

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Mr. Coderre advised that at the NABET union's request, a summit meeting was held on March 21, 1972, at which their chief negotiator together with two representatives, the President, Executive Vice-President and himself attended. Mr. Coderre said the atmosphere of the meeting was most positive allowing both parties to discuss the general situation without infringing in any way the work of the mediators. During the discussions, the union placed priority on job security, wages and grievance procedure.

Mr. Coderre stated that the union's most important issue was that of job security where they are insisting that technological advances not be allowed to result in massive employee layoffs without providing sufficient opportunity for retraining. Mr. Palmer enquired if any of the other unions had such a clause in their agreement and Mr. Coderre said that all unions enjoy benefits or guarantees which are comparable to outside industry. There exists a very extensive process of prior consultation, retraining or recycling of employees so that the possibility of a staff member dropping in level of employment would be practically non-existent.

Mr. Palmer was of the opinion that the western newspapers were not reflecting both sides of the strike situation and wondered if a statement should be issued to the press setting forth the Corporation's position. The President observed that the Corporation has to some extent publicized its position but felt that, while negotiations are still proceeding, and particularly during mediation, the presentation of the Corporation's case into the public forum should be avoided. In reply to a further question, the President noted that in the event of a general strike by NABET, a limited English-language TV service could be continued but the French-language TV service would have to discontinue operations. In the event of a total strike, the President felt it would be better that all CBC services be stopped across Canada because it would have been the result of NABET action rather than any initiative on the Corporation's part. The Corporation has not imposed a total walk-out and is in fact continuing to collect union dues with no obligation to do so as a goodwill gesture and continuing to pay the salary of the Corporation's union negotiating team. These actions are considered by Management to be the norms of conduct that should be respected no matter what action NABET may take.

ESCALATION OF PENSION BENEFITS

Mr. Coderre, together with Mr. John Burns of the Administration Department, presented the agenda report and recapitulated the history of the Corporation's efforts to introduce a cost-of-living adjustment to Pensioners scheme that would be consistent with that provided by the Public Service. As agreed to by the Board in May 1970, Management put before the Staff Benefits Advisory Committee a proposal to amend the CBC Pension Plan which would result in an escalation provision of up to 2% per annum, for all staff both currently on the establishment as well as those retired, based on the Consumer Price Index with the same qualifications stipulated in the Public Service Plan and would be financed on a cost-sharing basis between the Corporation and staff. This plan however, is in abeyance pending conclusion of NABET negotiations. However, indications are that this proposal will receive the sanction of the employee representatives on the Staff Advisory Committee once settlement has been reached with this union.

In the meantime, in order to provide some relief to existing pensioners, pending implementation of the global plan, an interim formula has been developed which would not entail any amendment to the CBC Pension Plan thus alleviating any involvement of the Superintendent of Insurance under whose jurisdiction all annuities under the meaning of the Act would come, and would be financed entirely from CBC operating funds.

Mr. Coderre emphasized that in adopting this recommendation, authority is hereby given to Management to vote special funds for this purpose on an annual basis with implementation or any change in the formula only possible upon written instruction from the President. The President noted that once the total cost-of-living adjustment plan is introduced for all segments of staff, the cost of this special provision would be absorbed into the total programme which would be financed through conventional funding means.