COMMON FRONT DEMANDS

Put an end to impoverishment

Our salaries have failed to keep up with inflation in recent years because of the working conditions imposed by special decree in December 2005. Our purchasing power has decreased. We must put an end to impoverishment.

Protect our purchasing power

The major banks and the Bank of Canada predict a 2% inflation rate for the next three years. We are therefore demanding salary increases of 2% per year from 2010 to 2012 in order to protect our purchasing power. This represents a 6% increase over three years.

Catch up

Labour shortages are already being felt in every employment category in the public and parapublic sectors. It is particularly difficult to recruit a new generation of workers. Young people must want to take up the challenge and that begins with salaries comparable with those paid in the private sector. Remember that, for COMPARABLE work, State employees are paid 8.7% less than other workers in Québec. If we compare them with unionized private sector employees, they are 12.4% behind.

Better salaries are needed to renew and maintain competencies in the public and parapublic sectors. To allow public and parapublic sector workers to catch up with the private sector, the Common Front is proposing an average increase of $0.49 an hour each year, which represents 1.75% of the average salary, or 5.25% for the duration of the collective agreement.

We would like the collective agreement to remain in effect from April 1, 2010, to December 31, 2012.

Enrichment

A significant increase in the GDP means more collective wealth. We believe that all employees are entitled to their share of the wealth generated by their economic activity. Our demands therefore include renewed negotiations to establish an additional amount to be added to salaries should the increase in Québec's gross domestic product, as measured by Statistics Canada, exceed 3.75% in any given year.

Skilled workers

The Common Front is demanding the creation of a management-union task force to study the working conditions of skilled workers and to make recommendations to the parties with a view to recruiting new workers and retaining experienced workers.

Retirement

Despite the economic crisis, our retirement fund is not in danger and long-term benefits remain secure. In addition, we intend to take advantage of this round of negotiations to make adjustments aimed at improving the plan’s stability. To this end, we intend to:

1. Review the financing method in order to better reflect the reality of our retirement plan. We would like to make changes to the contribution rate more predictable and stable, while ensuring the plan’s long-term viability.
2. Ensure greater equity among contributors. We would like the contribution exemption to apply to 25% of maximum insurable earnings rather than the current 35%. This change would be accompanied by a measure to ensure that low income earners are not required to pay more.
3. Ensure indexation for the years 1982 to 1999 by applying the same indexation method in effect since 2000. This measure would take effect as soon as the plan posts a surplus in excess of 20%.
4. Abolish the limit of 35 years of recognized service. This measure would pay for itself by allowing employees at the end of their working career to pay a few years more. It would also encourage experienced employees to remain on staff a little longer and would help us meet the challenges of recruiting new workers.

Parental rights

Laws and their interpretations are constantly changing. Some provisions of our collective agreements should be re-examined to make sure they are consistent with the laws and regulations in effect.

Work-family balance

To be more in tune with the issue of recruiting new workers and new job market realities, we are demanding the enactment of parent legislation fostering work-family balance in the workplace. This approach is groundbreaking, since the measure would apply to all workers in Québec.