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## Action

Federal Council  
June 21, 1999

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NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE  
MOBILISATION GROWS

**Before the beginning and at the end of this Federal Council meeting, the President of the FIIQ, Jennie Skene, met with the media. Journalists spent the day in the lobby, outside the meeting hall, waiting for the results of the delegates' debates.**

The strength of the mobilization of delegates was apparent all day long; each time it was possible to do so, delegates chanted songs they had composed on the picket lines.

The president of the Federation stressed the extraordinary mobilization of nurses and the solidarity that was tangible on the picket lines during the two days of recuperation held last week. She also highlighted that public support for nurses struggle was impressive.

*"Our mobilisation was fruitful. We can say that significant gains were made in the last bargaining talks. The parties agreed on measures to reduce casualization among nurses and to reduce the work load, two important gains in the light of our priorities. This is why, after a long debate among delegates, we agreed to give negotiations a chance for a few days.*

*However, we will not tolerate turning around in circles or coming to a standstill at the bargaining table.*

*The Negotiating Committee of the Federation has the mandate to call for other days of recuperation or for a general strike and delegates reasserted today, high and loud, their deep commitment to have negotiations progress and to obtain a settlement before the end of June.*

*Nurses deserve to have their working conditions improved as well as to obtain the pay raises they demand. There is still a lot of work to be done this week but we sincerely believe that it is possible to reach a satisfactory*

*settlement quickly. Nurses are reasonable women and they have a high level of tolerance. But when they have had enough, they are prepared to go all the way to reach their objectives. Delegates clearly expressed their intention of calling for other days of recuperation if necessary. They are convened at another Federal Council on June 29 and 30 to take stock of negotiations and we hope to be able to present a tentative agreement then; if not, a general strike will be imminent."*



**In this bargaining round, nurse identified the reduction of the workload and the end of casual employment as priorities. In the past weeks, and more particularly during the week-end of June 19 and 20, these issues were the focus of bargaining talks.**

**The following solutions were proposed.**

*Conversion of hours of replacement into permanent positions*

The conversion of hours of replacement

into positions was an exercise that the parties were invited to do in 1989 and 1995. Though this is an excellent way of obtaining more stable work teams and fighting job casualization, it was often bypassed by employ-

ers. They either simply refused to submit to this exercise or systematically refused to create positions.

This new letter of understanding on which the parties agreed on June 19 and 20 stipulates that all employers have the obligation not only to conduct the exercise, but also to post the positions. Moreover, this exercise for the conversion of hours will have to be repeated every two years in order to put an end to situations such as the one prevailing now, where the network rests in large part on the shoulders of

employees who do not hold positions.

*Settling disputes at the Committee on Nursing*

The current agreement contains measures for settling differences, in particular with regard to work load problems, which can be submitted to the Committee on Nursing. However, the unwieldiness of the procedure and excessive recourse to legal measures made this provisions almost inoperative.

In spring 1998, follow-

ing the overtime ban, the Essential Services Council had introduced a quicker procedure to examine complaints concerning the work load quickly. This procedure provides for a third party, a resource person, to conduct an inquiry and to try to bring the parties closer together. Failing an agreement, this resource person will present a report to an arbitrator who issues a decision.

Remember that employers were staunchly opposed to any modification of the procedure for settling disputes at the Committee on



CLSC Drummond

## Solidarity in action

*Throughout Quebec*

The action of nurses, on June 15 and 17, was proof of their determination to win the battle in this bargaining round for the renewal of their working conditions. Thus, more than 90% of health-care institutions affiliated to the Federation followed the Negotiating Committee's call to action. A mobilization that produced results.



Hôpital Laval



CLSC-CHSLD-CH Pontiac, pavillon CH

### For the week of June 28, 1999

Even before the Federal Council had adjourned, delegates decided to hold another meeting on June 29 and 30. Until then, the Negotiating Committee will negotiate intensively with the government. The delegation thus chose to "give negotiations a chance." The government must take advantage of this opportunity to come to a satisfactory settlement with nurses quickly.

### NEGOTIATIONS HOTLINE

If you want to know the latest news, do not hesitate to call the negotiations hotline :

**1-877-282-9125.**

The message is updated regularly by the Info-Support team. Of course, it is a very busy number, so you will have to be patient.

## A union counter-proposal

**In order to clearly show the determination of FIIQ members to arrive at a global agreement before the end of June, an important counter-proposal was presented on June 15. The content of this counter-proposal as regards salary demands was commented on the following day by Minister Marois.**

The Executive officer in charge of negotiations, Lina Bonamie reminded delegates that the draft collective agreement present on November 6 provides for a catch-up raise effective on July 1, 1998. The objective of this catch-up raise is, firstly to obtain parity between the salary of nurses with a university training and social workers. This demand could mean a salary increase as high as 7,8%.

This repositioning of salary scales also aims at establishing the salary of nurses with a CEGEP degree as being 85% of that of nurses with university training. This demand could mean a salary increase somewhere around 11%, depending on the echelon.

These new salary scales would then be subject to a 2,5% raise on January 1, 1999 and a 3,5% raise on

January 1, 2000. (see the table entitled "repositioning")

As for January 1, 2001, the percentage of raise would not be set immediately, but rather in fall 2000. This rate would be negotiated on the basis of the results of a study conducted jointly by the FIIQ, the Treasury Board and the CPNSSS. This study would compare the work of nurses and Baccalaureate nurses and their respective salaries with other jobs in the health-care and social services sector (pay relativity process) as well as with predominantly-male job categories (pay equity plan).

It is on the strength of these results that the negotiation of salary rates and salary scales for the third year of the work contract would be conducted.

### Repositioning and salary raises

	Current weekly salary	Weekly salary on 01-07-98	Catch-up raise (%)	2,5% raise 01-01-99	3,5% raise 01-01-00
Nurse with university training at the 18th echelon	1 031,31 \$	1 112,15 \$	7,8 %	1 139,95 \$	1 179,85 \$
Nurse with university training at the 15th echelon	955,91 \$	1 001,23 \$	4,7 %	1 026,26 \$	1 062,18 \$
Nurse with CEGEP training at the 12th echelon	844,63 \$	945,40 \$	11,9 %	969,04 \$	1 002,95 \$
Nurse with CEGEP training at the 9th echelon	747,84 \$	830,85 \$	11,1 %	851,62 \$	881,43 \$

### OUR PRIORITIES : A STEP FORWARD ! (cont'd)

Nursing. Employers agreed to maintain this simplified measure in the new agreement. This procedure will undoubtedly make it

possible to resolve a greater number of complaints with regard to work load.

The obligation to post positions after the con-

version of hours of replacement and the simplification of the procedure for settling differences at the Committee on Nursing

will contribute to improve working conditions and the conditions in which nurses practice by reducing job casualization and

by reducing the number of situations of work overloads. These are important gains!