their heads.

APPENDIX F

Sample List of Possible Courses

Introduction to your Union

Basic Union Steward

Basic Health & Safety

Table Officer Training

Contract Interpretation

Retirement Planning

Effective Communications

Political Action Seminar

Advanced Union Steward (Advanced Union Development)

AFL/CLC Spring Labour School

AFL/CLC Fall Labour School

Regional CLC Labour School

CLC Labour College (Ottawa)

Other:

- Employee Recovery Program (ERP)
- Conducting Effective Meetings
- Public Speaking
- Union Busting
- Human Rights
- Labour Legislation
- Labour Economics
- Union Administration
- Labour History

alberta federation
of labour
and the
canadian labour
congress

ANNUAL SPRING SCHOOL

Capri Centre
Red Deer, Alberta

APRIL 21 - 26, 1985

34 years of labour
education in alberta

AFL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Greg Yeats, Chairman ..... USWA
Carol Stewart, Secretary ..... ECWU
Ken Blacklock ..... Alta. Strip Miners
Harry Redford ..... AUPE
Anna Jaworski ..... PSAC
Karen Lockhart ..... CUPW
Bill Paterson ..... CDLC
Jean Ross ..... CUPE
Gordon Steele ..... UFCW
Clare Booker CLC

Timetable

SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 1985
2:00 - 5:30 pm – registration
6:00 - 7:00 pm – dinner
7:00 - 8:30 pm – Opening Session
8:30 - 9:00 pm – Classroom Orientation
9:00 - 11:00 pm – Cash Bar

MONDAY, APRIL 22, 1985
7:30 - 8:45 am – breakfast
9:00 - 12:00 noon – classes
12:00 - 1:30 pm – lunch
1:30 - 4:30 pm - classes
6:00 - 7:00 pm – dinner
7:30 - 9:00 pm - Films (optional)

TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 1985
Same as Monday with the exception that the evening session is compulsory.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 1985
Same as Monday with the exception that there is no evening session.

THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 1985
Same as Monday with the exception that a banquet and social will be held in the evening.

FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 1985
7:30 - 8:45 am – breakfast
9:00 - 11:00 am - classes
11:00 - 12:00 noon – Closing Session

FEE

$315.00 per delegate – double occupancy
$405.00 per delegate – single occupancy
$155.00 per delegate – Red Deer residents

Registration fees for double and single occupancy include accommodation at the Capri Centre, Red Deer, three meals per day, banquet and social, and a kit.

Registration fees for Red Deer residents include lunches and dinners each day, banquet and social, and a kit.

Cheques

Payable to:
Alberta Federation of Labour

Note

1. Due to hotel restrictions, all registration applications must be received by the Alberta Federation of Labour no later than April 5, 1985.
2. Course registration will be accepted on first-come, first-serve basis. We will attempt to limit class sizes to 20 students. There will be no exceptions.
3. Register early. No refund of registration fees for LATE withdrawals after April 12, 1985.
4. As much as possible, unions are encouraged to sponsor to this School delegates who have already completed some other union education.
5. Delegates are reminded that the general sessions which have been scheduled for Sunday, Monday and Tuesday evenings, and for Friday at 11:00 a.m., form an integral part of the total school. Your attendance at these sessions is as important as your attendance during the day at your specific course.

Questions?

Contact Felice Young
School Co-ordinator
483-3021

Registration Form

Name* _____

Address _____

City/Town _____

Postal Code _____

1st Choice _____ 2nd Choice _____

Smoking _____ Non-smoking _____

Name* _____

Address _____

City/Town _____

Postal Code _____

1st Choice _____ 2nd Choice _____

Smoking _____ Non-smoking _____

Name* _____

Address _____

City/Town _____

Postal Code _____

1st Choice _____ 2nd Choice _____

Smoking _____ Non-smoking _____

Union _____

Sec./Treas. _____

Address _____

City/Town _____

Postal Code _____

Phone _____

*Because rooms are based on double occupancy, please indicate male or female. Every effort will be made to put non-smoking delegates in the same room.

Complete this form a return with appropriate registration fee(s) before April 5, 1985.

ALBERTA FEDERATION OF LABOUR
350, 10451 - 170 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5P 4T2

OUTLINE OF COURSES

1. The Union Activist and The Employee Recovery Program

An Employee Recovery Program is a joint union/management program which provides assistance to individuals experiencing human problems.

This Course will provide participants with a thorough knowledge of the CLC Employee Recovery Program Guidelines and enable them to participate in the development or review of a program in their worksite.

Previous attendance to an "Introduction to ERP" Course would be desirable. Please Note: this is NOT a Union Counselling or Referral Agent Training Course.

2. Union Busting

We are fighting back – management advise and instruct on how to bust unions or organizing campaigns. This is an opportunity to learn some of the tactics workers can use to offset union busting. In times of massive unemployment, we must fight to maintain our hard won gains. This course will explore the experiences of workers in other countries and the participants will also be alerted about quality of working life programs which can be used as a form of union busting.

3. Advanced Steward Training

The rights, duties and obligations of the Union Steward will be discussed and specific areas will include: the Steward's union and contract position, union-building, complaint/problem handling, disciplinary action, grievance handling, etc. as much as possible, classes will allow for delegates' participation and practical exercise. Pre-requisite: previous Steward training.

4. Human Rights

This course will discuss areas of discrimination and inequalities in legislation and the workplace. Participants will have the opportunity to develop trade union remedies for positive change. This is a course for union stewards and local activists.

5. Political Activist and Labour

The right to belong to unions and what we can achieve through collective bargaining is determined by government and legislation. This course will discuss labour's legislative goals and how we can achieve them at all levels of government, by providing you with organizational, internal communication, and lobbying skills.

6. Effective Meetings: Public Speaking

This course will provide instruction and some first-hand experience with various elements of effective union meetings: planning publicity, worksite organization and group involvement, proper meeting conduct, and rules of order. As well, it will deal with the principles and characteristics of effective public speaking, etiquette, argumentation and persuasion. All students will have the opportunity to speak before the group.

7. Basic Health & Safety

This introductory course is aimed at persons who have little or no training in occupational health and safety but who want to become health and safety activists. The issues to be covered include: recognition, evaluation and control of occupational hazards; occupational health and workers' compensation; legislation; bargaining for health and safety; researching hazards; and health and safety committees.

8. Labour History

Unions new and old have a story to tell about collective bargaining gains and legislation won for all workers. This course will cover the development of unions in Canada, our beginnings and our policies and the role we have played in contributing to the economic and social benefits of our country. Delegates are encouraged to bring the history of their unions and locals with them.