

ED/OP

Get realistic – support the taxpayer

What happened to realistic minded people? In the August 29 issue of the *Gazette* it was opined (sic) that we should all support the umpteenth Postal Worker's strike. Well I feel I speak for the fed up majority (who isn't in a union) when I say enough B.S. is enough. No doubt we should support the democratic right to strike if this is deemed a necessary part of the inability to reach an agreement. However, Canadians have had to tolerate strikes by many different levels of Government as well as those considered crown corporations over the years. Not because they were making a minimum wage but because they wanted better benefits and even higher wages to keep up with the cost of inflation.

This is all fine and well but the whole theory behind these wage freezes is on behalf of the Canadian taxpayers. We, the taxpayers, have been heard by our politicians to cut costs and stop giving our Postal Workers and Civil Servants any more increases for a few years.

Just to speculate about the costs of any increase in their wages; there are 155,000 civil servants (PSAC) in Canada. From the last look the minimum wage was approximately \$20,000 and all the way up to perhaps \$100,000 and more. If we just speculate that the average was

\$35,000 across the board at a modest 5 per cent increase for 1991 (they want retroactive for 91) this would be approximately \$271, 250, 000. Does this bother you just a tiny bit? And just to calculate what an increase in Postal Workers salaries would do to the ever-increasing costs of the postal delivery; there are 45,000 P.W. at an average of \$30,000 at an increase of seven per cent this would amount to \$94,500,000.00. This figure is based on reported average earnings annually.

I've worked for the government, dealt with the Government on a

professional basis through my employment and I can say without regret, that there is a considerable amount of room for improvement. They are overpaid for their output and way too many people doing too little. Civil Servants spend a lot of time worrying about their friends being laid off so they spend time making sure that there is work for them to do as well as not appreciating those who sincerely want to do an efficient job. For this would put their position at stake if someone found out they could replace two workers with one.

I abhor the Postal Workers because they don't seem to realize how lucky they are to be paid so well for what is honestly mindless and mundane work. If getting disgustingly good wages makes them feel better about themselves then I would question why they got into that line of work. Because it can't be a career to write home to mother about despite how much they pilfer out of the harder working taxpayer.

All this concern about Job Security is sometimes a little backwards. If you are a good employee and they need you then you have job security.

If the government can save money and increase productivity due to modern technology then albe it. Who needs a modern technology with unions around? There would just be one union member turning the switch while nine others stood around and bitched about not enough vacation time, wages, sick leave, work over-load, leave, etc.

I have an excellent idea! Why doesn't somebody form a union, get better wages and benefits and then a \$14/hr job would have the same buying power as a \$4.50/hr job used to. Am I starting to make my point?

K. Stacey

Things that have been bothering me

I suppose I must sound like a very bitter person.

Maybe I am.

It seems that all I can do these days is complain.

My smoke detector goes off every time I make toast.

The underside of my toilet tank is covered in a thick black slime.

I don't want to clean it off.

(As long as no-one sticks their hands under there - I should be safe.)

My hot water tap takes five minutes to produce even LUKEWARM water. I hate to waste all that water, but I have no plants to give it to, and I don't like cold baths.

When I walk (which I seem to be doing all the time), I like to take in my surroundings - to see things I'm passing on my way to... wherever.

I like to look at the trees, at the strange little carvings over the doorways and windows.

I like to look at people.

Sadly, that is not something I'm often permitted to do.

How many times am I made to feel guilty because someone has caught me "looking" at them?

How many times have I looked up and smiled, only to be hurt and embarrassed by the fact that they weren't smiling back?

I walk through the SUB - the heart and soul of the university - where, by the way, I was assured I would meet other people "like me". People who like to look around. People who like to talk - to share obscure thoughts.

Where are these people?

Where are the people who are not afraid to smile?

I think I smiled at you the other day.

You turned away. I felt cheap.

When I was little, I used to run and leap across the room, knees tucked up high, hoping to avoid the groping hand of the beasties that flourished amidst the dust-bunnies under the bed.

I was afraid.

For years after that, I had never really been in a situation that caused me to feel FEAR.

This week, I experienced it, for the first time in so long.

Rush hour. Fast pace.

Hurrying along the road, hoping to reach the bank before it closed for the day.

Ahead of me, a group of men were loitering on the sidewalk.

I passed by (through?) them, seeing the doors of my destination on the next block.

Whistles, "Hey baby's", and other appreciative (??) remarks.

I felt exposed. Vulnerable.

A slab of meat on a cold metal tray behind glass.

I felt ashamed. Ashamed to be female?

Ashamed to be walking to the bank?

They followed me. Deliberately turned in my direction and proceeded to strut after me.

My heart is going crazy.

I came as close to panicking then as I've ever come before.

What have (we) done that I should feel afraid?

ASHAMED??

I am not a slab of meat.

I like myself. I enjoy being who I am.

What I don't like is having to walk through the streets with my

eyes cast down, afraid of what I might (or might not) see.

Thank-you for listening.

It feels good to talk (complain).

Could I ask a small favour, though?

Next time you follow me - please make sure it's because you feel like sharing a smile


(Woke up this morning to a brightly lit room. That doesn't happen. Nine o'clock. What was I late for? Class? Work?)

And then I remembered - Saturday!!!

Grinned a huge grin and fell back to sleep.

Guess life isn't so bad after all....)

S.L.M.



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