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TORONTO STRIKE OVER ASBESTOS HAZARDS IN PLANT 1973 B 253

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Canadian Johns-Manville Co., Limited

Products Division

Toronto Plant
West Hill P.O.
Ontario
(416) 282-1131

July 8, 1971.

Well, the strike is now winding up the second week. We filled you in last week on the average value of the offer made by the Company prior to the strike. We felt that perhaps you may have been told that the value of the various items in the Company offer have been mis-stated by us.

In order to clear the air on this point we have run a computer comparison of your actual earnings for your last full week worked, in most cases the week ending June 6th, 1971, compared with what these earnings would have been had a contract been settled based on the final offer of the Company. It includes only those items which are directly reflected in wages. There is the 13¢ per hour across the board increase, the 6¢ trades and non-incentive adjustment, and the increases to shift premium of 1¢ on 4-12 and 3¢ on 12-8. It also includes the build-in of 20¢ of the cost of living on the job rates and includes the increase of 4¢ cost of living, which would have been effective in May based on the April 1971 index.

The slip is made out similarly to the figures shown on the stub of your pay cheque. It is laid out as follows from left to right; employee number, overtime hours, incentive hours, total hours worked, amount of shift premium, amount of overtime premium, amount of regular and incentive earnings and total gross earnings for the week. The top line shows what the wages would have been had the offer been put into effect, the second line shows what they actually were and the bottom line shows the amount of the increase. Everyone will not have numbers shown in each column, however, you should not have too much difficulty in relating the amounts of the increase. The total value of the increase for this week is shown in the bottom right hand corner.

We have taken great pains to ensure the accuracy of the calculations, however, as you know can happen with any mechanical device such as the computer, there may be errors. If you have a question call either Roy Winkworth or Frank Feeley and they will explain the calculation to you.

It was rather interesting to note that the total gross pay for the week that was run for the 487 employees was $94,736.45. Putting the increases into effect raised that amount by a further $5,907.65.

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In addition to the amounts which have already been added, remember there is the continuing effect of cost of living as it rises through the agreement. Our gestimate was that it would rise 12¢ during the first year of the agreement and we have only included 4¢ of that which has actually happened, in our calculations above.

The union have obtained a great deal of publicity for the strike based on the few unfortunate individuals who are suffering from asbestosis. They imply that the Company is not concerned about the health and well-being of our employees and that we are continually exposing you to dangerous levels of asbestos fibre. I am sure that you are confident as I am that this simply is not the case. The union further states that we will not tell them what the results of the dust counts in the plant are. This again is simply not true. We had offered, in negotiations prior to the strike, to broaden the responsibilities of the Safety Committee to include environmental control. We stated that we would educate that committee so that they would be able to accurately interpret the test results, and that as soon as this was done we would review, with them, current dust surveys, both Company and Department of Health surveys, and further that they would actively participate in our discussions of particular problem areas in an attempt to further reduce the dust levels in the plant.

It is indeed unfortunate that the union have used this issue as a smoke screen to cover up their own inept handling of the negotiations which resulted in 500 plus employees going out on strike without being given an opportunity to take a secret ballot vote on the final offer made by the Company.

Yours very truly,

W. A. Young,
Plant Manager.

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