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BULLETIN

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MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

Speaking of victories...

... I would certainly choose to highlight the victory represented by the passage of Bill S-3 in the House of Commons on November 17, 2005. This was a victory for the whole of Canadian society, and in particular for our official language communities. I would be remiss if I did not give the greater part of the credit for this victory to the Honourable Jean-Robert Gauthier who, for several years before he retired from the Senate, tabled various versions of the bill on four occasions, before it was finally passed with the sponsorship of Don Boudria, MP. I have always supported Mr. Gauthier in the relentless battle he waged to reach this historic victory.

Since my appointment, I have repeatedly recommended that the government amend the *Official Languages Act* to make Part VII binding. Part VII sets down the government's obligations in relation to the development and vitality of Canada's official language communities. Indeed, this was the thrust of Bill S-3: to remove all ambiguity surrounding this part of the Act. It was high time that the legal scope of the government's commitment under Part VII was spelled out.

In the future, federal departments and agencies will have to take into consideration the particular needs of official language communities when setting up new programs or initiatives. These communities now have in their hands a powerful development tool, wherever they may be in Canada.

Needless to say, I am delighted by these amendments to the Act, which mark a historic step in progress towards equality for English and French in Canadian society. The development of official language communities and the promotion of linguistic duality are no longer the weak links in the Act. With the passage of S-3, parliamentarians have shown energetic leadership. It is now up to each government institution to act to give practical effect to their commitment. In other words, every federal institution must acquire the necessary mechanisms and resources to work with the communities, and make a concrete commitment. The role of Canadian Heritage will be all the more important, in that it will be front and centre in initiatives designed to implement the new provisions of the Act. OCOL, for its part, will retain its role as monitor. We shall follow with interest the implementation of these provisions by federal institutions in support of the development and vitality of official language minority communities.

If this does not come to pass, there is now the possibility of recourse before the courts. It is to be hoped that all these efforts and initiatives will suffice, and that the legislative changes flowing from the passage of Bill S-3 will be translated into concrete action. Conclusive results will obviate the need for legal redress.

The passage of S-3 truly represents a historic step. The worth of a democracy is measured, among other things, by the treatment it affords its minorities. By agreeing to accept its responsibilities towards official language communities, Canada is enhancing its reputation as a world leader in the field of human rights. This refinement of the Act, moreover, was the fruit of sustained cooperation among parliamentarians and representatives from government and the official language communities. A collective victory, if ever there was one!

As you know, I am moving into the last phase of my seven-year term as Commissioner of Official Languages. I shall be feeling the same enthusiasm through this period as I did in August 1999, and I draw special inspiration from the words of celebrated poet T.S. Eliot: "What we call the beginning is often the end / And to make an end is to make a beginning / The end is where we start from." In a constantly evolving society, achieving equality between linguistic communities remains an ongoing task. Nevertheless, I remain more determined than ever to see this equality respected.

That said, we have our work cut out for us over the coming months. In my most recent annual report, I gave a number of examples of items on our agenda. My team and I will be doing everything in our power to ensure that federal institutions do what is required to achieve results that are consistent with the official language policy and directives. We shall also be supporting our political

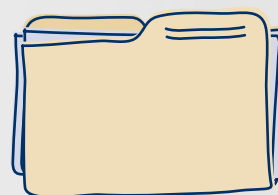
leaders and administrators who will, we hope, be offering us a vibrant and generous vision of our country. With the passage of S-3, we have reason to view the future with even greater optimism, although without ever letting our guard down.

The overture is playing for the year 2006. May it bring all of you an abundant measure of peace, prosperity, health and happiness.

Good Reading!



Dyane Adam



MAKING PROGRESS IN IMMIGRATION

Immigration is among the Commissioner's greatest social concerns. On many occasions, Dr. Adam has reminded the Government of Canada that, if it truly believes that immigration is one of the cornerstones to Canada's demographic and economic growth, then it must exercise equity in developing the country's two official language communities.

The Commissioner was pleased to learn that, in September 2005, Canadian Heritage awarded the Société des Acadiens et des Acadiennes du Nouveau-Brunswick (SAANB) an initial grant of \$20,000 through its Multiculturalism Program. This funding will enable the SAANB to establish a provincial policy on Francophone immigration. The organization is also slated to receive financial assistance from Citizenship and Immigration Canada and from the provincial government.

The SAANB strategy is aimed at establishing a permanent reception structure for recent French-speaking immigrants, helping them become integrated into New Brunswick's Francophone Acadian community. A 2002 study* published by the Commissioner revealed that immigrants

who already communicate in French at the time of their arrival in Canada (fewer than 10% of all immigrants) tend primarily to settle in Quebec. As a result, believes the Commissioner, the country's other Francophone communities are deprived of an important source of growth that could help them maintain their demographic weight.

The financial support granted to the SAANB will work to encourage the settlement of Francophone immigrants in New Brunswick and, in so doing, will enhance the province's economic, social, and cultural development. To read about one such example, see the article *We All Win*, on page 13.

* *Immigration and the Vitality of Canada's Official Language Communities: Policy, Demography and Identity.*

A NOTEWORTHY INITIATIVE

Commendable efforts continue to be made in federal institutions to foster a working environment that respects language rights, and the Commissioner considers it her duty to make these efforts known. As one example, she would like to highlight an initiative currently underway at the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).

Learning a second language can sometimes be a daunting experience. Recognizing this fact, the CRA recently launched a pilot project designed to assist some 30 managers as they carry out their duties in both official languages. The goal of the project is to determine how the Agency can help managers overcome obstacles to learning French.

The Agency opted for an unconventional type of language training that runs for 18 months. In addition to the linguistic component, this training also incorporates leadership issues.

Dr. Adam is hopeful that the CRA initiative will prove successful, leading to a work culture that truly embodies Canada's linguistic duality, ensuring Anglophone and Francophone employees equal respect, and providing Canadians with high-quality service, whichever their official language of choice.



A GOLD MEDAL FOR OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

"Feel the wave of emotion"

This was the slogan for the 11th FINA (Fédération internationale de natation) World Championships held in Montréal from July 16 to 31, 2005, the first time in FINA history that the Championships were held in North America. This prestigious gathering was attended by more than 2,300 coaches, athletes and officials from over 160 countries, representing five aquatic sports. The main events at Montréal 2005, which was also one of Canada's largest international youth sporting events since the 1976 Olympic Games, were broadcast to a potential audience of over 800 million television viewers.

From the opening of the Championships to the closing ceremonies, Canada's two official languages were on display to the world, from the islands of Jean-Drapeau Park in the St. Lawrence River. If the Commissioner could have awarded a gold medal, our official languages would have taken their

place at the top of the podium. Montréal 2005 showed the world that official languages co-exist in Canada in unity and harmony. In hospitality and security services, signage, advertising, documentation, translation and interpretation, radio and TV broadcasting, and service in kiosks and restaurants, English and French were present equally throughout.

INFOACTION would also like to mention one of the numerous factors that contributed to the success of bilingualism at the 11th FINA World Championships. Funded by Canadian Heritage, the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec sponsored a summer employment project providing 33 students from across Canada with the opportunity to work at Montréal 2005. Functional bilingualism was a condition of employment. The college and university students selected for the project had the

chance to work in both official languages at an international event. Additionally, they were given duties closely linked to their respective fields of study (health, social services, law, administration, etc.). Not only did they work in French and English, but student employees also had a unique opportunity to learn about the resources required to organize and manage an event of this size, to say nothing of the chance to meet people from around the world.

Dr. Adam would like to congratulate Montréal 2005 Honorary President Richard Pound, and Co-President and Mayor of Montréal Gérald Tremblay, for promoting

Canada's official languages and giving them their rightful place. Dr. Adam would also like to congratulate the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec for providing 33 young Canadians with the opportunity to work in both official languages at the Championships.

The 11th FINA World Championships will go down as a model in the annals of official languages history.



YOURS TO DISCOVER

Have you ever visited the bilingual Internet portal Culture.ca? If not, there's no time like the present. Launched in 2003 by Canadian Heritage, the Culture.ca site can help you locate Canadian cultural content on the Internet. Drawing more than 200,000 visitors every month, the site includes some 12,000 links to useful Canadian cultural sites, 30% of which offer cultural content in French. Meanwhile, the Culture.ca site itself is produced in both official languages.

Excerpt from the study *Bridging the Digital Divide*, p.15

A TRUE STORY IN THREE ACTS

Despite appearances, the following is not taken from a drama by Shakespeare or Tremblay.

Let's set the stage. The year is 2000. The place is Wellington, in Prince Edward Island's Evangeline region, at the offices of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC). And...action!

Act 1

In November 2002, the Commissioner of Official Languages receives a complaint about HRSDC. The individual filing the complaint is challenging the Department's decision to cut back the Wellington office's hours of service, effective September 2002. This would mean that from September to December, the office would no longer be open every weekday morning, and only one person would be there to serve the public on Wednesday mornings. This is the second time in five years that service hours have been reduced. As a result, the region's French-speaking residents no longer receive the same quality or quantity of services as those available to the majority. According to community representatives, the HRSDC decision would deprive the community in the Evangeline region of a service that is deemed essential to its economic, social and cultural development.

Act 2

The Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages (OCOL) investigates to determine whether the HRSDC decision to change the Wellington office hours is consistent with Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*. The OCOL officer responsible for the case discusses the impact of reducing services on the community's development, with community leaders as well as with the Department's administrative authorities. OCOL also holds more than a dozen interviews with Wellington business people, academics, etc. OCOL does an in-depth review of the lengthy documentation it receives from the various stakeholders. OCOL finds that HRSDC has failed to comply with section 41 of the *Official Languages Act* setting out the Government of Canada's

commitment to "enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and supporting and assisting their development." The complaint is substantiated. Finally, a preliminary report recommends that HRSDC continue discussions with community representatives, and consultations last until March 2005.

Act 3

And so we arrive at the final scene. Without detailing everything that happens from the time a complaint is filed until its resolution, let's see how a community learns that a complaint can be an effective agent of change.

In this example, OCOL clearly demonstrated that HRSDC did not meet its obligation under Part VII of the *Official Languages Act* to focus particular attention on the needs of a linguistic minority. In response to OCOL's recommendations, the Department reviewed its decision to cut back service in the Wellington office, ensuring that the impact of any decision will be to support the development of the Francophone community in the Evangeline region, in compliance with its mandate and with Part VII of the Act.

Finally, in September 2005, HRSDC announced that the Wellington office would be staffed five mornings a week to meet the needs of the Francophone community. In other words, a new bilingual employee will be at the Wellington office, every weekday morning.

The moral of the story? Even a single complaint to OCOL can result in a clear change that benefits Canadians.



AN INDUSTRY AT THE FOREFRONT

A leadership role

It is no surprise that Canada, with its rich tradition of institutional bilingualism, has built a language industry that extends beyond the country's borders. A new building under construction in Gatineau, Quebec, is eloquent proof of this achievement. The institution is already recognized as a world leader in language research and development.

We are speaking of the Language Technologies Research Centre (LTRC), announced in the federal government's March 2003 *Action Plan for Official Languages*. According to the Plan, the purpose of the LTRC is to support Canadian research in the language industry and the development of new solutions in language technology. Also in the Plan, the government announced that the Centre would be built on the campus of the Université du Québec en Outaouais (UQO), part of Canada's National Capital Region. Construction began in early 2005 and will be completed in 2006. The 54,000 square-metre centre will house approximately 150 experts currently working in the language industry, and include laboratories and the technological equipment required for research projects.

The Commissioner is very pleased with the creation of the Centre. She has often reminded the government of the urgent need to support the creation and dissemination of technology-based tools. In a special study,* Dr. Adam recommended that the Canadian government "promote

research and development of linguistic tools in both official languages in order to further develop the language industry in Canada." Dr. Adam applauds all language industry initiatives introduced in response to her recommendations, and hopes that the government will systematically provide researchers and the language industry with the language resources at its disposal.

It should be noted that, in 2003, Industry Canada obtained \$10 million under the *Action Plan for Official Languages* to enhance the visibility of the language industries and reduce their fragmentation. Under this mandate, Industry Canada participated in creating the Language Industry Association (AILIA), an organization that plays a leadership role.

Key partnerships

In recent years, the Université du Québec en Outaouais has successfully implemented innovative language study programs, notably by training translators, writers, terminologists and revisers. This proven track record made it an early and obvious choice to play a leadership role in creating the LTRC. UQO negotiated key research partnerships, including partnerships with the National Research Council of Canada and the Translation Bureau, a special operating agency of Public Works and Government Services Canada. Other important partners

* *The Government of Canada and French on the Internet*, Ottawa, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 1999.

include Industry Canada, the Government of Quebec's Ministère du Développement économique et régional et de la Recherche, AILIA and the Gatineau Economic Development Corporation. Partnerships such as these not only contributed to the creation of the LTRC, but are also playing a role in the development and marketing of innovative technologies that will generate significant spin-offs and provide a competitive edge on international markets.

Language technologies, research and training

Collaborating with universities, governments, associations and industry, the LTRC has already begun developing various programs, including translation and revision, software and Web site localization, post-synchronization, language training, speech processing and multilingual processing for information and communication, as well as document and multilingual content search and analysis and the management of language functions.

UQO offers a graduate degree in localization. The program is designed to meet the needs generated by the rapid growth in hypermedia software and documents. UQO is the first university in North America to offer this degree program.

Economic spin offs

Canada's language industry is an important sector of the economy. The industry posts total annual sales of over \$1 billion, and it is expected that the international market, which represented US\$8 billion in 2003, will reach \$15 billion in 2006. The industry includes more than 2,000 businesses and employs some 30,000 Canadians.

Based on its bilingualism, its openness to multiculturalism and its skills in the information and communications technologies, Canada is among the international leaders in this dynamic and constantly evolving industry. Its first trade fair, held a few months ago at the Ottawa Congress Centre, attracted an impressive host of visitors from around the world.

A featured role on the world stage

The private sector/public sector partnership created to build the LTRC is a good example of Canada's collaboration in and commitment to advancing knowledge and promoting Canada's language industry. The Centre will provide Canadian language businesses with an opportunity to distinguish themselves internationally and increasingly position themselves as world leaders in terminology standards, quality control and linguistic databases, in multiple languages.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL THERE'S A WAY !

It happened in Winnipeg. To be more precise, it took place in Winnipeg's City Hall. All because there was a will to respect the linguistic duality of the city. As you know, there is a large Francophone community in the area, and the Council's goal to provide the French-speaking population with effective bilingual municipal services is indeed a priority.

The WAY City Hall found to improve its services to the francophone community is an 11-week French-language training course set up in cooperation with French instructors from federally sanctioned programs. Seven Winnipeg councillors as well as several office assistants registered for the French course taught at City Hall.

This interesting initiative undertaken by the City has proven its commitment to learn more about Winnipeg's Francophone citizens. It also indicates in practice that

French-speaking citizens are treated with consideration and respect. The City clearly conveyed the message that there is a will to better communicate with the Francophone community as well as to improve the active offer of services in French.

The Commissioner applauds Winnipeg City Council for this initiative, a solid step to enhance the relations with the French-speaking population. Dr. Adam hopes this project will be a success story in the areas of language training and national unity. She regards it as an important cooperative endeavour for which the Council is to be commended.

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

With the explosive growth of the Internet, a marked imbalance has developed between the volume of French-language content and tools available on-line and the expectations and needs of Francophones in Canada. Furthermore, the creation of the Government On-Line initiative has presented significant challenges to ensuring that the federal government fulfills its official languages obligations on all its Web sites. For these reasons, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Language published two studies* on this issue in 2002. The recommendations in the studies focused on increasing the presence of French on the Internet and ensuring that English and French enjoy equal status on Government of Canada Web sites.

On September 13, 2005, the Commissioner of Official Languages, Dr. Dyane Adam, released a study entitled *Bridging the Digital Divide: Official Languages on the*

Internet. According to the study, despite certain shortcomings, the Government of Canada's efforts have resulted in significant progress. Of the 28 recommendations in the 2002 reports, almost half have been or are in the process of being fully implemented, and five have been partially implemented. Six new recommendations were recently added to the list.

According to the study, the proportion of French-language Internet content has increased, but it still accounts for only 5% of total Internet content. Accordingly, the study encourages the government to intensify and enhance the measures it has already implemented in response to the previous studies. In the Commissioner's words: "The Internet is on its way to becoming a giant global library. Canada and other countries of the Francophonie must increase their efforts to ensure that the French language is well represented."

* *Official Languages Requirements And Government On-Line*, Ottawa, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2002.

Official Languages on the Internet: Web Sites of Diplomatic Missions and International Organizations, Ottawa, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2002.

Progress must continue

The Commissioner also drew attention to the major accomplishments of the Government On-Line initiative, and to the fact that the Government of Canada has won several awards for the quality of its sites. This year, for the fifth consecutive year, Canada placed first among 22 countries in the delivery of government services on the Web.

Despite these successes, however, there is still work to be done to improve centralized co-ordination and avoid problems such as the Cyberaide.ca site, where the quality of the French-language menu was very poor. Dr. Adam reminds the government that it must fulfil its obligations. At the release of the study, Dr. Adam stated that, "The Government of Canada must be accountable for Internet issues. It needs to have a vision of the future and clearly defined benchmarks, which is why I recommend implementing a governance

framework specific to this issue. This framework would, among other things, identify a department that would be the key player in this issue, ensure that English and French are used equally on government Internet sites, and bridge the digital divide between English- and French-speaking Canadians."

The Commissioner hopes that the Government On-Line initiative will routinely offer English and French content that is equal in quality, and that the Internet will become a powerful cultural, social and economic lever in both official languages. According to the Commissioner, the implementation by the Canadian government of the recommendations presented in the study is crucial to ensuring that both English- and French-speaking Canadians have equal access to our knowledge-based society.



DID YOU KNOW? **- MOVING BEYOND DIFFICULTIES...**

In addition to considerably increasing the funds invested in digitizing Canadian cultural content in French, Canadian Heritage has also established linguistic criteria for funded projects and created the bilingual cultural portal Culture.ca.

Industry Canada has launched the Language Industries Program (LIP), an initiative that is expected to promote a higher profile for Canadian language industries in national and international markets. The program is also intended to foster an increase in the number of language professionals in Canada, thus responding to the current lack of translators that represents a major limitation on the translation and digitization of French-language content.

The Canadian International Development Agency has stepped up aid to encourage a number of Francophone African countries to join the information superhighway.

Excerpts from the study *Bridging the Digital Divide*, p. 3

A MEDICAL SCHOOL LIKE NO OTHER

There's more than one reason the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM), which opened its doors on September 13, 2005, is a school like no other. For starters, NOSM is the first new medical school to open during the Internet age—the first in 30 years. It is also the first school to operate at twin sites, which are 1,000 kilometres apart: the West Campus is located at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, and the East Campus at Laurentian University in Sudbury.

Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty officially opened NOSM, using the same leading-edge technology that will link remote communities with the School. Canada's Commissioner of Official Languages, Dr. Dyane Adam, and Ontario Lieutenant Governor James Bartleman also joined in the festivities via videolink from Ottawa and Toronto. Broadcast as a videoconference to Lakehead University in Thunder Bay and Laurentian University in Sudbury, the opening ceremony was attended by a number of distinguished guests, including Premier McGuinty and His Excellency John Ralston Saul at the Laurentian site, and Aboriginal leader Elijah Harper and Ontario Minister of Health George Smitherman participating from Thunder Bay.

The mandate of this innovative school is somewhat different from the mandate of Ontario's other medical schools. NOSM places a special emphasis on community-based medicine, giving priority to the special needs of Ontario's rural and northern communities and reflecting their specific circumstances. The School is based on the premise that medical students tend to practise where they have studied (as several international studies have shown), and the School's directors have a key objective: to gradually reduce the shortage of doctors in Northern Ontario, which is currently undersupplied by at least 400 physicians.

In its first year, NOSM received over 210 applications for 56 places. Of the 56 students selected, 18% are Francophone, 17% are bilingual, 11% are Aboriginal and 78% have lived in Northern Ontario for at least 10 years.

The Government of Ontario has committed to investing \$95.3 million over three years in the School's development, and an additional \$5 million in financial assistance to students registered at the School, to ensure that no one is refused admission because of a lack of funds. The federal government has invested \$6 million to support biomedical research and leading-edge information technology systems. These systems will make it possible for students to visit remote communities yet remain in contact with NOSM, clinicians and patients, giving them ongoing access to the information and tools that are essential for their studies and research. The School expects to graduate at least 50 doctors each year. Although instruction currently occurs in English only, Francophone communities expect the two universities to deliver on their promise to ensure that the student body is at least 17% Francophone. According to 2001 Census data, Francophones account for 18% of the population in the North, a reality that should be reflected in the courses offered and in student enrolment. NOSM has no other choice if it is to remain faithful to its mission to train physicians and ensure they have the skills they need to treat the health problems of northern residents and provide them with appropriate health care.

In the words of Founding Dean Dr. Roger Strasser at the official opening, this institution will play a unique role in Ontario. "Since beginning our work on this project three years ago, the staff of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine has promised to create a medical school like no other. We want to reaffirm that promise to the people of Ontario and to you students of the Charter Class here today."

CARREFOUR D'IMMIGRATION RURALE: A NATIONAL MODEL

A national success if ever there was one! An innovative project with humble beginnings has Saint-Léonard, a small town in northwest New Brunswick, making headlines across Canada. The Carrefour d'immigration rurale, although still in its infancy, is already a model for rural development and capacity building that is creating growing interest from coast to coast.

Interestingly, this "adventure" first began in Washington, D.C. In 2000, Father Jacques LaPointe, who hails from Saint-Léonard, was appointed vicar of a Catholic parish in a Washington suburb. The parish is home to over 103 nationalities, including 500 French-speaking families from Africa and Haiti. Father LaPointe described Saint-Léonard in such glowing terms that a group of Francophone parishioners decided to visit this corner of Canada. An initial visit in 2001 was followed by annual visits, and the families who were interested in moving there had an opportunity to experience the region's four seasons. They met with the town council, local business people, immigration experts and representatives of the federal and provincial governments, and finally decided to emigrate to New Brunswick. Even Father Lapointe decided to return home with them.

The residents of Saint-Léonard spared no effort in making the newcomers feel at home. The community's leaders quickly realized how energetic the newcomers were and that, given their skills and knowledge, they could make a contribution to the region. The Carrefour d'immigration rurale, the result of a coordinated group effort and a high level of community involvement, was created and has grown steadily since then. In August, Saint-Léonard welcomed its first immigrant family under the program.

In a very short time, the project, managed by Father LaPointe, has become a celebrated success, now numbering 10 employees. September 12, 2005, marked the official opening of this first rural immigration centre outside Quebec, and the Commissioner was on hand to celebrate (see *We All Win* on page 13 for excerpts from her speech). Funding from the project comes mainly from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, via the Rural Secretariat, in cooperation with the New Brunswick Department of Intergovernmental and International Relations. The remarkable involvement of the Town of Saint-Léonard is a critical factor in the initiative's success. The Edmundston campus of the Université de Moncton will play a major role, organizing conferences, international meetings, and so on. Two other locations have already joined the Carrefour, one in Prince Edward Island's Evangeline region and the other in Saint-Léon and Notre-Dame de Lourdes, Manitoba.

The mission of the Carrefour is to develop, create and assess a model for sustainable rural immigration to Francophone communities in Canada by fostering a participatory approach. The organization will create and develop tools and strategies to help rural Francophone communities attract, host and harmoniously integrate immigrant families and individuals.

In addition to helping immigrants fit into their new community, the Carrefour hopes to become a solution to a very serious population problem in Canada, particularly in Atlantic Canada. According to Statistics Canada, 44% of Maritimers live in rural communities, double the national average. Atlantic Canada is also seeing a decline in its rural population, a problem that has both leaders and

residents concerned. According to the two most recent censuses (1996 and 2001), the rural population in the four provinces has fallen by 5%, a loss of 74,000 people.

The opening of the Carrefour d'immigration rurale has raised many hopes. All the partners involved in its operation intend to develop, for New Brunswick, and even for all of Canada, a model that address the challenges of Francophone immigration and helps enrich rural communities, not only economically, but from a human and a socio-cultural perspective as well. The Carrefour has

successfully developed an innovative human approach, as the Commissioner pointed out in her speech in Saint-Léonard (highlights from her speech are included in this issue of INFOACTION).

To all the people involved in creating the Carrefour d'immigration rurale, the Commissioner wishes you resounding success for many years to come!

WE ALL WIN

This was the essence of the message delivered by the Commissioner of Official Languages at the opening of the Carrefour de l'immigration rurale de Saint-Léonard in New Brunswick on October 18th. The winners in this successful initiative are both the new arrivals and the residents who have welcomed them enthusiastically and warmly to this rural community.

In her speech at the Carrefour opening, Dr. Adam reviewed the reasons for the initiative's success, then identified the challenges of integrating new immigrants within a rural community. We are all familiar with the Commissioner's interest in immigration, a major societal issue that she focuses on, citing the challenges of immigration from the perspective of the proportional decline of the French-Canadian population. In two studies published by the Commissioner,* she strongly encourages the Government of Canada to find concrete means of ensuring that official language communities derive equal benefit from immigration. The Carrefour d'immigration rurale de Saint-Léonard is proof positive that innovative immigration projects are possible.

In her speech, Dr. Adam gave examples of her commitment to and actions on this portfolio: numerous public activities, in the form of speeches, meetings and appearances before parliamentary committees, a round table on this issue to which academics and community representatives were invited, and so on. Also, in November 2003, in response to her activities and recommendations and of those by leaders from Canada's Francophone and Acadian communities, Citizenship and Immigration Canada adopted the Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities. The Strategic Framework resulted in an increase in and regionalization of Francophone immigration to areas outside major urban centres and the implementation of numerous initiatives.

The Commissioner emphasized the human and respectful approach adopted by the residents of the Saint-Léonard host community. "[Translation] Successful integration is the result of a clear understanding of the reciprocal duties of everyone involved in the host process. We must understand that new immigrants bring with them not only a great deal of hope, but many fears as well. They often

* *Immigration and the Vitality of Canada's Linguistic Communities: Policy, Demography and Identity*, Ottawa, Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2000.

Official Languages and Immigration: Obstacles and Opportunities for Immigrants and Communities, Ottawa, Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2002.

have to learn everything: language, culture, customs, traditions, social obligations and so on. But we also have much to learn from them. We need to know how to listen and understand.” Dr. Adam paid tribute to the people who have made the Carrefour a true crossroads—a forum and place to meet, exchange ideas and opinions, and offer mutual assistance, a place where everyone can benefit. She cited Saint-Léonard as a model to emulate across Canada.

Dr. Adam concluded by recalling that we all have an interest in building host communities that are open to the world, and by expressing her hopes that projects such as Saint-Léonard’s will propagate elsewhere in Canada. This

is starting to happen. Such initiatives are essential for regional development and for enhancing our social cohesiveness. The Carrefour d’immigration rurale de Saint-Léonard is eloquent proof that basing an initiative on our values and our past is the best way to ensure its future. In the words of poet Victor Hugo: “Qui prend le passé pour racine/ A pour feuillage l’avenir.”* [Translation: a firm connection with the past is the best assurance of a sound future].

* Victor Hugo, “Fonction du poète”. In: “Les rayons et les ombres”, Œuvres poétiques, Volume I, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, NRF, p.1031.



Claude Haché



Denise Lécuyer

In the past year, two new Commissioner’s Representatives joined the OCOL team. Claude Haché is now the Commissioner’s Representative for the Atlantic Region, and Denise Lécuyer is the Commissioner’s Representative for the Manitoba and Saskatchewan Region. They can be reached at the following numbers:

Atlantic Region

(506) 851-7047
1 800 561-7109

**Manitoba and
Saskatchewan Region**

(204) 983-2111
1 800 665-8731

MODERNIZING A REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

While recognizing that our linguistic regime has enriched the lives of all Canadians, the Commissioner of Official Languages acknowledges that there is still much to be done. Dr. Adam reiterates her hope that the Canadian government will give new momentum to Canada's linguistic duality. In other words, it is her hope that the regulatory framework of the *Official Languages Act* will be reassessed and modernized so as to make more progress toward achieving true equality between the country's two language groups.

The Commissioner addressed this issue in terms of the exportability of language management expertise, making it the theme of her speech last summer in Paris to the 26th Annual Congress of the Association of French Speaking Jurists of Ontario.

It is a well-known fact that several multilingual countries have been inspired by language management in Canada, and specifically, by the way Canada ensures respect for language rights. Mainly because of its ombudsman role and its expertise, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages has often been consulted on language issues, notably by China, Russia, Wales, Sri Lanka, Spain, Mali, South Africa and Ireland.

During her Paris speech, Dr. Adam reviewed the history of language management, highlighting certain important achievements, and discussed the international scope of Canada's system. The Commissioner also explained why Canada, rich in its harmonious diversity, is regarded abroad as a country that has been able to value its diversity by guaranteeing respect for its minorities directly in its constitution. What concerns the Commissioner, however, is what remains to be done: "I believe that Canada itself has not yet sufficiently incorporated linguistic duality in its own foreign policies. As a result, under the attentive eyes of its peers on the world stage, I feel that Canada must still further promote our values and the importance we ascribe to our diversity."

Dr. Adam reminded her audience that there is a tendency in Canada to see linguistic duality and cultural diversity as an issue for minorities, visible or not. She suggested that it would be advantageous to involve majority communities, define their responsibilities and assess the impact on them of a comprehensive policy that integrates linguistic duality and cultural diversity. Canada's demographic landscape is changing rapidly. According to a recent Statistics Canada study, by 2017 the population of visible minorities is expected to increase to a total of between 6.3 million and 8.5 million, representing increases of 56% and 111% since 2001. If linguistic, cultural and ethnic differentiation continues, by 2017 approximately one in five Canadians (between 19% and 23.3%) could be members of visible minorities. The immigrant population could also reach 7.6 million, or 22.2% of Canada's entire population. Even these few figures show that the Canadian government must quickly articulate a comprehensive vision of its identity and linguistic future. The demographic changes underway should encourage the government to adopt a perspective of plurality and implement concrete measures that respect Canada's linguistic duality and cultural diversity.

According to Dr. Adam, the Canadian government will succeed in modernizing the country's linguistic duality by taking inspiration in a renewed determination to move forward. She hopes that the government will truly integrate linguistic duality and cultural diversity within Canada's social fabric. She concluded her speech with the hope that all of this will take concrete form in the years ahead: "We will have to show evidence of not just competency but also imagination" and political leadership.

LEADING FOR RESULTS

The Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages (OCOL) is mandated to conduct audits under section 56 of the *Official Languages Act*, which stipulates that the Commissioner must take all measures necessary to ensure that federal institutions fulfil their linguistic obligations.

Between October 2004 and March 2005, OCOL audited Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC). For those who are not familiar with federal institutions, this department is the main supplier of central and common services for the Canadian federal administration, including translation, terminology, revision and interpretation services.

The audit dealt mainly with the management of the Official Languages Program. Senior management's leadership, accountability and commitment to linguistic duality were key factors.

Between December 2004 and February 2005, OCOL interviewed assistant deputy ministers, senior and middle managers, directors and advisors in human resources and official languages, as well as employees. In addition to 94 interviews at national headquarters, the team conducted more than forty interviews in the Montréal, Halifax, Moncton and Shédiac regional offices. The findings and recommendations in the report are the result of these interviews as well as an analysis of documents provided by the Department, along with a large number of key reports. OCOL is very grateful for the cooperation of all those who participated in the audit, especially the members of the Official Languages Branch.

On September 20th, the Commissioner released the report, entitled *Audit of the Management of the Official Languages Program at Public Works and Government Services Canada*. Highlights of the report include the recommendation that management demonstrate more leadership in terms of the Official Languages Program. Although the audit revealed that some mechanisms have been implemented—production of reports, action plans relating to the staffing of bilingual positions, official languages courses, and so on—, the integration of official

languages in the organizational culture is far from complete. The audit also showed that employees understand the Department's official languages obligations to varying degrees. Essentially, the report is a reminder that the responsibility to ensure compliance with the Official Languages Program and policies belongs to senior management who must:

- give the Official Languages Program greater visibility;
- put in place measures that will enable better verification of program management; and
- make senior managers accountable.

Dr. Adam made 12 recommendations to PWGSC with a view to improving the management of its Official Languages Program. She hopes that the Department will demonstrate more vigilant leadership and that its Official Languages Program will centre more on lasting results.

The Department reacted positively and has committed to an action plan for implementing the 12 recommendations. A follow-up audit is planned for 12 to 18 months after the final report, to examine measures taken and progress made by the Department.

The audit report, highlights and recommendations can be found on the OCOL Web site, at www.ocol-clo.gc.ca.

OCOL PROJECTS

Key tools for encouraging reflection among various actors

The Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages (OCOL) has undertaken a number of research and consultation projects aimed at further exploring several issues with a major impact on Canadian society, particularly official language communities across the country. The findings of these various projects will of course be discussed in the next annual report from the Commissioner of Official Languages, expected in the spring. Even more importantly, they will assist official language community leaders, public servants and researchers interested in linguistic duality in furthering their own initiatives.

The following consultations involving important actors from across Canada were held last fall, addressing three major themes:

The forum on **Community vitality** explored the factors that ensure the development and vitality of minority official language communities. Participants also discussed the indicators to be used to measure this vitality, taking local characteristics into account. The Forum was also an opportunity to emphasize the importance of research in learning more about the communities and thus contributing to their development.

Toward Substantive Equality: Forum on new approaches to regulating official languages provided minority linguistic communities with an opportunity to express their views on Part VII of the *Official Languages Act* and on its Regulations as they pertain to service to the Canadian public.

The forum on **Linguistic Duality, Cultural Diversity and Governance** explored ways for better integrating the basic values of linguistic duality and cultural diversity, in order to more effectively promote these values in Canada and abroad.

The Office also prepared a mid-term study on the government's progress in response to OCOL's 2003 *Action Plan for Official Languages*. The assessment will assist the federal government and leaders of communities affected by this five-year initiative to adjust their focus for implementation of the second half of the Plan, and to plan the next steps more effectively.

Finally, OCOL is currently conducting research on ways for governments to become more involved in official language communities and in the planning and implementation of the various government initiatives and programs that affect them.

The Commissioner, Dr. Dyane Adam, is hopeful that these research projects will assist different key players in initiating meaningful dialogue on the Government of Canada's official languages approach and practices. Although she intends to propose possible approaches to the government in her next annual report, it is up to each member of Canadian society to work harder at ensuring the equality of Canada's official language communities.



A REMINDER FROM THE COMMISSIONER...

In a recent report, the Comité de toponymie of the City of Québec recommended that more streets be named in honour of eminent Anglophones who have marked the region's history. This interesting development reveals the committee's openness toward an English-speaking community that has deep roots in this historic city, the cradle of French America.

Meanwhile, in New Brunswick, the Conseil municipal de Richibouctou decided several years ago to make theirs a trilingual community, by adopting names from French, English, and ... Mi'kmaq. This eloquent gesture, which underscores the historical relationship that existed between the Acadians and the Mi'kmaq before the 1755 deportation, also bears witness to the continuation of their relationship to this day. The trilingual decision was quickly accepted, and various local businesses have joined in, featuring window signs in all three languages.

On January 10, 2005, the municipality of Clarence-Rockland (in Eastern Ontario) passed a by-law that requires new businesses to post their outside and window signs in

both official languages, with English and French having equal billing. Shortly thereafter, the neighbouring municipality of La Nation followed suit, adopting a similar regulation. Meanwhile, at its annual conference in September at Kirkland Lake and Rouyn-Noranda, the Association française des municipalités de l'Ontario addressed the topic of official languages at the municipal level, and Ontario's Minister for Francophone Affairs, Madeleine Meilleur, announced a new program to support the publication of municipal by-laws in both official languages. Moreover, in a statement on September 15th at the conference, the Commissioner congratulated the communities of Clarence-Rockland and La Nation on their initiatives, which showcase their bilingual character and encourage new businesses to become accustomed to both linguistic communities in their region to improve service for their Francophone and Anglophone clientele.