

SURVIVING THE COLD WAR:
A STUDY OF THE UNITED ELECTRICAL WORKERS IN CANADA

by James L. Turk

L'anti-communisme au sein du mouvement du travail canadien atteignit dans les années 40s et 50s un niveau sans précédent. L'adhésion à des syndicats de gauche fut restreinte; ces syndicats furent purgés de leurs dirigeants puis finalement démantelés. Cependant, la United Electric Radio and Machine Workers (UE) put exceptionnellement échapper au sort de ses semblables. Malgré des efforts concertés pour détruire la UE, celle-ci parvint à conserver la plupart de ses locaux, sauf au Québec où ils furent désaccrédités à cause de leur appartenance au mouvement communiste. Pour comprendre ce qui permit la survie de ce syndicat de gauche au Canada, une histoire sociale de ses 4 principaux locaux fut entreprise. Un archivage intensif ainsi que des entrevues de longue durée permirent de mieux comprendre comment la structure et le fonctionnement du syndicat, la nature et le processus de travail de l'industrie électrique, et le caractère des attaques dont fut victime la UE, contribuèrent à lui éviter le sort de ses semblables durant la "guerre froide". En conclusion, on fait état des difficultés propre aux histoires orales dont le sujet implique l'émotivité et la sensibilité politique des participants.

Labour and the Cold War in Canada

The cold war period is one of the most neglected in Canadian studies. Whether this neglect stems from a desire to forget what happened or from a belief that there is little of interest to study, the result is a gaping hole in our knowledge of our political and social history. Since the research reported here began several years ago, there has been a dramatic growth in the urgency for a critical examination of Canada during the cold war years. The Canadian response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan shows that the cold war mentality lives on and can be reactivated with alarming speed.

There are important lessons to be learned from the cold war experience--lessons that require a careful examination of that period from within the mood of the period. As William Appleton Williams, the noted American historian has argued:

"Only by grasping what we were is it possible to see how

we changed, to understand the process and the nature of the modifications, and to gain some perspective on what we are. The historical experience is not one of staying in the present and looking back. Rather it is one of going back into the past and returning to the present with a wider and more intense consciousness of the restraints of our former outlook."¹

The attack on the left in the period after World War II took many forms--one of the most virulent being within the trade union movement. Having been instrumental in the building of newly emerged industrial unions of the CIO, communists and other left wingers were subjected to a vicious assault aimed at dislodging them from positions of leadership and influence.

The United Electrical Workers

Of all the left wing unions in Canada, none was seen as more closely tied to the Communist Party than the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (UE). None fought the establishment within the Canadian Congress of Labour more vigorously.² UE's president, C.S. Jackson regularly opposed Aaron Mosher and the leadership of the CCL. Jackson and UE Secretary-Treasurer, George Harris, vigorously fought the CCL's affiliation with the CCF. Within the labour movement, UE fought against the Abbott Plan, against Canada's acceptance of the Marshall Plan, and against the anti-Soviet character of Canada's foreign policy.³

Naturally, the UE became one of the prime targets of those wanting to rid the labour movement of "communists". In Canada and the U.S., the CCL and the CIO went to great lengths to achieve that end: expelling the UE from their respective organizations, chartering a new electrical workers' union (the International Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers) to take over UE's jurisdiction and raid existing UE shops, and giving millions of dollars and key staff assistance to IUE.

This effort was quite successful in the United States where the UE was reduced from the third largest CIO union with over 325,000 members in 1948, to a shell of its former self with fewer than 140,000 members by 1954.⁴

In Canada the story was different. The UE, alone among the major left wing unions, survived the cold war years with its left wing leadership intact, its left wing political stance as visible as before, and with most of its major locals still part of the organization.⁵

The survival of UE is important to understand. It can shed light on how left wing leadership can establish a firm base among a rank and file that does not share the leadership's politics, and it can let us see what the cold war and anti-communism meant to workers in one of Canada's major industrial sectors.

The Survival of UE

A full report of the results of the research must await the far more detailed treatment only possible in a monograph.⁶ Nevertheless, an overview of the study will give some sense of events and will be an aid in looking at issues concerning the use of oral evidence in labour studies.

My study of UE largely focussed on four key locals which counted for almost half of the total membership of the union. What happened at these locals determined the

fate of the union. The locals--504 at Westinghouse in Hamilton, 507 at CGE Davenport in Toronto, 510 at Phillips in Brockville, and 524 at CGE in Peterborough--represented the heart of UE's membership in the electrical manufacturing industry. Local 504 was the largest with approximately 6000 members, followed by 524 with 3000, 507 with 1200, and 510 with 700.

These four locals had rather different situations and outcomes. Local 504 at Westinghouse was one of the strongest in its loyalty to the UE district leadership. The hold was so strong that the IUE never attempted a raid at Westinghouse. On the other hand, the IUE did launch concerted attacks on the UE locals in the CGE chain. The key to this attack was the Peterborough local. Both sides felt that the outcome in Local 524 would decide the future in the CGE chain and that in turn would probably decide the fate of UE. The fight in Peterborough was the most intense anywhere in Canada. For four years, the battle continued although the UE probably assured its victory in the decisive vote during the second IUE raid in 1951.⁷

The contest at CGE Davenport seemed secondary. Although it resulted in the most physical violence, the IUE failed both in 1950 and 1951 to sign enough workers to get a vote.

The Brockville local (510) is the exception within the exception. Here the IUE won on its second try in 1953⁸ and retained the local despite a UE counter-raid two years later. But since the Phillips plant was geographically isolated from the rest of the electrical industry, was not part of a prominent chain, and was the smallest of the key locals, the IUE's victory here did not turn the tide against UE elsewhere.

Factors in Survival: The Structure and Operation of UE

Several factors stand out as reasons for the pattern that emerged in each of these shops. Generally, UE had established its base through extensive rank and file participation from the outset in each local. It always sought to establish a functioning stewards body that met weekly and handled much of the work of the local. It expected locals' executives to meet weekly and to be supplemented by monthly general membership meetings. Contact with the rank and file was further facilitated by regular leaflets distributed at plant gates. There were rarely fewer than one or two a week and sometimes as many as seven to ten a week during negotiations. On top of this, there was a shop paper at CGE and Westinghouse and the Canadian UE News that appeared regularly at all shops. No other union in Canada has matched this level of publicity work with its rank and file.

One of the district officers⁹ was assigned to each major local: Jackson for CGE and Harris for Westinghouse and Phillips. They would head the yearly negotiations and attend the general membership meetings.

In all of this, the stewards' system was probably the key. If functioned as the key link between each department and the local leadership. Because the stewards were kept informed about all the events of the local and participated in most aspects of the local's business, there was a person in each department who could be a regular and reliable source of information for the membership. This went a long way to letting the membership feel a part of the union and keeping the leadership in touch with the rank and file.

The UE also built its credibility by emphasizing the democratic structure of the union. Formally, it was democratic from top to bottom. Nothing substantial could be done without the vote of the membership. During these years, the union's governing

body--the District Council on which each local had representation according to the size of the local--met every three months. Conventions were held yearly. All policy matters, all decisions regarding contracts, strikes, and negotiations were subjected to membership votes within the locals. Even the salaries of the officers of the union were limited to no more than the top hourly rate in the industry. However much the leadership organized to get its way through this structure, the structure existed and served to refute the claims about the anti-democratic behaviour of the "communists".

The UE stressed policy from the beginning. Its newspaper and leaflets were filled with strongly worded policy statements, economic analysis, and political comment. Also from the beginning, the leadership and the union were subjected to red-baiting. Jackson's internment during the early part of World War II was repeatedly brought to the attention of the membership by the anti-communists. So was George Harris' open admission of membership in the Communist Party. Having had to confront the issue of communism and left wing politics throughout its life and having always done so aggressively, the anti-communist charges made during the IUE raids lost much of their sting. The workers were accustomed to hearing these charges and the local leadership and the UE stewards had gained experience and confidence in how to deal with them.

One of the keys to success for the anti-communists during the cold war years was to provoke division among the top officers of the union and to use the division to break up the union. UE avoided this fate. Its top three officers--Jackson, Harris, and Ross Russell--followed an agreement that, when they disagreed on a matter of substance, they would discuss it until there was consensus and would stick to that position publicly. This proved critical because, despite major disagreements about tactics and strategy, the three never publicly disagreed and avoided giving their opponents an opening to divide the leadership.¹⁰

Also critical was the fact that UE stressed a non-partisan line: it was not the purpose of the union to be affiliated with any political party. This line, developed to fight the CCL's tie to the CCF, was used to turn the IUE's charge of communist domination against the IUE. Whereas the IUE could show little hard evidence of a UE-CP tie, the UE could easily show a strong tie between the IUE (and its other labour supporters) and the CCF. The key leaders of the IUE in Brockville and Peterborough had been CCF candidates in 1948.¹¹ The IUE's lawyers were Ted Joliffe, leader of the Ontario CCF, and David Lewis. The one attempt to organize the anti-communist forces in the UE prior to 1949 had been made by Oliver Hodges in his role as full-time organizer for the CCF Trade Union Committee and the name the anti-communist group had chosen was the UEW-CCF Unity Committee.

All of this allowed the UE leadership to argue persuasively that it was the CCF that was interfering, not the Communist Party.¹²

An additional factor was that UE had established a solid record of trade union work for its members. It processed grievances aggressively, even when there was little chance of winning. Its contract settlements were respectable and occasionally exceptional when historical comparisons are made with other unionized groups. It took a tough public stance toward employers as part of its outspoken anti-capitalist philosophy. Yet, it avoided strikes where possible while never shrinking from threatening a strike as part of a negotiating strategy. When strikes had to be taken, it took them, if possible, in smaller locals.¹³ All of this built its image with the rank and file as a militant trade union, but one which avoided unnecessary (and unpopular) strikes.

Finally, the UE adopted an organizational strategy that helped it immensely.

The District Office would appoint a full-time staff representative in each major area. The staff representative would take responsibility for overseeing the operation of the locals in that area and being the voice of the District leadership in the local situation. In the case of both Peterborough and Hamilton, the UE had exceptionally competent representatives who worked with the local officers to see that all aspects of the union's business, from grievances to publicity to public relations, were carried out in an impressive manner. These representatives, Bill Walsh in Hamilton and Ralph Sullivan in Peterborough, were cornerstones of the union's strength. When the top local officers in Peterborough fought the District repeatedly,¹⁴ Sullivan was able to function as a local voice for the District leadership. He saw that those loyal to the District kept up their morale and were prepared to take over when the existing anti-District leadership went into the IUE.

The only location where the UE failed to have a full-time representative in place was Brockville. The anti-communist local leadership could build their base with no day-to-day challenge. This figured prominently in UE's subsequent defeat there.

Factors in Survival: UE's Opponents

The success of UE was not only on what it did but also built on the failings of its opposition. As already indicated, the CCF's behaviour allowed it to be subjected to the very charges it levelled at the Communist Party.

Prior to the establishment of the IUE in 1949, the Steelworkers were the major union to encourage UE's anti-communists.¹⁵ The UE never passed up the chance to charge the Steelworkers and the anti-communists in UE with wanting to destroy the union. The anti-communists vehemently denied this charge: they wanted new leaders but were proud of their union. When the Steelworkers persuaded one of the anti-communist locals to leave UE for Steel,¹⁶ UE's claims were vindicated and the anti-communists throughout UE were put on the defensive.

The establishment of the IUE did not solve matters. The IUE concentrated its resources in the United States and merely sent in one organizer to handle all of Canada. Jack Morton, the president of Local 524 before the formation of the IUE, was made IUE's Canadian director. With only four years of trade union experience previously and having to continue to work full-time in the shop, Morton could hardly fill the void in the UE structure in Canada.

Partly to compensate, the CCL provided a series of experienced organizers to help the IUE in its early years. But contradictory advice given by people who had only a week or two to familiarize themselves with the situation often did more harm than good. This was recognized by 1951 when the CCL arranged for Joe MacKenzie, formerly of the United Rubber Workers, to be loaned to the IUE to head up the organization drive at CGE Peterborough. While the problem of continuity was solved, a conflict developed between the IUE's Canadian organizer and MacKenzie. The IUE staff saw MacKenzie as working in the interests of the CCL, not the IUE, while MacKenzie felt that the IUE was insensitive to the different way things had to be done in Canada. This bickering and division infected the whole IUE effort.

The IUE was also hurt by the strongly American character of its campaign. It stressed communism as the key issue and used leaflets that were obviously American both in approach and content. This met a lukewarm reception among Canadian workers who held a latent anti-Americanism which the UE successfully inflamed with its portrayal of the IUE as "Yankee Raiders".

Other Factors

A series of other factors contributed to UE's success. In the U.S., labour legislation could be used to hurt UE more easily than could Canadian law. The Taft-Hartley Act meant that unless UE's officer took a loyalty oath, the UE could not even appear on the ballot in any National Labour Relations Board elections. The Taft-Hartley Act also allowed a certification vote to be called by petition of the employers. This meant that the existing union could be challenged at any time and with no requirement that a new union have signed members in the shop.

In Canada, on the other hand, a certification vote could only be called after the contract had been in force for ten months and only after the petitioner (the IUE) had signed cards from 45% of the bargaining unit. This meant that the UE could plan for when the raid would occur and could fight to prevent a vote by blocking the signing of cards.

The American state intervened on behalf of the IUE in ways the Canadian state did not. At key moments in the various fights between the unions, the local UE leadership would be subpoenaed to appear before government bodies such as the House Committee on Unamerican Activities or the Senate Committee on Internal Security. This would pull the key UE people out of town at the critical moment preceding a vote. As well, appearance before these committees was used to discredit the UE people.¹⁷

While there is evidence that the RCMP kept tabs on the UE'ers and made discrete bits of information available to UE's opponents, there is nothing comparable to the actions of the American authorities.

Finally, the UE was strengthened by the nature of the industry in which it was situated and by the recency of its having organized that industry in Canada.

Let me deal with the last point first. Where the UE was organized in the mid-Thirties in the U.S. and most of its key locals were functioning actively before 1940, the UE in Canada did not really develop until the end of World War II. At the time of the split in 1949, the UE in Canada was a relatively new union still manifesting some of the vigour and unity of newly formed organizations. The unions' district leaders were known as the ones who helped organize the union and bring the locals into the trade union movement. It made it harder to convince the same workers that these leaders did not have the workers' interests at heart. In the United States, most locals had been active for up to 15 years and most of the workers had not been present at the founding of their locals.

The nature of the electrical industry also strengthened the hand of UE. As Kuhn¹⁸ has shown, the electrical industry produces an enormously heterogeneous array of products, and the organization of production is by departments in which workers are grouped not by trade but by product produced. This inhibits the development of ties on the basis of trade groups as in the rubber or steel industries. Where trade groups are facilitated by the organization of production, the groups often function autonomously with respect to grievances: rather than fighting them through the union, they often simply down tools or adopt some other group approach. This then puts the union in the position of telling them to go back to work or otherwise opposing their action and creates an adversarial relationship between the union and the informal work groups.

In industries like electrical manufacturing, the relative absence of such trade groups has meant that grievances are more likely to be processed through the union

structure. Not only does this prevent the adversarial relationship from developing, it allows the union to actively fight for the rank and file. Kuhn's comparison of unions in the rubber industry and the electrical industry documents the importance of this difference.¹⁹

In the case of UE, the opportunity to fight grievances was taken up enthusiastically as mentioned above. This helped build a harmonious relationship that it was difficult for the IUE to undo.

A final factor is the most difficult to assess--the role of the Communist Party. While it is clear that a number of UE'ers were members of the CP, it is unclear what effect this had on the union. Union policy passed through the formal democratic structures of the union. It is also clear that a number of CP'ers were given preference for staff jobs (just as CCF'ers were given preference for staff jobs in Steel). Yet it is also clear that Jackson had no reluctance whatsoever in firing a CP'er no matter how high up in the Party if the person was not doing a good job for the union. While undoubtedly the CP'ers in the UE used the UE as a basis for recruiting into the CP, this never was pursued as a central aim nor were there ever more than a handful of CP members in any one shop.

The most remarkable fact about the relation between the UE and the CP is that anti-communists were unable to use real and alleged "communist ties" to destroy the union during the years when left wingers were being put to rout throughout the labour movement. The rank and file were unwilling to vote out their leftist leadership, some avowedly communists, despite being offered every opportunity to do so and despite the social milieu of the cold war years.

Oral History, Labour History and the Cold War

In this final section, I would like to discuss the importance of oral history in the kind of work just described and explore problems encountered with such data.

The fascination with "oral history" leaves me a bit perplexed and uneasy. Too often discussions of oral history seem to be treating the subject as if it were a distinct branch of study rather than simply the use of oral evidence. I can understand much of the defensive quality of the oral history literature given the deeply embedded preference for written sources by most historians. But I find John Saville has put the matter into proper perspective:

"I do not have any real feeling about the tape except as an additional piece of evidence which has to be assessed and evaluated in exactly the same way that you evaluate any other kind of historical evidence."²⁰

The enthusiasm for oral evidence, and certainly its importance for my work, stems from possibilities it opens for study. The reliance on the standard written sources for labour history--minute books, leaflets, correspondence and newspaper accounts--has led to a narrow and biased understanding of labour. These limitations have already received much comment.

Minutes usually reflect only formal outcomes of events, giving little or no information on the process, the alternatives, the character of the opposition, the nature of the arguments and tactics of the various sides, and the strength of the opposing views.

Leaflets and union newspapers are produced by persons in positions of leadership

and represent issues and events as seen and described by such persons. Staff minutes and correspondence cannot be fully interpreted outside the knowledge of the relationship between the persons involved.

Public newspaper accounts, with their almost universal anti-labour bias, introduce a host of problems--selectivity in reporting, distortion of facts, incomplete investigation of issues reported, etc.

Finally, in the study of unions there tends to be little of the informal written sources available in other historical research, e.g., personal diaries and personal correspondence.

In short, studies of unions based solely on written sources give a partial picture of the formal life of the organization and usually are coloured by the views and the role of the leadership.

Oral histories provide a way around such limiting sources. They can fill in the interstices of formal outcomes at meetings. They can locate the historical context and unofficial publications and shed light on just what they meant. More important, oral history can reinstate the rank and file as an actor in the drama. Alice Hoffman has put this point nicely:

"The great events of our time--World War II, economic depression and inflation, the Cold War, the War in Vietnam--involve not only our leaders but have had an enormous impact on many nameless people, who in their turn have also had some influence on events. If we are truly to understand our times, we need to understand those events of the past as experienced by a much wider segment of the population than has previously been thought worthwhile to record and preserve."²¹

This point is heightened in its importance when we are studying working class organizations. The rank and file tend to have little access to historical preservation of their views both because of the leadership bias of all written records and because working people are less likely to have the time, the tradition and the sense of their own worth to keep diaries or preserve written records of their life experiences. Oral histories provide a way to overcome this problem.

But oral histories introduce their own sets of problems which I will discuss briefly in the context of my own work. The first is choice of informants. Unlike in traditional sociological and anthropological research, the range of choice is seriously limited. Many of the participants in the UE and IUE battles thirty years ago are dead or have moved and cannot be traced. Others are too old or too ill to be interviewed. Another few found the events so traumatic that they refuse to talk about them. This means that a statistically representative sample cannot be gained.

My alternative approach was to compile a list of local executive members and stewards for the years 1946 through 1954 for both the UE and IUE.²² While most of these people are now dead, I did contact the remaining ones, including almost all on both sides who were active in the events under consideration. I supplemented these interviews with interviews of key non-local people who aided the local efforts. Finally, I interviewed persons who worked in the plants but who, according to all records, had not been active on either side. Without exception, the interviews with inactive people were fruitless. None of the inactive people had much to say except to echo the clichés of whichever side they supported in the end.

The second problem is recall. The left-right battle in the UE began more than forty years ago and reached its peak thirty years ago. Memory of events that long ago is a fragile thing, as Neuenschwander reminds us.²³

I approached this problem by assuming that long-term memory is a matter of reconstruction of events, that people locate events and feelings in the context of other events that define the period for them. A typical example is:

Interviewer: When did you get active in the UE again?

Interviewee: Well, it was in 1947 or '48. Let's see. We had just moved to the apartment by the Beach and I had started truck gardening on the side. So that must have been the Spring of 1948.

Extensive preparation for interviews becomes critical given the identification of events in terms of other events. An exhaustive examination of all written sources preceded the interviews so that as interviewer I could have a grasp of the sequence of events to assist the recall of my interviewees. This assistance actually began with a pre-interview letter detailing my major questions so that the interviewee could prepare.

Throughout the interviews, I had my file of yearly lists of names, copies of leaflets, even pictures of local and district meetings to help the interviewee locate the events and people and facilitate his/her recall of them. This had the added advantage of generating comments on the nature of the written sources--their accuracy, their importance, and their completeness.

The problem of recall is related to the third problem--the sensitivity of the issues. The left-right struggle in the UE was carried on with the earnestness of most political battles in the cold war years. Both sides fought with deadly seriousness and with conviction that one's opponents were real enemies. The repercussions of one's position on the union question affected family and community relations as well as relations with fellow workers in the shop.

The repercussions are still being felt. Although the end of the struggle forced protagonists to find some means of accommodation, the differences are close to the surface and most relationships that exist among persons on different sides in 1950 remain fragile at best. This poses special difficulties for the interviewer. Since everything is seen in black and white terms, people are concerned with the interviewer's "side". There is also a concern that probing and writing about these events will jeopardize the fragile accommodations that have been built up over the years.

My approach to these obstacles to full and free interviews was to attempt to build rapport with the interviewees on the basis of being an interested, concerned and sympathetic labour scholar who wants to understand such a significant experience in our labour history.

The first step was taken by getting access to written records of all the parties involved. In the course of gaining access, I had to describe frankly my interest in an objective study to the leadership of both the UE and the IUE. To their considerable credit, both gave full access to all their records. They also were willing to vouch for my legitimacy when a number of interviewees checked with the union leadership before agreeing to an interview. Without the cooperation of the present union leadership, many of my interviewees would have refused to talk with me.

The second step was accomplished by the extensive research I did on all written material before my interviews. My detailed knowledge of the unions and the events seemed to assure interviewees of my seriousness, my genuine interest and my commitment to a scholarly treatment of the subject.

The final step was taken by the type of relationship I attempted to establish with each interviewee. Through preliminary correspondence and the initial phase of the interviews, I sought to create an atmosphere of informality and warm personal rapport.

This was achieved by a combination of factors. I made sure there would be ample time for the interviews so that the interviewee would not be rushed. In my initial letter I indicated I would use a tape recorder. This allowed the matter to be taken for granted once I arrived. I avoided a formal interview schedule in favour of a one page list of material I wanted to cover. This helped the interview to be more free-floating while reminding me of what needed to be probed. I took notes and made as little reference to my check list as possible so the interview could have the flavour of a discussion.

I tried to locate the two of us in the room the interviewee found most comfortable and positioned myself as I would if I had dropped in to visit a friend. I began with a brief but frank description of my interest in the subject and my plans to write a book about it. I answered any question the interviewee had at that point. Then we began the interview itself.

I did not raise the question of written permission to use the tape for my work and to put a copy in the Public Archives until after the interview. This put a question about which I am always nervous till the end when rapport was strongest. Equally important, the interviewee could answer the question in light of what was actually on tape rather than what subsequently might be going on tape. I found this particularly helpful for rank and file people who are not used to speaking publicly and therefore felt more comfortable giving permission after they knew what they had said.

Good selection of interviewees, proper stimulation of memory and good rapport to ease discussion of sensitive topics are concerns to all labour scholars and were particularly important in my study of UE survival during the cold war. It would be nice to demonstrate the importance of oral evidence by isolating its unique contribution in my own work. This can only be done impressionistically since the interplay of written and oral evidence can never be adequately disentangled.

However, in reviewing the conclusions about why UE survived, it is clear that a different and less adequate picture would have appeared if the study had been based only on written sources. For example, a major factor in UE's survival was the members' sense of a thoroughly democratic union and of a committed, competent, non-elitist leadership. While the written materials show some of the basis for these feelings, it was the interviews with the rank and file on both sides that made clear these were major reasons for UE's success.

Likewise, it was the interviews that revealed the decisive importance of the stewards' councils in tying the rank and file to the leadership of the union. As well, it was the oral evidence that made clear the disastrous consequences of the CCF's approach to helping the opponents of UE's left wing leadership.

Concluding Comment

For sociologists and anthropologists, much of the controversy about "oral history" is curious.²⁴ Having always relied heavily on oral evidence, sociologists and anthropologists wonder at the excitement (both negative and positive) which the use of interviews has generated among historians.

And yet, it is too easy to dismiss the importance of these discussions. Interviews open up a vast new territory for contemporary historians. They provide not just more evidence, but a different kind of evidence. They allow a fuller and less elitist understanding of events. Hopefully, "oral history" will promote a double marriage: a joining of social scientists' concern for technique with the historians' concern for substance, and a joining of the social scientists' mastery in the use of oral evidence with the historians' appreciation of and skill in the use of written evidence.

My hope for this liaison between the disciplines exists despite my misgivings about the immediately previous liaison which has seen the widespread use of sociological computer techniques by historians. While this has opened up new vistas for historical research, I fear it has done so at the price of the trivialization of historical work.

"Oral history", on the other hand, holds the promise of bringing together the richest quantitative traditions of sociology and anthropology with the wholistic and descriptively rich analytic tradition of history.

FOOTNOTES

1. William Appleton Williams, The Contours of American History. London: Jonathan Cape, 1961, p.19.
2. Irving M. Abella, Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973, pp.139-163; has given the best history of UE's fights with the CCL. Two general histories of UE are Douglas N. Caldwell, "The United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers, District Five, Canada, 1937 to 1956", unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1976; and U.E.R. & M.W., "UE Canada: 40 Years, 1937-1977", Toronto: U.E.R. & M.W., 1977.
3. For the opposition to endorsement of the CCF and the push for a unified wage demand in 1946, see Abella, *ibid.* pp.73-80, 148. Details of the discussions on a unified wage demand are set out in "Memorandum of Wage Policy Meeting", Toronto, January 24, 1946, UE Papers; CCL Wage Coordinating Committee, "Proceedings", March 19 & 20, 1946, UE Papers; Charles Millard Interview, February 13, 1968, Labour History Collection, Pennsylvania State University; C.S. Jackson Interview, August 22, 1979; "Officers Report" UE Convention Minutes, Sept. 20-21, 1946, p.5ff; UE Canada: 40 Years, pp.18-19.

Attacks on domestic economic policy and Canada's foreign policy formed the basis of a number of resolutions and reports at each of UE's Quarterly District Council Meetings. See, for example, "Statement on Foreign Policy", UE Quarterly District Council Meeting, April 27, 1947; and the Officers Reports throughout 1947, 1948, and 1949.

4. James J. Matles and James Higgins, Them and Us. Boston: Beacon Press, 1974, pp.194,229.

5. The Canadian UE's membership in 1949 was 21,581 (Dowd to Haywood, August 10, 1949, CCL Papers, Vol.185, Public Archives of Canada). By 1954, it was only reduced to approximately 19,000--a drop of little over 10%.
6. The research conclusions summarized below are drawn from my forthcoming book on the survival of UE during the cold war period.
7. The first IUE campaign was ended on February 28, 1950 when the OLRB rejected IUE's application because it "was not prepared to accept the evidence of membership in good standing submitted by the applicant(IUE)", D.W. Mather to Ross Russell, 28 February 1930, UE Papers. The Peterborough Examiner on February 20th provided a summary of the irregularities in IUE's cards that led to this verdict. The second IUE drive ended in a vote which the UE won on June 27th 1951, by 1909 to 1582. In 1952 and 1953, IUE was unable to secure enough cards to warrant a vote.
8. The first IUE try ended in a vote of 331 for IUE to 329 for UE. To win, however, IUE needed a majority of those eligible to vote. They fell 5 votes short of the total needed. (UE News, April 20, 1950). On their second try, IUE won 417 to 352 (OLRB "Report of Vote" January 29, 1953, UE Papers).
9. All Canadian locals of UE constituted District 5 of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America. District 5 had its own full-time officers (President, Secretary, Treasurer and Director of Organization), its own yearly convention and quarterly district council meetings. From the mid-Forties on, UE in Canada was granted complete autonomy and functioned as a national union although District Five's president remained a vice-president of the International.
10. C.S. Jackson Interview, August 22, 1979. This public unity of the officers contrasted notably with the pattern in other left wing unions such as Mine Mell.
11. Bill Miller, President of Local 510, ran for the CCF in Leeds, and Jack Morton, Past President of Local 524 and first Canadian Director of the IUE, ran for the CCF in Peterborough.
12. This proved a devastatingly effective argument according to some of the left wing's chief critics. J. Morton Interview, September 13, 1979; N. Davison Interview, December 14, 1979.
13. The bitter strike at Wallace Barnes in Hamilton in 1954 is an example. Bill Walsh Interview, #2, January 10, 1980.
14. The leadership of Local 524 were predominantly opposed to Jackson and the left wing character of the UE.
15. The first contact with the anti-communist forces in UE was made by USWA staffer Murray Cotterill in 1945. Harry Block Interview, September 7, 1979. The Steelworkers offered help to UE's anti-communists including a stated willingness to come in and organize against UE, Jack Morton Interview; N. Davison Interview; Peter Hunter Interview, January 21, 1980.
16. In 1948, the English Electric workers in Local 529 joined the Steelworkers. This put the critics of the left wing on the defensive and seemed to undermine their

claim that they were loyal to UE but opposed to its leadership. N. Davison Interview.

17. Matles and Higgins, op.cit., pp.198-226, give a detailed description of the state's actions against the UE in the U.S. during the cold war era.
18. James Kuhn, Bargaining in Grievance Settlement: The Power of Industrial Work Groups. New York: Columbia University Press, 1961.
19. This argument was brought to my attention by the work of Ronald Schatz, "American Electrical Workers: Work Struggles, Aspirations, 1930-1950". Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1977.
20. John Saville, "Interviews in Oral History", Oral History 1 (4): 93, 1973.
21. Alice Hoffman, "Who Are the Elite, and What Is a Non-Elitist?", Oral History Review, 1976, pp.3-4.
22. When UE and IUE were doing battle, each union would have its own local executive even though only one union was certified. IUE never set up an executive in Westinghouse.
23. John A. Neuenschwander, "Remembrance of Things Past: Oral Historians and Long Term Memory", Oral History Review, 1978, pp.45-53.
24. See Bryan Palmer, "Modernizing History", Bulletin of the Committee on Canadian Labour History, N°2: 16-25, 1976. Michael Katz, "Reply", Bulletin of the Committee on Canadian Labour History, N°2: 25-28, 1976. Bryan Palmer, "Response", Bulletin of the Committee on Canadian Labour History, N°2: 29-31, 1976.