

LOCAL 70125

FSD COMMITTEE REPORT

June 19, 1995

The NJC Cyclical Review of the FSDs scheduled for 1995 appears headed for a bumpy ride. Several factors are conspiring against an orderly process. Our members must be made aware of recent developments influencing the triennial review so that their comments may be taken into account.

Not many members have a printout of the FSDs most recent edition dated June 1, 1993. Members are of course entitled to the provisions negotiated at that time, but more than likely have the 1989 edition in hand for reference. It is only within the last two months that a limited number of the 1993 edition was printed and distributed mainly to participants of the 1995 triennial review. The 1993 version is available electronically on the SIGNET I: drive of the SBM division. This drive is not available outside the branch. Few members would be aware of its existence.

Substantive factors influencing the course of the 1995 triennial review are: a) the report of the Auditor General of Canada, May 1995 (particularly chapters 1, 7 and 8; and b) the creation of a management committee to fundamentally review the foreign service directives.

Firstly, the Auditor General's report. The FSDs have come of late under critical review by the Auditor General. The report calls for a benefits and costs analysis of the 1993 changes. Additionally, it calls for the 1995 triennial review to include the question of taxing benefits of foreign service directives particularly where non-accountable travel and vacation advances are involved.

Secondly, the establishment of a management committee to review the FSDs. Membership of the committee is composed of departments involved with FSDs: DFAIT, DND, C&I, RCMP, CSIS and TB. The chairman is Mr. Campbell, of PCO. It is to issue a report by the end of September. Management will then review that report and adopt decisions affecting their input to the FSD triennial review.

The precise impact of the above developments on the FSD review has yet to be determined. The timing of the review is expected to be delayed beyond the July 1st deadline. At the last NJC committee meeting (June 12th) union representatives called for an early indication of the new timeframe. It may already have been arrived at, but I have not yet been informed.

The foregoing does present an opportunity for us to consult rotational members and get a reading of their impressions on the situation.

Two other developments outside the FSDs will affect our members: a) the cutting back of the Recreational Hardship Support Program and b) the new Relocation Procedures coming into effect July 1st. Both indicate a hardening of attitude against the comfort of our employees abroad and may indirectly point to the attitude management will adopt in their treatment of FSD benefits.

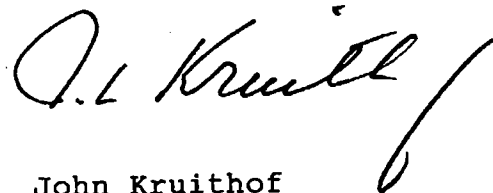
During May, messages went out to all hardship missions reporting that funding under the recreational support hardship program was reduced by 50 percent. This will greatly curtail social activities at those missions needing it most. It is not farfetched to suggest that next year the entire elimination of funding will occur. The challenge may be to develop FSD provisions to replace what has been lost

The June 12th issue (number 24) of Panorama details new relocation procedures and how they were arrived at. The simplified process gives employees more responsibility in the moving process. Four employee focus groups were set up. From that it was concluded by management that "many employees indicated a desire to assume greater responsibility and involvement in their moves, i.e. they would like to communicate directly with the moving company in arranging for estimates, preparation and packing, and removal".

My view is that both developments go against the best interests of our members. The new policies appear to be dictated by short-term financial interests, regardless of long-term costs. The managerial attitude is not surprising, coming from a source ready to sacrifice Canadian employment opportunities for the sake of financial expediency.

This report seeks the input of views by the Local on issues reported on.

Respectfully Submitted,



John Kruithof