

Grand Accord appetizer: Sharing the crumbs



The 2016 wage negotiations (NAO) wrapped up on Thursday, October 20:

CDIs, CDDs, apprentices: a one-shot bonus of €90

At the opening of the annual wage talks in September we reminded management of its written promise, made in July 2015 in the midst of a strike, of a general wage hike of 0.75 percent in the autumn of 2016. But promises, even written ones, are evidently not worth much. Management said it could not carry out a wage hike given the outlook for 2017. Thus the NAO turned into a somewhat surrealistic debate on how to equitably divide the €230,000 allocated in the 2016 budget for the wage hike.

Within the extremely restricted budgetary constraints we were faced with, SUD notes with tempered satisfaction its demands were satisfied:

- **Management renounced its intention of bonuses and promotions for a select few.**
- **With the wage scale frozen since 2012, SUD** had called instead for an equal gesture for all employees (except directors). The result of the NAO talks: **all CDIs will get a one-shot bonus of around €90 net with their pay for November**, except for the 30 top-earning employees (including the 17 directors).
- **Apprentices and those with professionnalisation contracts** will also get the bonus, as demanded by SUD.
- **Most CDDs to get it as well:** CDDs with contracts of at least 3 months in 2016 and who are employed as of November 1 will get the bonus, thus also meeting the demand of SUD—that CDDs also benefit.
- **French stringers will see their wage scale increase by 0.75% from January 1.** While this is an extremely small amount for journalists in the most precarious position, it is the first time AFP has increased its rates since 2009. Vigilance is needed to ensure the volume of work doesn't fall for stringers as a result of the increased rates.

This gesture doesn't replace a real wage hike. SUD, with other unions, has launched a lawsuit seeking AFP honor wage increases due in 2013 and 2014 under the SPQN press sector agreement. Arguments before the court are scheduled for 22 November.

Conclusions:

- **NAO:** we had a **constructive** negotiation, within a budgetary envelope that was **ludicrous**.
- **Grand Accord:** management is willing to let the unions negotiate details—if we accept the premise of **longer working hours** (for less pay).

The 2016 NAO was thus an appetizer for the Grand Accord: **if we accept the famine there is room to negotiate who gets what food is left.** The big IF is accepting the framework set by management. For us, it is clearly a loud: **Non!**

Reject working longer hours!

