SYNDICAT DE LA MUSIQUE DU QUEBEC

Quebec Musicians' Union

On November 2, 3 and 4, the SMQ held its third general meeting. Yves Alix was re-elected Vice-President for Information and we got a letter and news of the meeting from him. The following are the priorities agreed upon for 1980:

Organization: recruitment of new members will be focussed on hotels, cabarets, ‘brasseries’ and other smaller venues. Three new regional branches will be set up. The SMQ will pursue an information campaign about the American Federation of Musicians (If any of our readers have information about the AFM—copies of contracts, AFM newsletters, examples of unpleasant encounters with the AFM—please send them to Yves Alix, C.P. 205 Station “La Cité”, Montreal, P.Q. H2W 2M9).

Negotiations: expansion and adaptation of SMQ contracts to suit many different types of employment situations. Negotiations with Radio-Québec continue.

Information: regular publication of the SMQ newsletter, as well as publishing a brochure about the music industry.

Services: besides developing employment for its members, the SMQ will publish a directory of its members and their skills and a list of employers by region. The union is also working on a group insurance plan and price reduction for members on instruments, supplies, transportation, etc.

Yves says that in Quebec there is a crisis in the music industry; the big employers are getting bigger and eliminating the smaller ones. Yves recently interviewed the boss of a big recording distribution company in Quebec who told him that the company was going to transform itself into a multination and produce records in English for the international market. If employers of musicians are getting bigger and fewer, the role of a union like the SMQ in negotiating with these employers becomes very difficult, especially when confronted with the AFM negotiating throughout the rest of North America.

Rika Ruebsaat

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