

**PTI - Union Negotiations Update:**  
**There is Good News and there is Bad News!**

Negotiations for a new Union contract continued May 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and then again on June 1, 2, 3. There are good things to report and there are some things that clearly aren't so good.....and that is putting it gently.

Progress has been made and improvements have been made to your Collective Agreement in a variety of areas.

New clauses have been tentatively agreed to ensure better representation in the workplace; a smoother and quicker grievance and arbitration procedure if the company tries to fire you and evict you; and better scheduling rules and some health and safety improvements. In addition, some new rules have been developed to ensure a better process to bring worker concerns to the company during the term of a Union contract.

But notwithstanding the progress that has been made, your bargaining committee has been left with some grave concerns about where the company is headed!

Firstly, the company is saying that they reserve the right to change your entire scheduling and turnaround system on very short notice! **THEY HAVE TOLD YOUR BARGAINING COMMITTEE THAT THEY ARE RESERVING THEIR RIGHT, FOR EXAMPLE TO ALMOST INSTANTLY INTRODUCE A 10 AND 4 SCHEDULING SYSTEM.. THEY HAVE CLEARLY TOLD US THAT IF THE CLIENT DEMANDS IT THEY WOULD CHANGE YOUR ROTATION SYSTEM TO A 10 DAYS IN AND 4 DAYS OUT PROGRAM. OR ANY THING ELSE FOR THAT MATTER!!!!!!**

Your Union committee is outraged and has demanded that the 21/7 system be guaranteed as a minimum. The company says they can do whatever they want! We have also demanded that new scheduling options be given to employees for those who might want to work something other than 21/7. But to be clear, in the Union's vision, these options would only be if the employee wanted to utilize them.

For four years your employer has managed its business successfully and seen tremendous growth with a 21/7 rotation system. We worry that forcing people onto a 10 and 4 system or any other system of rotation would be a way to get rid of most existing workers. The company would be very pleased, we believe, to possibly use this to replace you with new hires at lower start rates and be able to significantly cut their costs.

Union paranoia? We think not. Recently PTI, behind your Unions back, and behind your back has embarked on a major effort to take high paid Union jobs and send them to third parties who will do the work at a much lower cost. Union members at PTI could be producing as many as 10,000 sandwiches a day with good Union wages and benefits. When Union members did this work the quality of the food was high and hard working guests at PTI lodges did not have to endure 7-11 style food to fuel them to complete their day. Now this sandwich work is being done at low wages in Edmonton at a company called Hygaard Foods in conditions that have not been inspected by Union officials. In fact PTI says that Hygaard Foods refuses to allow Union officials to tour their plant. We encourage you to research Hygaard's sandwich and food safety record by Googling Hygaard and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. Also, check out a new website coming soon....[www.notmysandwich.com](http://www.notmysandwich.com).

You might say that you do not care about the sandwich issue. On a closer look at the issue however you know that if someone else's job can be given away your job could be next. Indeed we are hearing that work that used to be done at the Lodges has over time been given away. Scratch baking that used to be done by Union members has been partially lost to pre-prepared products. A third party private company is sending pre-packaged lasagna, sheppards pie, burritos, etc, to PTI lodges. Will you face job cuts, losses of hours, and the unemployment line as a result of PTI's endless greed?

What about housekeepers? Surely their jobs cannot be sent to someone else.... or can they? Laundry work has not been shuffled to a centralized facility. That facility is gratefully Union, but this move clearly demonstrates the company's willingness to do whatever it takes to maximize efficiency and reduce costs. What if "Howards Housekeeping Services" told PTI they could set up a nearby camp and sell housekeeping services to PTI through their underpaid workers for 30% less than you are making? Like the sandwich work which was once done by Union workers....your job could be gone too.

As a response to the company's behavior, your Union is launching a major initial campaign of communication to PTI's customers. It will initially focus on food safety, food quality, and worker justice issues. This campaign is intended to encourage PTI to do the right thing, not to hurt their business. It is also intended to promote food safety.

Many employees are asking... will there be a strike? They are also wondering... why can't we just get a contract really quickly?

A strike is a possibility at PTI. Many employees are demanding action to get PTI to take bargaining demands seriously and they are willing to stand up and be counted to support their Union. The history of the UFCW is that we are not afraid to strike and we are a fighting Union. However, we urge our militant members to be patient and to appreciate that no one wants to go on strike. A strike is a last resort and should only be undertaken if there is no other option. It is our job as a Union to utilize every bargaining strategy we have to achieve a Union contract without a dispute. This often takes a significant period of time.

With respect to the length of time that bargaining takes there is no easy answer. Collective Bargaining is a give and take process. Union members have asked for many changes to their Collective Agreement. Issues can be complex and meaningful dialogue takes time. Having said this, though, it is also important to know that bargaining would move a lot quicker if your company acted more reasonably. Your Union is not your employer. It is the employer's responsibility to ensure that fair wages are paid and working conditions are proper. We are doing our job by demanding fairness, setting out our best arguments, and appealing to reason, logic, and fair play. **IT IS THE COMPANY'S JOB TO ANSWER!**

Bargaining is entering a serious phase and a tense phase. Bargaining will not go on forever. It is important that you do your part and engage in dialogue with your bargaining committee and fellow workers to build a strong sense of Union solidarity at this time. Negativity, second guessing, gossip, and misinformation will yield nothing but a bad contract. Strength, unity, Union support, and education will get you the best possible contract.

**UNITED WE BARGAIN, DIVIDED WE BEG! [www.gounion.ca](http://www.gounion.ca)  
Sincerely, your bargaining committee.**