



FNEEQ'S RESPONSE TO THE REFUSAL OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATIONS TO NEGOTIATE

After the meeting of April 30 «that never was», due to the refusal of local administrations to participate in what was to be the starting point on negotiations on Annex «A» (see detailed report in Express no 17), FNEEQ and the non-teaching professionals affiliated with the CSN sent out a press release and had an interview with the news media. Our message was the following:

- THE FEDERATION OF CEGEPS REFUSES UNION PROPOSALS TO AVERT DEADLOCK IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.

(Montreal) ... The representatives of FNEEQ and non-teaching professionals affiliated with the CSN regret but are not surprised at the refusal of local administrations to come to a table (one for each federation) in order to start discussions regarding the items subject to local negotiations as per Bill 37.

According to the CSN, by refusing to simplify the process of negotiations and by acceding to the directives of the «Fédération» (to represent them at this meeting with FNEEQ's negotiating committee without a mandate to negotiate) local administrations have abrogated their responsibilities.

We are faced with the «Fédération's» intransigence and repeated attempts to complicate the negotiations by erecting even more barriers than already exist in Bill 37. They also insist on negotiating the collective agreement at different levels and at different times. The CSN has no other choice but to increase the level of pressure tactics in order to make the «partie patronale» accept a reasonable mode of negotiations which will permit solutions to the serious problems of employment, retraining, professional development, quality of services and quality of education which for a long time now have hampered the normal functioning of Cegeps.

A PLAUSIBLE SOLUTION

FNEEQ and FPPSCQ (CSN) (Federation of professionals, and cadres) deplore the management's refusal to present itself to a common table to start discussing the items which have not as yet been presented. This is even more deplorable since several local administrations (among them Ahuntsic, John Abbott, Joliette and Limoilou), initially had expressed interest in our «dépôt» and in the meeting but made an about face at the last minute after having been put back in line, by their Federation, last Friday.

The imbroglio at the sectorial negotiating table, a result of Bill 37 and management's interpretation of this law which plunged negotiations into an impasse, prompted the unions of the CSN to propose a plausible and realistic solution to local administrations. This was the objective of this meeting today, to bring together the two parties at a common table in order to start negotiations on the local items foreseen in the law. This approach would have permitted both parties to obtain a global picture of all items which will, after all, constitute the entire collective agreement. It would also have cleared the way for discussions on substance rather than continued stumbling on formalities and interpretations with unknown consequences.

The refusal of management confirms once again that their intentions are to negotiate piecemeal agreements rather than a genuine collective agreement for everybody.

The Federations concerned (FNEEQ, FPPSCQ) will hold meetings in the next few days to decide on a course of action as an attempt to avert a deadlock.

FNEEQ and FPPSCQ were given firm mandates by their respective unions to negotiate the entire collective agreement on their behalf and on the basis of our priorities adopted at the general assemblies. These mandates were reconfirmed by the massive rejection of management's offers.

A LAW WHICH WAS SUPPOSED TO AVERT CONFRONTATIONS CREATES THEM USELESSLY

It is clear that the decentralization foreseen in Bill 37 instead of helping the two parties reach an agreement as smooth and as fast as possible becomes the source of useless confrontations. It makes no sense for the negotiating committee which has been mandated to negotiate one collective agreement for everybody to deal with more than forty local administrations on the same issue. Decentralization is the edge of the sword of the «Fédération» whose aim no doubt is the weakening of unions vis-a-vis management, the tactic being the dismemberment of our collective agreement. The result ... chaos and waste of time. Management's pretention to the contrary is but a disguise of their ulterior motives.

DEMONSTRATION IN FRONT OF THE FEDERATION OF CEGEPS

As a consequence, unions in the college sector will march in front of the main offices of the «Fédération» in Montreal and in front of the management's committee (CPNC) offices in Quebec City in order to demonstrate their readiness and force management to negotiate the renewal of the collective agreements for all employees in the college sector affiliated with the CSN in good faith.

Rose Pellerin
President of FNEEQ-CSN

THE RESPONSE OF UNIONS TO LOCAL ADMINISTRATIONS

Several unions protested the absence of the local administrations at the meeting of April 30. At Alma, André-Laurendeau, at Centre des pêches, Joliette, Montmorency, Rimouski, Trois-Rivières, unions have occupied the offices of their director generals and demanded to meet them in order to express their strong discontent. The St-Jean union sent their administration a singing telegram! At F.X. Garneau, Lévis-Lauzon, Institut de Marine and Rimouski prevented their administrators from entering the building and occupied their parking spaces. Others like St-Hyacinthe, Vieux-Montréal and Gaspé had symbolic picket lines.

At Granby and Limoilou, union members paid a visit to their Board of Governors. Dawson, Vanier, Sorel, Hauterive, Sept-Iles, Outaouais, St. Lawrence, St. Lambert used other means to make their point.

The message was very clear. Union members are resolutely against local negotiations and by having given their negotiating committee (FNEEQ) a mandate to negotiate the entire collective agreement, they demand a single provincial «dépôt» from management.

