

The Company's Attempts to Frustrate the Process of Negotiations

- Having completed negotiations to amend the Industrial Agreement for the period 2004 - 2010 the Company had the responsibility to provide the document for signing. Company refused to do so.

- The Union produced the document and submitting same to the Company for its perusal and comments. The Company never responded even after the Union delivered the Document to the Company on three (3) occasions

- Having had no response from the Company the Union went ahead and submitted in **August 2010**

proposals to amend the Collective Labour Agreement for the contract period 2010 - 2013.

- Following several letters and countless phone calls to the Company seeking a date to commence negotiations the Company finally indicated their willingness to meet on **July 19, 2011, almost ONE YEAR LATER!**

- Negotiations which took place on July 19 and August 16 made no progress. The Company negotiating team presented verbal proposals which they withdrew after the Union pointed out the irrelevance or impracticability to the Brewery's operation. This development demonstrated to the Union, the Company's attitude to the negotiations and it had become clear that the Company was prepared to deploy time wasting tactics geared at frustrating the process.

- On the 9th December, 2011 the 5th session of negotiations was held with both parties not being able to agree on a number on items. The Union declaring the matters deadlock and referred the issues to the Ministry of Labour (Ministry of Labour).

- The Company refused to accept the Union's suggestion on this matter showing clearly that it had no interest in concluding the negotiations as was its practice during the 2004 - 2007 contract period.

The Company has consciously refused to cooperate with the Union in activities geared at promoting the welfare of the workers

- Company's refused to participate in the Union's Annual Health Fair, thus denying the workers health check. The checks this year focused on cancer of the prostate, cervix and cardiovascular diseases.

- The Grenada Breweries Ltd. was the only Company which prevented its workers from benefitting from this programme. Again, the Company continued to behave in an uncaring and indifferent manner towards its workers.

Industrial Action By The Union and its' Members

This type of behavior only fueled a sense of frustration among the workers and the Union.

Update On Industrial Dispute Between Grenada Breweries Ltd and TAWU

Written by

Friday, 30 December 2011 00:00

- **December 13, 2011**, the Union and workers took strike action requesting the Company to take the negotiations seriously and to act with respect.

- The Minister of Labour called the parties to a meeting on **December 16, 2011** to try and bring a resolution to the matter.

- The Company through its Chairman of the Board - Mr. Andrew Sagba said at that meeting, the Company will not negotiate with "a gun to its head" and once workers return to work the team lead by himself will be available on **December 23, 2011** to negotiate all outstanding issues. (The meeting on the 23

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was to be held under the auspices of the Minister of Labour.)

- >The Minister suggested to the Union that it should give consideration to the Company's suggestion for resolving the impasse.

- The Union indicated it had to seek the input of the workers and will communicate its decision to the Minister in 48 hours.

- On **Sunday December 18, 2011** the Union's Management Committee met and agreed that the Minister of Labour suggestion was the best way forward and directed Senior Officers in the Secretariat to meet with the Shop Stewards and workers from 6:30 a.m. on the morning of **Monday December 19, 2011 to get agreement on the Minister's suggestion.**

End to Industrial Action By The Union and its' Members

- At that meeting the workers voted by secret ballot to accept the Minister's suggestion.
- This decision was conveyed to the Minister by letter dated December 19, 2011.
- The Union then directed the workers as follows:
- Shift workers who were scheduled to work on the evening of December 19, should present themselves to resume work on the evening of the said day
- All other workers should present themselves for normal duties on the morning of December 20.

Grenada Breweries Lock Out Workers

On presentation for resumption of work:

- The Company informed workers that they should leave their names and phone numbers at the security booth and await a call from the Company.
- An operator who had been called out on night duty Monday, December 19, 2011 to adjust the machinery, enabling produce to be bottled on Tuesday, December 20, was told on the morning of Tuesday, December 20, 2011 when he presented himself for work that he had to await a call from the Company on a date for the resumption of normal duty.
- The workers on being given the strange message refused to leave the Company's gate in their urge to resume work.
- As a result trucks of products driven by scab labour were unable to pass the workers picket line.
- The Police Officers who had been called by the Company then arrested Senator

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Humphrey and impounded the Union vehicle. He was released later that day on bail.

- On Wednesday, December 21 the State on the request of the Company had the members of Special Services Unit (Riot Squad) descended on the workers and forcibly cleared a path for the Brewery trucks with products to exist the Brewery.

Labour Minister Intervene a Second Time

- The parties were again called to a meeting with the Minister of Labour at 4:30 p.m. the same day (December 20, 2011).

- The Minister, the Ministry of Labour's team included the Permanent Secretary - Ministry of Labour, Labour Commissioner, Assistant Labour Commissioner and the Solicitor General.

- Discussions concluded at 12:01 a.m. with the Company insisted it did not dismiss the workers nor did it lock them out.

- A statement to that effect was drafted by the Solicitor General and the Union agreed to sign the said statement and was also prepared to treat Tuesday, December 20, 2011 as a day of industrial action even if the workers were locked out and the effective date for normal operations will be Wednesday, December 21, 2011.

- **The Company indicated it was willing to sign on two (2) conditions:**

- That the strike is declared as illegal; and

- That as a condition for recommencement of negotiation the workers and union end the blockade at its gates.

- The Company also suggested that the workers will have to remain off the job until all outstanding matters at negotiations were settled whether that was completed on December 23, 2011 or December 23, 2012.

There can be no doubt that the Company has no intent of bringing a quick resolution to this unfortunate situation; even when it was evident clear that this matter if left to escalate would have serious economic and social impact on the Grenada economy and society.

We cannot help but to speculate that the Trinidadian majority shareholders have plans for the Brewery that may not involve the production of beer or any other bottled products. This clearly will be bad for the Grenada economy but very good for the Trinidad owners and their national economy. Were this to be the case, this Union and the general public as they have shown in their support for the workers will have no appetite and tolerance for that option.

We urge the Government and People of Grenada to be vigilant as we go forward.