



## **The Common Front Demands – *Négo 2010***

### **Stop making employees poorer off**

Our salaries have not kept pace with inflation in the past few years, since our working conditions were decreed by special legislation in December 2005. Our purchasing power has diminished. The government must stop making its employees poorer off.

### **Protect our purchasing power**

The major institutions are projecting inflation rates in the vicinity of 2% for the next three years, and this is also the rate targeted by the Bank of Canada. We are consequently demanding 2% salary annual increases from 2010 to 2012, to protect our purchasing power. This comes to a total of 6% for a 3-year period.

### **Ensure a catch-up increase**

Labour shortages are already being felt in all job groups in the public and parapublic sectors. Renewing the workforce poses particular challenges. We have to induce young people to take up the reins, and the first incentive would be to offer comparable salaries to those in the private sector. It is important to point out that the salaries of public and parapublic employees are lagging 8.7% behind those of all other Québec workers in COMPARABLE jobs. If we compare them to employees in the private sector who are unionized, the wage lag is approximately 12.4%.

Renewing and maintaining skills in the public and parapublic sectors depends in part on raising salaries. The Common Front proposes the introduction of a catch-up increase to help bring salaries in line with the private sector. It is thus demanding an increase of 49 cents an hour for each year of the contract, which represents 1.75% of the average salary. This amounts to a 5.25% increase for the duration of the collective agreement.

The contract sought by the Common Front would cover the period from April 1, 2010 to December 31, 2012.

## **Participate in collective enrichment**

A significant increase in the gross domestic product (GDP) means an increase in the collective wealth. We believe that all employees are entitled to their share of the wealth generated by their work. Our demand therefore calls for resumption of talks to determine an amount to be added to salaries should Québec's GDP (as measured by Statistics Canada) exceed 3.75% for a given year.

## **Skilled workers**

The Common Front is demanding that a management-union working committee be set up to study the problems associated with working conditions for skilled employees, and draw up recommendations for the parties that are designed to attract new personnel and retain experienced employees.

## **Pensions**

Despite all the hubbub in the headlines these past few months, our pension fund is not in peril and the long-term security of benefits is ensured. In addition, we think this round of negotiations is an appropriate time to introduce adjustments aimed specifically at ensuring greater stability for the plan. We therefore propose:

1. To revise the method of funding to better reflect the reality of our pension plan. We would therefore like to introduce changes to the contribution rate, including both upward and downward adjustments, to provide more predictable and stable funding while ensuring the plan's long-term viability.
2. To ensure greater equity among participants, we would like to have the exemption from premiums apply from now on to 25% of the maximum pensionable earnings rather than to the current 35%. This change would be accompanied by a measure ensuring that lower-paid employees will not have to pay more.
3. To apply the same method of indexation from 1982 to 1999 as the method in force since 2000. This measure would come into effect as soon as the plan reports a surplus of more than 20%.
4. To uncap the plan by eliminating the ceiling of 35 years of recognized service. This measure would pay for itself by enabling employees at the end of their career to participate for a few years longer if they so wish. This would also be an incentive to keep the experienced workforce a bit longer, and would help us face the challenges of workforce renewal.

## **Parental rights**

The laws and their interpretation are constantly changing and evolving. Some provisions in our collective agreements have to be re-examined to ensure that they are in line with the legislation and regulations currently in force.

## **Family-work balance**

To better address the issues of renewing the workforce and the new realities of the labour market, we are demanding that a framework law be adopted to facilitate family-work balance in the workplace. This approach in negotiations is ground-breaking, as this measure would apply to all Québec employees.