



Special Edition

June 1981

# nouvelles csn



## SPECIAL F.A.S. CONVENTION

**PDF  
IN THE PUBLIC  
SECTOR**

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**THE UNTOLD STORY OF  
THE PROFESSIONAL  
DEFENCE FUND**

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# C.S.N. EVENTS

## June

CSN Confederal Council meeting, in Montreal, at the Sheraton Mont-Royal. Replaces the one scheduled for May.

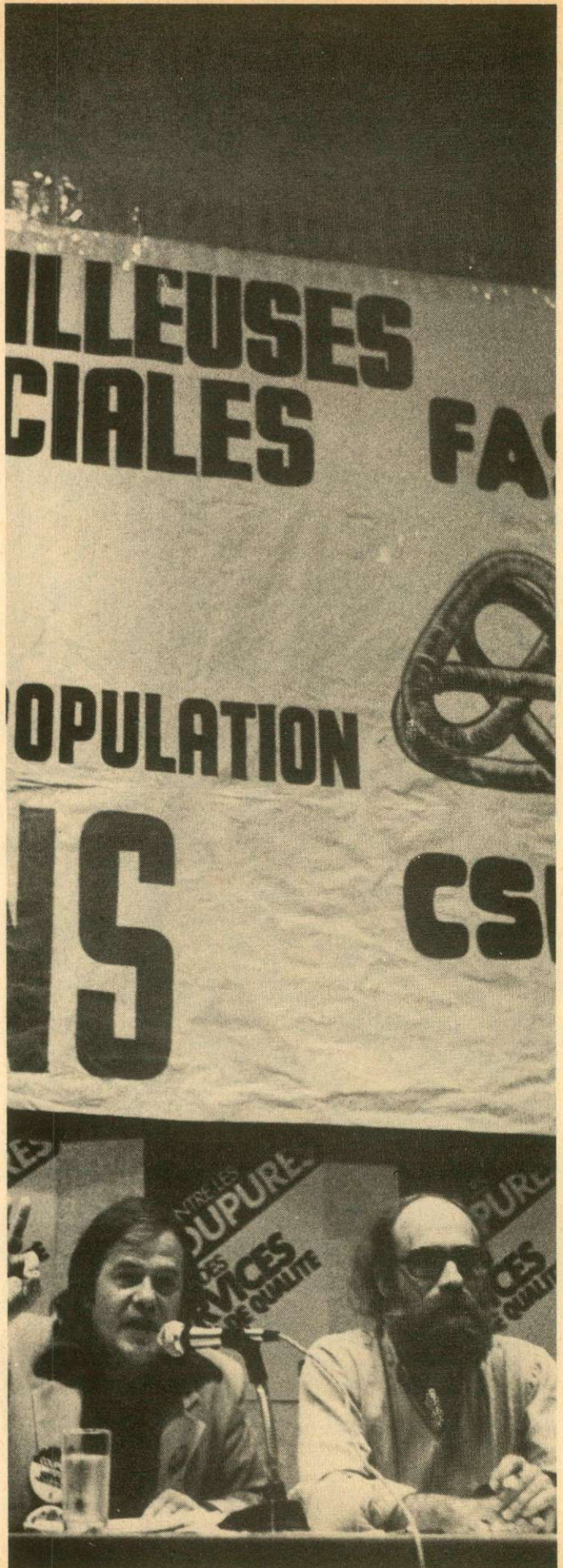
18-21 FNEQ Federal Council, in Trois-Rivières

20-21 FNSBB session for information officers for the membership drive, in Montreal, at CSN headquarters

22-23 CCGN committee meeting, in Montreal, at CSN headquarters

The CSN employees' union general meeting, scheduled for June 12, 13 and 14, was postponed until September 11, 12 and 13, in Quebec City.

**THE PROFESSIONAL  
DEFENCE FUND  
CAMPAIGN AT  
THE HALFWAY  
MARK AND THE  
GOAL IS  
SOLIDARITY**



# C.S.N. TREASURER

## LEOPOLD BEAULIEU

### ADDRESSING THE DELEGATES

### AT THE SPECIAL FÉDÉRATION DES

### AFFAIRES SOCIALES CONVENTION

*A few words to tell you that the campaign we are organizing together in each Federation, in each region and in each CSN affiliated-union is receiving unprecedented support and participation. Up until now, over 95% of the unions we have met with have pledged to do their part.*

*95% of the unions we have met with, all pledged to meet or even to surpass the goals for contributions which have been suggested for them.*

*I am prepared to announce this morning that the contribution made by your Federation and by its affiliated unions is over one million with slightly over half the union general meetings held.*

*And for the movement as a whole, with almost half the union general meetings held the pledges to contribute came to over 3 million if we add up the unions, the Federations and the Central Councils.*

*As many meetings remain to be held as those we have already held, we have to go forward.*

*We have to keep on because the PDF has been providing support to over 5700 workers on strike or locked-out.*

*We have to keep on because our reserve has been used up and without the campaign we have undertaken, we would have to rely on borrowed money to support these strikers.*

*We have to keep on because not only must we support those presently on strike, we must be prepared to support those who may come along.*

*Keep on because we are determined not to be weakened.*

*Keep on because we have a responsibility as a group towards workers who need the bare minimum to undertake or continue a struggle.*

*Keep on because we have to resist the attacks on our basic rights — the right to free association — the right to collective bargaining and the right to strike.*

*Keep on because we must constantly struggle for the right to decent working conditions.*

*And when it is possible to read statements in the paper such as the formula for a healthy economy being higher unemployment to fight inflation and that Gérald Bouey, the Governor of the Bank of Canada asserts we have to get used to having 900 thousand unemployed in Canada and high interest rates. Comrades, unemployment means plant closings and job cut-backs.*

*We must once again say that the workers will never accept the bosses' solutions to the crisis. This is what we will reaffirm together next June 5th in Quebec City and Montreal*

**Continued on page 4**

**LEOPOLD BEAULIEU***Continued from page 3*

when we demonstrate to maintain the right to strike and for the right to work and against plant closings and budget cuts.

It is normal that an additional contribution, be it temporary, should raise some objections because the only place where the workers have a say is the trade union movement.

This means there is no question of censuring or condemning the 7 or 8 FAS unions or the twenty or so other unions in the CSN which are in difficulty or which were unable to support the campaign to rebuild the defence fund as they would have liked to do. We will visit them again and we must explain that the real meaning of this campaign goes far beyond that simply filling up the fund and that this task is a vital one for which they are called upon to visit other unions and meet with their members to reaffirm their commitment; we must explain, convince, and see that they understand the reasons why our movement is going through difficult times.

As we have seen, it is not because the money has been siphoned elsewhere that we are experiencing these temporary difficulties. It is rather because of the demands of trade union struggles, of

struggles to win better conditions and defend the rights we now have, which mean that we must provide an extra effort to support one of the instruments the workers have built in order to improve their chances of winning their demands. This instrument is the PBF.

The CSN is now going through difficult times, but they are also times rich in experience. The responses which we keep receiving from the Federation, the Central Councils, the local unions, are living proof of our movement's vitality. In our organization, we have a marvellous capacity to react instantaneously as soon as major issues are at stake. Other members of the CSN have felt this capacity throughout its history, before us.

We are experiencing the same thing today.

This capacity is called **SOLIDARITY**. A solidarity which is not an empty slogan, a routine phrase, but which demands the proof of generosity and commitment which make this movement different from any other.

For the workers, the crisis is plain to see: it means a 12% inflation rate in 1981! It means debts per person increasing 116% between 1972

and 1978! It means the consumer price index rising by 67.1% during the same period! It means interest rates doubling between 1977 and 1980! It means the equivalent of 5% in wages has been transferred the profits in the national income, during the past three years; in Canada, this transfer amounts to 17.5 billion! It means a real loss in workers' buying power! It means 300,000 Quebecers out of work! It means more than 50 000 massive layoffs between 1977 and 1979! It means more than 80 businesses in which the workers were CSN members closing in the last four years! It means the Reagan budget in the United States, in which only military spending was allowed to increase! It is the one billion in cutbacks foreseen by Finance Minister Parizeau in his latest budget!

All these attacks have effects on our members, who must struggle longer, who have to organize to defend their rights, who must call upon the support provided by the PDF in greater numbers and for longer periods.

This also explains our current problems.

The strike fund now needs \$6 million to enable the workers who are fighting back to continue to

receive support from every member of the CSN. Fundamentally, this \$6 million is there for every CSN member who may need this collective instrument sooner or later.

I am not exaggerating at all. You can check on this by reading **NOUVELLES CSN** which you receive weekly about how the defence fund campaign is responded to in the movement as a whole. It is important to read the reports on general meeting decisions which we receive every day from all regions of Quebec to begin to understand that our movement has roots which go far deeper than the governments, the multinationals, the business community even suspects.

Almost 10% of the unions consulted, in every region, in the F.A.S. or other Federations, have surpassed the suggested goal.

And if throughout the movement, hundreds of salaried or elected militants are at work, it is because they have all understood the importance of maintaining a defence fund which can ensure the vital minimum for those who must struggle to improve their living conditions struggles which have positive effects on ours too.

**Leopold Beaulieu**  
C.S.N. Treasurer

**AS TRAVAILLEURS & TRAVAILLEUSES  
DES AFFAIRES SOCIALES FAS**

CONSCIENTS DE NOS ACQUIS  
CONSCIENTS DE NOS BESOINS  
CONSCIENTS DES BESOINS DE LA POPULATION

**BATISSONS**

CSN



**FAS**

**CSN**

2,000,000 \$

**FAS**

60  
50  
40  
30  
20

**F.D.P.**

**CSN PRESIDENT NORBERT RODRIGUE ALSO TOLD THE DELEGATES TO THE SPECIAL F.A.S. CONVENTION THAT BUDGET CUTBACKS ANNOUNCED BY THE GOVERNMENT IN THE HEALTH CARE, SOCIAL SERVICES AND EDUCATION SECTORS WERE A SETBACK COMPARABLE TO THE ERA OF DUPLESSIS' REGIME.**



**DEMONSTRATION AGAINST BUDGET CUTBACKS AND FOR THE RIGHT TO STRIKE AT ALL TIMES, MONTREAL, JUNE 5TH**

## In 36 Months

**\$6,378,372**  
**to support**  
**public sector**  
**members' struggles**

CSN affiliated workers who are members of the four federations representing public sector employees received a total of \$6,378,372 paid out by the PDF over the past 36 months, in different forms.

This period corresponds to the recent round of Common Front negotiations.

This sum was made public last Friday (text written April 3rd 1981) at the FAS Federal Council by CSN treasurer Léopold Beaulieu.

In June 1976, a decision made by the CSN convention allows the Defence Fund to be used to provide concrete support for the members of the public sector in their negotiations.

In his speech to the F.A.S., Beaulieu explained how this sum totalling over six million was distributed.

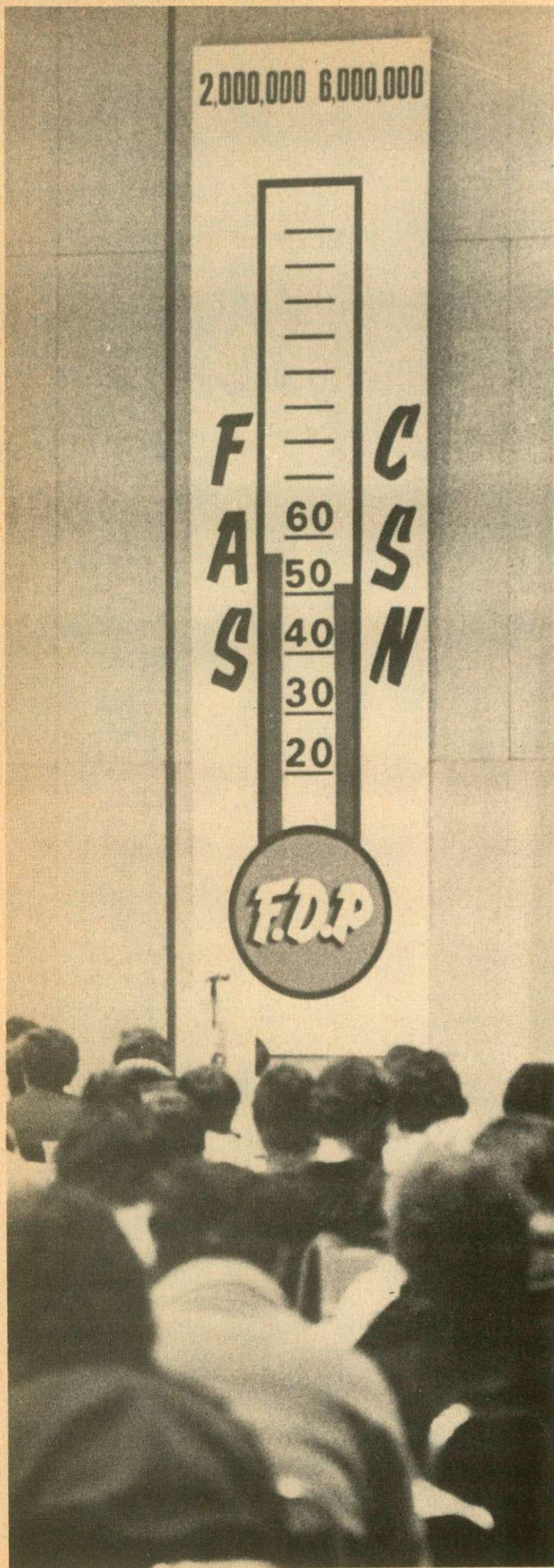
Out of it, \$3,441,553 was paid out in the form of strike benefits and

\$56,349 was paid to workers fired for union activity.

The Comité de coordination des négociations dans le secteur public (Public Sector Negotiations Coordinating Committee) received the sum of \$2,228,803 for education, information, action, Quebec-wide coordination and regional operation; this constitutes direct support to the negotiations. Furthermore, a sum of \$51,024 was spent for preventive publicity.

The amounts paid to local unions and for other strike-related expenses totalled \$480,238. Finally, the legal expenses for the public sector as a whole entailed expenses coming to \$120,425.

“In one form or another, all CSN members reap the benefits of this defensive arm, the defence fund.” stated Léopold Beaulieu to the 600 FAS delegates.



# THE UNTOLD STORY OF THE PDF

In 1982, the Professional Defence Fund (PDF) will be 30 years old. In January 1952, almost 30 years ago, workers in the CSN decided to constitute this fund to better enable members struggling for improved conditions to receive support.

In the beginning, the contribution to this fund was set at 10 cents per month and the strike pay was set at \$2.50 a week. This first 17 months of the fund left us with a deficit of \$163,108.15.

As you can see, this is not the first time the Defence Fund has had problems. In fact, we can go so far as say it is to be expected that a fund of this kind has problems from time to time.

Faced with the 1953 deficit, something had to be done. During the regular convention held in September 1953, two important decisions were made: contributions to the PDF were increased to 25 cents a month, and strike pay was raised to \$6.00 a week.

During the months before this decision, the CSN was supporting strikers in 6 disputes, including the linoleum workers in Montreal and Farnham, which had lasted 4 months, the knitting workers in St-Hyacinthe and the plumbers in Montreal. Two special contributions, \$1 and \$3 had to be solicited.

The measures resulted in the stabilization of the PDF but new problems were on the horizon.

1955: many strikes to support. The September convention raised the contribution per member to 35 cents a month. Soon afterwards,

there were strikes in the paper, textile, chemical industries, the clothing industry, public services, throughout Quebec. These workers, in many sectors of the economy, benefited from strike pay upped to \$8 a week.

In 1957, the CSN lived through one of the most important strikes in its history: the four month strike by 6,800 Alcan workers in Arvida, in the Saguenay. It was after this difficult struggle, which our movement managed to support by every possible means, that a sliding scale for PDF contributions was instituted based on the average wage in the plant or facility. However, unions which had no right to strike (including hospital workers and all other public services) paid a lower rate than those who did enjoy this right.

The strike pay remained at the rate of 8\$ a week for almost ten years. But at the 1966 Convention, during which Marcel Pepin presented his first policy report and a new and more militant stand was taken by the CSN, the defence fund was transformed to better meet the new needs of the confederation. Up to then, the strike benefits were paid out in money by the strike directors.

In 1966, the contribution was raised to between 50 and 75 cents per month, according to pay. This was a significant increase in the amount set aside for this fund, but this motion was passed by an 81% majority of the 1,200 delegates in a secret ballot vote.

At this time, 15 years ago, the special reserve of funds

set aside for difficult periods with more or longer strikes than usual was introduced. In March, of the year after special dues were collected in order to ensure \$4,500,000 to the PDF. This fund was to stop collecting contributions when the assets of the PDF reached \$20 per member and resume when they fell below \$15.

This special dues ranged between \$.50 and \$1.00 a month.

The 1968 Convention, with the report on "The Second Front" also brought about an important change in the confederation's outlook.

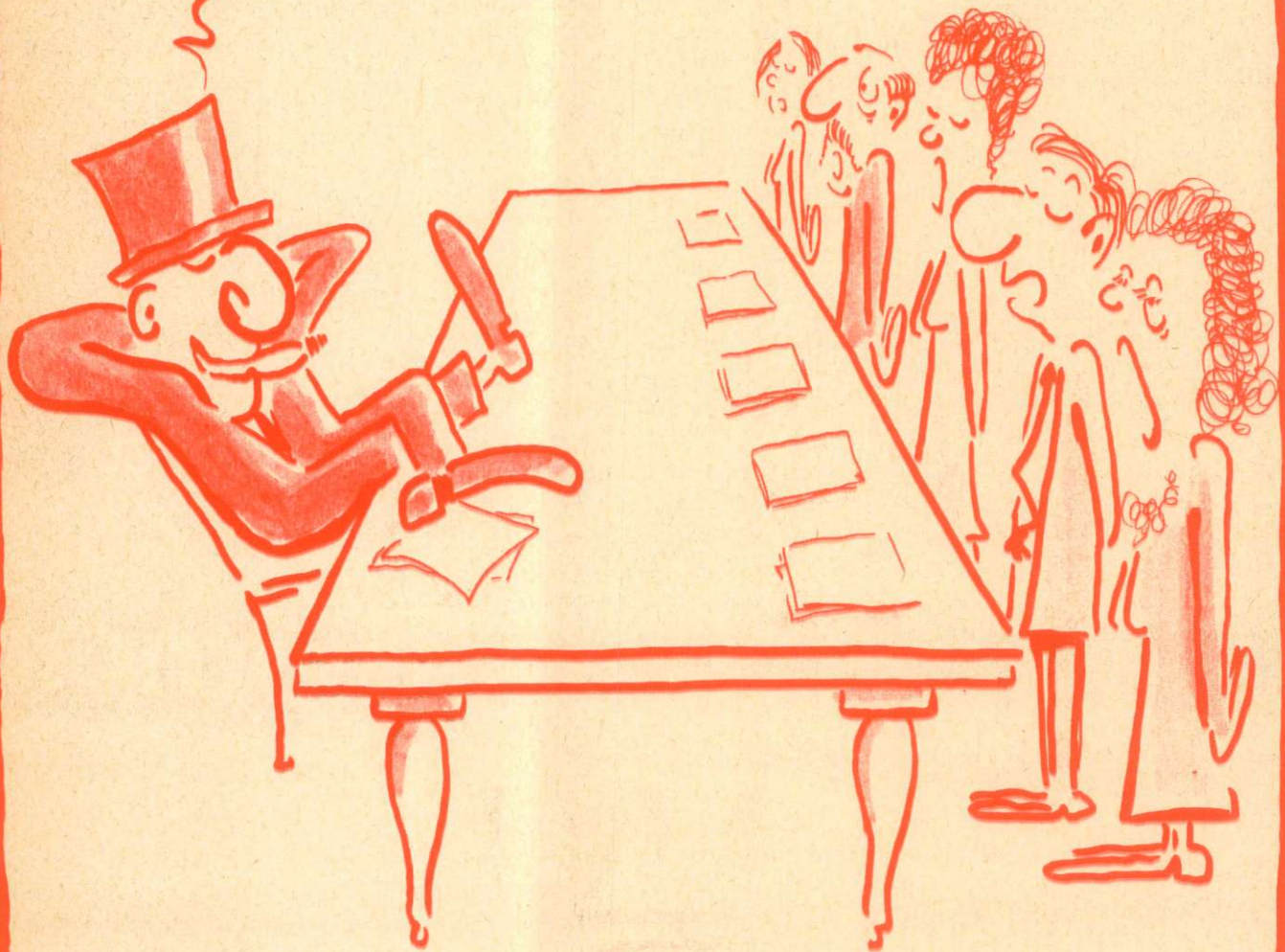
Dues were set at \$15 for persons with dependents and \$10 for others. The 1970 Convention raised the average contribution to \$1.20 per member per month, more or less depending on income. And at the 1972 convention, strike benefits were raised to \$35 and \$20 per week.

FAS members have greatly benefited from the decision to use PDF funds in support of the public sector negotiations, following the historic Common Front struggles in 1972.

In the mid-1970's, the cost of living rose dramatically, and many unions had to fight to re-open their contacts and negotiate Cost of Living Adjustments. this entailed a number of strikers far beyond the predicted figure, which in turn entailed raising the contribution from \$1.40 to \$2.43 per month. Despite this increase, in 1975 a special drive was launched to rapidly collect \$1 million. And in July 75, another special convention established percentage-based dues.

*It's against  
my fundamental  
principles to give  
in to union  
pressure!*

*Our fund  
will outlast  
your principles!*



**RYANEUF**