

NEWS

Quebec Students Show Solidarity Against Charest in Strike

Matt Campbell
Reporter



The Federation des Étudiants Universitaire du Quebec has asked its some 170 000 student members to go one strike. "We ask students to do everything within their means to launch a strike in their universities," stated Pier André Bouchard, President of FEUQ.

George Soule, the National Chairperson of the CFS gave a brief overview of the situation and why it was reached this level. "The strike has been launched in response to the \$103 million cut to the grants program last year by Premier Jean Charest. It is estimated that the cuts drove student debt up by 62% for those already burdened with student debt. Québec students also view this as a prelude to the removal of the tuition fee freeze that has kept university tuition fees at half of the Canadian average. There are already approximately 70,000 CEGEP students on strike in the province.

FEUQ stated that it has done everything in its power to demonstrate to the government that this cut was irresponsible: participation in the various consultations on education, telephone calls to MNAs, demonstrations, targeted actions of every type, advertising and so on.

"By ignoring the social consensus reached on the issue of the \$103M, the government is heading towards a dead end. This leaves students with no other choice but to strike," added Pier André Bouchard in

an interview with Montreal press. The issue has taken over Quebec student newspapers, such as The McGill Daily.

"Across the province, universities whose students are striking have cancelled classes and supported student demands. Many of these students are striking indefinitely. Here at McGill, where students are striking for a single day, the administration attempts to mute democratic protest." The paper reports that although classes are being cancelled all over Quebec, they are still being held at McGill even though an overwhelming majority of students voted to strike for an undetermined period of time beginning Friday, March 18th 2005.

Meanwhile on the other side of the campaign, the Quebec provincial government noted that Quebec students pay the lowest price (1600\$/year) in North America for their studies. Education Minister Jean Marc Fournier says he'd like to work with the students, but he's not sure how much money he can commit to make education more accessible. However, the Charest government still stands firm with their \$103 million cut to the bursary program. Adding to the drama is the fact that the Parti Québécois refuses to endorse the strike.

An estimated 230,000 students in Quebec continue to show solidarity by striking across the province.

Bomb Plot at Saint John High Uncovered

Nick Stewart
News Editor

Saint John Police have discovered a plot by several students to bomb Saint John High in New Brunswick on April 20th, the anniversary of the Columbine High School Massacre and Adolf Hitler's birthday. Three teenage boys were arrested and charged with possessing explosives after materials to make pipe bombs were discovered in their homes. The Globe and Mail reported that the three boys are accused of planning to take revenge on teachers and bullies who they felt had mistreated them. Two more students who have not been charged by police have been suspended from the school. The plot was uncovered when other students brought it to the attention of the principal.

April 2005 Final Exam Schedule

The final examination schedule for the 2005 winter semester can be seen at <http://upei.ca/~cls/dropbox/ExamDates.html>.

May 14, 2005 – Convocation

Convocation this year will be held on Saturday, May 14 with two ceremonies, the Morning Convocation at 10:00 am and the Afternoon Convocation at 2:30 pm. Both will be held in the Chi-Wan Young Sports Centre. For more information regarding convocation, contact Cathy Toombs at the Registrar's office by emailing toombs@upei.ca or visit www.upei.ca/convocation.

Former French Immersion Students: Earn \$25.00 for Research Survey

Are you an Anglophone student? Did you complete an elementary early, middle or late French immersion program? If so, we'd like to hear about what you did in high school and university. Did you stop taking French? Did you enroll in a high school immersion, extended, maintenance, or core/basic French program? Did you complete the high school French program or did you drop French during high school? Did you take post-secondary French courses or did you stop taking French after high school? **If you completed an elementary French immersion program we want to hear from you.** We will pay a limited number of students \$25 to complete a 15-20 minute survey for a large research project. Go to www.cpf.ca and select the Student Survey link in the "What's New" section.