



BARGAINING BREAKS DOWN

STRIKE VOTES TO BE CONDUCTED

After two days of bargaining with the Red Cross we are at a major impasse. The employer's monetary proposal was an insult to the value of home care workers in the health care system. This from an organization viewed by the public as compassionate and doing good for humanity. The lack of respect was evident in the compensation the Red Cross offered. SEIU responded to the Red Cross proposal in the presence of a conciliation officer from the Ministry of Labour. In our counter proposal we withdrew some of the proposals we had originally put forward, recognizing we were not going to be able to gain every monetary proposal. But we do want a fair deal. We believe a fair deal must include compensation for travel time since it's part of your job, increased mileage allowance, a sick leave provision so that when you get sick you don't have to worry if you are bringing it to your clients, improvements to benefits that you pay half of the premium for minimal coverage, a minor improvement in your vacation to catch up with other health care workers, and a better and equal wage for the work you do. What is not fair about all this? It is difficult to prioritize what monetary issues are the most important when there is everything to improve upon.

When SEIU put forward our amended proposal the Red Cross rejected it outright and called for a meeting with the conciliator. There was no will on the part of the employer to continue negotiations. At this point the Red Cross has no intention of giving a fair contract. They claimed that the travel time, our priority proposal, was a nonstarter. And what they did propose was a formula for travel time which meant concessions for some members. It is a travesty that Red Cross home care workers continue to be given no respect for the job they do. You continue to be suppressed and exploited.

Sisters and Brothers, the time has come to stand together, to send a strong message that we will take collective action to achieve a fair deal. If we do not rise this time the same attitudes of disrespect and disregard will continue for years to come. Your negotiating team must have a strong strike mandate with which to return to the bargaining table on July 30 and 31. These dates have been set aside to try to reach a deal. Strike vote dates are set and are enclosed in this mailing. I encourage you to come to the meetings. There will be no proxy voting. I will be attending all of the meetings and giving you a further update. Your bargaining committee thanks you for your support.

In Solidarity

Cathy Carroll
Secretary Treasurer SEIU Local 1 Canada and
Chief Negotiator

QUOTE IN TORONTO STAR ON FINAL DAY OF BARGAINING

IF YOU START TO FEAR LOSING, YOU'RE GOING TO FAIL. IT'S NOT GOING TO WORK. SO YOU HAVE TO BE BRAVE AND GO RIGHT AT IT AND BELIEVE IN IT.

NEW scheduling language agreed to in principle but falls apart with travel time issue

On our first day of bargaining we were able to work out new scheduling language that put principles and protocols into the language but at the same time addressed many concerns of the membership as it relates to availability, continuity and seniority. Many issues have been addressed at the table and the many stories heard from the membership action meetings have been echoed. The language reflected hours that were contingent on having travel time and that was made clear throughout the development of the articles. The concept and rational to this language was that home care workers should be paid and allowed time to do their job. Traveling between clients is part of your job. The real stopper to having agreement on this clause is monetary and according to Red Cross there is no money.

HOME CARE PROJECT ON THE MOVE

Don't Forget - PUBLIC HEARINGS ON HOME CARE SET FOR JUNE

Hearing Dates

Monday, June 9 - Toronto – Marriott Hotel (Bloor and Yonge) – 10:00 am to 8:00 pm

Tuesday, June 10 - Sarnia - Holiday Inn 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Wednesday, June 11 - Peterborough - Holiday Inn 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Thursday, June 12 - Ottawa- Marriott Hotel 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Monday, June 16 - Thunder Bay - Valhalla Inn 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm

SEIU has taken out full page ads in major newspapers in the above cities to advertise these hearings.

WORDS FROM YOUR BARGAINING COMMITTEE

I was very disappointed with our employer. I was insulted and felt like a second class citizen.

Pam

This has been a great learning experience and has shown me how important it is to belong to a Union. It has been an insulting slap on the face from an employer that for over 15 years I had respected. NO MORE.

Claire

A real eye opener to the differences of the Union and Red Cross. Red Cross does not realize the difficulties we go through to complete our jobs.

Diane

Bargaining is an emotional rollercoaster, highs and lows but the ultimate high is a strong contract that benefits our workers and brings dignity to our lives.

Theresa

I wonder why Red Cross came to the table if they weren't willing to give us better working conditions. We have to stand together to get better this time for all 3500 of our fellow workers.

Anne

I learned a lot. I know how to unite my workers. The Union is the only tool to improve our working conditions.

Lucy

For more info on the SEIU Local 1 Canada Home Care Project Go to -

www.seiulocal1.org/yourworkplace/homecare