

Society NewsFLASH 2005:03

Tuesday, April 26, 2005

Hydro One Local just says no; rally today at Queen's Park Society team meeting with management this morning

The Society will hold a rally today to support its Hydro One local, whose members yesterday solidly repudiated their CEO's "final offer."

When the the votes were counted in the management-forced "final offer" vote, 97 per cent of Society-represented employees had voted, and 95 per cent of those rejected the offer. The turnout was several percentage points greater than that of last month's strike vote, and a week and a half of heavy pressure from Hydro One management had made hardly a dent in support for the Society position.

Late yesterday afternoon, CEO Tom Parkinson phoned Society President **Andrew Müller** and asked the Society to return to the bargaining table this morning. Negotiations began at 9 a.m. today.

Society Local Vice President **Keith Rattai** announced the vote results at the Church of the Holy Trinity, across the square from Hydro One headquarters, to about 400 assembled members and supporters.

"Our members have resoundingly said *no* to discrimination against future employees and young energy professional graduates," he said. "They have said *no* to increased hours of work without pay, and they have said *no* to demands for concessions solely from energy professionals when the company is highly profitable and Hydro One President and CEO Tom Parkinson has just received a 35.2% pay increase."



Photo: Andrew Müller

Hydro One professional employees in the Church of the Holy Trinity cheer Keith Rattai's announcement of vote results

Parkinson wrote all Society-represented employees on April 13th, and told them they would be locked out if they were to vote in the way they just have.

If the professional employees are locked out, said Rattai, it “will put the safe and reliable delivery of electricity throughout the province in jeopardy, significantly increasing the risk of power disruptions and blackouts for the people of Ontario,” said Rattai. “We call upon Premier McGuinty to reject the irresponsible position of Hydro One management that is jeopardizing the security of the provincial electricity system.”

Rattai also said it's time for the public to take some action. “We ask members of the general public to please immediately contact their MPPs and tell Premier McGuinty to stop putting the electricity system at risk by withdrawing Hydro One's demands for concessions from its energy professionals and by offering us a fair and reasonable contract.”

As nothing is guaranteed in today's discussions, the Society continues to prepare for a lockout or job action.

Rally for Hydro One professional employees today at 12:30 p.m.

Hydro One professionals will hold a rally at 12:30 p.m. today at Queen's Park.

The Hydro One bargaining team says today's rally is the most important thing today for its members to do. In a bulletin to their members today, they said, “Although things look better this morning than they did last week, it is not over yet,” and pointed out that the last time Mr. Parkinson invited the Society back to the table it was to dress up a previous offer as a “final” offer.

Members of other Society locals—especially the Ontario Power Generation local—are encouraged to participate.

Hardship Fund: another way to donate

For members of Meridian Credit Union (formerly HEPCOE), there is an easy way to donate to the Society Hardship Fund.

Inspired by the impending lockout at Hydro One, the Hardship Fund has been set up to deal with colleagues in exceptional financial circumstances due to strikes or lockouts (see *Newsflash* 2005:01 for more details).

Meridian members can establish an "autotransfer authorization" to Society Meridian account 21088-0.
The autotransfer can be cancelled at any time.

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