



NOUVELLES EXPRESS

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The "offensive" launched by the Quebec Winter Carnaval pushed our troops in the "41" back to the wilds of Ste Foy. They huddled there on Friday to discuss the Strategy Committee Proposal to reject the changes in the outlined settlement proposed by Education Minister Laurin, a settlement which unlike the Carnaval is no party.

The "41" unanimously recommend the General meetings vote down Laurin's proposal

The "41" were unanimous in recommending a "no" vote to the General Meetings on the proposed changes in the outlined settlement the government put forth on February 9th.

Union General Meetings have until Monday evening to vote on this proposal. As we go to press, some meetings have already reported a massive "thumbs down" to Laurin's proposal. These are: Thetford, Vieux-Montréal, John Abbott, Limoilou, Rimouski, Rosemont, Saint Lambert, St Lawrence, Sept Iles, Lévis-Lauzon, F.-X. Garneau and Trois-Rivières.

The proposed changes: nothing new

While the job situation is rapidly going from bad to worse, once the decree is "changed", 1 500 positions will be eliminated, affecting around 2 000 people, most of them non-tenured teachers, part-timers and lecturers who benefit from no job security whatsoever. In reality, 1 500 people will be dismissed outright.

The so-called concessions Laurin has made mean nothing really new. The actual workload will be increased by 9% the first year, the 1983-1984 academic year. This means 1 000 positions eliminated affecting 1 500 people.

As for the second year, the workload will increase by 3%, meaning 350 more jobs cut. To top it off, in the last year of this "contract", the workload will be increased by 1.5% more positions cut back.

Moreover, Deputy Minister of Education Michèle Fortin says herself that the increased workload mean 65% of the teachers "on availability" due to this increased load will fill teaching jobs opened by untenured teachers pushed out of the system.

As for the salaries they are proposing for MED's we can't say the government has suddenly decided to be overly generous to this group.

In fact, all the government is proposing is to shuffle around the pay cut for MED's. These teachers would receive 80% for the first two years and 50% the third. The "Trojan Horse" Laurin is trying to palm off on the FNEEQ was nailed together right out the 20% cut in MEDs' paycheques already announced in the decree.

Serious threat to quality education

Considering the increasing enrollement over the past two years (5 000 in 1981-1982 and 10 000 in 1982-1983) and enrollment forecasts the MEQ itself considers overly conservative for the next three years (4 000 a year), the Federation wonders how they can justify cutting teaching jobs in light of the growing needs.

In this context, how can we be astonished to see Laurin himself refers to the threat to the quality of education. There is indeed cause for worry...

The "41" pass other motions

In the same meeting, the "41" passed a motion calling for public action to speak out against the government's blackmail in the form of its threatened ultimatum. The motion presented by Vieux-Montreal also aims at using this public action as a forum to publicize the concessions we made over the last six months, especially as to salaries.

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We will also state our determination to maintain our existing working conditions and the quality of education and to regain the right to free collective bargaining.

No sooner said than done. As soon as the "41's" meeting wound up, the Federation President delivered a statement to reporters on the Quebec parliamentary beat and a press release was issued giving the gist of the motion.

CSN SUPPORTS JOHN-ABBOTT'S CHALLENGE

The CSN also assured the members of the John Abbott teachers Union on its support in their legal challenge to the constitutionality of Bills 70 and 105. CSN pledged to pay costs incurred by this action.

DEMONSTRATIONS, RALLIES AND STRIKE SUPPORT PARTIES IN QUEBEC, MONTREAL AND JONQUIERE

Special events took place in Montreal and Quebec City on Wednesday, February 9th, and in Jonquiere on the 10th. These were organized to explain to the public why we are on strike, and more specifically show how law 105 constitutes an attack on women.

In Quebec, around 400 teachers from Limoilou, Ste Lawrence, F-X Garneau, Lévis-Lauzon and Ste Foy (CEQ) colleges and private sector workers in the region took part in a protest march winding up outside complex "G". During this demonstration, they enthusiastically re-affirmed their commitment to continue their struggle and not break ranks in the face of the government's repeated threats to get them to give in by repressive measures.

Afterwards, Quebec City area teachers converged on Limoilou Cegep, where several inter-union activities took place.

Meanwhile, in Montreal, the CSN President and other representatives from various CSN bodies took part in a demonstration numbering more than 1 100 teachers from greater Montreal, Saint-Hyacinthe and Valleyfield.

Afterwards, the demonstrators moved on to the Montreal Central Council to see a "new and improved" version of the Radio-Canada TV News Broadcast, starring Normand Lester in a hilarious sequence on the public sector negotiations. Such insight!

Last but not least, the next day in Jonquiere, around 650 people met outside the Quebec government's administrative building during the morning. The rally was followed by a solidarity lunch. Elementary-secondary school teachers and CEGEP teachers took part in these events.

SUPPORT FOR OUR STRIKE FROM MANY QUARTERS

We have received messages of support for our cause from near and far, from other groups of workers and many individuals. The list is too long to state in full but some idea of it is shown by messages from as far away as Berlin, Mexico and France. Among the many individuals supporting our cause, NDP leader Ed Broadbent and Louise Harel, PQ member for Maisonneuve.

REMINDER

1st peoples' seminar on telematics organized by the ICEA at Pavillon Judith Jasmin (UQAM), 1495, Saint Denis, MONTREAL, February 18th and 19th, 1983. For information: 842-2766. The session starts at 5:00 PM on the 18th.
