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2010 Event Calendar

- Health National Conference**
Hôtel Loews Vogue in Montreal
April 13
- General Council**
Hôtel Loews Vogue in Montreal
April 14-15
- CPAS Convention**
Hôtel Rimouski in Rimouski
June 8-9-10
- General Council**
Hôtel Rimouski in Rimouski
June 11
- General Council**
Hôtel Classique in Québec
October 6-7
- General Council**
Hôtel Sheraton Laval
December 8-9



The Review

RIDICULOUS OFFERS FROM THE CONSEIL DU TRÉSOR Forty years of difficult negotiations with Quebec

by Guy Jolicoeur

WHILE THE QUEBEC GOVERNMENT BUYS FULL PAGE ADS IN THE NEWSPAPERS TO THANK HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES PERSONNEL FOR ITS OUTSTANDING WORK DURING H1N1 VACCINATION EFFORTS IN 2009, THE CONSEIL DU TRÉSOR IS OFFERING THOSE SAME UNION MEMBERS A MISERLY 5% WAGE INCREASE OVER FIVE YEARS. IS THE GOVERNMENT BEING HYPOCRITICAL, OR DOES IT PLAN TO IMPROVE ITS OFFER ONCE THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IMPROVES?

The answer is already clear: the government takes its employees for granted and is betting that health sector personnel will not stage any demonstrations no matter how ridiculous the government offer is.

The government is obviously being supported in this cynical calculation by two parties: employers' representatives, and public opinion, which has been manipulated by some of the media. I'm not condemning our journalist friends—it's just that some newspaper owners unabashedly affirm that the Common Front's demands are excessive, and even inappropriate in a time of financial crisis. Unions, unfortunately, do not have the luxury of deciding on the length of their collective agreement, much less on the right timing so that they can submit their offers in times of prosperity rather than in times of deficit.

In fact, our last collective agreement, in 2005, was signed just hours before a government decree was issued, and that was in a time of budget surplus! So when the government/employer flexes its legislator's muscles to impose its working conditions, we may very well question the legitimacy of the bargaining process. The government has been loudly proclaiming since the 1970s that it does not have the means to pay for union demands. We have therefore been lobbying for 40 years to get a decent salary for the work we do. Meanwhile our working conditions are steadily deteriorating.

All we have left as leverage is to show our disapproval. We are all taxpayers, but when I see the waste that the Charest government accepts unquestionably—think about the Lieutenant Governor's expenses—I simply tell myself this: it's not up to union members from the health sector to pick up the pieces. We are entitled to our share of the province's wealth! On March 20, that is what I'll be telling Mr. Charest loud and clear, and I won't be embarrassed to do it. I hope to see you there, too!

DEMONSTRATION
ON SATURDAY, MARCH 20
IN MONTREAL



A Word from the President



by Pierre Soucy

DO YOURSELF A FAVOUR!

This is the last phase before negotiations wind down on March 31, 2010. That's less than one short month away.

The government has handed us an offer on a silver platter: a 5% increase over five years. That amount doesn't even come close to the rise in the cost of living.

WE'RE TURNING IT DOWN.

What's the next step? **WE NEED TO RALLY.** When? On **MARCH 20**, in Montreal. While stopping short of civil disobedience, we need a huge demonstration on March 20 or we will lose the battle.

**DO YOURSELF A FAVOUR
LET'S HAVE A MASSIVE TURNOUT
ON MARCH 20**



by Michel Jolin

A Word from the Secretary General

It is now early March. Spring is upon us, and perhaps a new collective agreement is in view. While your Bargaining Committee works on negotiating a collective agreement worthy of your expectations, an entire nation is trying to recover from a terrible catastrophe, I'm speaking, of course, of the people of Haiti.

It is at times like these that the power of the word **SOLIDARITY** truly comes into focus. To CUPE members of the Haitian community, indeed, to the entire community, and to your families and friends, the Provincial Council of Social Affairs salutes your courage and wishes you the strength to go on during this difficult time.

YOUR GROUP INSURANCE

by the CPAS Insurance Committee
Lucie Marchand, Francine Lamothe,
Ghislain Doré and Alain Tessier



Your CPAS insurance committee is here to assist you. If you have any questions about your group insurance or if you disagree with a decision of La Capitale, speak to your union executive. They will take the necessary action with the support of the CPAS insurance committee. One member of the insurance committee is also a member of the Intersectorial Joint Committee FTQ, which was established under the collective agreement to manage our contract.

As a CUPE-FTQ union member, you are entitled to group insurance provided by La Capitale. Our insurance provides coverage under a Basic Health Insurance Plan, including travel insurance. It also provides additional optional health, dental and life insurance. Detailed information can be found in La Capitale's information brochure, which is available in French from Human Resources, union offices, and on our website at www.cpas.scfp.qc.ca, under the «assurances collectives» tab, and in French and English on La Capitale's website at www.lacapitale.com. The employer assumes a portion of the cost of the Basic Health Insurance Plan. The amounts are listed in article 23.23 of the collective agreement.

In addition, article 23.20 of the collective agreement provides for life insurance for all eligible employees and their dependents, subject to the exemption right, which is under provincial legislation. The exemption right applies only to the Basic Health Insurance Plan. It allows employees to refuse or stop participating in the plan if they establish that they or their dependents, if any, are insured under a group insurance plan with similar coverage. In addition, an employee may decide to make this selection only for his or her dependents; in that case, the same provisions apply. If coverage under the alternate group insurance plan is no longer provided, the employee and his or her dependents must become members of our plan.

Optional plan coverage can be obtained without having to prove eligibility within 30 days of eligibility after an employee is hired or obtains his or her first permanent position. Employees may receive basic life insurance coverage without having to submit proof of eligibility when they get married (as defined in the contract) or when their first child is born.

Employees who take unpaid leave for longer than 30 days must maintain their Basic Health Insurance coverage by paying their own portion as well as that of the employer. They can maintain their optional plans or suspend them for the length of the leave.

EXEMPTION FROM PREMIUM PAYMENTS IN THE EVENT OF DISABILITY

Beginning of participant's exemption period

In the event of disability, the participants' insurance and that of his or her dependents, if any, continues to be current without the participant making any premium payments, starting from:

- The 8th working day, for full-time employees; or
- The 6th working day, for full-time employees working four days a week under the reduced work time program; or
- The 9th calendar day, for part-time employees.

Exemption from premium payments is limited to a 36-month period.

CALCULATION OF SALARY INSURANCE BENEFITS

For the purpose of calculating the benefits paid to full-time employees during the first one hundred and four (104) weeks of disability, the salary used is the rate on the applicable salary that the employee would receive if she/he were at work.

For a part-time employee, the amount of benefits is prorated on the basis of time worked in the fifty-two (52) calendar weeks preceding her/his disability. This calculation must include a minimum of twelve (12) calendar weeks. Failing this, the employer takes into consideration the weeks prior to the fifty-two (52)-week period until the calculation can be based on a period of twelve (12) weeks. If the calculation cannot be based on a minimum of twelve (12) weeks because the period between the employee's last date of hiring and the start of the disability do not allow for it, the calculation is done on the basis of this last period.

The group insurance contract is renewed each year. We will be sending you a survey in the spring to help us decide on amendments to coverage under the contract, if any.



Retired CUPE union representative **Louise Luneau** raised money at the December General Council meeting to benefit children in Cameroon. She wanted us to convey her deep gratitude for your gift. The funds have been distributed for immediate needs, especially tuition, health services, one childbirth case, large sacks of rice, and school supplies for youth group homes.

After returning from a three-week trip to Cameroon, she told us the following:

« I met people who were very charming, warm-hearted and generous. These people have almost nothing; they are poor but they keep smiling and hoping that everything will turn out well. We can consider ourselves spoiled and very well organized. If I ever become dissatisfied with what I have, I'll think about the people of Cameroon... »



Our two retirees !

Francine Barrette and **Julien Lapointe**, who combine a half-century of good and loyal services to CUPE between them, have left us for a well-deserved retirement.

We wish them a full and happy experience !



March 8 - International Women's Day and third year of international activities in support of the World March Of Women.

« **Women on the March Until We Are All Free!** »



MOBILIZATION – KEY BARGAINING LEVERAGE!

by the Bargaining Committee : Karine Cabana, Ghislaine Doré, Yves Paprocki, Monique Trépanier, Michel Jolin and Alain Tessier

As with each negotiation, the government uses various media streams to tell the public how, as a good steward, it cannot give in to union demands without putting the public coffers in peril. The government has been preparing for this moment for a long time and has used the economic crisis to back up its position.

We can nonetheless oppose the government's assertions individually and collectively. To do so, we must have a firm understanding of the rationale behind our demands. In terms of salary, all we want is to maintain our purchasing power and make up for the salary freezes we've experienced over the years. It is not unreasonable to believe that this demand is an acceptable minimum. With inflation rates projected at no less than 2% per year, the government's offer of a 5% increase over five years is a wholesale impoverishment of public service employees--the same employees who, by keeping the economy rolling, have helped Quebec emerge from the recession relatively unscathed.

By staying well-informed we can marshal our forces, continue to pressure our employer, and make the public aware of our situation. Without your support, your Bargaining Committee has little power. Therefore, let's be on the alert and stay informed, united and involved so we can obtain a collective agreement that recognizes the importance of our services and the value of our work.

Stay tuned to your local union so we can get a large turnout at the activities supporting the ongoing negotiations.



OVERVIEW OF DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN SECTORAL DEMANDS

UNION DEMANDS	EMPLOYER'S DEMANDS
Part-time employees who so desire may be considered full-time if their replacement assignment is longer than three months.	Review status concepts (full-time, regular part-time, casual part-time) to give the employer flexibility when establishing schedules. Review seniority practices for shift assignments (day, night, evening).
Expand the banks of union leaves paid by the employer in order to provide members with better service.	Reduce the number of union leaves.
Provide for the application of the department head premium when an employee provides orientation. Provide that evening and night premiums apply to the entire shift when most of the shift occurs between 2 p.m. and 8 a.m. Provide a bilingualism premium when required. Provide a trailer clause for beneficiary attendants in regard to the intensive care premium. Be entitled to bereavement leave as time off work.	Review all premiums and floating days off to assess their relevance. Review benefits procedures (vacations, statutory holidays, sick leave) to increase availability of personnel.
Provide the minimum remuneration applicable to callbacks when an employee works from home; and Remunerate work performed during mealtimes by employees on stand-by duty.	Option of expanding the workday without incurring overtime. Option of increasing the number of workdays in a week without incurring overtime.
Option to obtain three-, four- or five-month leaves with deferred pay plans.	Review the financial management of the deferred pay plan in order to avoid any financial loss for the employer.
Increase the employer's contribution to basic group insurance plans. Reduce waiting periods.	Review the definition of disability. Introduce the concept of temporary assignments with regard to salary insurance plans. Reduce the number of days in the bank of sick days. Extend the "Loser pays" concept to dismissals and medical arbitration.
Request an 11.25% salary adjustment over 3 years.	Offer a 5% increase over 5 years.

THE CLIENTELE IS CHANGING, BUT ARE HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAMS KEEPING UP?

by Karine Rainville

AS IT IS EACH YEAR, APRIL 28, 2010 WILL BE A DAY OF MOURNING FOR THE UNION MOVEMENT--A DAY TO REMEMBER THAT TOO MANY WORKERS GET INJURED OR SICK OR EVEN LOSE THEIR LIFE ON THE JOB. IT WILL ALSO BE A DAY TO REAFFIRM OUR INTENTION TO IMPROVE SAFETY IN OUR WORKPLACES.

Over the past few years, many services offered to rehabilitation centre users have been transferred to a growing number of intermediary or family-type resources. Today, clients who remain in group homes and receive the services of the members we represent frequently display serious behavioural problems or have severe physical disabilities. These changes bring our Locals new challenges in maintaining healthy and safe work environments.

As their clienteles continue to expand, workers must be well prepared and be working in sufficient numbers as they face the daily threats to their safety. All too often, lack of experience or training, shortage of support staff, and lack of protection systems or intervention protocols for aggressive behaviour lead to serious but avoidable accidents. Isn't it a paradox that safety programs have not kept up with changes in clientele in some rehabilitation centres?

Occupational health and safety programs in rehabilitation centres vary widely from one centre to another, and their effectiveness also varies as much as the employers' commitment to ensuring workplace safety. In fact, joint committees in some workplaces regularly work on reducing accident risks by developing approaches as original as they are efficient, while other employers drag their feet and the accidents keep happening. It is critical for employers to fulfill their legal obligation to maintain safety in the workplace and continue having effective health and safety programs. It is also our duty to remind them of this obligation.



HUMAN RELATIONS TECHNICIANS STUDY GROUP THE CPAS IS NOW A MEMBER!

by Guy Jolicoeur

On September 22, 2009, the Office des Professions du Québec established a study group to examine the situation of mental health and human relations technicians.

The study group is a natural follow-up to the government's adoption of Bill 21 in June. The bill brings substantial changes to the Professional Code in regard to activities reserved for members of professional orders, protection of the public and interdisciplinary collaboration among physicians, social workers and psychologists in mental health and other cases.

The study group was established to help the Ministère de la Santé, employers, unions, and professional orders draw attention to social service, specialized education, and youth and adult

correctional intervention technicians, in view of current labour shortages. One major player was passed over, however—the FTQ was not invited to join the group, but was finally able to secure a spot after lobbying for it.

The Category 4 Committee (health professionals and technicians) is now working hard to get up to date on the work already underway and the analysis grids that will be submitted to the participants. The ultimate objective of the study group's meetings is to re-establish the importance of social service, specialized education and youth and adult correctional intervention technicians, who have been slighted by Network employers over the past years.

The first meeting, held on February 4, highlighted the working conditions of these technicians in non-profit mental health organizations and crisis

centres. Technicians there play a key role in making assessments and recommendations and providing clinical follow-up because they work on the front lines when clients come in to request services. Quebec started recognizing the existence of these community organizations 30 years ago, and has been supporting them with funding.

These organizations want to maintain their independence and not be subject to the regulations of professional orders or be cheap labour for institutions in the public system. There are 22 crisis centres in Quebec, and they are asking for recognition for technicians who perform the foregoing tasks without a university diploma. The study group will pursue its work throughout the year. We will keep you informed of developments in upcoming issues of The Review.

CPAS General Council, February 9 and 10, 2010

by Michel Jolin

Several items were on the agenda at the General Council's most recent meeting.

Alain Tessier, social affairs coordinator, told us about a judgement handed down by the Commission des relations de travail. The judgement, which was in CUPE's favour, involved a conflict with RESSAQ-CSD (Centrale des syndicats démocratiques). Further to this decision, CPAS-CUPE will be representing approximately 300 people from IR (Intermediate Resources) and FTR (Family-type Resources) of the West Montreal Readaptation Centre.

In addition, Serge Leblanc and Marc Thomas, project managers with ROSEPH, a coalition of employment organizations for people with disabilities, came to explain the "Unity in action" kit. They told us about an umbrella group named SSMO-PH (Services spécialisés de main-d'œuvre pour per-

sonnes handicapées) that offers specialized labour services for the disabled and may help us with tasks such as assessing employability and functional abilities for work, identifying work positions, analyzing work tasks, increasing sensitization in the workplace, adapting workstations, coaching, and providing personalized employment follow-up for disabled workers.

The Bargaining Committee reported on negotiations with the Sectoral Table. Michel Parenteau, FTQ coordinator for public sector negotiations, reported on the work accomplished by the Central Table.

Naturally, the issue of mobilization came up. We

agreed that no effort would be spared to secure the largest turnout possible at the rally on March 20, 2010 in Montreal. We need to tell the government that cutting into our working conditions and reducing our purchasing power is out of the question.



INTER-UNION COOPERATION FIRST COALITION OF MONTREAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Although their most recent vote of allegiance placed Montreal's 12 Health and Social Services Centres (CSSS) into different unions, health professionals and technicians belonging to the CSN, the APTS and CUPE-Quebec have set aside their differences to band together, share their union experience and lay the foundations of a Montreal coalition. « *We realize*

that the differences between our unions are minimal, and that all the Health and Social Services Centres are essentially experiencing the same realities: labour shortages, work overload, inadequate supervision, and unstable working conditions », said Marjolaine Goudreau, co-founder of the coalition and Union President of the Ahuntsic-Cartierville CSSS (APTS).


"There are plenty of issues on which we can take a common stand," added Manuel Penafiel, Community Organizer at the Jeanne-Mance CSSS and CSN Union Officer. « *Knowing about another Centre's working conditions and struggles helps us understand that we're not alone in defending our member's rights and assets.* »

Guy Jolicoeur of the St-Léonard-St-Michel CSSS, who is the CUPE-Quebec representative and one of the coalition's co-founders, also believes that the time has come to set aside differences: « *The Common Front is evidence that, in tough times, we must unite and confront our common opponent – the Quebec government.* »

The coalition meets once every six weeks, and the coordination committee is composed of one member from each confederation. We hope that this exemplary display of solidarity will be followed in other regions of Quebec!



Guy Jolicoeur, SCFP (CSSS St-Léonard-St-Michel); Margot Rouleau, APTS (CSSS Laval); Marjolaine Goudreau, APTS (CSSS Ahuntsic Montréal Nord); Manuel Penafiel, CSN (CSSS Jeanne Mance)



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