



Bloodletters

A Bargaining Bulletin for OPSEU Members at Canadian Blood Services

To Conciliation!

CBS refuses to engage on issues important to you.

Both the Technologists' Unit and Support Unit have filed for conciliation May 18 amid limited progress at the CBS bargaining tables.

OPSEU took the step of going to conciliation after the employer refused to engage on any of the key issues, including hours of work, scheduling, part-time issues and health and safety. CBS also refused to budge on the takeaways highlighted in previous *Bloodletters*.

While the Technologists' Unit made little headway May 11-12, the Support Unit was able to clear away a number of mainly "housekeeping" items in its meetings May 17-18.

Despite their attempts to slow progress down, the support you gave the bargaining teams at the ballot box is making a difference. During the last round, we couldn't even pry housekeeping motions from the employer at this stage. Clearly, there is an attitude change being felt at the bargaining table. But we cannot let up.

What is conciliation?

The role of the conciliator is that of a neutral third party working with the union and the employer to reach a deal and avert a strike. "Conciliation" is a legal requirement in the lead-up to a strike.

As long as the parties are making progress, the conciliator will work with both sides to achieve a deal. If the conciliator cannot bring the parties to a deal, the Ministry of Labour may issue what is called a "no board" report. A strike or lockout may legally begin 17 days after the "no board" report is issued.

Either the employer or the union can file for conciliation.

Our primary goal remains to get an acceptable collective agreement, not take our members out on strike.

To keep that momentum going forward, we have filed for conciliation as a means of keeping the pressure on. A strike deadline is the only way to get this employer to take the bargaining process seriously. By moving the goal posts a little closer, we are hoping that upcoming bargaining dates in June will yield

better results. The message is clear: we will not allow the employer to stall us for another 18 months in this round.

Meanwhile, both sides are awaiting an arbitration decision regarding comparable hospital wages. The hospital outcome will be a baseline from which bargaining on monetary issues can truly begin.

Upcoming Bargaining Dates:

Technologists Unit:
May 30, June 21-22

Support Unit:
June 7-8, June 28-29

Bloodletters is your direct communication resource from the OPSEU bargaining teams and is intended to keep you up to date and informed on bargaining developments. *Bloodletters* is your only accurate source of bargaining team information during this round of bargaining. If you do not read it here, you cannot be sure it is true. Do not rely on gossip and rumours. We will provide the facts. *Bloodletters* will be available by e-mail and on the OPSEU website at <http://www.opseu.org/bps/health/cbs/index.htm>

CBS labour activists from across Canada meet in Calgary

Six common bargaining issues agreed upon...

By **Katherine Zan**, Local 160

OPSEU members, **Shirley Johnny** (Local 210), **Sean Allen** (Local 477), and **Katherine Zan** (Local 160), along with **Ruth Hamilton**, staff negotiator, met with other CBS labour activists from across Canada in Calgary, Alberta May 13-14. Every province, except for Quebec and Prince Edward Island, were present at the meeting. Unions that were there included: CUPE (Alberta and New Brunswick), SEIU (Saskatchewan), HEU (British Columbia), NSGEU and NSUPE (Nova Scotia), HSAA (Alberta), NAPE (Newfoundland), and MGEU (Manitoba).

Each province by Union did a brief presentation on their membership and classifications, where they are in bargaining, and the problems they face with Canadian Blood Services.

We are certainly not alone! Across Canada, everyone is facing similar issues with CBS. After long discussions, we agreed on six common bargaining issues that all CBS workers across

Canada are dealing with – job security, increasing use of part-time, health and safety, standardization of classifications, standardization of benefits, hours of work/scheduling of work.

All the unions' collective agreements have expired or are expiring in 2004 and 2005, with the exception of Manitoba and British Columbia, which expire in 2006.

We networked and exchanged collective agreements.

This meeting in Calgary was an historic event, marking the first time that unions representing CBS workers across Canada met at one table.

We will be continuing to keep in touch with teleconference calls planned for September 2005 and Spring 2006, as well as a tentative meeting in November 2006.

Thank you to NUPGE and CUPE Local 1846 for organizing the event. New friends were made and we will all be communicating for years to come.



*"Before we can get married I need to know one thing...
Does your employer grant parental leave?"*

Your CBS Bargaining Teams

Technologists

(Locals 210 and 5101)

- Steven O'Marra (L5101)
- Shirley Johnny (L210)
- Sheila Annett (L5101)

Support Unit

(Locals 160, 210, 477, 5103)

- Katherine Zan (L160)
- Brenda Thompson (L210)
- Kelly Tibbles (L477)
- Mirla Alvarado Fenn (L5103)
- Dino Gus Kourlas (L5103)

Thunder Bay Plasma

(Local 716)

- Jennie Hartviksen
- Joanne Bruni
- Kelly Borchardt