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July 10, 2016

NEGOTIATIONS OR ARBITRATION?

The Union continues to be opposed to interest arbitration. As mentioned in previous bulletins, the Union fought against the unfair and unconstitutional legislation that took away our right to free negotiations in 2011 and we won. Why would we give up that right?

ARBITRATION IS A LONG PROCESS

It is important to understand just how long and time consuming the arbitration process can be. Here are some examples of national arbitrations:

On October 3, 2007 the Corporation announced its Postal Transformation Initiative. The interest arbitration process under Article 29 started in 2010. There was a decision on May 30, 2013 dealing with Group 1 issues. However, the process is still continuing to address the adverse effects impacting Group 2 members.

On September 7, 2010 the Union filed a national policy grievance (N00-07-00032) on three issues: the two-bundle delivery method, access to information during restructures and routes being restructured in violation of the Letter Carrier Route Measurement System. It is now 2016 and not one of these three issues has been resolved.

As you can see from these examples, the arbitration process can drag on for a very long time. In these grievances, the arbitrator was only dealing with a small number of issues and the cases are still active after 5 or 6 years. Imagine the complexities involved in arbitrating two entire collective agreements.

We have had experience with interest arbitration in past rounds of negotiations. In 1997, the arbitration in front of Justice Richard lasted 2 years and no decision was ever issued.

On October 17, 1987 the government imposed back-to-work legislation and appointed Justice Laurent Cossette as a mediator/arbitrator. A decision was issued in June 1988. This process only dealt with a few Group 1 issues and yet lasted 10 months. With so many issues outstanding between the parties, imagine how long the process could last this round.

On July 28, 2010 Arbitrator Brian Keller was appointed to resolve issues in the final RSMC reopener. This process was not overly complex and yet lasted 15 months.

The above examples indicate how long the interest arbitration process can last.

WHY NEGOTIATE?

The only way for us to achieve fair collective agreements is through negotiations that are not restricted in any way. We cannot freely negotiate with legislation or interest arbitration. Arbitration will not allow us to achieve what we need during this round of bargaining.

WE WILL FIGHT TO KEEP OUR RIGHT TO NEGOTIATE!



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2015-2019/Bulletin n° 140