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The UK Trade Union Congress Education Department courses are often seen as a model of representative training but the narrow focus of the courses on the workplace and their experiential nature has limitations. The Canadian Labor Congress, although operating with fewer resources, has been committed to representative training and providing broader, more liberal, programming. This article subjects the claims made for the TUC courses to empirical scrutiny and outlines alternative approaches to labor education illustrating the argument with examples of individual union courses drawn from the UK and Canada.

On considère souvent comme un modèle de formation les cours de la division d'éducation du Trade Union Congress (TUC) du Royaume-Uni. Toutefois, ces cours ont une vision étroite du monde du travail et de sa nature en tant que source du savoir d'expérience. Le congrès canadien du travail, même s'il possède moins de ressources, s'est engagé dans le domaine de la formation de délégués et présente un programme plus complet et plus libéral. Dans cet article, les prétentions face aux cours du TVC sont soumises à une analyse empirique. On y présente aussi des avenues possibles à l'éducation syndicale avec des exemples de cours au Canada et au Royaume-Uni.

Wherever adult, community, and labor education is practiced there are arguments about the relationship between education, social awareness, and social action. Since Freire this debate has shifted to focusing on the liberating impact of student-centered educational methods and student-determined course content (e.g., Pyrch, 1990). In union education democratic participation in the classroom has been held to lead to participatory democracy in labor unions, the workplace, and society at large. The arguments favoring this approach have suggested that broader social awareness will grow in an unstructured way from experiential learning. It is believed that students do not need a course content which teaches about the complexity of Western society. UK students on union education courses, however, operate within a course framework which is institutionally determined (by unions, colleges, and the law) and is state influenced, outside of direct student control; it is therefore questionable that student centeredness in the classroom can overcome external control (Spencer, 1992a).

Indeed the origins and practice of the British Trade Union Congress (TUC) model of workers' education have been scrutinised and it has been argued that a workplace, problem-based focus of courses prevents students from critically examining the broader social and political context of trade unionism. The courses fulfil TUC objectives without making waves and threatening the government grant to the TUC Education Department (McIlroy, 1990 pp. 173-275; Spencer, 1992b).

Those arguing in favor of an activist classroom focusing on worker-defined problems as opposed to those arguing for a layered provision—including workplace *and* broader issues, experiential *and* structured courses—insist that TUC 10-day courses are providing all that workers need to develop independent workers' organizations in the 1990s. Further it is argued that structured courses—with a content based on knowledge beyond student experience—would undermine workers' confidence and control (Powell, 1987).

It should also be noted that the retreat into skills-based and experiential learning avoids addressing the dilemma of what direction unions, and union education, should be going in the context of globalization of markets and postmodernist analysis. This educational strategy leaves it up to the students to determine what should be learned and avoids the question of whether or not union education should develop an independent critique of global changes in political economy.

However, the claim that these UK union courses are providing the basis for independent union organization and activity and that these courses provide a model for unions in other countries becomes as much an empirical as a theoretical claim. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to examine the evidence available from surveys and course experience in the UK and to compare UK provision to that in Canada. The supporters of the TUC approach have not made a serious attempt to research the impact of trade union education. If, as it is argued, the value of these courses is that they support democratic activity in workers' organizations (Powell, 1987) then the test of how useful the education may be is empirical not theoretical.

Admittedly, surveys of the impact of education are bound to be problematic with many undertaken as evaluative exercises by tutors involved. They can be self-fulfilling to a large extent. Some of those who have tried to draw conclusions from survey material have not always taken account of the more contradictory evidence that is available. (Mahon & Sterling, 1988, and the TUC Review of Education, 1987, are examples of selective review of the evidence.) For example, the TUC did not discuss the implications of their finding that stewards wanted to know more about the law, instead they reiterated their commitment to methods as content). But there is survey material on which some tentative judgement can be made and this evidence casts doubt on TUC claims for the efficacy of their model above all others.

The Canadian Labor Congress (CLC), in contrast to the TUC, has always been committed to developing both "tool" (the term is used in Canada to describe representative training courses similar to those offered by the TUC, concentrating on chairing meetings, handling grievances, meeting management etc.) and "awareness" (broader courses looking at aspects of the historical, political, economic, and social context of unionism) courses, with the example of the CLC's Labor College of Canada as a model of liberal adult education provision for trade unionists (Swerdlow, 1990, pp. 68-75, 90-108).

There are some in the CLC who distrust broader-based education and question the value of expending so many resources on these awareness courses and they look to the TUC program as providing a model for future CLC provision.

The CLC has received public funds to aid its education but there has been little state intervention in CLC provision for unlike the UK, the grant is not tied to industrial relations training but can also be used for labor education focusing on broader issues such as union history or social and political change. Therefore these two factors—the attitude of the central labor organization and the conditions attached to the state grant—have resulted in a different pattern of provision in Canada from that in Britain, a pattern which we will discuss further after reviewing UK experience. In the following sections we will review the course experience and research findings based on UK survey evidence of membership opinions before considering the experience of alternative models of labor education and the pattern and experience of Canadian labor education.

What Do Students Get from a Course?

What do shop stewards (this terminology will be used as a generic term for workplace union representatives) and other workplace trade unionists get from TUC training courses particularly given that these courses have a student-centered and workplace-based content? Since the early 1980s there have been two core courses, each of 10 days in length and usually conducted as one-day-a-week over 10 weeks, a total of 60 hours study time. Commentators mention the usual "confidence" factor and participatory skills, but what are we offering those who have some of these already? (A defence of these limited objectives is offered in a discussion by Caldwell (1985); however, by 1989 Caldwell appeared to have moderated his absolute commitment to basic method orientated courses after he became co-sponsor of a certificate course in union studies which included discrete areas of study and traditional essay requirements.)

There are problems of integrating all stewards into a course in which there is student-determined content and student-centered methods. While such a structure may be very useful for new stewards and may indeed involve more experienced students in aiding those new shop stewards, what it does not always do is advance the educational interests of the experienced shop stewards. For example, one of the learning methods which had been advanced on these courses is a "course committee" during which the problems faced by the students are reported at the beginning of the day and discussed collectively by the course: these can then become the course agenda. There are some benefits to be had from selective use of this method but a number of problems can arise in tackling a course exclusively in this way. One of them is that, particularly on a large course, working through everyone else's problems can be tedious and in some cases this has led to student absenteeism (Spencer; 1987; Miller, 1986). Secondly, as recognized by

the stewards themselves, the course can lack structure and direction: "We spent so much time in meetings discussing where the course was going, it wasn't going anywhere" (McIlroy, 1985, p. 11).

Survey Evidence from UK Union Courses

The difference between experienced and less experienced representatives emerges in Tony Smith's survey findings (1984), which reveal that stewards have different needs which, he argues, ought to be met by trade union education. He identifies "active" and "inactive" representatives—those with a key negotiating or union role and those simply representing a section; and he relates their needs and expectations to TUC educational provision. The conclusions he draws about the limited nature of the TUC provision are: "By being so narrowly conceived the courses do not provide for the broader educational needs of workers." But he further argues that if unions are to progress in difficult economic times, then thinking about alternative policies is needed as an "essential feature of trade union education" and should "take place in an adequate program of political education, that is, an analysis of power structures and how to respond effectively to them, is essential" (p. 44).

This view, which recognizes both the benefits of "basic" courses and the limitations of the course content, is also supported by a survey of course members' opinions conducted by two workplace representatives (Kelly & Grooms, 1986).

Similar evidence was found amongst an experienced group of trade union workplace representatives at Newbrewco (a large brewery on Merseyside), when questions were asked of 13 representatives who had been on union courses (Spencer, 1986). Among them they had attended a total of 38 ten-day courses, including the subject specific "follow-on" courses developed in the late 1970s but now abandoned by the TUC and 17 short courses. The stewards listed four different categories of skills as having been learned on course, including handling meetings. It was clear from the responses that these were more important to newer, less experienced stewards and to those with a weaker organization, in this case the contract cleaners, which is in line with Tony Smith's findings and supports the view that skills development is an important part of courses for trade unionists, helping them to participate in the union and the workplace more effectively.

Ten of the 13 representatives also made more general statements of what they had learned from the follow-on courses—for example, "understood why trade unions can't rely on the law"; "gave an insight into management thinking"; "learned more about trade union objectives." These have wider applicability and clearly interested the more experienced stewards who had a grip on the basic organizational skills trade union activists require, but who wished to gain a deeper insight into the context of trade union activity.

The criticisms of the courses ranged from specific organizational points to some linking of these to objectives. The union convener (senior negotiator) wrote: "talking to some of the stewards it's clear they would prefer a two-week block course looking at recent trends in Government legislation and policy," rather than one day a week problem-based courses. He suggested the stewards wanted more continuity and more time to think away from the day-to-day pressures. The two- and three-year courses offered by some UK University Extra-Mural Departments were unknown to them (Forrester, 1988).

This is obviously a small sample on one site but a detailed study is available of this workplace union organization against which these comments can be tested (Spencer, 1989) and the findings are in line with Tony Smith's, and Josephine Kelly and Colin Grooms' more extensive surveys across unions and workplaces and illustrates again that stewards identify diverse needs beyond skill development and problem solving. Only part of these needs are being adequately met by the new emphasis on "self-directed" education.

Another survey (Keithley, 1983) involved 225 interviews with managers, stewards, and full-time officers. It was designed to find out their perceptions of, and the impact of, shop steward training courses. There was evidence that the courses did equip stewards better to fulfil their role and rely less on full-time officials. But interestingly those who had been on courses were less likely to see issues in broader trade union terms than those who had not. He recognized that the unions and the TUC had controlled the courses but he did not consider that the courses had succeeded in locating the stewards' role in the union. There was general agreement amongst his respondents over what should be included in stewards' courses (workplace collective bargaining) but the full-time trade union officials expected the courses to generate an independent union view of industrial relations whereas stewards and managers shared a near common workplace perspective. "In fact, frequently, it was the views of full-time officials which were out of line with those of other responding groups, both managerial and shop steward" (p. 249). Therefore, in his survey the TUC education scheme had not achieved what the TUC (Powell, 1987) believed to be an independent worker education scheme. "The fieldwork . . . would suggest that on balance shop steward training could more accurately be seen as encouraging a pro-management shop steward ideology, and thus operates as a managerial control agent" (Keithley, 1983, pp. 249-250).

Keithley considers the question raised most by the research is in relation to course objectives: "the issue . . . would appear to concern in particular the content of shop steward training courses and the perception that shop steward training tends to pursue objectives which are more managerially than trade union biased" (p. 269). This survey illustrates the extent of shop steward incorporation by management and supports sponsorship and incorporation theories of workplace trade unionism. Keithley's evidence further supports a view that shop steward training is essentially industrial relations training resulting in shop stewards more independent from their full-time officials and

more completely conforming to managerial objectives—not the kind of independent workers' education envisaged by supporters of the TUC model. Keithley concludes his study provocatively by considering that:

> alternatively, there may in fact be a case under the circumstances for abandoning shop steward training altogether, certainly those untrained stewards interviewed had more sense of identity with the trade union movement than those who had been trained. (p. 271)

This is an extreme view and may be untypical of course experience elsewhere but does indicate that unions might do well to look at other broader types of courses.

TUC Responses

The TUC does constantly review courses and methods of delivery and also responds selectively to specific issues raised. For example, it has produced some very useful handbooks on "Tackling Racism" and "Women at Work" for use on introductory courses (although the recent edition of the "Women at Work" book has been withdrawn because of government objections). In addition the TUC provides short courses of one to three days duration in response to specific developments such as the introduction of new health and safety regulations. However, the TUC does seem to be determined to stick at providing fairly basic shop steward training courses and indeed Alan Grant (1989), the Head of the TUC Education Department, has now said there is no point in criticizing the TUC for not going further given the limited resources available and their present brief; he has recognized more should be provided but argues the TUC is not able to respond (until 1991 the TUC had not, however, endorsed other longer trade union studies courses offered by labor educators in institutions of higher education).

At this juncture it is useful to contrast the general TUC provision outlined above with some examples of labor education in Canada. Although the emphasis in Canada is also on developing representative skills there is national CLC provision for more intensive education, for example, the Labor College of Canada, describes its eight-week residential program as five subjects taught at first-year university level: economics, political science, labor history, labor sociology, and labor law. In addition some provincial federations, labor councils, and the CLC co-sponsor three-year certificate courses (trade union students attend three hours per week for two semesters) as in Saskatchewan and Manitoba and there are shorter courses, also co-sponsored by the CLC and offering a broader curriculum, such as those run at the Atlantic Region Labor Education Center in Nova Scotia and the labor studies program offered by Toronto's Metro Labor Education Center.

In order to deal with the question of what kind of course provision is needed to meet the needs of trade unionists in the 1990s, in the context of changes in the global economy, we need to look beyond the TUC scheme. A second layer of course provision is needed for stewards interested in sustained study of

broader issues—a course such as the UK Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) Distance Learning Course. Because the TUC is no longer interested in providing their own more sustained courses (such as the multi-media joint Workers' Educational Association/British Broadcasting Corporation/TUC course tried in the mid 1970s) we shall use the TGWU course as an example of what the next stage in industrial studies for trade unionists in the UK could be. We shall also examine the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) paid educational leave (PEL) program for members as an alternative Canadian model of how to utilize 20 days labor education.

TGWU Distance Learning Courses

Stemming from a review of trade union education by the TGWU (Cosgrove, 1983)—which called for a broader curriculum—the TGWU in discussion with Surrey University, the major provider of the union's course in Region 1 (London and the South East), developed a new idea of "distance learning" combining, in this case, tutorials with monthly course meetings over the 12-month period. This, it was felt, would provide both the "collectivism" via the course meetings so central to union activity and missing from postal courses, and a sustained course looking at issues beyond the workplace. The course should perhaps have been called "half distance learning"; but the "distance learning" tag stuck, and this, and other similar regional courses, are operated under the same title. (It should be noted that TGWU courses are designed to range from basic representative induction courses to this kind of more advanced work. The bulk of their provision is inevitably basic, stage one and stage two stewards' courses of three to five days.)

The TGWU distance learning courses have now been discussed in a number of articles in the *Industrial Tutor, Adults Learning,* and *Research in Distance Education* and these accounts illustrate how a more demanding course, using more traditional educational skills (guided reading, extracts from texts and essays, etc) but in a different framework, can be run successfully (Fisher, 1984; Fisher & Camfield, 1986; Sterling, Nesbit, & Miller, 1986; Sterling, 1988; McIlroy, 1988; McIlroy, 1989; Spencer, 1991).

Because these courses are experimental they have been subject to detailed scrutiny. Substantial course reports have been written in each Region and some have included surveys of student attitudes towards the courses. For example, the reasons students gave for applying for the Leeds University/Region 9 (Yorkshire and Humberside) courses included the usual "to make me more effective" and "to give me more confidence," but also extended to a desire "to study in more detail history and labor law," to gain a "wider range of subjects than usual" and more "knowledge and understanding."

Interestingly, many also raised the point about the limiting nature of other courses they had been on. One wanted to get "away from the day-to-day

problems of the workplace focused on in other courses." Another stressed how a "broader course would be more useful at work and in the union" than others she had been on. Although the majority saw the course as complementary to previous courses—as, indeed, it was designed to be—these critical comments (which were in no way specifically elicited) were nevertheless included in students' statements of why they wanted to do the course and what they thought the union local and union generally would get out of it.

In their original applications all students expected the course to benefit the union. Asked later in the end-of-course surveys whether the course had influenced their union activity, students replied that it had. Comments were varied and included: that it had "stimulated interest in the Union's Regional activity"; had given more confidence; and had meant that they looked at events differently "away from the tunnel vision of the workplace."

When asked if the course would promote greater involvement in the union all those who answered were positive. The responses were interesting in that most related to external as well as internal activity—a desire to be involved in lay-tutoring and in regional activity was included, as was the view that awareness of history and politics would assist their activity within the Labor Party and help in "argument with the public," etc. A few had definite plans about what they wanted to do in the union.

In many ways Region 8's (Northern England) responses on the usefulness of the course were even more positive, giving specific examples of changes in branch (i.e., local) organization and affiliation. Other Regions also reported favorably on the impact of the course on union activity. However, it is always difficult to separate cause and effect in this matter—was the attendance on the course one aspect of a greater activity or did the course lead to greater activity? In any case, tutors are particularly sensitive to anything which might help to persuade the "client" to continue a relationship with the "provider"! Therefore, while it would be wrong to exaggerate the impact of these courses, it is possible to claim that the broader, more educationally demanding curriculum was well received by these more experienced UK trade union students. Having examined a UK alternative to TUC course provision we will now turn to a Canadian example of an alternative model of membership education.

The Canadian Auto Workers Paid Educational Leave Program

The CAW and its predecessor the United Auto Workers (UAW) have been running extensive educational programs for their members and activists throughout the postwar period. Since the split from the UAW the CAW has refurbished its Family Education Center at Port Elgin, Ontario, and overhauled its educational programs. The union runs a number of varied educational programs from this center but the major emphasis is on the union's PEL

program. This is funded via a two cent per member, per hour benefit negotiated in contracts with employers. The money goes into a trust fund and is used to pay for lost wages, travel, accommodation, and the educational costs of the program. The bargaining unit can send as many members as its contributions allow.

The program consists of four week-long residential courses, usually separated by two to three weeks back at work. The program is previewed at a weekend residential, to which partners are invited, and commitments made to stay the course. A PEL course would typically consist of 130 members subdivided into six groups. The union also offers the program in French, available to any of their francophone members, with three of the four weeks of the program run in Québec and the fourth offered at Port Elgin. To date more than 3,000 members have completed the CAW-PEL program.

Each week (level) of the course has a separate theme: level 1, the present as history; level 2, sociology; level 3, political economy; level 4, social and political change. Some study skills (for example basic maths and reading) and union representative skills (for example reporting and effective speaking) are built into the course. There are also committees established at the outset from among the course members which mirror the kind of committees operating throughout the union—substance abuse, international affairs, womens', human rights, cultural, recreation, etc. which organize events during the course and make recommendations to the course coordinator. The course concludes with a convention (mock conference) focusing on the wide range of issues addressed during the course and reported on by the committees. Videos are used extensively and are shared by members but they have not replaced written materials which are sometimes read aloud by voluntary readings in each group—recalling a technique utilized in early North American unions (Gompers and the Cigar makers come to mind).

Each week has a number of plenary sessions with union and guest speakers and with an opportunity for questions and discussion from the floor. These can vary depending on the issues of the day and on student requests. During my visit to a Level (week) 4 course they included the politics of free trade, refugees, Palestine, community politics, and coalition building. These inputs complement the work going on in the classroom and in student committees.

Union discussion leaders tutor the groups. These tutors are volunteers, union activists, who have received additional discussion leader training. In addition to teaching methods training these lay tutors meet annually to discuss changes in course content and updating of materials.

There is plenty of opportunity for student experience and knowledge to be utilized within the groups although anyone trained in TUC educational methods would find the approach used as material and subject based, rather than experiential. Undoubtedly there is room for more experimentation within

the learning methods used in the classroom but the CAW has not (and is not) going to make the mistake of substituting method for message. Their purpose is to provide a broad educational experience which challenges their members to question social, economic, and political structures and to review the role of unions in society. They discuss the relationship between national and international questions as well as those between union members, globalization, and personal politics.

It is clear from talking to members that the course is an eye-opener for many participants, particularly for those who conceived of the union as having only a limited role. As a result of the experience some will move from being union card-carriers to activists. Dennis McDermott, a former head of the union and CLC President described his stay at Port Elgin in the 1950s as a turning point in his union activism. The experience is also social, contacts are made, and understandings of different work and community situations gained. Articles and books are read and videos exchanged, newspapers gutted and discussed. It is always difficult to evaluate the impact of this kind of course. The CAW undoubtedly are content that a majority of participants leave with a heightened union and social consciousness and that a substantial minority are prepared to take on union positions as a result.

A four-week residential membership education program is an achievement greater than anything currently available for trade union members in the UK and it is a model of the kind of PEL that can be won through negotiation. Its future is, of course, dependent on what can be achieved in negotiations. A substantial number of students come from plants in the "big three" auto companies (GM, Ford, Chrysler), and they are currently affected by lay-off and staff reductions. The union is committed to extending the PEL clauses to all its contracts—at present approximately 75% of bargaining units, covering 93% of the union's total membership, have negotiated PEL—and the biggest threat to the program comes from plant closures which have increased in the present economic recession and restructuring of the Canadian economy.

It is important to recognize that the employer has no influence over the PEL program—this is not employer-paid time-off as experienced in UK union training courses. Once the contract includes a PEL clause the levy goes into the CAW-PEL trust fund and all pay and insurances are met by that fund and the member receives time off without pay from the employer. Nor is there any state influence over the educational program the union offers its members.

Union Education for the 1990s

The stress of TUC introductory courses on experiential learning and related activity might be right for new stewards—confidence building and participatory skills are all vital to develop democratic decision making and activity within unions. But, as illustrated by the TGWU and CAW-PEL programs, it is also possible to achieve this in another way, for both members

and representatives. Unions also have to think about the constraining and contradictory context within which they operate and the need to develop an understanding of this context with their members, particularly in the light of the increasing globalization of companies and capital and the threats therein to union organization. Unions also have to consider the educational needs of other, more experienced, trade unionists. If first stage courses are to be entirely experiential then second stage stewards' courses should be linked to wider concerns, and they should meet broader challenges such as those presented by the UK National Union of Public Employees' (NUPE) National Education Officer, Jim Sutherland, of locating trade union education within a political context, "to develop materials and political issues within an understanding of the ideas" and to "examine and explain the connections between unions and the Labor party (and wider society)" (Sutherland, 1985, p. 10, 1985). These challenges must be responded to by tutors as well as by unions, and placed, of course, in a critical educational setting. Social awareness does not grow automatically from experiential learning.

An emphasis on "self-directed" learning through course meetings does not address the question of what should be covered in the 10 days of day-release education, or the 10 days following that. There is a real need to go beyond "expressed needs" conditioned by specific industrial relations training requirements. Participatory methods can permeate the course, but connections must also be made with the points raised above by NUPE's National Education Officer, the TGWU, the CAW, and increasingly, other unions which are seeking to set more of their work within the traditions of liberal adult education and are recognizing the limits of the workplace problem-based training approach. NUPE has just launched a membership education program which emphasizes basic educational skills of reading, writing, and numeracy, replacing the previous membership courses on workplace union problems and union policy, but they are not attempting anything as ambitious as the CAW. Tutors should not avoid *their* responsibility for considering the whole of the curriculum; course committees cannot be a substitute for course content nor does a series of course "meetings" necessarily add up to a course.

Labor educators have sought to develop a new democratic, active androgogy, beginning with adult students' experiences and their present environment. The interrelationships of the different experiences of the tutor and class, of practice and theory, of individual experience and wider knowledge, are difficult ones to make and to develop. However, influenced by simplistic interpretations of child-centered learning applied in British schools from the 1960s and 1970s, and by simplistic interpretations of Freire, some worker educators have moved towards a total concentration on student self-direction (Gowan, 1982; Baker, 1986). In such a situation, the tutor is seen essentially as a facilitator arranging learning situations, which at best tap and unravel the student's preexisting but unrecognized knowledge and skills.

Courses, it is argued, should move marginally—if at all—beyond the students' experience and the course content should be determined by the immediate concerns of workers and therefore their problems at work. Not only does this androgogy dismiss any leadership which may be provided by the tutor, it also refuses to challenge the limitations of students' existing consciousness and experience and refuses to discuss how education may go beyond and deepen existing experience and understanding. Another criticism of this approach is made by Dale Spender (1982) who notes that women's experience is undervalued to begin with and therefore tutors should be careful about building courses in that way (p. 60).

It may seem that the TUC approach of student-determined content, student-centered courses, implied a total freedom from previously determined course structure. However, the operation of this androgogy was, in practice, limited by the state legislation and the desires of the TUC to focus only on workplace issues. It was made clear to the students at the outset that they were to discuss their problems and their workplace issues and that those issues and problems were to provide the focus for the course. If any student wished to discuss, for example, the history of the labor movement on the course or questions of economic theory, then they would be reminded that this was a representatives' course aimed at dealing with representatives' problems. The lack of detailed explicit curriculum which this approach entailed avoided an overt conflict between union and government over the annual grant, and certainly did succeed in giving a veneer of free choice to the TUC program, but nonetheless reflected and confirmed the existing *status quo.*

This scrutiny of recent British workers' education, and the examples from Canada, illustrate the limitations of a simplistic student-centered approach in the classroom when it is situated in a complex framework. It also points to the advantages of a variety of curriculum and methods and supports the view that social awareness (and social action) can be stimulated by more traditional liberal adult education approaches. Canadian educationalists and trade unionists who visit the TUC Education Center in London return impressed with what they see and hear, but none are introduced to a critique of the work and could therefore be excused if they return starry-eyed, enthused with TUC materials and methodology.

Canadian Provision

Provision of labor education in Canada is more diverse with different unions, federations, and labor centrals mounting distinct programs. The evidence from the TUC provision would suggest that it would be a mistake for Canadian labor educators to attempt to emulate the TUC program and adopt a "methods as content," "tool training" only, course approach, focused narrowly upon the needs of workplace bargaining. There are some officials in Canadian unions who are suspicious of liberal adult education approaches, and of links with universities and colleges and they would consider the TUC

program as a model for CLC and union provision. They would like to see a shift of resources to more workplace, problem-based, courses and a break with broader "awareness" courses. While the continuation of the CLC's own educationally demanding eight-week residential Labor College ensures that will not happen easily, the case against a narrowing of curriculum needs to be vigorously stated and the limitations of the TUC model need to be exposed if this view is to be denied.

The existing Canadian emphasis on tool and awareness courses means there is room for more experimentation with distance learning courses, certificate programs, and co-operative ventures between unions and universities and colleges which could build on the individual unions' own provision of tool and awareness courses.

The University of Manitoba, for example, in its University-Labor three-year certificate program, promises a learning skills session and then two subjects a year—Canadian Labor and Economic History up to 1939, then post 1939, Labor and Economic History in year one, Industrial Relations and Labor Law in year two; and in year three, Economics of Labor Relations and Canadian Government. Also, Athabasca University and the Alberta Federation of Labor, supported by the CLC, are experimenting with a mixture of seminar and home study, distance education, credit courses for trade unionists.

Carol Arnold noted in her study of labor education in Alberta that, compared with the UK, in Canada there was more "emphasis . . . on forging collectivist thinking and increasing the levels of participation by rank and file" and that this was to be achieved via tool and specific awareness courses (1982, p. 25). Worker educators along with other community and adult educators need to acknowledge this tradition and understand that different course objectives might require different structures. There is more to "empowering" a particular student group than allowing that group to run a particular course; education also has to reveal and examine structures and contexts and therefore go beyond the limitations of the textbook of life experienced.

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