

The Real Deal

Bargaining news from your OPSEU Central
Bargaining Team in the Ontario Public Service

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It's crunch time

As reported last week, your negotiating teams called for conciliation on Thurs., Jan. 24. Why did we do this? Because the employer's hired help said no, no, no and no to all of our proposals to get things moving. Nothing that the employer has done has been productive.

That being said, make no mistake about what your bargaining team is here to do. We are here to negotiate a collective agreement. When the

conciliators show up on Fri., Feb. 8, we will bargain in good faith. However, the employer has given us no reason to believe that conciliation will produce any significant change.

What exactly does that mean?

That means that should conciliation fail, we will be looking to you for your support. We will need to come to you and ask you for a strike mandate in order to get a contract worthy

of you and your families. Imagine what we can do when "they" know that 45,000 people are with us at the table!

The time lines

While conciliation, in and of itself, does not trigger any time-lines, failure at conciliation will. You will know the time lines immediately should that happen.

When do we draw for essential services?

We have received many questions about when to do the essential service draw. When you received your essential service agreements, a conditions document was attached. On Page 11 of the document, you will find Stage One. The ninth step of this process states, "after either party requests conciliation under the Ontario Labour Relations Act, an ordered list of all names will be created using a draw jointly conducted by

'worksite' union and management representatives, to ensure random selection."

Local leaders are free to conduct these draws anytime between now and five days prior to a strike vote, at their convenience.

It should be noted that this process is not currently a part of the Corrections strategy. Stay tuned to the Correct View for further details from the Corrections table.

Take control

Local managers and police departments have been trying to set up meetings to enter into picket line protocols with our members. Do not enter into these discussions! No local picket line protocol agreements are to be made.

Should this message change, you will be informed in this publication and only in this publication.

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POST AND CIRCULATE

Wear your colours

On Tues., Feb. 12, we are asking people to wear blue in support of the Rebuild the OPS rallies taking place on that day. Contact your SACG (Service Area Coordinating Group) to find out how to participate.

Members are also asked to wear red on Feb. 14 in support of our Office Administration (OA) members. The OA group will be participating in events across the province on that day, such as the OA appreciation

lunch at MacDonald Block in Toronto. OA members are reminded to get their “new” Office Action Memos as soon as possible. Contact your SACG for details.

Black and Blue theme begins the week of Feb. 20. Members are asked to wear black on Tuesday and blue on Thursday. Our message: We’re tired of getting beat up by this government!

Another bogus crisis

The idea that major cuts to public services are justified by an alleged \$5 billion deficit is “irrational arithmetic” designed to terrorize front-line public employees in contract talks with the Ontario government, says OPSEU president Leah Casselman.

“This is a bogus crisis from the John Snobelen School of Bogus Crises,” President Casselman said. “The real crisis in Ontario is not a financial crisis, it is a public service crisis. The report of the Walkerton Inquiry revealed a public service devastated by cuts, layoffs, privatization, and mismanagement at the highest levels. The provincial auditor

has pointed out ‘critical’ deficiencies in Ontario food safety and gross mismanagement of road safety. Ontario probation and parole officers have the highest caseloads of any in Canada. They have, on average, only 30 minutes a month to meet with convicted sex offenders.”

“I don’t know what has to happen for the Tories to get it through their thick skulls: their policies kill people.”

“If this government were really concerned with the province’s finances, they’d stop privatizing public services and get companies like Andersen Consulting out of the public trough,” Casselman said.

Board rules on Corrections issues

On Mon., Feb. 4, the Ontario Labour Relations Board held a hearing with regards to what could be bargained at the Corrections Team table. Arbitrator Whitaker ruled that the following items are Central Table issues:

- Autonomy
- Temporary Assignments (new Corrections article),
- Unclassified other than seasonal, students and go temps - new Corrections articles dealing with seniority and conversion

Central Team quote of the week:

*“Cross the river in a crowd and the crocodile won't eat you.”
Proverb from Madagascar*

How to contact your team members

You can contact the Central Team directly at (416) 815-1406, by fax at (416) 815-1412 or by e-mail at centralteam@opseu.org.

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The Real Deal is your only accurate source of Central Team information during this round of bargaining. If you don't read it here, you can't be sure it's true. Don't rely on gossip and rumours. We will provide the facts.

The Real Deal will be available by fax, by e-mail, and on the OPSEU web site at www.opseu.org. To receive it directly, send your secure fax number to Lesley Williams at (416) 443-1762 or send your e-mail address to lwilliams@opseu.org.

*Authorized for distribution by
Marg Simmons, chair, Central team, and
Leah Casselman, president.*
