

RSMC Negotiations

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APPOINTMENT OF INTEREST ARBITRATOR

In a recent letter to the employer the Negotiating Committee proposed the names of Serge Brault, Louise Doyon and Ted Weatherill as possible interest arbitrators. These individuals are well respected within their respective jurisdictions and have the qualifications that the Union believes are necessary in an interest arbitrator. These qualifications include being fair and honest, being bilingual and having a sufficient number of available dates. The Negotiating Committee is still awaiting the employer's response to these proposed names. If the parties are unable to agree on an arbitrator one will be appointed by the Minister of Labour.

SMOKE AND MIRRORS

As part of its efforts to turn the membership away from their own negotiation demands the employer recently sent a letter dated February 10, 2010, to all members, providing the employer's perspective on negotiations. Unfortunately, the employer's letter is less than honest and fails to present negotiations events in a clear manner.

In the second paragraph of its letter the employer indicates that during the negotiations process "... the parties have exchanged proposals which focused primarily on improvements to your wages and benefits." **This is untrue.** In the context of "wages and benefits", which deal primarily with financial benefits, it is only the employer that has restricted its proposals to financial issues. While the Union's package of demands certainly includes demands that would provide increased financial benefits to the membership it has also proposed changes to the collective agreement, such as a work measurement system, increased transfer rights, job security proposals and contractual requirements concerning technological change that would provide non-financial entitlements to members.

The employer's letter continues by stating in the fifth paragraph that "(d)espite concerted efforts through the negotiation process, an agreement was not reached". **This is untrue.** While the Union's Negotiating Committee made a concerted effort to negotiate a collective agreement, as it believes this is the better method of achieving collective agreement changes, such concerted efforts were not reciprocated by the employer representatives. Throughout the negotiation period the employer's main goal was to stall negotiations in order that interest arbitration would have to be used by the parties, giving the employer an opportunity to try and force changes to the collective agreement that it knows are unacceptable to the membership. The primary example of the employer's refusal to negotiate was that throughout the entire process, and indeed up until today's date, it has refused to provide the Negotiating Committee with any idea as to what impact its proposals would have on the financial cap.

The fifth paragraph then continues by indicating that the proposals made by the employer concerning a short term disability plan, a corporate team incentive and a drug plan were made "... in a fair and responsible manner". **This is untrue.** Throughout the negotiations the employer has failed to provide a reasonable explanation as to why RSMC members should receive lesser benefits in these areas than other unionized employees at Canada Post.

Finally, in the last paragraph, the employer indicates that it "... hopes that an outcome that satisfies the employees, the Union and the Corporation can still be achieved." **This is untrue.** As reported in previous bulletins the employer has refused to negotiate with the Union prior to and during the arbitration process. If this refusal continues the only outcome will be determined by a third party and, as indicated above, the employer's goal is to have an interest arbitrator impose terms and conditions into the collective agreement that do not provide reasonable solutions to the problems experienced by the membership on the work floor and are not acceptable to the membership or the Union.

For an accurate reflection of what is happening at negotiations and interest arbitration the membership should continue to read the Union's bulletins and access other information on the Union's website (www.cupw-sttp.org)

MEMBERSHIP SOLIDARITY IS IMPORTANT

During the upcoming Presidents meeting representatives of the Negotiating Committee will be in attendance to make a presentation and answer any questions that may arise. As part of their presentations the Negotiating Committee members will be speaking about the need for solidarity and unity – not only among RSMC members but also across the entire CUPW membership. This solidarity and unity is important as some of the proposals being made by the employer during the RSMC negotiations will also impact on the Urban Operation negotiations. The struggles currently underway by, and on behalf of, the RSMC membership are struggles that Urban Operation members and the Union will be facing in the near future.

SHOP STEWARDS NEED TO BRING THIS INFORMATION TO THE ATTENTION OF THE MEMBERS DURING REGULAR WEEKLY SHOP FLOOR MEETINGS.

In solidarity,



Donald Lafleur
Chief Negotiator and
4th National Vice-President

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