

# Canadian Union of Public Employees - active

Robert Crockett -President of Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) for Local Union No. 501 consented to give the Cadre an interview.

The National Union of Public Service Employees & the National Union of Public Employees decided to dissolve their unions and merge together to form one big union for public service employees. This one big union, called The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) came into existence in Winnipeg in September 1963.

Since many groups of members had been involved in unions prior to the formation of CUPE, there was that special know-how and knowledge needed in producing a system most suitable to the interests of public employees.

CUPE has more than 160,000 members. It is a National organization, operated by and for the Canadian people.

Among the CUPE members are professionals, white collar workers, blue collar workers, technicians, labourers and skilled tradesmen. Approximately half of the CUPE members are women.

It is a known fact that when dealing with management and governments, Unions need experts. For this reason CUPE employs more than 100 full-time experts.

These experts help locals in writing bargaining proposals and they step in when the local is having difficulty enforcing the collective agreement. CUPE has experts in research, law, public relations, and education.

An educational program has been established to provide local unions with leadership training. The courses given are: Steward Training, Duties of Officers, Parliamentary Procedure, Public Speaking, Union Administration and Collective Bargaining.

One of the newest departments of CUPE is job evaluation. Job evaluation is the system where the Union and the management jointly assess the worth of various job classifications on the basis of skills required, training difficulty etc. It is a system which guarantees that people are

paid according to the job content and not the job title.

The Legislative Department of CUPE is responsible for providing assistance to local unions on matters of arbitration and the wording of contracts.

The Research Department provides CUPE locals with detailed background information on general economy and collective bargaining trends. It works out jointly agreed upon bargaining requests. It establishes a liaison committee or a joint committee which will actually conduct bargaining.

The local union is the key level of activity for CUPE members. These local unions are autonomous & came about because a majority of employees decided to unite together to better express their collective feeling to management.

In Prince Edward Island, we have CUPE. In Charlottetown, it is local Union No. 501. Involved in this local union are civil employees ie. city police, firemen, etc. and also some Security Police employed by the University of Prince Edward Island.

Through collective bargaining CUPE has managed in less than two years to increase the salaries of the Security Police at U. P.E.I. by approximately \$2,000. These collective agreements usually cover: wages, hours of work, vacations, holidays, pension and insurance plans, maternity leaves, work loads, promotion systems, protection against unfair disciplining and firing, ways of combatting favoritism and any other aspect of work

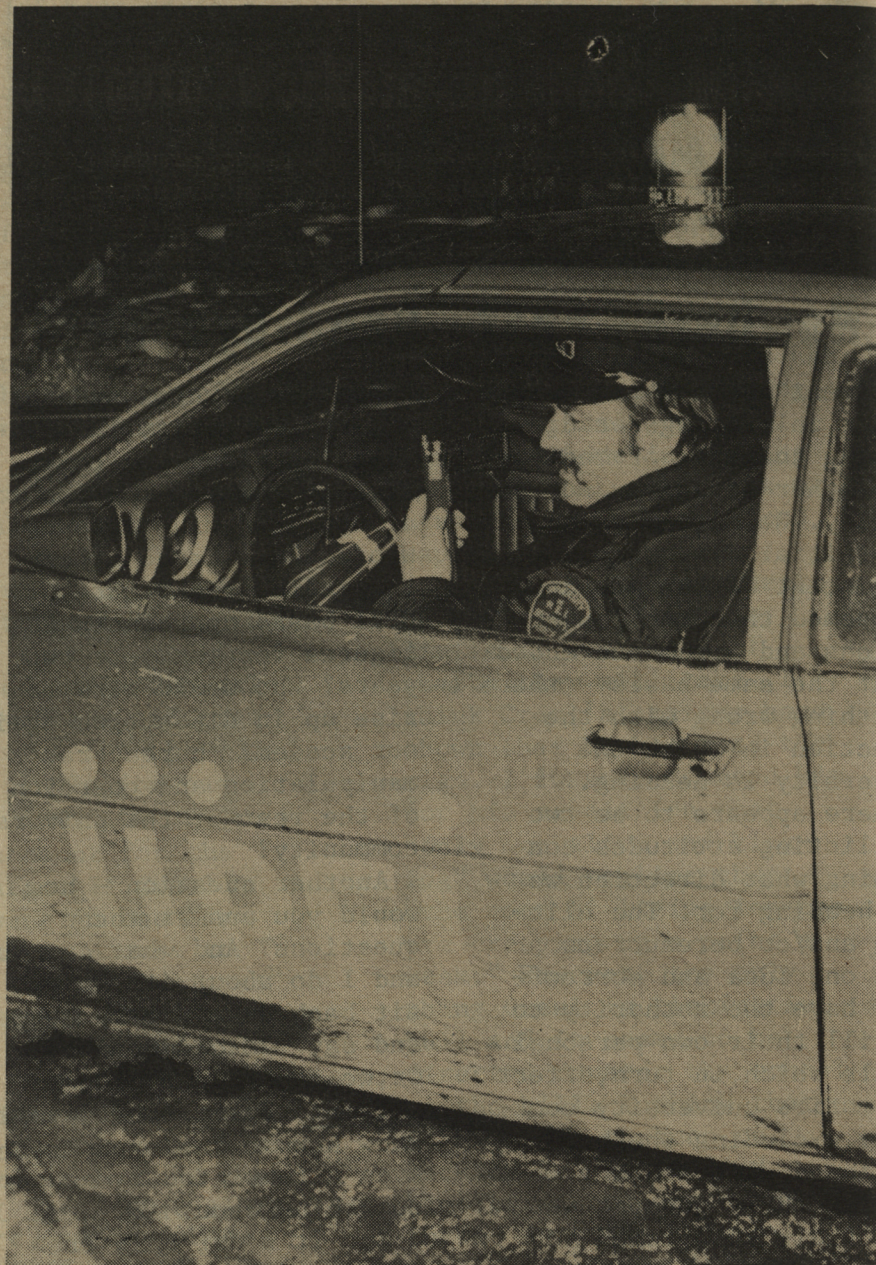


Photo by Gordon Pierce

The UPEI Security Police are CUPE members.

that local union members deem important.

A formal structure is set up and administered by the local union, to allow the individual to have his case heard by top levels of management. If the individual still feels he has been unfairly treated, he can have his case heard by an impartial arbitrator who will decide if management's actions were fair or not.

Strikes by CUPE members are rare, but on those rare occasions when deemed ne-

cessary, the decision to call them is made at the local level by a vote of all local union members. CUPE is a union where 99% out of 100% of collective agreements are signed without a strike.

For further information on CUPE please contact any CUPE member in local union # 501 or contact the Regional Office in St. John, N.B. or contact the local office for this region in Moncton N.B.

Colleen Warren

