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# en Action

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## A SHARE-OUT AMONG ALL NURSES:

### FOR NURSES WHO WENT ON STRIKE

SPECIAL ISSUE

Since the spring, we have waged an important battle against a government that is stubborn, to say the least. Worse still, this government not only neglected our legitimate demands, but also tried to break our union organisation and to limit its action by repressive measures. In this context, we must demonstrate great solidarity. It is our way of telling the government and employers that, despite repression, we will not give up and we will continue to defend our rights and our working conditions.

We know that nurses expressed the will to share among themselves the penalties imposed by the application of abusive laws. We also know that a good number of institutions were obliged to maintain a high percentage of essential services to guarantee services to the population. Consequently, it is important to distrib-

ute among all nurses, in an equitable manner, the salary loss suffered due to the use of pressure tactics.

Thus, at the Convention, we will propose that nurses be given financial compensation for the hours of strike and the related penalties by way of the special assessment. This means that the majority of the special assessment will be returned directly to nurses who went on strike. Nurses will receive compensation for each hour of strike and each hour of penalty imposed.

By sharing the salary loss and the penalties, all FIIQ nurses will contribute equally to the mobilisation. Thus, regardless of whether nurses were on the picket lines, on essential services, at work or on vacation, they will contribute financially in the same way to the struggle waged for the defence of their rights and the improvement of their living and working conditions.

Jennie Skene,  
President

## TOWARDS ENPOWERMENT

A Special Convention meeting will be held on November 30 and December 1 in St-Hyacinthe. In addition to these two days of convention meeting, there will be an additional day of Federal Council meeting. Convention delegates will be called upon to take a stand on a proposal for a special assessment, aimed at distributing financial

losses suffered during the strike, and on amendments to the FIIQ Constitution and Bylaws.

Then, at the Federal Council meeting, delegates will vote on a plan of action for the year 2000 and on the related financial forecast. In a context where it is more and more difficult for nurses to defend and negotiate their work-

ing conditions, without being subject to repression on the part of the employer-legislator, the Executive Committee proposes actions that are designed to develop even greater cohesion and solidarity within the organisation. Thus, the actions proposed are designed above all to support local union life, to support the negotiation of our

collective agreement, to preserve cohesion within the Federation and to stabilise the financial situation. In view of this, the Executive Committee hopes that the *Plan of Action 2000* will make it possible to strengthen our organisation and to preserve our collective tools: the unions and the Federation.

## A SPECIAL ASSESSMENT:

### WHAT FOR? WHO FOR?



A special assessment? Yes, because all nurses decided to share the financial costs of the battle they waged this summer. This show of solidarity will undoubtedly enable us to end the struggle with the government for better working conditions and the recognition of the nursing profession at its true value.

Thus, the special assessment will be used, as delegates at the August Federal Council meeting had decided, not only to share the double salary penalty (application of Bill 160) but also to replenish the Negotiation Reserve fund, and to reimburse the Union Defence Fund and the loans totalling 2 million dollars (to compensate for the lack of cash flow).

In addition, since this vast operation to reimburse penalties will incur additional expenses for unions, such as the issuing of cheques to nurses, the Executive Committee proposes that a sum of money be paid to affiliated unions to compensate for these expenses.

Moreover, once the compilation of all the information was completed, the Executive Committee evaluated that it would be fairer if nurses, who took an active part in the battle by going out on strike, did not suffer the salary losses individually. Thus, the Executive Committee proposes that the special assessment also serve to compensate nurses for the number of hours of strike they waged following the decision of the negotiation bodies. This new proposal will be debated at the Convention meeting.

Lastly, as you will see in another article, the main part of the special assessment will be used to compensate nurses for the financial losses they suffered in the struggle they waged to defend their rights and to improve their working conditions.



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## A SPECIAL ASSESSMENT... WITH NUMBERS

The compilation of the information received from local teams or unions produced the following results:

Gross amount of the penalties:	_____	11 388 656 \$
Gross amount of salary losses:	_____	11 388 656 \$
No. of hours of strike:	_____	507 785 h

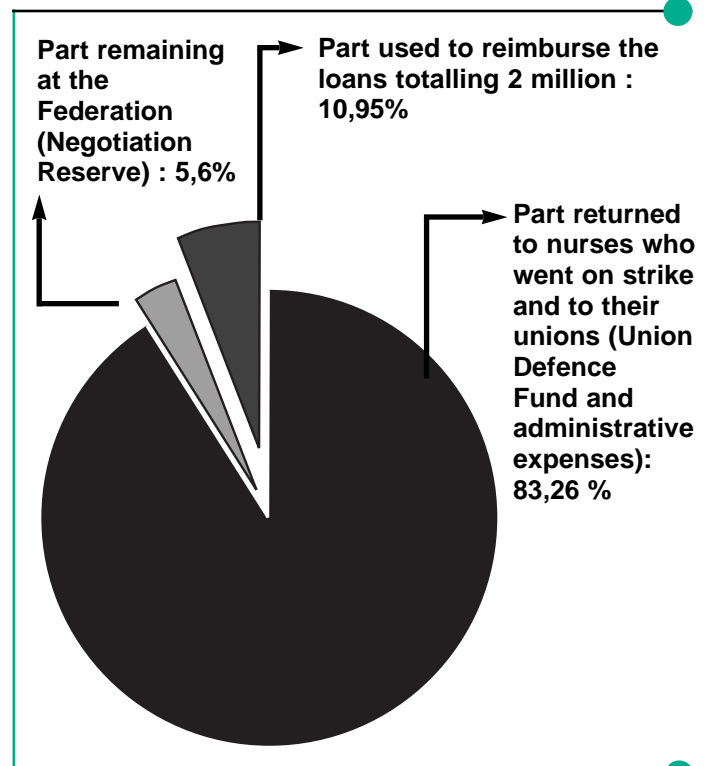
Since the Income Tax Act allows for a compensation in the form of a set and equal amount to be considered as a strike benefit, it was established that the benefit given to nurses would be based on an hourly rate of 13\$. Moreover, as we mentioned previously, in institutions where nurses were on strike, an amount of 1,50\$ per nurse will be granted to unions as a compensation for the expenses incurred to issue the cheques.

Thus, the amount of the special assessment was calculated on the basis of these figures.

Benefit for the double penalty (13\$/hr):	_____	6 601 207 \$
Benefit for the salary losses (13\$/hr):	_____	6 601 207 \$
Replenishing of the Negotiation Reserve :	_____	1 055 850 \$
Reimbursement of the Union Defence Fund:	_____	1 944 150 \$
Reimbursement of the loans:	_____	2 000 000 \$
Compensation to unions:	_____	55 000 \$
<b>Total :</b>	.....	<b>18 257 414 \$</b>

IF THE CONVENTION AGREES TO COMPENSATE THE HOURS OF STRIKE IN ADDITION TO THE DOUBLE PENALTY, THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF THE SPECIAL ASSESSMENT WOULD BE **433,67\$**.

When we examine the various items used to calculate the special assessment, it is apparent that more than 80 % of the amount is returned to nurses who suffered financial losses and to the unions who must receive an amount, as stipulated in the Union Defence Fund Bylaws, equal to 5\$ per day of strike per dues-paying member.



By sharing out their penalties amongst themselves, nurses will give an even greater show of solidarity. If the government thought that, by passing repressive laws, it could reduce nurses to powerlessness and inaction, it was wrong... Through solidarity, nurses will be able to regain full control of their collective power.