

The Ultimatum came by phone...

Position:



Council Meeting Secretary

Wage: \$9.00/hr.

Duties: Required to take verbatim minutes of Students' Council meetings, generally held between 7 and 9 p.m., Monday nights.

Also must transcribe from shorthand to typewritten copy such minutes for edition by Council Speaker. Needed from November until April, 1975.

Please forward applications stating qualifications to Gene Borys, VP Admin & Fin, Students' Council offices, 2nd floor SUB.

The Ultimatum

The order in which the outstanding contract items were to be negotiated became crucial to the union after the government's chief negotiator Ed Waddington, delivered a telephone ultimatum to the union on Monday October 20 at 11:00 p.m.

In that conversation Waddington told the union negotiator, Parrot, the union "must say yes" to the government's wage offer - 38 percent over 30 months - or the government would terminate discussions.

The union position was that other issues - the use of casual labour rights of part time employees, shift premiums, among others - must be negotiated prior to wages or as part of a "global package" and that wages were also subject to negotiations.

The CUPW released a tape transcript of that conversation

part of which is as follows:

Mr. Parrot: *Mr Waddington, we want to negotiate. That is the question. Negotiation is negotiation.*

Mr. Waddington: *Therefore it is simple. It is yes (to our wage offer) or we take it that we don't meet any further.*

Mr. Parrot: *Yes, but that is an ultimatum, Mr. Waddington.*

Mr. Waddington: *That is an ultimatum, there is no doubt on that point... you said it.*

Mr. Parrot: *Yes but listen, that is not the way to negotiate when we are faced with the possibility of a national strike.*

Mr. Waddington: *There is no doubt you can negotiate. Say yes, and then we'll sit down after that.*

Mr. Parrot: *Yes but then there will be no negotiations after that, it will be all over.*

And it was all over. Shortly after the conversation ended, the executive council of the CUPW met and called a nationwide strike.

Mackasey denied the ultimatum had been made by the government. Under questioning in the House of Commons, Mackasey stated October 23 "I made it very clear yesterday - I should make this clear - that we did not issue an ultimatum. We did not."

Correspondence Resumes

Mackasey's written reply to the CUPW's Oct 23 request to resume negotiations, delivered to the union on Friday Oct. 24, was found unacceptable in part by the union.

In it, Mackasey offered to return to negotiations and submit a "package proposal with respect to those items still outstanding" and said he was "not concerned with the order in which outstanding items are discussed."

But he called the government's wage offer "our ultimate position" and asked the union leaders to "acquiesce tacitly with respect to our position on wages, recognizing that this acquiescence can be revoked by you if the outstanding items are not settled to your satisfaction."

The union replied to this letter on Oct. 25, saying "there can be no question of the union 'acquiescing tacitly' to the wage offer that you still consider as final" and said Mackasey's reply "indicates clearly that your attitude remains unchanged with respect to your ultimatum on the wage issue."

But the union did agree to reopen talks, with wages being the final item for negotiations, and concluded:

"Our attitude is not inflexible and we sincerely hope that you will return to the principle of collective bargaining rather than that of ultimatums. It is possible to find a compromise if a comprehensive attitude is shown by both sides."

Mackasey wrote back the next day, Sunday Oct. 26, again denying that an ultimatum had been made. But he indicated the government had "completed the preparation of a package of outstanding items, one of which is the wage item."

According to that letter, Mackasey has not changed the government's wage offer, but it is now subject to negotiations, as are all other outstanding items, and all can be discussed in any order desired in accordance with the CUPW's conditions for resuming talks.

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