

The Real Deal

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

Issue #23
February 14, 2002



Team unanimously recommends rejection of employer's offer

Your employer sent you a clear message this morning: They're not going to work to renew the public service, respect you or address your issues until you make them - and they don't think that you can pull it off.

"Our work is important and we are important," said Marg Simmons, chair of the Central Bargaining Team. "As 45,000, strong and proud, we will push this employer off their agenda to privatize our work and devalue us. As 45,000, we will work together to get what we deserve from this employer. I want you to know that your Central Bargaining Team has unanimously recommended that you reject this offer! We know that there's a better one there. We also know that we're going to have to work to get it from the employer. We can only do that with your support - in the form of a strong strike mandate."

The following is a synopsis of what the employer has offered us. A full document will be available soon on the OPSEU

web site. An issue of Table Talk is being finalized and will be available to you within the next few days.

Wages: this is the **first** time that we have seen an offer from the employer on wages. They have offered 1.95 per cent in each year of a three-year agreement. We have proposed a two-year contract. We have also proposed six per cent in year one and six per cent year two, which is strictly limited to wage recovery - after 10 years of lost income due to inflation.

In addition to the wage offer, they have proposed an increase of up to 0.5 per cent in the first year if we give them concessionary language on job postings and unclassified conversions. It must be encouraging to our unclassified members, who make up 30 per cent of the OPS, to know that the employer is willing to sell them out for 0.5 percent. We, however, are not.

No offer was made to reflect the demands of over 25 per cent of our members in their special

case submissions.

Pay for performance is still there but in a different form. Now, the employer proposes to free up 0.5 per cent of payroll to be available to employees at the top of their grid. This would only be available to selected employees and still at your boss' discretion. If you don't get this additional pay, it cannot be grieved.

There were no specific details tabled on benefit improvements. Instead, the employer "proposes to reconfigure the benefit program by improving certain benefits while implementing cost control limits to prevent doubling of benefit costs over the next four to five years. If accepted in principle, the details will be worked out with the Union." In other words, they'll give you some improvements, if you agree to cap your existing benefits.

Factor 80 was a big NO unless you are surplussed. They

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POST AND CIRCULATE

Team recommends rejection (cont'd)

also want to prevent us from using our surplus (our money) to extend Factor 80 for our members.

The employer maintained their proposal on "Term Classified" with no mention of wages for these employees. This means they can hire whoever they want, at whatever wage rate they want.

They have rejected all of our

proposals to enhance the quality of life for our unclassified members and restore some of the crumbling infrastructure after seven years under the Harris Tories.

"Give us that NO vote," said Simmons. "Give us the tools we need to bring you the contract that you and your families deserve."

Central Team Quote:

"When angry, count four; when very angry, swear." Mark Twain

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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Wrong number in strike manual

The fax number to send in "OPT OUT" forms on page 57 of the Inside Strike Manual is incorrect. The number listed is (416) 488-7451.

The correct fax number is (416) ~~488~~-7451. Please do NOT send faxes to the number listed in the manual.

Bargaining hotlines available

The OPS Bargaining Information Hotline is now available. A recorded message will give members updates about bargaining. You can reach the Information Hotline at 1-866-811-7274.

You can also call the OPS Mobilizing Hotline to find out how to get plugged into actions across the province. The Mobilizing Hotline number is 1-877-561-8692.

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.