



The Real Deal

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

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Court worker finds a way

Frustrated by the result of the recent Labour Relations Board decision in the courts, Patti Arrowsmith from Local 230 (Kitchener Court), decided that rather than pull out her hair, she would shave it off instead.

Some of her co-workers were being kicked out of their courts

for wearing jeans to work. Patty felt betrayed by some of the same Justices that demanded her respect but were unwilling to return any. "I felt stripped of all my dignity and quite powerless," Patti said. "I thought that if they were going to treat me this way, I might as

well look the part. When it was my day to be in court, I showed up dressed quite appropriately – but with no hair!"

"Unlike Mike Harris, I know how to be fiscally responsible," she said. "I'm saving \$40.00 per month on hair cuts and hundreds of dollars on hair products."

Extension of Factor 80 provided by OPSEU

The employer's latest ad refers to a time-limited extension to the Factor-80 retirement plan. They make it sound like they actually gave us something.

During the final hours leading up to a potential strike, the bargaining team unanimously endorsed a plan to have OPSEU investigate extending Factor 80 for the life of the strike, beyond the current Mar. 31 deadline. This extension is funded by our pension plan surplus, and has absolutely nothing to do with this employer except for their customary signature.

We have been waiting for their signature for some time,

and were in the process of having it arbitrated when they gave us their rubber stamp. At the same time, the employer ads went out.

We still have the extension of Factor 80 in our proposal. We believe that the employer should be **contributing** to the extension for our members. What we didn't want was anyone caught in the gap if there isn't a new collective agreement before Mar. 31.

The employer has said that, like all windows, "this too will close". Well, guess what? Thanks to OPSEU, it remains open!

Get those letters in!

We have received some comments about why the media is not always conveying our message. Often, the media will only report on what's "interesting", as opposed to the real issues.

We have a suggestion. Start writing letters to the editor telling the *real* stories. Tell about the employer refusing to allow you in to perform essential work, about being harassed by your manager, about being threatened. Tell good stories too, but tell a **story**. When you put a human face on events, the media will often listen.

POST AND CIRCULATE

Don't be fooled by their propaganda

Suddenly, there is a flurry of paper being distributed by the employer. They have been unsuccessful thus far in swaying you, and *will remain* unsuccessful. If managers hand you anything that is related to bargaining, remind them that you get your information from **your union**. We will keep you updated on any progress.

The truth is simple. The employer would rather spend thousands of dollars in the courts and at the Labour Relations Board than giving you a contract you deserve.

Consider this as well: The employer is refusing to allow hundreds of essential workers into the workplace, yet they are paying those workers their wages. This is not about bargaining a fair contract; it is all about the employer trying to take control. They appear to be willing to endanger the lives of the public and the people we serve to make a point. Yet, the front-line workers in this province remain committed by being on the picket line every day should they be needed inside.

It's quite evident who the real professionals are.

*Authorized for distribution by
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How to contact your team members

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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.