

## **JACFA General Assembly Minutes**

October 18, 2005 at 5:30 p.m. — Penfield 204

John Abbott College

General Assembly President: Jim Leeke

### **01. Adoption of the Agenda**

Moved by Joel Hartt;  
Seconded by Larry Weller;  
Adopted unanimously.

### **02. Adoption of the Minutes**

Moved by Pierre Gauthier;  
Seconded by John Serrati;  
Adopted unanimously.

### **03. Announcements**

*Jim Leeke* Announced that there was a student present that was taking a Journalism class and was taking notes on the current negotiations.

*Peter Solonysznyj*

Announced that there was going to be a demonstration organized by the Common Front in Montreal on Saturday Oct 29. The demonstration starts at 12:00 p.m. in front of 500 René Lévesque Blvd. This is to show the government how we feel about the present negotiations. You can leave your name with Louise Samoisette at the JACFA office if you're interested in participating. Her extension is 5506.

*Michel Milot* There will be a World Social Forum in Caracas, Venezuela this coming January. FNEEQ has arranged airfare and accommodations for \$995 (possibly supported by FPDC funds). If you are interested in going there, please contact Michel Milot. Come to the office and you will be able to read on this.

### **1.0 Financial Motions – British Columbia Teachers' Federation**

**VOTE**

***Motion: Be it resolved that JACFA donate \$1000. to the British Columbia Teachers' Federation in support of their struggle for a fair, negotiated collective agreement.***

*— Executive Motion.*

*Stephen Bryce*

Stephen explained that the BC teachers are on an illegal strike after having their right to strike taken away and a decree imposed. FNEEQ has sent them a letter giving our support. According to

the news report, they might have all of their assets seized, so we will find out the best way of getting the funds to them before mailing the cheque.

*Joel Hartt:* Asked for an amendment to the motion and could we change the amount from 1000\$ to 2000\$?  
*Jim Leeke:* Your amendment is out of order as the amount cannot be increased without prior notice, it has to be announced in the Agenda before the meeting.

Pierre-Normand Vaillancourt called the question.

Moved by Pierre-Normand Vaillancourt;  
Seconded by Ed Palumbo

The motion passed with 3 opposed.

## **2.0 FNEEQ Motion – Strike Vote**

## **VOTE**

Whereas the Regroupement Cegep of FNEEQ has adopted the CSN Action and Information Plan;

***Motion : Be it resolved, that JACFA adopt the part of the CSN Action and Information Plan mandating a bank of four legal strike days, to be exercised as of November 10, 2005, in the form of rotating, regional strikes, or in any other form, as the state of negotiations may require. – Executive motion.***

*Peter Solonysznyj*

Negotiations have been going on for more than two years. Last spring, FNEEQ cegeps went on legal strike for 1 1/2 days.

This succeeded in:

- putting education issues in the media;
- increasing the number of meetings at the negotiation tables;
- helping convince the new education minister to put off any major shake-up of the cegep system;
- killing the idea of local negotiations. A Fédé des Cegeps / FNEEQ negotiating table was agreed to in June.

JACFA is a part of FNEEQ which represents 35 cegep faculty unions (2/3 of total). FNEEQ is negotiating as part of a CSN-FTQ Common Front which itself represents close to 200,000 public sector workers.

In September the Common Front launched three initiatives:

- 1) increase mobilization of each sector behind its specific demands (working conditions)
- 2) deposit a new counter proposal on salary with the government (13.5% over 5 1/2 years, 3%, 3%, 2.5%, 2.5%, 2.5%, with COLA clause for last three years);
- 3) consult the membership on a four-day strike mandate

What are we asking for?

- Workload improvements
- Allocation for program-related activities
- Resources for teaching weak students

- Better job security for non-permanents
- Integration of Cont. Ed. with better conditions
- Improved pension indexation for 1982-1999
- Protect departmental autonomy & chair release
- Keep Academic Council

What are we being offered?

- 8% over 6 years and 9 months (0%,0%, 2%,2%,2%,2%)
- No additional teaching resources
- No improvements for non-perms
- No improvements for Cont. Ed.
- Removal of Academic Council from the collective agreement
- More work for dept. chairs, with less release

Why strike?

We want a good collective agreement. Negotiations are stalled, both on salary, and on normative issues (working conditions). We believe that increasing the political pressure on the government will increase our chances of obtaining a good settlement.

Let the government know that we are serious about our salary, pension, and workload demands. Show visible, quantifiable support for our negotiating team.

This government is not particularly popular, or particularly strong. The union demands are reasonable, and we are ready to negotiate. A deal is possible this year, but not on the basis of what they are currently offering.

We are not in this alone. The Common Front unites the two biggest labour centrals in Quebec, including the vast majority of health care workers, which gives it a lot of weight. If we get the mandate, from Nov. 10 until Dec. 16, there will be rotating, regional strikes throughout Quebec every weekday. We want to maximize the political pressure on the government, while minimizing problems for the public, including our students. This is also a struggle for the provision of quality public services, including a good college education.

The strike will be legal under the Labour Code. We will know in advance what days we will be going out. JACFA will pay strike pay for picketing. No teaching will take place during strike days. There may be make up days, but we are waiting for a legal ruling on this. The exam schedule may be moved, but we encourage you to look at alternatives that will not penalize students.

**WHO DECIDES?** The membership. To obtain the mandate, we need a double majority: at least 18/35 unions in the regroupement cegep of FNEEQ, AND at least 50% of the members who voted. If obtained, the timing of the strike will be decided by the Common Front. Legal notice must be given to the college. IF THE JACFA GENERAL ASSEMBLY VOTES NO, AND VOTES NOT TO RALLY, JACFA DOES NOT GO ON STRIKE.

Finally, this strike is about respect. We work hard to provide a good education for our students, in conditions that are far from ideal. Our salaries have been falling behind both that of teachers in other provinces, and behind that of equivalent workers in the private sector. The government however is refusing to recognize this and is refusing to negotiate seriously, hiding behind the old excuse of lack of funds. We are not asking for the sky. We are asking to be treated with respect, to be paid a decent salary, to have a pension with reasonable indexation, and be given the teaching resources to enable us to do our jobs properly.

The JACFA Executive urges you to vote in favour of the motion.

**Question period:**

*Sandra Stephenson:*

What do rotating strikes mean exactly?

*Peter Solonysznyj:*

That strikes will happen one or two day at time on a regional basis, rotating throughout the province.

*Sandra Stephenson:*

Is JACFA going to call another vote for the makeup days and how will they be organized?

*Peter Solonysznyj:*

We are not going on strike on our own. We must wait for all of the FNEEQ cegeps and the Common Front to vote. Also, we are hoping that the legal issues that came up last semester with make up days will be resolved in Court.

*Fiona Tomaszewski:*

How are we going to deal with exam days after December 22?

*Peter Solonysznyj:*

The Math dept. found a way of dealing with this, they will move exams back to last week of classes. Final exams are worth 30% so I will move my exams back to the last week of class, and if I do that, then this will liberate the exam space in the gym. Departments have to look at alternatives and we need to look at this practically without messing things up too much for the students.

*Fiona Tomaszewski:*

What about common exams?

*Peter Solonysznyj:*

That's up to the departments and how they decide to operate.

*Mary Hiles:*

Sector by sector going on strike, does this mean that the island of Montreal would be on strike at the same time?

*Peter Solonysznyj:*

Yes, everyone in the Common Front in all sectors (health, education, etc.) would go on the same day, in that specific region.

*Mary Hiles:*

Then Cegeps will have less visibility?

*Peter Solonysznyj:*

The cegep teachers must be sure to be visible.

*Roy Fu:*

Double majority is this for all of CSN or just within the Cegeps?

*Peter Solonysznyj:*

18 out of 35 cegep unions must have a majority vote to get the FNEEQ majority so it's possible that FNEEQ gets the mandate and that the Common Front does not.

*Chantal Pelletier:*

Is it true that strike pay is illegal?

*Peter Solonysznyj:*

Only in British Columbia, it's an illegal strike.

*Diane Talbot:*

What about the Pay period problem? Is this only teachers that are affected by this? Has this issue been addressed?

*Jim Leeke:* There is no loss of salary whatsoever. A year is 365 days but you still get your yearly salary. It is just a timing issue, anyone who gets paid an annual amount divided by 26 weeks (a pay every two weeks) this will happen.

*Pierre-Normand Vaillancourt:*

Did we get a 2% increase from the government in 2003-2004?

*Peter Solonysznyj:*

You are right. But, the government is saying 0% and 0% for the past 2 years (2004-2005, 2005-2006).

*Renée Lallier:*

What is happening with the negotiations with the other sectors?

*Peter Solonysznyj:*

The CSQ was part of the Common Front until March of this year, but they left the Common Front as they thought that they could pursue their own negotiate to settle in the Spring. Their negotiations have not worked up to now, they have no strike mandate and some would like to join the Common Front and some would like to continue to negotiate. We hope that they will get on board with us. Concerning the health sector, the union accreditations have taken up a lot of time but this process is almost over. By November 10 the FSSS should be at the same place as we are. The vast majority of them will have the legal right to strike.

*Vivianne Silver:*

At John Abbott we will have a 4-day strike?

*Peter Solonysznyj:*

For us it is 4 days, but one or two days at a time.

### **Debate portion of this issue:**

*Roy Fu:* A strike is biting the bullet and demonstrating the willingness to sacrifice to have a greater gain. It is a worthy sacrifice, not just personal but we have to look at it in terms of the future of our society.

Minko Sotiron called the question.

Seconded by: Rod Hayward.

Ballots were distributed to JACFA members and collected by the two scrutineers, John Serratti and John Sheshko.

*Jim Leeke:* Do we have a motion to close the vote?

Moved by: Pierre-Normand Vaillancourt

Seconded by: Bob Binette

The motion passed with majority with 0 abstentions and 2 opposed.

Secret balloting was held. John Sheshko and John Serratti acted as scrutineers. The two scrutineers took the ballots, tallied the results, and reported them to the Chair.

*Jim Leeke:* The vote results are in.

**93: for the strike**

**41: against the strike**

No Rally vote is necessary.

*Jim Leeke:* Do we have a motion to destroy the ballots?

Moved by: Pierre-Normand Vaillancourt

Seconded by: Alain André.

Motion to adjourn the meeting moved by Alain André.

/Jane Hannah, secretary.

/October 18, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.

/Revised October 28, 2005