

# Canadian Office & Professional Employees' Union

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August 9, 2004

Michael Goodwin  
President, OPEIU  
265 West 14 St. #610  
New York, NY  
10011

Dear Brother Goodwin:

Re: Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union “COPE” – Autonomy

I was surprised to receive your letter dated July 16, 2004 addressed to me as “Canadian Director”. As you are aware, Canadian members exercised their rights under Article XIV of the International Constitution to establish an autonomous union. Article XIV, Section 1 of the International Constitution states as follows:

“CANADIAN AUTONOMY. The Office and Professional Employees International Union fully recognizes the right of the Local Unions within Canada to establish their own autonomous national union if such is the desire of a majority of Office and Professional Employees International Union members within that country.”

On June 20, 2004, both yourself as International President and the International Executive Board were provided with a letter from myself, as spokesperson for Canadian members, signed by officers of the Canadian National Committee giving notice that Local Unions within Canada were invoking our rights under Article XIV, Section 1 of the Constitution to establish our own autonomous national union. As of June 20, 2004 twenty-four thousand four hundred and ten (24,410) OPEIU members representing (74% of all members within Canada) confirmed their desire to establish such an autonomous union. We further advised that as of June 20, 2004 Canadian Locals would no longer be governed by the International Constitution. A copy of that letter is enclosed.

As President of the Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union “COPE”, I would ask that you as President of the International comply with the International Constitution and “Fully recognize the right of the Local Unions within Canada to establish their own autonomous national union”.

It is unfortunate for both the American OPEIU members and the Canadian COPE union members that you have chosen to disregard the democratic rights of Canadian union members and continue to expend substantive International monies and resources challenging the rights of Canadian members in Courts in both Florida and Canada. Clearly our respective members’

monies could be better put to representing OPEIU and COPE union members' interests in the many struggles we each face with our respective governments and employers.

I have also received the communication dated July 6, 2004 from yourself and International Secretary Treasurer Nancy Wohlforth addressed to "All OPEIU Canadian Local Unions". You have heard from our legal counsel demanding that you cease and desist with your interference with the finances or operations of COPE in Canada.

A letter dated July 22, 2004 from International Secretary Treasurer Nancy Wohlforth requesting repayment of monies from the International Convention Fund has also been received.

As you are well aware, the International initiated legal proceedings in Courts in each of Canada and Florida to sue individual officers and Locals within Canada and in turn, we have now filed counter claims against the International. We feel it is inappropriate any monies be paid to the International until there is a complete accounting or a Court ruling on the parties' claims. We remind you that COPE is claiming a proportionate share of the International assets. The B.C. Supreme Court has yet to rule on that claim.

I am sending to you a copy of the earlier judgment issued by Justice Pitfield in the B.C. Supreme Court. Court proceedings may not be in the best interests of union members in either Canada or the United States.

Finally, I would ask that you remove reference to myself as Canadian Director from the International letterhead and that any future communication to Canadian Locals be addressed to myself as President of the Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union.

Yours truly,

Jerri New  
President  
Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union

Cc: COPE Executive Board  
COPE Local Unions  
OPEIU Executive Board  
OPEIU Local Unions  
Ken Georgetti, President CLC  
John Sweeney, President AFL/CIO