

# Labour Education and Training Research Network



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## Seizing the Moment to Finance Training: A Union Perspective on the Joint Union Management Program (JUMP):

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*An interview with*

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Communications, Energy and  
Paperworkers Union*

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## **SEIZING THE MOMENT TO FINANCE TRAINING: A Union Perspective on the Joint Union Management Program (JUMP)**

### **1. CONTEXT**

**Interviewer:** JUMP has been huge. In terms of funding for training, and union influence over the design and delivery of training, there are few equivalents in Canada. What was the opportunity that it started with and how has that opportunity shifted?

**Fred:** This was about reinventing a whole sector. You can't make sense of training in the pulp and paper industry without seeing it in the context of reinventing the whole forestry sector. It didn't happen by itself or in an isolated way. The forest sector was in crisis: environmentally, economically, politically. We had the war in the woods, with young people occupying Clayoquot Sound, growing market problems, overcut and excess manufacturing capacity. And, we also had an international trade battle in which the Americans claimed that we were subsidizing the exports to the United States. So all these problems meant that it wasn't possible to carry on the industry in the same way.

It actually took a few years after the NDP was elected in British Columbia (1992) and it wasn't until 1994 that they were able to make a change. In the interim period they created the Forest Sector Strategy Committee, a 'board room table' group of CEOs of companies, union leaders, environmentalists and community leaders. This committee was supposed to address all the fundamental problems facing the industry. Of course it was only possible to do because there was an NDP government that told them that change was inevitable. The government was prepared to implement consensual change if people would participate in the process, but the club was that unilateral change would be imposed if they failed to participate.

The FSSC went on for two years. Brian Payne participated directly on the committee and I was part of several of the subcommittees that were generating ideas. The result of that consultation process was the creation of Forest Renewal BC, which, in my opinion, was the best idea in terms of economic policy that we've had in the last two decades in Canada. The fundamental notion was to take a super-royalty off the resource. Instead of that royalty going into general revenues and being spent on schools and hospitals and so on, that it would go to a newly-established crown corporation, to reinvest back into the resource itself. This was conceived broadly, to include reinvesting in the workforce, redressing environmental issues, making forest communities more viable, and so on. This would be set up on a permanent basis with stable funding.

This crown corporation would, therefore, provide the basis for an overall reform of the industry: to allow it to meet the fall-down crisis. Fall-down is the term used when your harvest is declining and your manufacturing capacity is not. It's another way of saying you will have unemployment and an economic crisis as a result. So this was meant to address fall-down by investing in the resource and trying to stabilize and hopefully, in the future,

increase harvest levels. Money was also supposed to be available to provide for community diversification in forest communities. There is a list of forest-dependent communities in British Columbia which is quite substantial.

This money is coming from the industry itself; it's all coming from a royalty on the resource, over and above previous royalties paid to government. This is not a diversion of money from general revenue. This agreement from all parts of the industry happened because of the pressure of an NDP government, a very active environmental movement, a very polarized province on environmental issues.

Forest Renewal British Columbia, FRBC, was originally created with five so-called 'envelopes.' The Act set out guidelines with the rough percentage of money that would be forwarded to each of these envelopes. The average annual funding was to be around \$400 million per year. The first couple of years, because of extremely high lumber prices, it actually exceeded that enormously. There was a huge surplus. By now, of course, that surplus is gone because we went into a major recession and the bottom fell out. During the first few years all they could talk about was the need to spend the money. They used to issue reports on how much money had been sent out the door that month and they would have a round of cheers if lots of money went out. There was not a very significant emphasis on quality control and cost-accounting. All of that radically changed in the last two years when money became short and every little expenditure had to pass through several layers of tests and bureaucracies.

**Interviewer:** So that also has to do with both the volatility of the BC economy and the Asian Crisis, but, also the cyclical nature of the forest industry. It's always been a boom and bust industry.

**Fred:** Exactly. So, running up a surplus at the start was a very normal thing to take you through the next trough. But there were great demands and expectations. In retrospect, one of the fundamental issues if you're going to put together an overall fix for an industry like this is managing expectations. Because the creation of FRBC, without a doubt, created enormous expectations among people: that decades of wrongs were somehow going to overnight be made right. That put huge pressures on everybody involved in FRBC. So, part of its political failure was that no matter how much good it did, it was never good enough.

Training expenditures fell into the third of the five envelopes.

The first envelope was land-based programs, which were supposed to invest in the resource itself. We're talking about intensive silviculture. It would not fund re-planting itself, but it would deal with everything post-planting. And that was almost half of the total budget. This was supposed to be a major effort to stabilize and even increase harvest levels. The second envelope was environment. Most of this money would go to restoring

watersheds damaged by bad logging practices and cleaning up fish-bearing streams. This was just a basic clean-up but it would cost a lot of money because there are many watersheds along the coast of British Columbia.

The third envelope was workforce. The plan was for 20% of funds to be allocated to training, skill upgrading, etc. That was where the most immediate benefit to our members could be found, and JUMP was to evolve under its jurisdiction.

Then there was a communities budget which was to assist forest-dependent communities to diversify and to deal with impacts of change. Finally, there was a value-added envelope which was to provide funding to assist the industry to move up the value chain. Instead of being the manufacturer of two-by-fours and market pulp, this funding was to move up the value chain and do more processing of wood in B.C. We have grown the value-added sector enormously over the last two decades. It's been the single largest job-growth sector of the industry. The main problem with the value-added sector is that they can't get access to wood because most of the wood is controlled by the major companies who use it for dimension lumber and commodity markets. Another problem with the value added envelope was that FRBC never could get its head around value added in the paper sector. To this day, value added to them only applies to wood products.

Each envelope had an advisory committee made up of people from different stakeholder groups. The whole concept of this crown corporation was to reinvest broadly in the industry on the basis of a consensual model made up of stakeholder groups such as loggers, company representatives, environmentalists, union representatives, First Nations representatives and community representatives. We were very optimistic and full of enthusiasm and energy and we set out with hundreds of millions of dollars to spend to change the world. Our goal was to transform the forest industry.

**Interviewer:** This initiative, then, was comprehensive. It wasn't driven primarily by training. It linked training in with these other things, getting people to buy into the total package at a global level and then play out particular interests within each envelope.

**Fred:** Training wasn't driving this agenda but it was a significant part of it. But, the workforce envelope was more than training, it was also transition and labour adjustment. The latter became the main thing which eventually was the project's downfall, because it took on the task of being the primary labour adjustment mechanism for an entire industry. This was just too big a job.

When we started, we consciously decided that adjustment would be a minor part of our mandate. We would be the people with the finger in the dyke, to hold back the flood until bigger-scale help arrived. Given the scale of restructuring needed, lots of workers were going to be displaced. We could never have enough money to deal with labour adjustment for all of them. We tried to focus our attention on skills upgrading, on "high-teching" the

workforce and keep our emphasis on existing workers, rather than those that were moving out. That commitment eventually was pushed aside by the pressures of the day and eventually the workforce budget was overwhelmingly focussed on transition. Eventually, when the funding was squeezed, something had to give. It was sectoral training and basic skills that gave, so we now have to wrap up JUMP.

The workforce committee started off with 8-10 people on it. There was myself and some IWA people on the union side, 2-3 company Human Resources people, an educator who ran programs for First Nations people, 2 environmentalists, a couple of people from community colleges, a person from HRDC and somebody from the Ministry of Skills, Training and Education (the provincial Ministry in charge of training). It was our job to sit down together and make a vision for workforce training.

The first decision we made was to concentrate on training and skilling the workforce; making the workforce more adaptive to change in order to enhance productivity. Secondly, we discussed job stabilization and job creation. Our lowest priority was adjustment funding. So, we set up some principles for programs. At the time, the priority was basic skills, our second priority was sectoral training, our third was skills upgrading and then there was value-added. Only last, then, was a kind of interim adjustment program.

After we had set out the basic programs within the workforce envelope, I sat down at the union office and put together a training concept for pulp and paper that met the guidelines, by covering the basic categories and addressing the key principles. This served as the basis for the initial proposal for funding. Later, the JUMP steering committee would spend several months developing the actual program.

FRBC was thinking of itself as the overall provider of programs, and expected people to come forward and ask for funding in any one of those specific areas. But, JUMP was a program to be administered by the industry and the union, to cover off all of those programs. It was a swallow for FRBC, because we had to convince them that they should give us millions of dollars in block funding and that we would apply it and set out the criteria for it.

**Interviewer:** So, from their point of view it was a loss of control. They were delegating a lot of authority to you.

**Fred:** This was a big political swallow for them. We had to convince them that this delegation was not only feasible, but it was appropriate because it would be a better training program for this sector. We were able to do it because we got buy-in from most of the employers. Because we were basically able to present a united front from the pulp and paper side of the forestry sector, we could meet their concerns. They finally bit and we got our program.

One of the problems from the beginning was that there wasn't a similar united front in the rest of the forest sector industry. The lumber side, with the Industrial, Wood and Allied Workers, the IWA, weren't able to pull together in the way we did for pulp and paper. I think that later this was part of our undoing.

## 2. CAPACITY

**Interviewer:** That brings us to the capacity or competence of the union to address training issues. We built the labour movement on other things in North America outside the construction trades. We know how to handle grievances, health and safety, and collective bargaining. But training has been a secondary function of the labour movement and generally we've been told it's a management right. We could criticize what the employers and governments were doing, but here you're talking about the union taking initiative. How did that happen?

**Fred:** There were all these obstacles that you're speaking about, plus what I think is a more important issue, the culture of the union. The old Canadian Paperworkers Union, now the pulp and paper sector of the CEP, has always looked with tremendous suspicion at any joint arrangement with employers. We never used words like "jointness" because it was never a positive word in our industry. It had a definite negative connotation. In fact, if you went to the membership and talked about a "jointness" program, it was like standing up in front of 200 people and telling them that you'd sold out. It was as simple as that.

Training had always been a management prerogative and they had always rejected joining one or another joint training scheme proposed by management. So the question was: how are we going to move into this area given that tradition. How would members believe that this was their program and not a management scheme to undermine seniority or other hard-won gains. That was one of the reasons we got Jim Dixon, a former local president, as the CEP coordinator. Choosing the right people was absolutely critical. Because the people who were going to lead this had to have impeccable trade union credentials. They had to be leaders that the members trusted, people who had never had any truck or trade with team concepts and various employer schemes in the workplace.

So all of that relates to the union's capacity to initiate a major training program. I would say when we started, we had very little capacity. Certainly, I didn't know very much about the field. What became apparent to me, being on the workforce committee, was that there was a huge opportunity. I was motivated by the very simple view that there was an opening here. It was evident to me that tens of millions of dollars were about to be spent on training. This spending was going to affect the industry and the union. We could lead that, or get access to that, or be on the receiving end of that. This had been a management prerogative but we wanted to bring this within the scope of collective bargaining. This project could broaden the jurisdiction of the union, extend the horizons of collective

bargaining into a new area.

**Interviewer:** And there was money to do it. Was it important that the money was not strictly from the employers' budget? Did that make any difference? You weren't having to trade it off against pensions, for example.

**Fred:** Exactly. It wasn't a trade off. This was new money that was going to be spent regardless of what we did. So why wouldn't we try to get our share? This was really the prize for our members.

**Interviewer:** In a broader sense, their communities would benefit, their environment would benefit, there would be new jobs created for their children. But for them, there was this immediate opportunity.

**Fred:** Yes, and it had to be secured by some assurance that their union couldn't be pushed out of the process. In drafting the initial proposal, I was able to follow the guidelines of the workforce committee on how JUMP was going to be structured, what the overall principles would be, and so on. But the key is a consensual model, which requires the agreement of the union at all levels. The program was established on the basis of a mutual veto between management and the union, which is the closest we can get to a collective bargaining model.

Because of all the bad history, the generic idea of training program was developed and pitched to industry before it was pitched to a wide audience in the union. If they weren't going to play, it was a waste of time to take it to the members. The employers came along on the basis that the money was going to be spent in any event.

The context in the pulp and paper industry was that the 50-year history of industry-wide joint bargaining had just been broken up by the employers. We were going to strike them on that issue but the labour board prevented us, the so-called "Northwood decision." Cooperation had reached a historical low and there was a lot of animosity between the union and the employers at that time. So this provided an opportunity for the industry and the union to work together collaboratively on a project. At that time it brought together all of the senior human resource managers and the senior union leaders.

We also had to decide at the very start whether or not to include the PPWC (Pulp, Paper and Woodworkers of Canada). We first of all struck a deal between CEP and the employers and then immediately asked the PPWC to join. We were afraid that if we had tried to get the two unions on the same page before approaching the employers that we would miss the window. The two unions have acted as one ever since, the PPWC named Rob Tukham as a counterpart to Jim Dixon, and there's never been a problem.

In terms of capacity, I'd have to say, once we made the decision to go in this direction, the

capacity in the union was simple: it was myself, Brian Payne and a handful of other staff members and local union people with an interest in the subject. We had to learn a lot in a hurry about what to do. That's why we turned to Eastern Canada to look for models, experiences and lessons. Within the CEP, you D'Arcy, can remember me calling you early to talk about this stuff. The three examples we could see as relevant were the CSTE (Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress), the SSC (Sectoral Skills Council in the Electrical and Electronics Industry) and the BEST (Basic Education for Skills Training of the Ontario Federation of Labour). Thankfully, there were some people in Eastern Canada who were not just practitioners, but who had actually thought theoretically about these pursuits and had put some of it down. That was absolutely crucial, to get some documents and to discuss principles about what we were doing. I would have to say the body of literature was relatively small, and remains small today. For a unionist starting out next year in this kind of training initiative, that will continue to be a problem. I don't think anybody has written a comprehensive book on this subject. I found the most theoretical people were the best; they were very passionate and ideological about what they were doing.

Later, when we presented JUMP to the employers as a comprehensive training program, they thought it was overly ambitious. They thought we should just begin with literacy. They had in mind bringing in Literacy Canada and running a few literacy classes. It's interesting that the last thing to be done in JUMP is the literacy component. The employers understood early on that we intended to use the BEST model and we had a radical agenda around literacy. We were always transparent with them, we never tried to hood-wink them. At the end of the day, we ended up with very comprehensive training program with only a little on literacy. We've only done some pilot projects. It was the last thing to be accomplished although it was the first thing agreed upon.

In the second year of the program we hooked up with Tamara Levine, now the literacy coordinator at the Canadian Labour Congress, and brought her to British Columbia to talk with us. We picked her brains clean. She was a very useful and supportive ally.

In terms of capacity, I think the remarkable thing about JUMP was how we built capacity. Both Jim Dixon and Rob Tukham came out of mills, with all kinds of talent but no previous experience whatsoever in running training. Well, that was four years ago and if you are to speak to them today, they're experts on training in Canada. The steering committee and the 44 joint workplace committees involved dozens of people who came to understand a lot about training and education.



**Interviewer:** You talked about the culture in this sector with labour-management relations. What was the culture with regard to training?

**Fred:** Well, if it was run by the employer, we didn't participate. If the employer offered training, individuals could participate and a few did. But overall the union said that's your parade and I'm not in it. The union was very suspicious of employer-led training because the goal of the employer was to constantly raise the bar for entry level into the mill. We had a substantial number of members in the mill with less than high school education. Many of those, of course, were union activists and leaders. We knew very well that the agenda was that nobody was going to get into the mill without a college degree. They wanted grade 12+. Nobody goes to work in a mill today in British Columbia without the "Dogwood" which is a grade 12 diploma offered by the Ministry of Education. Most people who are hired today have grade 12+.

**Interviewer:** So, the union stance was that management was using training credentials to attack some of our street smart people. So the best stance for the union was to say that the worker owns the job and to fight back based on job jurisdiction and seniority.

**Fred:** Yes but I would have to say that in general I don't think that most people turned their minds to training very much. It wasn't as if there had been a whole analysis on training developed. That would exaggerate the situation considerably. People were focused on other workplace issues and they understood everything in the workplace from this overarching concept of rejection of jointness with the employer in the workplace. It was one thing the CPU did very well was to convince our members that there isn't a team in the workplace, there are two teams: their team and our team. People believed that and still believe that fundamentally.

### **3. CHANGE**

**Interviewer:** How did the JUMP funding evolve over the years since 1994?

**Fred:** We didn't get \$36 million dollars out of FRBC at the get-go. When we made our original proposal, we did not know what the JUMP program would eventually look like. We were on a steep learning curve. So the first thing we did was to apply for an amount of \$300,000 as the first phase of a program to work out a detailed plan. We got that funding for a year (1994-1995) in order to bring together a committee, to get a staff, design a program and design a budget for a multi-year program. Looking back on it I think that was critical. The system had to be flexible enough to say: we're going to give these people a lot of money even though they don't know what they're going to do yet because their concept is right. The money was really to design the program. Then we had the substance needed to sell the larger multi-year program to the Board of FRBC.

**Interviewer:** So at that time, you had to set your priorities: where the fundamental skills, job-specific skills and lifelong learning all sat. How did you shake those priorities down

within the union?

**Fred:** In the union that debate was very unfocussed because most union members were concerned about the labour relations side much more than the learning side of JUMP. They were overwhelmingly focussed on the issue of whether this program was a sell-out: is the union leadership taking us into team concepts through the back door? That was still the overwhelming significance of the debate in the early days inside the union. That's why at the end of the first year, we had almost \$100,000 left in our budget, because of the resistance to getting into real programming. So we decided to hold a conference in Prince George that was union only.

We almost lost the program right there because the employers were very suspicious. But, they couldn't do anything about it because the contract was controlled by the union; Phase One was basically given to CEP. But, the reason we called the Prince George conference was so that we could discuss this training program in a union-only environment. This allowed us to address the main issue: what was the agenda, what was the goal and why was the union getting involved in this. We went there with one main purpose: to satisfy the membership that we were going into this program with a union agenda that was different from the employer agenda. We needed to make it clear that this was not an alternative to adversarial class-based relationships in the workplace, but rather that this was an extension of that into the area of training. That conference was a success and from that we then proceeded to structure the second phase of the program and then came all the negotiations with the bureaucracy.

**Interviewer:** So at that key shaping time, the debate in the union was about strategies with regard to management, not about training issues or priorities?

**Fred:** Exactly. To the extent that the debate at that time revolved around training issues, there was concern and suspicion in some parts of the union that we would be facilitating the employer agenda to raise the bar on entrance into the industry, to set up two classes of citizens amongst the workers: educated and uneducated. We countered that we understood entirely what the employer agenda was, but that our agenda was to provide our members opportunities to get past the bar that the employer was setting. We wanted our members to have an opportunity within the industry to succeed so that somebody with a grade 10 education wouldn't be standing still and watch a young college graduate zoom by them in the workplace. This was about making sure that the first opportunity to succeed and to progress went to the people who were already there.

**Interviewer:** So the one training issue of concern to the members was selection for training, who would get the training. And that priority issue was linked to seniority.

**Fred:** Absolutely. We told them, of course, that this program would not affect the collective agreement. Seniority in the workplace would be the primary and paramount determinant when choices had to be made between people. But we said that the union could take a lead role, providing opportunities for our members to progress and have the first chance to do whatever was new and sexy in the workplace before they brought in the college kid. I think that general notion carried a lot of people.

**Interviewer:** How concerned were the members about the state of play among different sources of training funds? It seems that the union dues dollar was not part of that package.

**Fred:** Never. I'd have to say that the fact that it never came out of union dues and neither did it come directly from the employer, it only came indirectly from the employer, created optimum conditions for success.

We were able to convince the members and the employers equally that if we didn't spend this money, somebody else would. Therefore, you would be ill-advised and a little stupid not to take advantage of what is rightfully yours. Employers could not be under the illusion that if they didn't spend it on this they'd have it for something else, because they wouldn't; it's not out of the employer budget. They didn't like the fact that the super-royalty was there to begin with but the way in which the program was structured meant that 20% of the overall budget was going to be spent on training. So we were able to tell the pulp and paper companies: if it's not going to be spent in the JUMP program it won't be spent in the pulp and paper sector at all.

**Interviewer:** What you were offering to the employers was: here's one zone of common activity, the war's not over, but at least the medics can be talking to each other in the tent someplace.

**Fred:** Exactly. And I think the big carrot we offered the industry was that we said we wanted to create a culture of training and learning in the industry. Although I think that bounced off a large number of "dead heads" in the Board rooms, there were people within the corporate structure who understood that the significance of the goal that the union was setting. It took them totally by surprise. It was something they had to support.

**Interviewer:** These were the kind of people who saw a learning organisation as desirable. Because in management culture, there's lots of talk about learning organisations.

**Fred:** Absolutely. Quite apart from the ideological content of what we were doing, just the fact that we were promoting a training and learning culture, that had to be better in their view than just banging heads. Of course, from our point of view it was never an

alternative to banging heads, it was just banging more pointy heads.

**Interviewer:** The only contribution from the dues dollar to the setting up and running of the JUMP program, then, was your salary. Was a similar investment being made by other unions in the forestry sector?

**Fred:** JUMP was created because the union took the initiative; the union moved out front and said we're going to do this. And that was a good investment of union resources.

It was possible for the CEP to make this move. The IWA had a much more difficult project to begin with. We have 22 pulp mills, they've got 200 sawmills. Their industry is much more disparate and unfocussed. Mind you, we had lost central bargaining and the IWA still has central bargaining. But in spite of that, they couldn't do it because already on the local level, different parts of the IWA had already got involved in various local initiatives. By the time the IWA pressed forward with a central program, the window was closing. Essentially, they took the JUMP model and used it as the basis for their model and said: you've funded that, now fund this because it's the same principle. But the employers turned it down because at that time they were not prepared to agree with the union or the government on any new issue. By that time the industry was starting to fight the government on other forestry issues. So it was a straight political decision: turn these guys down. At that particular time there was a recession and they said: we're losing money, you're taking stumpage from us that's too high. If want us to agree on a multi-million dollar program for training – no way. We're not sending that message to anybody right now. So, the IWA couldn't get it.

**Interviewer:** So there's a matter of timing and there's a matter of coordination. That's important for unions elsewhere in Canada to consider.. Was the problem one of perspective or of capacity?

**Fred:** I think that the IWA had the capacity, in fact, they had some staff people there with a very broad understanding of issues. But, I think fundamentally the problem was that the IWA had a different agenda with FRBC, related to another envelope than workforce. They wanted the money that was being spent on the land to end up employing IWA members. Training came after job creation and jurisdiction for them.. For similar reasons, the forest worker adjustment program was also a much larger priority for the IWA than training. When this is taken into account, the IWA was very successful in securing a lot of resources for their membership, only on the basis of different priorities.

#### 4. COLLAPSE

**Interviewer:** You say that the window of opportunity is closing now, because there's less money available with the downturn, the political conditions have hardened, and money is getting diverted into transition. How is this all different from 1995?

**Fred:** Things have polarized a lot since then. By 1996-97, the current recession started to hit the forest industry. There were 6-7,000 people who lost their jobs in those years on the solid wood side. We had unemployment in the pulp side but it was much less significant. So, the adjustment program started eating up more and more money.

Still, it was the best transition program that I've ever seen. It provided any displaced forest worker with \$7,000 in tuition and books and \$20,000 of income support after their EI ran out. So if you were someone with say EI for a year and the \$20,000 would take you another two years, the transition program would provide a displaced forest worker with sufficient funds to enroll in a very significant occupational course and give income support to complete the course. Thousands of people have participated in that and are now out there in the economy because it didn't have to be forest related training. You needed two years attachment to the industry to get in, but many young people with low seniority benefited from this. By 1998 the transition program was somewhere around \$30 million a year and it was a multi-year commitment. So you had a snow-ball effect and pretty soon transition was the majority of the workforce budget at a time when the overall income was declining.

**Interviewer:** What is the union's perspective now on FRBC?

**Fred:** Well, they've been spending the surplus for the last two years and it's almost gone if not completely gone by now. So, when all of this hit, the Board of Directors knew they had to adjust to a new reality. They started a strategic planning process. I've always hated those and now I'm convinced more than ever that they're no good. The whole process is a fraud because somebody comes in on day one with a set of principles so broad that they seem almost banal. But, if you look carefully, you'll see from those broad principles where it's heading. The upshot is that we lost a number of things in that process: workforce is no longer 20% of the overall pie. First of all, workforce never hit 20% of the overall spending, but rather than address that, the percentage guidelines were completely removed. In practical terms the workforce share came down to 10% or less. Secondly, within workforce, transition – which was always the last priority – became priority one. All we're left with now is transition and value-added.

**Interviewer:** You mentioned earlier that at the beginning of the process, training priorities were never really addressed with the union. Do you think that made it easier for the top priorities to end up being dropped?

**Fred:** Not really, because once we got the program going and the network of committees who understood our program, we got up to speed on those issues. We were pretty clear in our resolve to fight this cut both inside and outside FRBC, but they had already made up their minds. The charge was led by a former head staff of the BC Labour Force Development Board who had been brought into FRBC. His view was that skills upgrading for existing workers should be paid for by the companies and that it was inappropriate to spend FRBC money on it. Even though the workforce committee was opposed to the changes they made, once they set on a course they never retreated. In the end, all we were able to do with JUMP was to take the existing funding and get it spun out until March of 2000. They shut JUMP down in spite of the fact that the program was hugely successful and the participation rates were phenomenal.

The end of JUMP is due largely to a change in vision. We're talking about money, but I think more importantly we're talking about vision. The cash only fuels the vision. The reason that our cash is coming to an end is because they've changed the vision. There was one vision for the cash-rich situation and once the money started to dwindle, they changed the vision to meet the new fiscal reality. What we argued passionately over the last year was 'don't change the vision'. If the fiscal reality is changing, then we reduce the scale of operation to meet the new fiscal reality. But leave the vision there so that people can still buy in and we can still all be a part of it. Then when happier fiscal times come around again, we can get back to what we really want to do. Even temporarily end funding to certain projects, like ours, but leave open the hope and the aspiration that we will return to it when we can afford it.

But all those arguments failed and they decided instead to change the vision and really to eliminate us. That's where we are now, in winding down mode.

## 5. CONTINUITY

**Interviewer:** So what about the impact on the union? Where does the union sit at the end of this experience of financing training?

**Fred:** The genie is out of the bottle, I think. We know have a cadre of activists who understand training from a union perspective. There's a minority of members in the union at the local level who did approach training as a collaborationist thing and who never really did grasp the working class agenda or see it in an adversarial way. But, most of our people understood exactly what we were trying to do. Throughout all the years there was never any doubt that the union had a strong role. This occurred centrally and at the workplace level.

With the program coming to an end, our trained activists view FRBC as a failure of the NDP and they feel abandoned by the NDP government and furious at management. They look at this enormously successful program, and ask what have the company people done to save it? And they come up with nothing.

Their attitude towards management is: 'Don't tell us about how we can have cooperative models when you're not prepared to go to the mat to save this program. In some of your mills 50% of employees participated on their own time. And you sit back and let it be cut.'

**Interviewer:** How do those people feel about their union?

**Fred:** I would say that the demise of the program will leave some people disappointed and remorseful over the loss of something they thought was very good. And with other people it will leave them angry. But their negative feelings aren't about their union.

There has been an utter transformation in the union with respect to its attitude and capacity to take on the next step. But, this is only one of the elements. Will we have the funding? My guess is that the scale of opportunity in this window called FRBC and the workforce committee was the exception to the rule. So, we're going to have to figure out what we'll do in a more austere model. Actually, we've made a decision not to propose anything just yet since we've got until next March to think it through. I'm interested to see between now and March, what we might be able to cobble together. For example, in the last year we ran a pilot project in 3 mills with LEAP, which is our literacy program, and it was an huge overwhelming success.

**Interviewer:** That's because you've shifted the whole culture in the mills. Congratulations, and thanks for this interview.

## The Labour Education and Training Research Network

Training Matters is funded by the *Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada* for a period of five years. During that time, we expect to produce innovative research that critically examines the provision of training for the Canadian workforce. In addition to publishing books of collected articles on selected themes, we are publishing a working paper series to disseminate as widely as possible the research being conducted by members of our Network.

### Training Matters Working Papers

**Access Diminished: A Report on Women's Training and Employment Services in Ontario**, Jennifer Stephen; **L'alternance: pratique structurante ou alternative pédagogique? Éléments d'analyse d'une dynamique régionale**, Christian Payeur, Laurier Caron et Nancy Émond; **The British Columbia College, University College, Institutes and Agencies Accord on Government Contract Training**, John Calvert; **Consequences of Attrition in Apprenticeship: An Analysis of the 1994-95 National Apprenticed Trades Survey**, Robert Sweet and Zeng Lin; **Les Entreprises et la formation de la main-d'oeuvre au Québec: un état des lieux**, Colette Bernier; **La formation de la main-d'oeuvre et les syndicats au Québec dans les années 90**, Jean Charest; **La formation professionnelle continue dans les ordres professionnels au Québec**, Sylvain Bourdon et Claude Laflamme; **Formation professionnelle et action syndicale: enjeu plutôt que dilemme**, Christian Payeur; **The German Dual Apprenticeship System: An analysis of its evolution and present challenges**, Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay and Irène Le Bot; **Human Capital, the Competitiveness Agenda and Training Policy in Australia**, Stephen McBride; **The Impact of Privatization on Newfoundland College Students: The Case of the Career Academy**, Michelle McBride and Gregory Kealey; **A Labour Agenda on Training Funding**, John Anderson; **Un modèle de pratique en formation destinée aux jeunes à risque d'exclusion**, Sylvain Bourdon and Frédéric Deschenaux; **The Political Economy of Training in Canada**, Stephen McBride; **Research and Engagement with Trade Unions**, Carla Lipsig-Mummé; **Sectoral Strategies of Labor Market Reform: Emerging Evidence from the United States**, Laura Dresser and Joel Rogers; **Skills Training: Who Benefits?** Nancy Jackson and Steven Jordan; **Snakes and Ladders: Coherence in Training for Office Workers**, Alice de Wolff and Maureen Hynes; **The Strategic Conception of Skills and Training in Construction Unions**, John O'Grady; **Trade Unions and Vocational Education and Training Trends in Europe**, Winfried Heidemann; **Training and Canadian Labour: The Hard Questions**, Jean-Claude Parrot; **Training and Equity Issues on the British Columbia Island Highway Project**, Marjorie Griffin Cohen and Kate Braid; **The Training Strategies of the Australian Union Movement**, Peter Ewer; **Union Membership and Apprenticeship Completion** Robert Sweet and Zeng Lin; **Universities, Liberal Education and the Labour Market: Trends and Prospect** Paul Anisef, Paul Axelrod and Zeng Lin; **What Works in Forest-Worker Training Programs?** Tom Nesbit and Jane Dawson; **What's Happening with Training in New Brunswick?** Joan McFarland and Abdella Abdou; **Women's Access to Training in New Brunswick**, Joan McFarland; **Women and Apprenticeship: The Role of Personal Agency in Transition Success**, Robert Sweet; **Worker-Centred Training in an Economy-Centred World: The Challenge for Labour**, Thom Workman and David Bedford

### Other Network resources and CRWS Working Papers

**Combating Youth Employment I and II**, Winfried Heidemann; **Funding for Training: An Annotated Bibliography**, Nyranne Martin and D'Arcy Martin; **Knowledge and Skills for the New Economy: The role of educational policy**, Winfried Heidemann; **Public and Private Sector Unions in the Delivery of Training: The 1998 CLC Protocol**, John Anderson; **Seizing the Moment to Finance Training: A Union Perspective on the Joint Union-Management Program**, Fred Wilson; **Voices from the Classroom: The Ontario Colleges and the Question of Quality**, Jerry White

The Training Matters Network is coordinated by the **Centre for Research on Work and Society**. For more information on Training Matters and the Centre for Research on Work and Society, and its activities and working paper series, contact the Centre at:

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