



Federal Council
 May 25, 26, 27 and 28, 2004
 and Special Convention
 May 27, 2004

POSTE-PUBLICATION
 Convention 40007983

(adresse de retour)
 FIIQ-QUÉBEC 1260 boul. Lebourgneuf
 Bureau 300, Québec, QC G2K 2G2

VOLUME 17 NUMBER 4 JUNE 2004

IN A SPIRIT OF OPENNESS



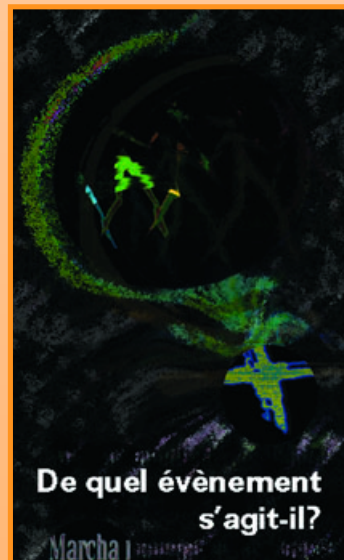
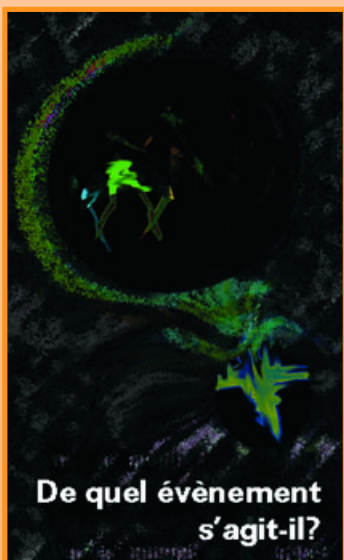
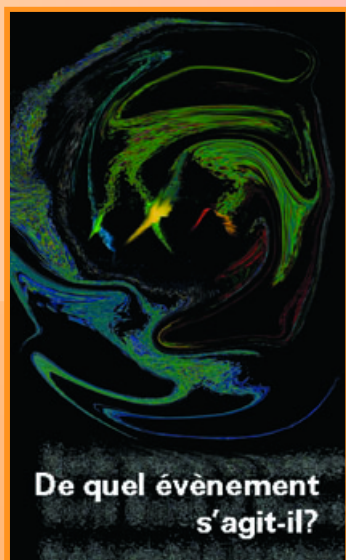
After welcoming the delegates, Jennie Skene, President of the FIIQ, presented an overview of the issues that would be discussed during the week. She specified from the outset that this Federal Council would be held in a spirit of openness because the President of the Association professionnelle des inhalothérapeutes du Québec (APIQ) and the Alliance professionnelle des infirmières et infirmiers auxiliaires du Québec (APIAQ) would be present throughout the four days of proceedings. *"Our openness cannot be limited to fine words. It must be rooted in the Constitution and By-laws not only of the FIIQ, but of its member unions. This week we will prepare to welcome new members by ensuring that they can participate fully in the development of our organization. Enriched by these new partners, the FIIQ will become the only real force capable of representing health professionals."*

The President reminded delegates that, within the context of the provincial negotiations, the major issue of classification of nursing jobs had already been the focus of presentations at previous Federal Councils. *"Today we have reached a turning point, the unveiling of a career path model and the associated job titles. In a context of staff shortages, defections and loss of motivation, members will certainly look positively on the introduction of such a professional practice model, which will ensure the development of their full potential. This is the last milestone leading to the tabling of our full demands for the renewal of our collective agreement. Bill 90 creates a new environment for nursing practice and we intend to exploit it to the maximum. In this sense, gateways will be proposed to allow nurses to advance on clinical and clinico-administrative paths. Nurses will be able to qualify for certain job titles based on the recognition of equivalencies related to knowledge, savvy and know-how. The classification issue paves the way for change. As you can see, the career path model we are proposing to nurses is a stimulating project that is meant to correct major problems encountered by nurses in their work environment."*

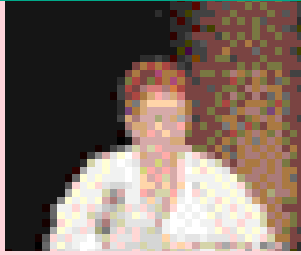
Jennie Skene told delegates that finances would also be discussed at this Federal Council meeting. *"As we had announced when the budget estimates were adopted, the 2003 fiscal year posted a deficit. However, various measures have been put in place to correct the situation. The increase in FIIQ union dues in force since last January was more than necessary, as we maintained, to allow us to support the growth of activities in several sectors of the FIIQ."*

In another vein, the President reiterated the FIIQ's opposition to the Charest government's neoliberal approach. Several issues related to our resistance to government reengineering were on the agenda: the minutes of the interunion work and the lawsuits to contest Bills 25 and 30, adopted in haste last December, and the follow-up on the local networks, the FIIQ's response to government disengagement, and Lorraine Guay's lecture on the theme *"Women and Re-engineering."* *"These are all questions on which the FIIQ will continue to make its voice heard,"* Jennie Skene affirmed. The President also announced that the delegates would receive a progress report on pay equity and would hear about the forum on the emerging union and social activists that will be held next September.

"In a context in which neoliberal forces are prevailing over human rights and needs, the government wants to make us believe that market mechanisms are the answer to the problems confronting Quebecers. It is false to think that the market can create equality. On the contrary, it sounds its death knell. It is important to remember that despite our standard of living, many people live under the poverty line even in this country. We must not allow an invasion of the law of the market, an insidious ideology that severs social bonds. In conclusion, she added, let me invite you to make the people around you aware of what is happening, the current transformations of society and, above all, the need for citizen participation."



First wave of vote IN SEPTEMBER



The Union Organization Service team reported to delegates on the follow-up of the work regarding the merger of the union bargaining units made compulsory by Bill 30. This team is composed of Michèle Boisclair, 3rd Vice-President in charge of Union Organizing, and Simon Barrette, Hélène Barry and Pierre Desnoyers, consultants. A report of the current discussions with the *Association professionnelle des inhalothérapeutes du Québec (APIQ)*, the *Fédération des infirmières et infirmiers auxiliaires du Québec (FIIAQ)* and the *Alliance professionnelle des infirmières et infirmiers auxiliaires du Québec (APIIAQ)* was presented. To date, several meetings have been held with the representatives of these three union organizations. An impact study is being produced to evaluate the path of affiliation both for respiratory therapists and for nursing assistants. Moreover, the treasurers of each organization have met to evaluate the costs and consider the necessary transitional measures if affiliation becomes a reality.

Now that the first Order-in-Council merging certain bargaining units is in force, and in the event that the motion for a stay is dismissed, a first wave of votes will be held in September. Remember that this legal remedy is meant to stay the application of Bill 30 as long as its constitutionality has not been established. The second wave could occur in late fall, because another Order-in-Council should be adopted by mid-June. The third Order-in-Council could be adopted around the holiday period or no later than the beginning of 2005, resulting in the third and undoubtedly the final wave of votes.

At present, the health and social services network includes about 350 employers. By the end of the operation, only 205 employers will remain, deployed over more than 350 sites throughout Quebec. The Service's mandate is therefore to maintain the FIIQ's presence wherever it already represents nurses and introduce the FIIQ wherever the presence of the APIQ, the FIIAQ or the APIIAQ will allow it to participate in the vote.

Throughout the month of May, executive committee members travelled to all regions of Quebec meeting members and union representatives. Executive Committee members also met with respiratory therapists and nursing assistants whenever possible.

Regarding preparation for change, Lucille Auger, consultant with the Education-Animation Service, gave a progress report to delegates on the actions taken to date to deal with the anticipated mergers of bargaining units. Up to now, five training sessions have been given to the consultants, union reps and members of the local executives affected by the votes. The next sessions will be intended for the union reps of the institutions affected by the second wave of votes. These sessions, designed to inform and equip union reps, were greatly appreciated.

A SPECIAL CONVENTION

PREPARING TO WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Lasting half a day, the Special Convention allowed delegates to debate amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws within a context in which the FIIQ will soon be called upon to represent not only nurses, but also nursing assistants, respiratory therapists and others. The motions presented were designed to change the wording of the mission of the Federation and make adjustments to the composition of the various decision-making bodies, such as the Executive Committee, the Federal Council and the Convention. The resolutions moved by Executive Committee were adopted by more than a two-thirds majority. Those that sought to increase the number of delegates to the decision-making bodies, to account for the number of sites under the same employer, were postponed until the networks are defined and the picture becomes clearer. In addition, after the delegates agreed to change the composition of the Executive Committee, specifying that the number of vice-presidents would increase from four to five – one nurse vice-president, one nursing assistant vice-president, one respiratory therapist vice-president and two other vice-presidents, they adopted a transitional measure worded as follows:

As federations or associations of employees affiliate that include professionals from the category of nursing care and cardiorespiratory personnel, and for the entire transition period leading up to the June 2005 Convention, the composition of the FIIQ Executive Committee is amended to add (1) one vice-president coming from a federation or association of employees composed either of nursing assistants or respiratory therapists, newly affiliated to the FIIQ for a maximum of three (3) new vice-presidents.

These new vice-presidential positions will be filled by persons designated by their respective provincial union organizations.

The President of the FIIQ, Jennie Skene, then invited delegates to continue the same discussion on the constitution and bylaws of their respective unions to allow the inclusion of new members who will join our ranks.

On this picture, the members of the Executive Committee, from left to right: Jennie Skene, President, Sylvie Savard, Associate Secretary-Treasurer, Lise Martel, Treasurer, Daniel Gilbert, 2nd Vice-President, Lina Bonamie, 4th Vice-President, and Michèle Boisclair, 3rd Vice-President.





The FIIQ Treasurer, Lise Martel, presented the 2003 financial statement to delegates. *"The June 2003 decision to increase FIIQ dues as of 2004 was more than ever necessary and the 2003 balance sheet attests to this,"* she declared. As anticipated when the financial forecast was adopted last year, the FIIQ is faced with a deficit. However, it is bigger than projected.

Several factors known to the delegates explain the overruns: the payments related to pay equity for FIIQ staff, payment of the new equalization payment to the unions, the costs involved in our resistance to the anti-labour and anti-social legislation adopted last December, the extension of the pay equity issue for nurses, and other issues. The FIIQ is also faced with a staggering and worrying increase in the costs of medical opinions. This increase will be examined closely, Lise Martel assured the delegates.

"There is also good news," she announced. *"The new dues in force since January 2004 will replenish the general administration fund."* All in all, despite the deficit, the FIIQ remains in good financial health, thanks to the economizing efforts of the past few years and the deferment of certain internal job postings. *"Once again, we will have the means to meet our obligations and offer quality services to our members and to those who join our ranks, while continuing to base our public positions on solid, well-documented research,"* the Treasurer concluded.

All in all, the FIIQ is in good financial health

ADMINISTRATION FUND	2 003 (12 months)	2 002 (12 months)
REVENUE		
Regular Dues	13 709 800	13 625 798
Interest	133 001	141 605
Grants	40 582	43 412
Other revenue	2 321	5 543
Total revenue	13 885 704	13 816 358
EXPENSES		
Meetings and elected union officers Sectors	1 289 164	862 346
Negotiations	0	0
Labour Relations	7 565 501	6 914 842
Sectors and Services	636 096	561 975
Health-Care	229 184	165 668
Status of Women	165 179	138 652
Occ. Health and Safety	168 026	120 946
Task and Organization of Work	132 931	68 471
Social Security	<u>166 596</u>	<u>174 221</u>
Total for the sectors	9 063 513	8 144 775
Services		
Education-Animation	465 141	347 498
Union Organizing	310 160	259 052
Communication-Information	257 624	260 605
Translation	<u>116 498</u>	<u>91 590</u>
Total for the services	1 149 423	958 745
Equalization	394 737	221 274
General Administration	3 350 246	3 110 872
Human Resources	<u>647 072</u>	<u>849 144</u>
Total expenses	15 894 155	14 147 156
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	<u>(2 008 451)</u>	<u>(330 798)</u>

RESERVE FOR NEGOTIATIONS	2 003 (12 months)	2 002 (12 months)
Correcting entry Dec. 31, 2002	0	0
BALANCE, BEGINNING OF PERIOD	1 048 907	778 643
ADMINISTRATION FUND CONTRIBUTION		
Regular dues	1 228 203	1 221 235
Special assessment	0	0
Other revenue	27	35
Total contribution	1 228 230	1 221 270
PROVINCIAL NEGOTIATIONS		
Salaries and fringe benefits	714 053	342 846
Travelling expenses	386 233	182 911
Rental expenses	65 266	9 549
Printing expenses	78 162	26 349
Courier and communication	20 674	6 925
Professional fees	53 479	35 140
Publications	34 036	15 780
Special projects	23 554	8 031
Federal Council meetings	358 512	280 791
Other expenses	17 324	12 843
Private sector negotiations	<u>11 660</u>	<u>29 842</u>
Total for negotiation expenses	1 762 953	951 007
EXCESS OF REVENUE/ EXPENSES BEFORE CONTRIBUTION	<u>(534 723)</u>	<u>270 263</u>

REVENUE AND EXPENSES FOR THE PERIOD AND BALANCE OF ALL FUNDS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2002

	Union Defence Fund	Admi.- Fund	Negotiation Reserve	Solidarity Reserve	F.C. and Convention Reserve	Total
BALANCE						
As of 31-12-02	894 272	2 484 993	1 048 907	642	186 703	4 615 517
Adjustment	0	0	0	0	0	0
Balance after correction as of 31-12-02	894 272	2 484 993	1 048 907	642	186 703	4 615 517
Revenue for the 2003 period	537 388	13 885 704	1 228 230	83 664	863 091	16 598 077
Expenses for the 2003 period	<u>496 372</u>	<u>15 894 156</u>	<u>1 762 952</u>	<u>68 606</u>	<u>940 957</u>	<u>19 163 043</u>
Excess for the 2003 period	41 016	(2 008 452)	(534 722)	15 058	(77 866)	(2 564 966)
BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2003	935 288	476 541	514 185	15 700	108 837	2 050 551

Note: Difference is due to rounding off of decimals

IN SOLIDARITY, DUES WERE COLLECTED

A report on the progress of the collection of union dues was presented by the Treasurer Lise Martel, who insisted on the obligation set out in the Labour Code to pay union dues. Regarding this, news are encouraging: almost all nurses who had forgotten or neglected to pay their dues, whether the regular dues or special assessment, have now done so. As you may remember, the special assessment had been levied in a spirit of solidarity in view of sharing among all members the financial costs shouldered by the nurses who were on strike in 1999. As the President stated in the November 1999 issue of the *FIIQ en Action* "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." And we can now say: "mission accomplished." Congratulations to the nurses, local teams, unions and employees of the FIIQ who, each in their own way, helped to make solidarity a reality.

BALANCE SHEET AS OF DEC. 31, 2003

	Union Defence Fund	Adminis- tration - Fund*	Total
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash	183 861	0	183 861
Temporary investments	800 503	3 575 878	4 376 381
Advance of benefits	3 853	0	3 853
Advance to Union Defence Fund	0	69 430	69 430
Debtors	7 116	867 658	874 774
Expenses computable on next period and long-term	0	179 114	179 114
	<u>995 333</u>	<u>4 692 080</u>	<u>5 687 413</u>
FIXED ASSETS	<u>0</u>	<u>777 620</u>	<u>777 620</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	995 333	5 469 700	6 465 033
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Suppliers and accrued liabilities	0	831 949	831 949
Deferred income	0	9 569	9 569
Dev't of human resources	0	67 731	67 731
Advance to the Administration Fund	59 944	0	59 944
Debt coming to term within a year	0	0	0
Accounts payable	104	3 445 189	3 445 293
TOTAL LIABILITIES	60 048	4 354 438	4 414 486
LONG-TERM DEBT	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	60 048	4 354 438	4 414 486
MEMBER'S EQUITY			
Accumulated surplus	935 285	476 540	1 411 825
Reserve for negotiation	0	514 185	514 185
Solidarity reserve	0	15 700	15 700
Reserve for convention	0	108 836	108 836
	<u>935 285</u>	<u>1 115 261</u>	<u>2 050 546</u>
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	995 333	5 469 699	6 465 032

* negotiations, solidarity and Convention & Federal Council meetings.

UNION DEFENCE FUND	2 003 (12months)	2 002 (12months)
REVENUE		
Administration Fund Contribution		
Benefits		
Regular dues	163 994	162 831
Donations	0	590
Interest	<u>14 088</u>	<u>14 227</u>
Union Organizing		
Regular dues	359 306	325 663
Interest		519
Special projects		
Other revenue - Distribution of penalties	0	0
Total income	537 388	503 830
EXPENSES		
Benefits		
Union Defence Fund Committee	(217)	1 507
Salaries and fringe benefits	0	164
Fines and legal expenses	0	0
Professional fees	12 156	27 157
Interest and bank charges	18	18
Other expenses	37 193	40 856
Financial aid - strike	<u>1 971</u>	<u>34 745</u>
	51 121	104 447
Union Organizing		
Salaries, union leaves	288 039	201 357
Travelling expenses	6 687	6 670
Rental expenses	1 038	2 752
Printing expenses	4 894	4 003
Courier and communications	10 639	13 307
Professional fees	119 273	200 291
Other expenses	<u>14 682</u>	<u>76</u>
	445 252	428 456
Special projects		
Salaries and fringe benefits	0	0
Travelling expenses	0	0
Financial aid - strike	0	0
Other expenses	0	0
	0	0
Total expenses	496 373	532 903
EXCESS OF EXPENSES OVER REVENUE	41 015	(29 073)

SOLIDARITY RESERVE	2 003 (12months)	2 002 (12months)
REVENUE		
Administration Fund Contribution	83 664	84 512
EXPENSES		
Solidarity	<u>68 606</u>	<u>80 761</u>
EXCESS OF REVENUE/EXPENSES	15 058	3 751

RESERVE FOR CONVENTION	2 003 (12months)	2 002 (12months)
REVENUE		
Contribution from administration fund	863 091	863 091
EXPENSES		
Convention & F.C. meeting	<u>940 957</u>	<u>968 538</u>
EXCESS OF EXPENSES/REVENUE	(77 866)	(105 447)

Report of the internal audit committee

As is the tradition each year at this period, the Internal Audit Committee presented its report to the delegation. The Committee concluded that the Executive Committee faithfully complied with the decisions made by union bodies. The Committee also shares the concerns raised by the FIIQ Treasurer regarding the increase in the cost of medical opinions. Remember that the Treasurer told the delegates that the Executive Committee would discuss this question soon.



THEIR PRIORITY IS

HEALTH CARE to cut in

Lise Martel, along with the consultants for the Health-Care Sector, Lucie Mercier and Florence Thomas, denounced the principles and allegations contained in the documents *Shine Among the Best* and *Modernizing the State* produced by the Government.

Shine Among the Best is the Government's general action plan, addressed to Quebecers, which seeks to gain public support for neoliberal values such as the primacy of individual freedom, empowerment of individuals and valuing the entrepreneurial spirit. Very few traces can be found in this document of the core values of our society, such as democracy, equality and solidarity. The FIIQ has reacted strongly, denouncing this action plan in a manifesto entitled "*FIIQ position on the Charest government's action plan*", which you can read in *FIIQ Actualités* and on the FIIQ Web site.

Erroneous basic postulates

In the *Shine Among the Best* action plan, which they try to pass off as a consultation document, the Liberals conclude that one of the Government's action priorities should be to modernize the State. In a second document entitled *Modernizing the State: promoting quality services to the population*, the Government claims that it is caught in a budget trap and that the emerging population changes are causing a major problem. Denouncing the abuse of statistical projections, the FIIQ deplors that the Government is using this alibi to justify its political and economic decisions. As for the pseudo-bankruptcy of public finances, it is appropriate to remember that while Quebecers pay more taxes, they have access to more public services and their purchasing power has even increased since 1992. It should also be noted that, according to Statistics Canada, Quebec is the North American region with the smallest inequalities of income.

The Charest Government therefore is proposing to rethink the ways things are done and refocus the State on its essential missions. It is also tending to virtualize itself by implementing Government Online (Internet) and withdrawing as much as possible from the public network, by subcontracting and public-private partnerships (PPP). These measures represent the implementation of trade agreements from which private enterprise will emerge the winner, to the detriment of citizens. In this review of the role of the State, health care remains the inevitable target of the Charest reengineering.

Suppression of free speech...

The Government also organized regional forums which it claimed would enrich the government reengineering approach, by listening to the Quebec population. According to the Government, this approach was already strongly supported by the public, when according to the latest polls, 72% of Quebecers are dissatisfied with the present Government. These forums, held between May and September, are essentially public relations exercises in which participants have only 30 seconds each to express their views. Refusing to sanction this procedure, the FIIQ has decided not to participate in these so-called consultations.

Finally, as the Executive officer with interim responsibility for the Health-Care Sector, Lise Martel is pleased at the impact the FIIQ is having on the government reengineering issue, particularly through the dissemination of its work on public procurement.

For human beings today, what is most important, is not to learn to survive, to be the best, the most competitive, but rather to learn to live together. This is the meaning of the right to dream.

(Riccardo PETRELLA,
Désir d'humanité.
Le droit de rêver.
Écosociété, 2004.
our translation)

Women and re-engineering : A GUARANTEED DIVORCE!

Lorraine Guay agreed to write a summary of her presentation to Federal Council delegates. Here it is.

The coming to power of conservative governments is always very bad news for women. Since the coming to power of the conservative Liberal government headed by Mr. Jean Charest there are a growing number of facts that send a very clear message to Quebec women: no mention in the inaugural speech of the nomination of a minister responsible for the status of women; rapid bringing into

question of the two organizations responsible for the defence and promotion of women's rights (*the Conseil du statut de la femme and the Secrétariat à la condition féminine*); the increase in fees for daycare services; the negation of the right to organize for workers in foster homes, who offer home childcare services or intermediary or family-type services; abolition of the status of employee for thousands of workers, against a ruling of the Labour Court, with the result that they are not covered by minimum labour standards; an act that facilitates sub-contracting thus contributing to the rise of atypical, flexible, part-time, casual jobs, for which salaries are always lower and which are held by an overwhelming majority of women; the quasi-absence of women in the document *Shine among the best*, a document which serves as the basis for the debate on demography and the dropping birth rate, matters which concern women to the highest degree, and the list could continue...

All these bad news that are piling up and which have a name — re-engineering — are deeply rooted in the neoliberal and patriarchal concepts upheld by this government, despite the presence of 30% of women parliamentarians. These concepts aim at questioning the role of Government and limiting its jurisdiction to a few supposedly essential missions. Yet, any roll-back of the State in its major roles as guardian of the commons and in the redistribution of wealth has a direct impact on women: they are invariably re-directed to the home and reassigned to their traditional role. When a society is no longer collectively responsible for its children, and vulnerable and dependent individuals, women always feel the burden. Who will leave a job to take care of an elderly parent in loss of autonomy? Who will take responsibility for children when childcare facilities are lacking or are too expensive for families to be able to afford them? Who will continue to uphold zero tolerance on the matter of violence towards women? Neoliberalism is incapable of including the equality of women in the economy because our economy rests on gender-based inequalities, on the maintenance of the salary gap between men and women, and on the free labour of women in the home. When a government does not resolutely address these questions, then women pay the price...

Re-engineering, of which we are just beginning to see the first consequences, is a dangerous concept. It attacks social gains and enters our minds, which become occupied territories, under the control of these right-wing ideas. It is important to unveil this strategem, shed light on the underlying objectives, reveal the consequences it will have, in particular on women, and to undertake the long and patient work which consists of proposing alternatives.

Countering the perverse effects of Bill 30...

The adoption of Bill 30 last December has profoundly altered the collective bargaining system in the health and social services sector. Previously negotiated at the Quebec level, 26 matters, including the conditions for granting positions and questions relating to the organization of work, would not be decentralized to the local level. This decentralization will require a lot of energy on the part of the local teams called upon to negotiate these matters, especially since Bill 30 stipulates that these negotiations will begin with the certification of the new union and may not last more than two years. The energy that will be invested in these local negotiations will certainly be greater than those deployed in negotiating the local arrangements previously provided for in the collective agreement.

The FIIQ maintains that the union leave credits prescribed in the different collective agreements must remain in force until the first local negotiations are concluded. However, the collective agreements mention nothing about the possibility of obtaining leave for local negotiations. It is therefore essential to define the Union demands immediately and discuss an amendment to the existing collective agreements with the *Comité patronal de négociation du secteur de la santé et des services sociaux (CPNSSS)*, so that union leaves be allotted specifically for the local negotiations. This is why delegates mandated the FIIQ Executive Committee to negotiate the following clause:

“ That the employer grant a union leave without loss of salary to five full-time employees from the date of the certification of the union until the coming into effect of the first local collective agreement.”

PAY EQUITY talks to resume soon

You will recall that last February the Quebec government called on the *Intersyndicale équité* to discuss how to resume discussions, following the decision by Judge Carole Julien, who invalidated Chapter IX of the Pay Equity Act. Now that it was subject to the Pay Equity Act in its entirety, the Government wanted to ensure the compliance of the work performed to date by the *Intersyndicale's* member organizations: the CSN, CSQ, FIIQ, FTQ and SFPQ. This work focused particularly on identifying the job classes and their predominance, training the members of the Equity Committee, developing the evaluation system and the survey questionnaire, sampling, the investigation process and, finally, the job evaluation process.

As had been explained to Federal Council delegates at the end of February, the FIIQ considers that the work performed is in accordance with the spirit of the law. However, some points have to be polished to reflect the letter of the law. For example, the first posting of the program has not been done. The possibility of proceeding with such posting in all institutions is thus not excluded.

The SFPQ has chosen to withdraw from the *Intersyndicale*, believing that the job categories of its members would be evaluated better in another framework.

The four organizations that now compose the *Intersyndicale équité* met with *Conseil du trésor* representatives in May to inform them of their intention to continue the process. A meeting is scheduled for the beginning of June to pursue the discussions between the Government and the *Intersyndicale* and to establish a framework. FIIQ representatives strongly hope that the resumption of the discussions will achieve progress on this issue, which is important for nurses and for all Quebec women.



HEALTH-SECTOR credit unions

The epitome of the cooperative movement, the Mouvement Desjardins recently launched health-sector credit unions. This credit union is seeking to set up business in the various work environments where nurses are present and already has 25,000 members. Several financial services will be offered. We should remember that a workers' credit union was the only financial institution that agreed to advance funds to us during the last strike in 1999. Check whether such a credit union already exists or is the planning in your institution.

A beacon of resistance, sounding the alarm



The last Federal Council was the opportunity for FIIQ Executive officer Lise Martel to present a progress report on the actions of the *Réseau de Vigilance*. As explained in the last *FIIQ en Action*, a solidarity network has developed bringing together over 50 groups in every field (unions, community organizations, social issues coalitions) and has continued to gain strength over the past 7 months, since the resumption of the Liberal Government's parliamentary activities.

The *Réseau de Vigilance* enables the FIIQ to convert the priority actions adopted for 2004 into reality, particularly by facilitating mobilization at the local, regional and national levels. Many nurses have gotten involved in the *Réseau de Vigilance* to fight the Charest Government's reengineering. Thus, 16 respondents are intervening in 13 Quebec regions and over 244 respondents are ensuring local follow-up. Martine Éloy, FIIQ consultant, ensures that the information flows permanently in both directions to reach as many nurses as possible.

Among the activities in which the *Réseau* has participated, there is International Women's Day (March 8), "the first anniversary" of the Liberals' coming to power (April 14) and, of course, the Mayday demonstration.

The report on the *Réseau's* activities also led to a reflection on the need for mobilization, and the difficulties encountered in these times when our social achievements are in jeopardy. If you are interested in becoming a respondent, contact your local team. For more information on the *Réseau de Vigilance*, visit www.vigilance.cam.org or use the direct link on the FIIQ Web site at www.fiiq.qc.ca.

EMERGING YOUNG ACTIVISTS



Isabelle Pouliot, a nurse at the CHUQ and a member of the Youth Committee, informed the delegates about a Forum to be held at UQAM on September 24, 25 and 26 on emerging social and union activists. The Forum's coordinating committee brings together union organization, student and youth associations, and alterglobalist, political, union and non-union, community and cooperative groups. As a member of the coordinating committee for this unique and stimulating event explained the main objectives of this meeting to the delegates.

"The Forum is meant to be a breathing space to allow young Quebecers to continue the dialogue begun in 2001 at the Quebec Summit. Our objective is to develop a better understanding among young people of the challenges that society will have to face and on which they should focus their demands. The discussions proposed at the Forum will deal with how to improve collective action and activism. The main themes will be: neoliberal globalization and its effects on our lives; the consequences of the reengineering; population shock in Quebec; the history of social achievements; prejudices against the labour movement and their deconstruction; and finally, obstacles to activism and their possible solutions. This Forum should bring together 500 young people from different backgrounds and horizons, from all over Quebec. Each partner is responsible for promoting the Forum to its members. The organizers are aware that the labour movement will have a turbulent autumn, but urge the organizations not to forget the next wave," Isabelle Pouliot concluded.

You are interested?

For more information, a hyperlink will be available soon on the FIIQ Web site. Periodic reports will also be presented at future Federal Councils.

Goodbye Regional Boards, Hello Agencies

Bill 25, which we strongly opposed, is now a fait accompli, because the *Act respecting local health and social services network development agencies* has been in force since January 30, 2004. With this Act, we have seen the abolition of the regional boards and the creation of regional agencies in 18 Quebec regions. These new entities were mandated to deposit the local network scenarios chosen for their respective regions with Minister Couillard, no later than April 30. A local network is a local body (forced merger of one or more CLSC, one or more CHSLD and a hospital, or CH) responsible for coordinating the different services which its population needs (pharmacies, community organizations, private resources ...). These agencies were required to consult the public and some have done so. The FIIQ participated by tabling memoranda which can be found in their entirety on the FIIQ Web site at www.fiiq.qc.ca. The *Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux* is currently analyzing the tabled scenarios. Final approval by the Minister and the Cabinet should be known in June. The local networks will be established in several phases and the process should be completed by April 2005.

Stay tuned...

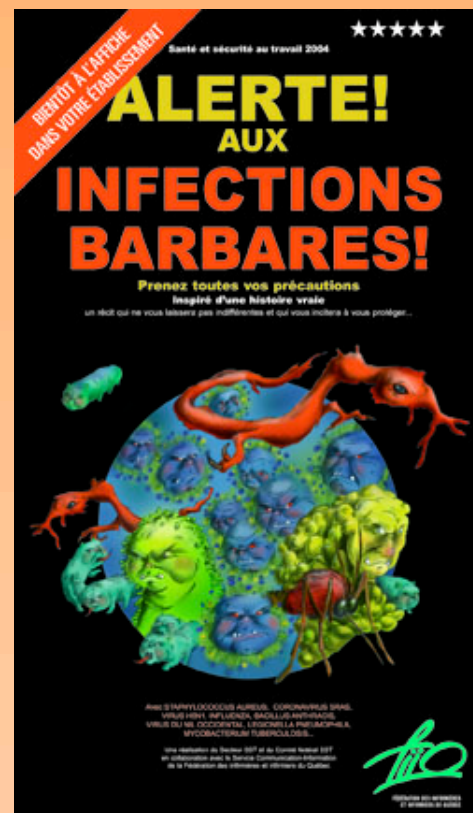


Union tribute

On behalf of the entire FIIQ Executive Committee, Jennie Skene paid tribute to the important contribution of Aline Michaud, who has worked for the FIIQ for over 25 years, as a union consultant responsible for various issues, especially social security. Aline Michaud will retire in a few weeks. The team of *FIIQ en Action* joins all FIIQ employees to wish Aline good luck in her many projects and in her new life.

Developing our union strength

Once again, the contents of this *FIIQ en Action* show how the laws adopted in controversy last December are changing and, in the year ahead, will continue to transform the Quebec labour scene. The forced merger of bargaining units by category means that tomorrow, nurses, nursing assistants, respiratory therapists, child nurses, perfusionists and extra-corporal circulation technicians working for the same employer will be part of the same union. Some union organizations are bound to disappear, others, like the FIIQ, will transform themselves and represent thousands of these new members, while still others are likely to see their membership decline. This is the context in which the FIIQ is currently meeting with representatives of the labour organizations that will probably join our ranks in the coming year. Anticipating changes on the labour scene and the new forces at play, FIIQ representatives are also discussing with other partners the possibility of creating a central labour organization in the field of health-care, which could be envisaged when the dust of the current upheavals has settled. These are two independent approaches, which both reflect a will to show the Government that tomorrow it may be facing an even stronger nursing labour force, acting in solidarity with other health professionals and technicians.



An attention-grabbing poster in line with the danger of health and safety hazards in health-care institutions. This poster and the accompanying pamphlet, designed by the FIIQ Health and Safety Committee, will be distributed in all institutions where FIIQ nurses work. It draws attention to the importance of taking full precautions to protect yourselves against the infectious diseases that are emerging, resurgent or have become resistant to antibiotics. An information tool will follow in the fall.

A VISIT by new partners



From left to right, Monique Leroux, APIIAQ, Jennie Skene and Éleine Trottier, APIQ

Éleine Trottier, President of the *Association professionnelle des inhalothérapeutes du Québec (APIQ)*, and Monique Leroux, President of the *Alliance professionnelle des infirmières et infirmiers auxiliaires du Québec (APIIAQ)*, presented their organizations to the Federal Council delegates. Without negating the past, the two presidents said that they are focusing resolutely on the future and are ready to develop new solidarity with FIIQ nurses. The message was well received by the delegates who took the floor to welcome them. They raised questions and engaged in discussion with the presidents to find out more about their respective organizations.

An influx of energy

Elections were held at the Federal Council to fill two vacant positions on the Youth Committee. Valérie Girard (CHUM, Hôpital Notre-Dame) and Jérôme Rousseau (Hôpital Laval) join the existing team composed of Danielange Charles (CHA, St-François D'Assise), Audrey Émond (CH Le Jeanneois) and Isabelle Pouliot (CHUQ, Pavillon CHUL). The *FIIQ en Action* team joins the delegates in congratulating these new officers and wishing them good luck in their new duties.

Exploring the creation of a new central labour organization

Michèle Boisclair, the executive officer in charge, gave the delegates a progress report on the possible creation of a central labour organization that would bring together exclusively professional health and social services practitioners. Since the last Federal Council, only one meeting has been held. This meeting led to the identification of principles, objectives and values to which the partners in this venture adhere and that will serve as guidelines during the discussions.

Valuing the autonomy and freedom of the affiliated labour organizations, democracy, solidarity and advocacy in favour of social justice, this new central labour organization, which could be called the *Centrale québécoise de la santé*, would have the objective of representing a Quebec-wide unifying force, using its power of influence and fighting for the defence of collective rights.

FIIQ EN ACTION
VOLUME 17, NUMBER 4, JUNE 2004
This journal is published by the
Communication-Information Service.
Web site: www.fiiq.qc.ca
Email: info@fiiq.qc.ca



Published after each FIIQ Federal Council and Convention meeting, this journal has a circulation of 45,500 copies. Any reproduction of articles or excerpts must bear the mention "Reproduced from the publication *FIIQ en Action*".