

Casual labor, not wages, is issue says official

OTTAWA (CUP) - Despite press reports to the contrary, the wage packet is not the major issue behind the general strike of Canada's 22,000 postal workers, according to Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) spokesman Paul Mitchell.

Mitchell said October 22, one day following the nation-wide strike of inside mail sorters, that contract talks broke down after Post Master General Bryce Mackasay and his negotiating team delivered an

ultimatum to the union - accept the government's wage offer or the talks are off.

This was unacceptable to the union, Mitchell said, because issues other than wages, notably the use of casual non-union labour by the post-office, must be negotiated before wages can be settled.

"It is these issues which have led to the disruptions of the postal system over the past ten years" he said. "There will never be peace in

the post office until the problem of casual labour is solved."

Mitchell said the other major issue - automation - has already been resolved to the satisfaction of the union, and union negotiators have already initialled the contract clauses dealing with automation.

But without further agreement on the issue of non-union casual labour, the CUPW feels the postal workers jobs are no more secure than before.

Mitchell said at some postal stations across the country there are more casuals than regular post office employees.

The casuals are not members of the union, they receive less pay and no union benefits, and we want them eliminated or controls placed on their use."

But the government will not talk about casuals or any of the unresolved issues until the union accepts the pay offer, and MacKasay has admitted that it was his side which ordered the remuneration of the talks.

Not that the Post Master had much choice. The Monday night telephone call in which the chief negotiator for the post office told the union to accept the wage offer or forget the talks scheduled for the next morning was taped by CUPW.

The telephone ultimatum followed three days of talks between the union and the government which saw the union initial 123 clauses of the contract.

Then, on Sunday afternoon, MacKasay put his wage proposal on the table - 38 percent over 30 months.

The union submitted its counter-proposal - 51 percent over 27 months, which would bring

members up to \$7.32 per hour down from the original demand of 71 percent over one year.

At talks held Monday afternoon, the government negotiators told the union the wage offer had to be approved as presented before other matters were discussed. Another meeting was scheduled for Tuesday morning.

Then came the phone call and the ultimatum.

Shortly after, the nine-member national executive committee of the CUPW voted unanimously to strike. The west was the first to go out, and by Tuesday morning the whole membership was out.

Although the CUPW is prepared to go back to the bargaining table to discuss non-monetary issues, and say wages are not the major issue, they are far from satisfied with the government's pay offer.

The government offer is based on the report of the conciliator and would give the inside workers parity with the letter carriers.

But the inside workers, Mitchell said, have always received more

than the letter carriers in the past. They work shifts, do night work, and put in longer hours. Parity is just not good enough, he said.

Mitchell feels the government "doesn't want to go too long" and may use back-to-work legislation to break the strike legally. He would not speculate as to the possible union response to such legislation.

The CUPW members, however, are the ones who suffer the most from this strike, Mitchell said. They have no strike fund, nor is there any union-controlled pension fund to borrow against.

"They'll have to live on money they can borrow from their credit union or on savings for the duration of the strike," Mitchell said.

But hardship to advance union demands is nothing new for the CUPW membership.

It was the militancy of these workers which, in the 1960's, won for all federal public employees the basis of collective bargaining power - the right to strike.

SFU re-offers jobs

BURNABY (CUP) - In an effort to end a five-year boycott of Simon Fraser University by the Canadian Association of University Teachers SFU's administration has offered jobs to two of seven professors fired after a bitter 1969 dispute.

SFU and CAUT representatives have been negotiating for several months in efforts to reach an agreement to end the boycott imposed after seven political science, sociology and anthropology professors were fired by former administration president Kenneth Strand.

CAUT vowed not to end the boycott until the seven were reinstated. The boycott was lifted briefly last year after Pauline Jewett became administration president, but was reimposed because she failed to act quickly on the issue.

Mordecai Briemberg, one of the fired professors, said in an interview October 20, SFU's administration has offered unspecified jobs at SFU to two professors and offered two year research stipends to four others.

The seventh professor was not offered any job, Briemberg said.

All of the so-called PSA seven find the proposal unacceptable, he added.

Briemberg, who currently works for the Western Voice, said he was informed of the proposed agreement by telegram.

Under the proposal, he said,

Kathleen Aberle and David Potter were offered jobs. Louis Feldhammer, Prudence Wheeldon, Nathan Popkin, and Briemberg were offered two year research stipends.

Briemberg said he thinks the stipends will be \$9,600, but another source said the stipends would be \$12,000.

John Leggatt, who is currently a tenured professor at Rutgers University in New Jersey was not offered a job or a stipend.

"I'm not going to accept this ripoff of the working people," said Briemberg.

"SFU has been trying to buy its way out of the hole for the last six years. The University, by negotiating this agreement, is acknowledging they are wrong."

He said several committees were formed to investigate the firings. "All found out there is no reason we should be fired."

"We all should have our jobs back", he said.

Administration president Pauline Jewett announced October 17 that "CAUT and SFU are considering a tentative proposal to solve our differences."

She continued, "The proposal was developed by a committee representing the CAUT academic freedom and tenure committee and a committee representing SFU."

One source said it would make a decision by November 30 which is later than desired by the university.

The amended proposal must go before the Board of Governors again, Briemberg said. The CAUT academic freedom and tenure committee will meet November 14 and 15 to decide whether to approve or reject the proposal.

CAUT's executive board will meet the two weeks later and then a special CAUT council session will decide whether or not to lift the boycott.

Scientists find drug store

LONDON (ZNS-CUP) - British archaeologists report they have recovered a stash of hashish about 2000 years old from a Carthaginian warship which sunk off the coast of Sicily during the Roman-Carthage wars.

The excavators report the ship was found with airtight containers of the hash, which apparently was smoked by members of the crew to heighten their morale during combat.

According to the scientists, the containers were good enough to preserve the potency of the hash under the sea for the past 20 centuries.

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Hoeniger talk slated today

"Old Tales and the Contemporary in Shakespeare's Romances" will be the topic of a lecture given by Professor David Hoeniger in Tilley Hall room 28 at 3:30 p.m., Friday, November 14. This will principally concern *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale*.

The lecture is given under the auspices of the Department of English with the support of the visiting lecturers' fund of UNB.

Professor Hoeniger, born in Germany and a graduate of Toronto and London (England), has served at the University of Toronto since 1948 as Professor of English and Director of the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies. He has held numerous fellowships (including a Guggenheim) in England, Canada and the USA. He is the editor of Shakespeare's Henry VIII (Penguin), Pericles (Arden Shakespeare) and is the general editor of the Revels Plays series; he is the author of numerous articles and studies in the literature of the Renaissance, both dramatic and non-dramatic.

Faculty, students and general public are invited.

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