



November 23, 2018

Negotiate, Don't Legislate!

The Liberal government has intervened in the labour dispute at Canada Post. The Minister of Labour introduced back-to-work legislation that fundamentally violates the right to free collective bargaining, guaranteed to all workers in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. We know from experience that Canada Post management has only one strategy: sit back and wait for legislation, and the Liberal government is now doing their dirty work.

You either believe in collective bargaining, or you don't. The Prime Minister has just made it clear that his talk is cheap. He only believes in collective bargaining when it's convenient.

The government may try to distance themselves from Canada Post, but the truth is, they hold all the cards. It is the government that has to approve the business plan at Canada Post. It is the government that has the ability to direct Canada Post management. And the government has the power to end this, without legislation. They have made a choice: they would rather violate workers' constitutional rights than allow free collective bargaining.

In early November, the Prime Minister signaled as much by saying "all options are on the table". That comment told Canada Post that they could safely cease negotiating, since he was willing to back them up.

But postal workers do not have options when it comes to injuries and unpaid work. When management forces more work onto workers and demands they finish in the same amount of time, we do not have an option. When poor staffing leads to forced overtime, we do not have an option. When injuries increase by 43% in two years, we do not have an option. When Canada Post refuses to treat women equally, we do not have an option.

The government has all the options. And they would rather violate constitutional rights than deal with health and safety issues. They would rather legislate workers back to work than treat women equally.

We tried to serve Canadians while aiming to pressure Canada Post to negotiate. They manufactured a crisis, that the government used as justification to prolong our workplace abuse. The blame for this dispute now lies squarely on the government. Three years of broken promises and Liberal inaction have led us to where we are today.

Postal workers will not accept another violation of our right to free collective bargaining. And it's not just a matter of our Charter rights; this bill legislates continued injuries, unpaid work, gender inequality, and general dishonesty and disrespect.

In Solidarity,

Mike Palecek
National President

