



BULLETIN EXPRESS

THE GOVERNMENT PUTS A STOP TO MEETINGS WITH THE "COALITION FOR THE RIGHT TO NEGOTIATE"

The "Coalition for the Right to Negotiate", which now includes 19 labour organizations, managed to obtain a face-to-face meeting with the government, following the success of its 8 regional rallies. Since 1983 the only thing the government has been offering us is "joint committees" and has seen us at times as social organizations, such as the Kiwanis Club and at times as nothing more than mere professional associations. The first meeting was held on the 6th and continued on the 7th of March. At this time, René Lévesque, along with ministers Clair, Duhaime, Gendron, Chevrette, Lalonde, Johnson and MNA Michel Leduc, gave the impression they were prepared for some openings about negotiability of salaries and decentralization. The Coalition (CSN was represented by G. Larose and N. Brouillet) expressed its positions on these subjects as well as about mediation and essential services in the Social Affairs Sector, including the concept of a union code of ethics.

Another meeting was set for Friday, March 15. Except for Duhaime, the same ministers accompanied Lévesque, including Bérubé, the minister for Collegial education (!). The employer associations had three representatives present (school boards, CEGEPs, Social Affairs) like the last time. However, their lobby seemed to have been quite influential, especially in terms of decentralization.

The meeting was a short one, for the government quickly reversed its position on the "openings" made in the first meeting. René Lévesque announced a bill in 2 or 3 weeks containing the following elements:

- Pay: A three-year collective agreement with negotiations for the first year, but decrees for the other two. These decrees would be based on reports from the planned Pay Research Bureau.
- Decentralization: The government distinguishes between teachers and others.
 - In the school system (elementary, secondary and CEGEPs): two-level negotiations: provincial and local. The local negotiations would be held with no right to strike and based on a list of subjects inscribed in the law. (For more information about this list, see INFO-FNEEQ "A Study of Appendix "A").
 - In the Social Affairs sector, school support staff, CEGEP support staff and non-teaching professionals: province-wide negotiations with local arrangements based on a list inscribed in the law. After agreement between the parties, this list could be lengthened but not shortened!
 - Social Affairs: provincial table eliminated, 5 sub-tables would take over.
- Right to Strike: In the Social Affairs, the aim, according to the government spokesmen, is to reduce the right to strike to a mere symbolic level. Proclamation of Essential Services Act (Law 72).

The evaluation of this meeting is extremely negative. The government has not budged since its document "In Search for a New Equilibrium". It continues to maintain its hard line stance towards the workers, and it has clearly taken a stand in favour of the employer. Its aim is to dismantle FAS with its five sub-tables, and reduce the right to strike to something symbolic.

The latest developments clearly out the onus of public sector negotiations on the education sector. And once again, with respect to the teachers, major non-monetary clauses such as the department, distribution of workload, seniority, hiring, disciplinary measures, union rights, etc. would be negotiated entirely on the local level, without any right to strike.

By these announcements, René Lévesque is virtually putting an end to the meetings between the parties. Yet according to him sectorial tables with the respective ministers will be "possible"!! (i.e. Bérubé for CEGEPs and Gendron for elementary-secondary schools) to discuss the decentralization list with each sector.

FOLLOW-UP ON THIS MEETING HELD MARCH 15

As union members, we are left with little choice: we have to step up our opposition to this "reform of the negotiations", which takes away our right to negotiate our working conditions and our salaries. This means that the National Day of mobilization set for March 20th is all that more important, as well as its aftermath. This is why the CEGEP sector's workshop, within the Conseil federal held on March 14, 15 and 16, voted to hold local consultations to evaluate the proposed CSN plan for action (to be presented to the Coalition) in response to the government's attitude.

We will also have to think of a FNEEQ plan of action because the Fédération des CEGEP (and even the Conseil des collèges) has had a major influence on the government's decision to bring the negotiations on the local level. We will have to get the idea across to our local administrations very clearly as to what negotiations on the local level would mean that they will have to face local pressure tactics and a "corresponding" labour relations climate locally.

The regional Mobilizing Committees to be held on March 25 will analyse the local union representatives' reactions before each Federation recommends a plan of action to the general assemblies.

During the last "Conseil fédéral" the sectorial workshop of CEGEPs considered the meeting with Bérubé to discuss an annex in project-law which we have rejected - non pertinent. Many of our members have not forgotten the contempt Bérubé showed CEGEP teachers last year during our campaign about a freeze on workload: he offered us (verbatim) a "wailing wall"!

But throughout all these discussions about the "Reform on the negotiations", we can't lose sight of what's at stake: our working conditions. The decree expires December 31st, 1985. The work on our negotiating priorities must continue. We will have to formulate well developed priorities and demands shared by all our members. This is another way of reacting to the government's attempts to divide us.

MARCH 14, 15, 16's CONSEIL FEDERAL

After discussing the "planned reform on negotiations" the Conseil fédéral discussed the finances of FNEEQ, union leave policies and the upcoming CSN orientation convention.

Finances

The financial statements dated August 31st, 1984 and January 31st, 1985 confirmed the position of the committee on special dues, which was submitted to the Conseil of November, 1984. The two major sources of income for the negotiations reserve have dropped. One the one hand, the general fund's income tends to level-off if not shrink, while its expenditures tend to increase closer and closer to the budget predictions with no surplus created.

The committee on special dues will submit the second part of its report to the Conseil in June, along with possible solutions. If not, there will be a shortage of money for the next negotiations.

Union leave policy

Our union release policy was discussed at length. The General Assemblies will be asked to take a decision on this issue between now and the end of the term. This is intended to allow non-permanent teachers access to union release.

Insurance policy

The dental plan wasn't approved by the unions. Therefore the accumulated surplus funds in the group insurance policies of the CEGEP and private college unions will be used as a waiver on premiums for our members.

CSN orientation Convention

Due to the fact that the pre-convention documents couldn't be distributed in advance, the CSN President Gérald Larose attended our last Conseil and presented them. The discussion led to question about such issues as the status of women, employment, worker participation in firms, etc. and the way these issues have to be dealt with.

There was a certain discontent expressed about CSN's "social platform" as presented. It was seen as either non-existent or unsatisfactory. Discussions will resume during the CSN Convention set for March 28, 29, 30, 31 in Quebec City.

YES WE WANT TO NEGOTIATE
WE DON'T WANT PERMANENT DECREES

