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Negotiations at the heart of the Federal Council



At this Federal Council meeting, delegates completed the work on representativeness, adopted the agenda of the next Federal Council and took stock of the financial situation, an important question during bargaining. Above all, in a period when nurses have begun to apply pressure tactics, delegates took advantage of the Federal Council to prepare for the coming struggle for a new collective agreement.

The President of the Federation, Jennie Skene, congratulated delegates and members for the success of the first hour of recuperation. *"On June 1, we applied the first pressure tactic adopted by a referendum vote on April 8. We were forced to do so because, in spite of intensive work at the bargaining table, there are still no concrete solutions to nurses' problems. Despite the fine words of our politicians and employer associations, what is put on the table is but hot air and then they try to soften us with a lament. As you saw, the first hour of recuperation was a success; on the news, we saw nurses on picket lines in all corners of Quebec. We must all be proud of this.*

Seeing the way in which the government and employer associations are acting, on the one hand giving the impression that they share our priorities, but on the other presenting texts which are contrary to the objectives set, we have no other choice but to take action and apply crescendo-like the pressure tactics we voted in the referendum."

The President assured delegates once again of the Federation's firm intention of obtaining an overall settlement in the coming weeks. Delegates reiterated their support for this orientation. They also took measures to continue mobilizing their members and the financial means to support their struggle and win their demands.

Enough is enough! It's time to act!

A FIRST SUCCESSFUL ACTION

Last Tuesday, on June 1, beginning in the wee hours of the morning, nurses were pacing back and forth on the sidewalks, posters and banners in hand, chanting slogans. On each work shift, the FIIQ's call for a one-hour walk-out was massively followed. It was a warm-up for local teams, especially since two other hours of recuperation will be held in the week of June 7. Others may be necessary before we call for days of recuperation and a general strike.

In many cases, local teams proved to be very imaginative. Besides writing songs adapted to the situation, some local teams decided to offer a gift (!) to their employers, such as a lemon-squeezer, or to spread feathers along a busy boulevard, or to make lemon-shaped pickets... The media were fond of these original actions and reported extensively on this first action. A specialized media firm reports that

nurses' actions were mentioned on radio or television 150 times in two days.

Moreover the French daily *La Presse* conducted its daily poll on June 1 on whether or not people support nurses' pressure tactics. The response was clear: 73 % of respondents said YES. The results of the Vox Populi of the *Journal de Montréal* were the same. The public understands nurses, and it has given nurses

unfailing support over the years.

In the coming days, local teams will complete their preparations for the next pressure tactics: lists of essential services, strike schedule, communication network, mobilization committee, etc. The nurse activists of the FIIQ will be prepared for all eventualities, including a general strike.



THE FIIQ SETS THE PACE



Since the beginning of the year, a progress report on the progress of negotiations is presented to delegates at each Federal Council meeting. This time the report was delivered by Chantal Boivin, Executive Committee member jointly responsible for negotiations. Since the April 20 Federal Council meeting, twelve meetings were held with the management bargaining party, the *Comité patronal de négociation du secteur de la Santé et des Services sociaux (CPNSSS)*, at the rate of three meetings per week. During these meetings, both parties, the union party and the management party, explained and discussed their respective demands.

On May 20, the management party was very surprised when the Negotiating Committee presented a counter-proposal. The Federation thus changed the pace of the negotiations and delivered a clear message. *“We told the management party in a very straightforward way that we wanted to negotiate intensively because our objective is was to reach a settlement before the summer. We also explained that concrete solutions that respond to the current and future needs of nurses must be found and implemented in the next collective agreement”*, explained Chantal Boivin.

The same message was given to the *Conseil du trésor*, on May 27, at the time of the detailed presentation of pay demands. This meeting was also an opportunity for the Federation to stress that it is important for nurses to make headway on the issue of pay relativity.

Then, on May 28, the CPNSSS responded by presenting a counter proposal to the FIIQ indicating that it agreed with the priorities established by nurses: to stabilize regular work teams, to reduce job instability and to reduce work loads. *“As soon as we read these new offers, it was clear that employers were simply trying to recuperate our concerns, while presenting solutions that were contrary to our objectives.”* An article entitled *“A counter proposal”* tells you more about this.

Without delay, the FIIQ convened the media to announce the beginning of pressure tactics. Thus, on June 1, nurses took an “hour of recuperation”, and this on each shift. The next day, the FIIQ Negotiating Committee presented a second counter-proposal. *“The wide mobilization of members and the media coverage of the beginning of pressure tactics exercised by nurses had an effect. Minister Pauline Marois asked employer associations to speed up negotiations and the management party should meet us soon. Our solidarity and our determination must be unwavering and even more visible because the struggle will not be an easy one. But nurses always stood up and will do so once again”*, concluded Chantal Boivin.

During the week of June 6, nurses will, on two occasions, take “one hour of recuperation”, but the date and time of these hours will vary from one region to the other. The Info-Support team that returned to office on May 4 informed local teams of the days when they were scheduled to apply this pressure tactic.

To keep
you informed
A negotiations hotline

The negotiations hotline is now
in operation at the FIIQ.

With a message updated at least once
a week, the Info-Support team will keep you
posted on the most recent
developments and will inform you of
any important events. Dial

1-877-282-9125...

and make sure you pass
the information along!



During the second day of the Federal Council devoted to the issue of negotiations, SINEQ delegates greeted the Negotiating team with the song they composed on a well-known french folk tune *«Le p'tit prince»*. Here are the last two verses, and if you want to give it a try, your local team has the complete version.

Samedi matin, Bouchard, Marois, et ses p'tits princes

Sont venus chez nous avec une offre minable,

Comme on est écoeuré

De s'faire enfirwaper

On est sorti avec fierté

Dimanche matin, Bouchard, Marois, et ses p'tits princes

Sont venus chez nous pour nous en imposer

Étant mobilisées

En solidarité

Nous allons gréver pour la postérité

A counter-proposal

The employer associations' counter proposal presented on April 29 can be summed up in three points:

- more flexibility in managing positions
- more mobility in the movements of personnel
- less restraints in the management of assignments

As you can see, employers would like to manage personnel as they see fit, in each of their institutions ! What would this mean in practice? For example, concerning mobility, employers would like to be able to guarantee a number of months or hours of work per year, but without committing

themselves to where, when and on what shift the nurse would be scheduled to work.

As for the management of assignments, employers want to be able to move nurses to respond to variations in the level of activity, or to avoid having to pay for overtime.

It is clear that such demands do nothing but increase job instability and do not help to have more regular work teams. Yet, this is what employer associations claim to be doing. This is what we call a two-faced employer !



MAJOR issues at stake



The Federation has grouped in six large points the major issues at stake in these negotiations:

- remuneration (salary relativity, 15% pay raise over three years, etc.)
- the work load (posting of vacant positions, creation of float teams, workload measurement tool, etc.)
- union leaves
- annual vacation
- the life, health and salary insurance plan
- accessibility of positions

In addition to these major issues, there are others that are being discussed at the bargaining table, such as violence at work, the availability premium, the confidentiality of the nurse's medical file, automobile expenses, partial leave without pay, the development of human resources, the introduction of an Employee Assistance Programme, etc.

These major issues were presented to delegates by the Vice-president in charge of negotiations, Lina Bonamie. She completed her presentation with these words: *"There is still a lot of work to do and the Negotiating Committee of the FIIQ is working full steam. With good will on both sides of the table, a settlement is still possible by next July. We must keep on course and remain united. The Negotiating Committee needs the support of all the nurses of the Federation. We have begun pressure tactics and we will continue as long as we do not obtain a settlement. Nurses have the right to better working conditions and a better salary, in keeping with the greater and greater responsibilities they have to face. We have to wage a struggle until we win and obtain what we are rightfully entitled to."*

INTERNATIONAL NURSES' DAY under the banner of mobilization



Centre hospitalier Robert-Giffard



C.H.U.M., Campus Saint-Luc



Centre hospitalier des Vallées de l'Outaouais, Pavillon de Hull



CLSC Pierrefonds



C.S. Maria-Chapdeleine



C.H.U.M., Campus Notre-Dame

In Quebec, nurses took advantage of International Nurses' Day to launch pressure tactics in support of their contract demands. They wore jeans and the tee-shirt with the negotiation slogan "Enough is enough! It's time to act!" and they asked beneficiaries and visitors to sign cards in support of their demands. Thousands of cards were signed. Local union teams were very imaginative and organized activities, such as blood pressure clinics or health prevention clinics, lunch conferences, demonstrations and meetings with the local, regional and province-wide media.

This year, nurses throughout Canada took part in a joint action, demonstrating their solidarity. They organized a watch around noontime to express their concern with regard to the deterioration of their working conditions and the impact of this on the quality of health services. Candle in hand, nurses from coast to coast read a united declaration and with the same breath, extinguished the flame of the candles, symbol of the energy which continues to motivate nurses, even after years of cutbacks and upheavals.

On this occasion, the President of the Federation, Jennie Skene, began a round of unions which led her to the regions of the Saguenay, Lac-St-Jean, Abitibi-Témiscamingue, Quebec City and Montreal to meet nurses and discuss the main issues of this bargaining round.



Royal Victoria Hospital, Victoria Pavillon



Centre le Jeannois, Pavillon Hôtel-Dieu d'Alma

The World March of Women



Marche mondiale des femmes
World March of Women
Marcha mundial de las mujeres

The Executive officer in charge of the Status of Women, Mrs. Sylvie Boulanger, gave delegates last minute information concerning the World March of Women of the Year 2000. Mme Boulanger revealed the 12 demands that Quebec women put forward.

In view of eliminating violence, women demand:

- a large educational and awareness-raising campaign over a 10-year period to eliminate violence against women;
- the revision of all existing legislation and the adoption of new laws, and their enforcement, in order to assure women that their fundamental right to equality, safety, dignity and the protection of their private life will be respected;
- access, without delay, to free, adapted and quality support services for all women that are victims of violence, and their children;
- the elimination of discrimination with regard to gay women in laws, regulations, policies and services;

In view of eliminating poverty, women demand:

- the introduction of universal family allowances and an additional allowance for poor women, based on the real needs of children;
- the adoption by the Quebec and Canadian governments of framework legislation aimed at eliminating poverty;

- social housing:
 - investment in the maintenance and development of social housing by the government of Canada ;
 - the setting up by the Quebec government of a large project of social housing, that is 8 000 low-income housing, co-operatives and non-profit-making housing projects per year;
- progressive taxation of companies and individuals based on the principles of justice, equity and the redistribution of wealth;
- social assistance :
 - the amendment of the social assistance legislation to include the principle of a minimal income level, below which there can be no levy, seizure, cuts or fines;
 - that this income level be established in such a way as to cover basic needs (at least: housing, food, medication and clothes) ;
- the improvement of the Quebec system of grants in order to promote access to higher education on a part-time or full-time basis;
- the increase of the minimum wage to 8,50 \$ per hour ;
- that workers in private homes (in particular, workers who deliver care to people and home helpers) be protected by all labour legislation and that the employers be compelled to register;
- the reform of employment insurance in order to modify the conditions of access that are particularly discriminatory against women and the youth, to increase benefits, to extend the period during which benefits are received and to expand parental leave benefits;
- an increase of the amounts allocated as old age pension, spouse's allowance and guaranteed income supplement pension;
- a government contribution to the Quebec Pension Plan in order to acknowledge the work of women when they raise their children;

We will report on the numerous activities or actions planned for winter 2000 in the fall issue of *FIIQ Actualités*. Keep an eye out for an article on this ...

Note : A recommendation concerning "sex" workers (and prostitution) will be debated and adopted in the fall. It will then be included in the platform of Quebec women's demands.

As customary each year, the Treasurer of the Federation, France Bisailon, presented the report of the auditing firm and gave a round-up of the financial situation of the Federation to delegates. The budget deficit was limited and the financial forecast proved to be accurate. Moreover, the Internal Auditing Committee presented a progress report.

The consolidated financial statement presented hereunder gives you a detailed picture of the financial situation of the Federation.

● REVENUE AND EXPENSES FOR THE PERIOD AND BALANCE OF ALL FUNDS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 1998

	Union Defence Fund	Administration Fund	Negotiation Reserve	Solidarity Reserve	F.C. and convention Reserve	Total
BALANCE AS of 31-12-97	1 409 517	1 196 216	265 862	4 809	106 437	2 982 841
Adjustment	0	0	0	0	0	0
Balance after correction as of 31-12-97	1 409 517	1 196 216	265 862	4 809	106 437	2 982 841
Revenue for the 1998 period	460 514	12 131 827	560 721	41 000	1 030 000	14 224 062
Expenses for the 1998 period	122 968	12 443 325	1 834 469	52 080	1 365 488	15 818 330
Excess for the 1998 period	337 546	311 498	(1 273 748)	(11 080)	(335 488)	(1 594 268)
BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 1998	1 747 063	884 718	(1 007 886)	(6 271)	(229 051)	1 388 573

RESERVE FOR CONVENTION & F.C. 1998 1997
..... (12 months) (12 months)

	1998 (12 months)	1997 (12 months)
REVENUE		
Contribution from administration fund	1 030 000	893 500
EXPENSES		
Convention & F.C. meetings	1 365 488	687 280
EXCESS OF EXP./REV.	(335 488)	206 220

SOLIDARITY RESERVE 1998 1997
..... (12 months) (12 months)

	1998 (12 months)	1997 (12 months)
REVENUE		
Administration Fund Contribution	41 000	39 500
EXPENSES		
Solidarity	52 080	39 258
EXCESS OF EXP./REV.	(11 080)	242

UNION DEFENCE FUND 1998 1997
..... (12 months) (12 months)

REVENUE		
Administration Fund Contribution		
Benefits		
Regular dues&interests	140 115	134 529
Interest	39 152	72 233
Union Organizing		
Regular dues	281 247	282 645
TOTAL REVENUE	460 514	489 407
EXPENSES		
Benefits		
Union Defence Fund Committee	1 797	1 324
Salaries and fringe benefits	1 282	13 063
Fines and legal expenses	0	0
Professional fees	804	3 318
Interest and bank charges	0	0
Other expenses	28 280	615 683
Financial aid - strike	0	0
	32 163	633 388
Union Organizing		
Salaries, union leaves & fringe benefits	63 054	452 115
Travelling expenses	14 778	166 802
Rental expenses	747	18 115
Printing expenses	1 179	43 749
Courier and communications	442	85 327
Professional fees	7 135	31 861
Other expenses	3 470	284 509
	90 805	1 082 478
TOTAL EXPENSES	122 968	1 715 866
EXCESS OF EXP./REV.	337 546	(1 226 459)

RESERVE FOR NEGOTIATIONS	1998	1997
..... (12 months)	(12 months)	(12 months)
Correcting entry, Dec.31 1997	0	0
BALANCE, BEGINNING OF PERIOD	265 862	491 657
ADMINISTRATION FUND CONTRIBUTION		
Regular dues	560 462	538 115
Other revenue	259	342
TOTAL CONTRIBUTION	560 721	538 457
PROVINCIAL NEGOTIATIONS		
Salaries and fringe benefits	309 439	13 228
Travelling expenses	147 621	146
Rental expenses	33 510	0
Printing expenses	165 685	40 954
Courier and communications	82 227	33 839
Professional fees	83 452	27 835
special projects	265	15 682
Federal Council meetings	1 025,997	566 723
Other expenses	1 939	193
Private sector negotiations	(15 666)	65 654
TOTAL FOR NEGOTIATION EXPENSES	1 834 469	764 254
EXCESS OF EXPENSES/ REVENUE BEFORE CONTRIB.	(1 273 748)	(225 797)

ADMINISTRATION FUND	1998	1997
..... (12 months)	(12 months)	(12 months)
REVENUE		
Regular Dues	11 959 741	11 578 165
Interest	118 516	123 855
Grants	36 247	33 133
Other revenue	17 322	7 460
Total revenue	12 131 826	11 742 613
EXPENSES		
Meetings and elected union officers	838 472	872 663
Sectors		
Negotiations	140 575	137 365
Labour Relations	5 656 712	4 903 333
Sectors and Services	375 283	409 595
Health-Care	135 386	168 034
Status of Women	164 592	164 054
Health and Safety at Work	182 042	184 168
Task and Organization of Work	224 456	219 886
Social Security	178 681	185 137
Total for the sectors	7 057 727	6 371 572
Services		
Education-Animation	290 910	382 621
Union Organizing	165 424	224 273
Communication-Information	223 372	208 764
Translation	82 036	90 166
TOTAL FOR THE SERVICES	761 742	905 824
Equalization	274 120	206 028
General Administration	2 987 625	2 936 592
Human Resources	523 638	379 603
Total expenses	12 443 324	11 672 282
EXCESS OF EXP./REV.	(311,498)	70,331

BALANCE SHEET AS OF DEC. 31, 1998

	Union defence Fund	Adminis- tration Fund*	Total
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash	751 754	736 788	1 488 542
Temporary placements	769 504	18 674	788 178
Advance of benefits	57 174	0	57 174
Advance to the Administration Fund	157 989	0	157 989
Debtors	10 641	301 605	312 246
Expenses computable on next period and long-term	0	153 392	153 392
	1 747 062	1 210 459	2 957 521
FIXED ASSETS	0	1 098 058	1 098 058
TOTAL ASSETS	1 747 062	2 308 517	4 055 579
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Suppliers and accrued liabilities	0	483 665	483 665
Dev't of human resources	0	137 698	137 698
Debt coming to term within a year	0	59 793	59 793
Accounts payable	0	1 827 863	1 827 863
Advance to the Union defence fund	0	157 989	157 989
TOTAL LIABILITIES	0	2 667 008	2 667 008
LONG-TERM DEBT	0	0	0
	0	2 667 008	2 667 008
MEMBER'S EQUITY			
Accumulated surplus	1 747 063	884 718	2 631 781
Reserve for negotiations	0	(1 007 886)	(1 007 886)
Solidarity reserve	0	(6 271)	(6 271)
Reserve for convention	0	(229 051)	(229 051)
	1 747 063	(358 490)	1 388 573
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	1 747 063	2 308 518	4 055 581

* negotiations, solidarity and Conv.&F.C. meetings.



Representativeness: mission accomplished

It is with a feeling of accomplished mission that the person responsible for meetings, Régine Laurent, and members of the Defi team presented the third and final report on the issue of representativeness in FIIQ decision-making meetings.

After having commended the availability, the open-mindedness and the active participation of delegates and activists of affiliated unions, Régine Laurent pointed out that *“without the active participation of all the groups concerned, it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to have a general understanding of representativeness and representation and to reach a balance in decisional power. Initially, this question could have generated divisions within the organisation; instead it was the object of a constructive search for solutions, over and beyond specific interests.”*

Proposals were presented to delegates to minimize the discrepancy that exists in certain cases between the number of members represented and the decisional

power of the delegates that represent them at the Convention and at the Federal Council. However, they were merely presented, since they will be debated at the Special Convention to be held in November. Thus, the adoption of provisions, in the Constitution and Bylaws, aimed at establishing a better equation between the weight of votes and the number of members that each delegate represents will close the work on the issue of representativeness. However, efforts will have to be deployed to enable delegates to possess, sooner or later, all the instruments required to represent as efficiently and adequately as possible the 47 500 nurses of the Federation.



A show of determination

At lunch time, on the last day of the Federal Council meeting, the 600 delegates marched to a nearby health-care institution, Réseau Santé Richelieu-Yamaska - Pavillon Honoré-Mercier. This march was another warning served by delegates to employers, to tell them that nurses have had enough and that they are determined to obtain a settlement. The slogans which the nurse delegates chanted were a clear expression of this!



« Nous irons jusqu'au bout
Pour montrer qu'ont est à bout ! »

«Avec Marois
Nous «Rochon»
Autant qu'avant ! »

In the fall A Special Convention

As required by virtue of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Federation, delegates adopted the agenda of the Special Convention to be held this coming November. Delegates were also required to present any modifications they wanted to make to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Federation. Thus, in

addition to amendments to the FIIQ Constitution and Bylaws, other items on the agenda of the Convention include the plan of action and the financial forecast for the Year 2000, rules of order for meetings and equalization. We can therefore expect the debates to be interesting and productive.



FIIQ EN ACTION

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