

Prepared to talk without a “poison pill” for free collective bargaining

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OTTAWA - Postal workers currently living under the shadow of a threatened lockout are relieved that the value of their 30-day truce proposal to keep talks going and the mail moving was acknowledged by Canada Post management. But giving up their right to freely negotiate is a poison pill that shouldn't be part of the deal, they say.

“We have been crystal clear from the beginning we want a negotiated settlement. We want to have meaningful discussions with management, but getting a guaranteed bail-out from an arbitrator at the end of it isn't the incentive they need to stop playing these games with the public,” said Mike Palecek, national president of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, which is facing a lock-out on Monday, July 11th.

“Our bosses at Canada Post could just sit there for 30 days, refuse to discuss our proposals, as they have been doing for months, and then wait things out in the legal system for years,” said Palecek.

“The public and postal workers need certainty. We have never wavered while Canada Post has been inconsistent. For example, they said they wouldn't lock us out and now we're living with their threat to lock us out,” said Palecek, adding “with their current proposal, the only certainty is that we would again lose our constitutionally guaranteed right to free collective bargaining.”

Postal workers recently won a court challenge to legislation forcing them back to work after Canada Post locked them out in 2011, which was ruled illegal and unconstitutional by the courts as it violated free collective bargaining guaranteed under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

“We believe that Canadians cherish their constitutional freedoms,” said Palecek.

The union renews its call for a thirty day cooling-off period and meaningful negotiations.

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