LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY

THE QUARTERLY REVIEW OF CANADA'S COMMISSIONER OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

CANADA AND THE COMMONWEALTH OF ENGLISH

LA FRANCOPHONIE: THE UNIVERSALITY OF FRENCH

TO MARK TWO IMPORTANT SUMMITS OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT HELD IN CANADA IN FALL 1987, ONE IN VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA, AND THE OTHER IN QUEBEC CITY, QUEBEC, THE OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES PRESENTS THIS OFFPRINT OF TWO SPECIAL REPORTS INCLUDED RESPECTIVELY IN THE DECEMBER AND SEPTEMBER 1987 ISSUES OF LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY.

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LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY

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OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES
COMMISSARIAT AUX LANGUES OFFICIELLES

TO MARK THE SUMMIT OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT HELD IN VANCOUVER OCTOBER 13-17 1987:

SPECIAL REPORT

CANADA AND THE COMMONWEALTH OF ENGLISH

This special report was prepared under the direction of Stuart Beaty.

Message from the Commissioner

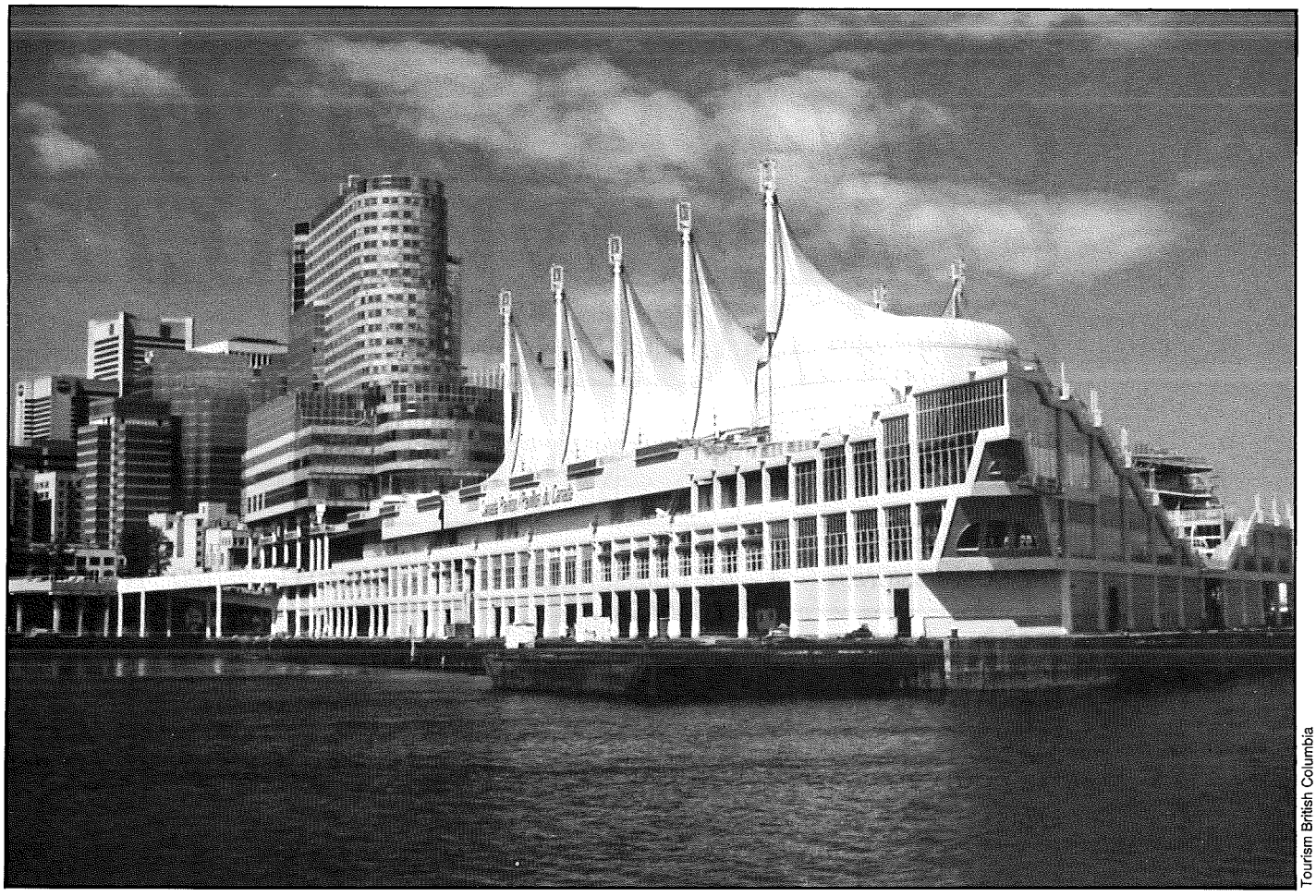
D'Iberville Fortier

Unlike *la Francophonie*, which celebrated its second summit in Quebec only last September, the more established Commonwealth club rarely puts its English language link front and centre. That it is something other than an association of countries where English is used is obvious. Not only is its membership list more limited, but one of the world's most prestigious English-speaking nations, the United States, has never been part of the Commonwealth company. But if it is not a collective love affair with the English tongue that explains the historical phenomenon that is the Commonwealth, nor indeed any other single thread from the Queen to the game of cricket, it is still possible to detect some subtle but important association between the English language, those nobler human values with which it is best associated and the principles of internationalism and negotiation which inspire the modern Commonwealth. Volumes have been written about "the genius of the French language" as an instrument of human civilization; the genius of the English language and its traditions is so pervasive in our world that we are in some danger of taking it for granted.

In our previous issue *Language and Society* published a special supplement on *la Francophonie* to coincide with the Quebec City Summit. While recognizing the differences between the two associations, we felt that the Vancouver meeting of Commonwealth leaders last October was another suitable occasion to reflect on the unique access which Canada's language duality gives us to these vital international networks, and on some of the other riches and opportunities which we have inherited through "The English Connection".

The new Official Languages Act speaks for the first time of the Government of Canada's commitment to "fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society." Foster means both cherish and encourage. Canadian society is therefore to be considered in the enviable position of being able to enjoy, if it chooses to, *both* English *and* French with all that those two great languages entail. In this special feature, we will be looking at the unparalleled position of English in today's world and at just a few of the many ways that enhances the enjoyment of Canadian society.

As we salute the Commonwealth leaders in their endless task of reconciling human differences in an often violently divided world, we must give thanks that fortune has favoured our country with a language potential that is second to none and with enough wit to turn our good luck to account. As a French-speaking Quebecer, I am probably sticking my neck out in also avowing a lifelong admiration for the English language. But I have no such difficulty in proclaiming myself privileged to share in the work of national and international dialogue with which our official languages are unashamedly and inextricably linked. ■



Tourism British Columbia

Canada Place, where most of the Commonwealth meetings were held.

English, the New Lingua Franca

*David Dalby**

Webster thought American English would be to England's English what Dutch is to German. He did not reckon on modern telecommunications.

Language is not only a matter of practical communication. It is also a means of social and cultural identification. Each of us needs to relate to a specific community, and particularities of language form one of the most fundamental and emotive means by which this identification is achieved. When a language expands, there is pressure for local and social differences to be maintained or created, whether as different languages or as variations within the same language. The forces of linguistic divergence thus balance the forces of convergence, as in the colonial expansion of Latin, which left behind a network of differentiated Romance idioms, or in the world-wide spread of Western European languages, which gave birth to a rich variety of "pidgins" and "creoles". The forces of divergence are also evident in the survival against all odds of two Celtic languages, Welsh and Breton, only a few hundred miles from London and Paris.

Spoken English has never existed in a common unified form.

Of dialects and idioms

It is common to speak of "dialects" within a language, but the term has pejorative overtones. We can best redefine the subdivisions of a language in terms of its constituent "idioms", often more numerous than traditional "dialects". Each idiom of a language is distinguishable from the others by its particularities of pronunciation or "accent", and often of vocabulary and grammar. Our emotional attachment is commonly to the idiom spoken around us in our childhood, even in our mother's womb, and only subsequently to our native language as a whole.

In recent centuries, many languages have also evolved a more or less standardized *written* idiom, which is accepted as a norm for harmonizing existing spoken idioms. This process of harmonization has been furthered by mass education, and as a result many of the regional idioms of the British English are now converging, in terms of vocabulary and grammar, in the direction of written Standard English. There is still resistance, however, among speakers of some other regional and social idioms, to the so-called "received pronunciation" of Standard English.

An eclectic tradition

Spoken English, including British English, has *never* existed in a common unified form. The wide range of regional and social idioms of British English does not represent divergencies from some ancient norm, but results from the mingling of a variety of Germanic idioms brought across the North Sea, from the fifth century onwards, by the Saxons, Jutes and Angles, and later by the Danes and Norwegians. Subsequently, the French-speaking invasion after 1066 had two effects which were to prove useful in preparing English for its future role as a world language. By hastening the end of an early written tradition in the idiom of Wessex, it paved the way for the development of a new written idiom, based especially on the spoken idioms of London and the adjacent Midlands. In the process, English was freed of many of its former grammatical complexities. The second advantage was that the English language was opened to massive influence from French, a linguistic gateway to the civilisations of France and the Mediterranean. This led not only to a great enlargement of English vocabulary, but also created an important eclectic tradition. The English language, spoken and written, has since continued to borrow words without constraint, and now has the largest recorded vocabulary of any language in the world.

How has it come about that this language, once limited to an archipelago off the coast of Europe, should now be the principal medium of world-wide communication? It is obvious that *one* language was bound to find itself increasingly in this role as barriers to international communication were progressively eliminated. The processes determining which language has been like a game of chance, however, and the rise of English is to be analysed in terms of a long sequence of disparate historical events, from the martyrdom of Joan of Arc in 1431 to the victory of the Allies in 1945.

Colonizing languages

Five centuries ago, historical and geographical factors placed world-wide exploration, colonization and trade in the hands of the maritime peoples of Western Europe. Their languages went with them. Spanish, Portuguese and Dutch were each carried to three or four "new" continents, but by the eighteenth century it was English and French which found themselves most widely distributed in the world. The long-standing rivalry between England and France led to their pursuing each other in every continent. Ironically, the factor which tipped the balance most decisively in favour of England (and of English) in the world was its exclusion from the mainland of Europe. Events at the end of the fifteenth century were of particular significance for the future of the English language. Joan of Arc's life and death accelerated the final exclusion of the English from France (apart from Calais) in 1475; the first printing-press in England was set up by Caxton in 1476; English replaced French as the language of parliamentary record in England in 1489; and the New World was "discovered" in 1492. So it was that the vast opportunities opened up in the Americas came at the very moment when the energies of England were turned away from Europe, after France had completed its liberation from the English, and after England had completed its own liberation from the domination of the French language.

Vast opportunities in the Americas came just when the energies of England had turned away from Europe.

The major world language

The main outlines of the subsequent expansion of English are well known — its extension as a native language to North America, Australasia and South Africa, its establishment as an official and/or second language in Southern Asia and in many parts of Africa and the Pacific, and its adoption as the first foreign language studied in most other countries of the world. Also obvious is the dual base which

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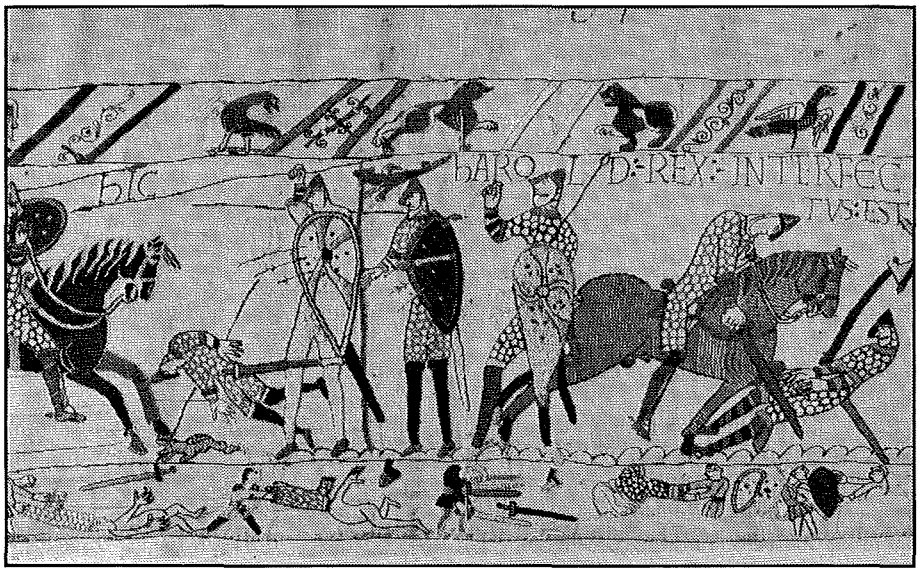

The death of King Harold at the Battle of Hastings, 1066. From the Bayeux Tapestry.

the English language acquired for its expansion throughout the world: the British Empire and the United States. By the early twentieth century, the English language was already rivalling French as the language of international diplomacy, and since the Second World War its position as the major language of world-wide communication has not been seriously challenged.

After 1945, some believed that the English language might decline with the British Empire. In India, it was hoped after independence that English would cease to act as an official language by the 1970s but rivalries between Indian languages rendered that forecast unrealistic. The role of English has in fact been reinforced since independence in many multilingual, formerly British-ruled countries in Southern Asia and Africa. The latter continent — with its multitude of languages — is now largely covered by a patchwork of states using either English or French as their official language. In the Philippines, English has actually replaced the former colonial language, Spanish, as a means of inter-ethnic communication, and it is clear that the attraction of English to many multilingual states is its unrivalled use for international communication.

In considering the forces which have projected English into the lead we should not overlook the counter-forces encouraging divergence among its far-flung idioms. Their implantation around the world reflects the regional idioms, or combinations of idioms, brought by speakers from different parts of the British Isles. For example, the spoken idioms of Newfoundland still have clear links with those of Ireland and southwest England, whereas those of Australia are linguistically close to the idioms of southeast England.

A revolution which unites

But for the revolution in telecommunications and air travel, distinctive idioms of English already established around the world would have continued to draw apart. Books, letters and sea travel might have slowed the process, but early last century it was still realistic for the American lexicographer, Noah Webster, to anticipate the day when the languages of North America and England would be as different from each other as Dutch, Danish or Swedish are from German. Radio, the cinema, television, the telephone and the airplane have arrested this process, and the forces of convergence among the idioms of English in the world now outweigh the forces of divergence. Americanisms once unfamiliar elsewhere are now commonly used throughout the English-speaking world, and North America is currently the most prolific source of new vocabulary for the English language.

Formal Standard English, as written and studied throughout the world, can thus be regarded today as a single written idiom, with a huge stock of common vocabulary and with relatively minor divergencies between its epicentres in Britain and North America. Colloquial Standard English, on the other hand, is still represented by different spoken idioms in different countries, each distinguished by its own accent, colloquialisms and local vocabulary. So-called "Oxford English", which served to identify members of an élite, has been losing some of its more "affected" features and been merging into an idiom not only widely spoken by the British middle classes, particularly in southeast England, but also frequently used in the world as a model for the pronunciation of Standard English. Although a generalized American idiom ("Network Standard") is also often used for this purpose, the distance between these alternative models is decreasing. We are witnessing the emergence of an internationalized *spoken* idiom of Standard English.

But there is still a centrifugal force away from Standard English, especially at the social level. Examples of popular idioms thriving alongside local idioms of Standard English are provided by Cockney in the London area, Glaswegian in Scotland, Strine in Australia, and by Singlish in Singapore. During this century, the working-class Cockney idiom has been spreading outwards from London almost in defiance to the parallel spread of Standard English. Another rich source of continuing variation is in the idioms evolved by speakers from Africa, or of African descent. Influenced by the languages which so many Africans were forced to abandon in slavery, the idioms of Black English share much in common, especially among the so-called "pidgins" and "creoles" on both sides of the Atlantic. Jamaican and Nigerian idioms are likely to be the most influential of these in the future, particularly through the medium of popular music.

Planning creatively

Language evolves naturally, and language-planning should be a sympathetic response to observed trends and situations. No language, and no idiom of any language, is inherently superior to any other, even if it may offer different opportunities. In the case of English, we should encourage a healthy balance and mutual respect among its diverse idioms. It is in the interests of world-wide communication to support the trend towards a more harmonized and internationalized Standard English, spoken as well as written. But it is in the interests of communal identity and individual creativity, and of cultural and ethnic expression, to support also the less conventional idioms of English, to encourage that vigorous outer fringe of the language we might best describe as "Free English". For the purposes of education, especially in communities where Standard and Free English idioms are in contact, it is important that teachers and pupils should be aware of — and able to operate — both forms.

Finally, a word about the relationship between English and other languages in the world. If the rest of the world has decided to give priority to the learning of English, then it is more important than ever that English-speaking countries and communities should place the study of other languages high on their own educational agenda. Here as elsewhere, Canada's complex linguistic heritage equips it well to encourage a creative balance between the convergent and divergent forces which are constantly at work in the field of language. ■

The Commonwealth Idea

*Stuart Beaty**

The Commonwealth has emerged out of shared experience and interests. Today it is a loosely structured, voluntary organization of 49 independent states.

The Commonwealth has come into being through a succession of compromises and adjustments which sometimes made it easier to say what it was *not* than what it was. At the turn of the century, barely 12 per cent of the subjects of the British Empire were European, let alone English-speaking. It contained such largely self-governing white settlements as Australia, Canada and the Cape, the Indian sub-continent, largely under direct rule by Britain, and a long and exotic list of other colonies and possessions acquired over several centuries.

The Commonwealth's membership represents about a quarter of the world's population and about the third of the membership of the United Nations.

In the twentieth century, the Commonwealth has emerged, albeit in fits and starts, out of a shared experience and shared interests. As the new century progressed, dreams of an ongoing imperial federation gradually gave way to the realities of mutual defence and trade preferences. Indian Prime Minister Nehru once pointed out that the Commonwealth "seems to prosper most in adversity", and it must be granted that some of the bonds that have held the Commonwealth together were forged in two world wars in which Africans and Australians, Indians, Canadians and Fiji Islanders fought and died for the same cause.

It was at the height of the Second World War that Winston Churchill took the opportunity when receiving an Honorary Degree from Harvard University to muse about the shared heritage of law, language and literature which, for him, underlay the Anglo-American alliance and the entire "fraternal association" of the emerging Commonwealth. He saw 'basic English' (on which much work was then being done at Harvard) as "the head-stream of what might well be a mighty fertilizing and health-giving river...an advantage to many races, an aid to the building up of our new structure for preserving peace." Churchill had long anticipated a time when the need for world security would call for new forms of international co-operation and a greater readiness to subordinate national interests to those of "a larger synthesis". The Commonwealth is one such synthesis.

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The modern Commonwealth

The Commonwealth today is a loosely structured, voluntary association of 49 independent states, consulting and co-operating through largely informal governmental and non-governmental networks. These are based on the use of English as a common working language and on similar administrative, legal, governmental, educational and other practices. The Statute of Westminster of 1931 gave legal expression to the independence of Canada, Australia and New Zealand

Dreams of an imperial federation gave way to the realities of mutual defence and trade preference.

and to their equal status with Britain within the "British Commonwealth". In 1949, on achieving independence, India chose to become a republic but nevertheless to retain the Commonwealth link. This marked the beginning of the modern Commonwealth, and the number of member states grew ➤

Canada and the Commonwealth

Development of the Commonwealth has been a vital part of the Canadian experience. It has eased the change in our post-imperial relationship with Britain; it has given Canada partners in Asia and Africa with whom it shares a heritage of British political and legal traditions and with whom it can communicate through the English language; and it has strengthened our historical ties with the English-speaking Caribbean and the Pacific. Above all, perhaps, the Commonwealth has introduced Canada to the problems of developing countries and has given it the opportunity to make an important contribution to technical and development assistance. Most recently, it has provided inspiration for Canada to seek similar institutional ties with the French-speaking world.

Canada and Canadians have played a major role in Commonwealth affairs from the beginning, and what the Commonwealth has become owes much to the policies of Canadian decision-makers. The evolution of the association and of Canada's own political independence are closely related. It has even been suggested that the fountainhead of the Commonwealth idea lies in Lord Durham's 1839 Report on the causes of discontent in the Canadian colonies. Canada certainly set the example in the nineteenth century in achieving representative government and widening colonial autonomy. Of particular note were Robert Borden's successful bid, in 1919, for separate representation at the Versailles Treaty negotiations and Mackenzie King's insistence on a declaration of full autonomy, which resulted in the Statute of Westminster in 1931.

Canada welcomed the development of the modern Commonwealth. Prime Minister John Diefenbaker's condemnation of apartheid in South Africa in 1961, which prompted that country's withdrawal from the Commonwealth, encouraged other African members to remain in the Commonwealth or to join it as new states. Canada gave strong support to the creation of the Secretariat in 1965 and nominated one of our diplomats, Arnold Smith, to be its first Secretary-General. It was Canada, too, which proposed important transformations of the style and format of Heads of Government meetings in the 1970s, to help keep them informal yet relevant, while making sure they were well backed up by meetings of senior officials.

The Commonwealth

1	Antigua & Barbuda	8	Britain	15	Ghana	22	Lesotho	29	New Zealand	36	Sierra Leone	43	Trinidad & Tobago
2	Australia	9	Brunei	16	Grenada	23	Malawi	30	Nigeria	37	Singapore	44	Tulavu
3	Bahamas	10	Canada	17	Guyana	24	Malaysia	31	Papua New Guinea	38	Solomon Islands	45	Uganda
4	Bangladesh	11	Cyprus	18	India	25	Maldives	32	St Christopher-Nevis	39	Sri Lanka	46	Vanuatu
5	Barbados	12	Dominica	19	Jamaica	26	Malta	33	St Lucia	40	Swaziland	47	Western Samoa
6	Belize	13	Fiji	20	Kenya	27	Mauritius	34	St Vincent and The Grenadines	41	Tanzania	48	Zambia
7	Botswana	14	The Gambia	21	Kiribati	28	Nauru	35	Seychelles	42	Tonga	49	Zimbabwe

quickly from the late 1940s into the 1960s as many Asian and African countries also became independent. In more recent years, many small Caribbean, Indian Ocean and Pacific Island countries have taken their place in the association. About half the present members are small states with populations of under one million, but total membership represents about a quarter of the world's population and about a third of the membership of the United Nations.

Jawaharlal Nehru pointed out that the Commonwealth "seems to prosper most in adversity".

The biennial meeting of Heads of Government is at the pinnacle of the group's consultative process, but there are many programs of ongoing co-operation which are assisted by the Commonwealth Secretariat. Unlike the United Nations, the Commonwealth has no written charter or constitution and does not conduct its business by means of votes or binding decisions. Views are exchanged between equals, freely, informally and confidentially, to avoid as much as possible the kind of posturing which can hamper dialogue on the international scene.

Above all, the Commonwealth is a means of pooling experience and arguing divergent viewpoints. A Commonwealth consensus can provide both moral and practical leadership on some of the major issues of the day: the condemnation of racism; a more equitable sharing of economic resources; the security of small states; and the integration of women as full partners in the social and developmental process. The Commonwealth contributed to large scale decolonization into the 1960s and today it is at the forefront of international efforts to end apartheid and to bring about non-racial, representative government in South Africa.

Even where concerted Commonwealth action has not been possible, however, consultations often have a moderating influence. The Commonwealth has been described by its Secretary-General, Mr. Shridath Ramphal, as "a facility for harmonizing differences, even contrariness, within the framework of community". Through the accident of history, Commonwealth members have enough in common for dialogue to be fruitful, but enough diversity to reflect many points of view and to set up a creative quest for solutions. It is this capacity for "bridge-building" which gives the Commonwealth its importance and its continuing potential.

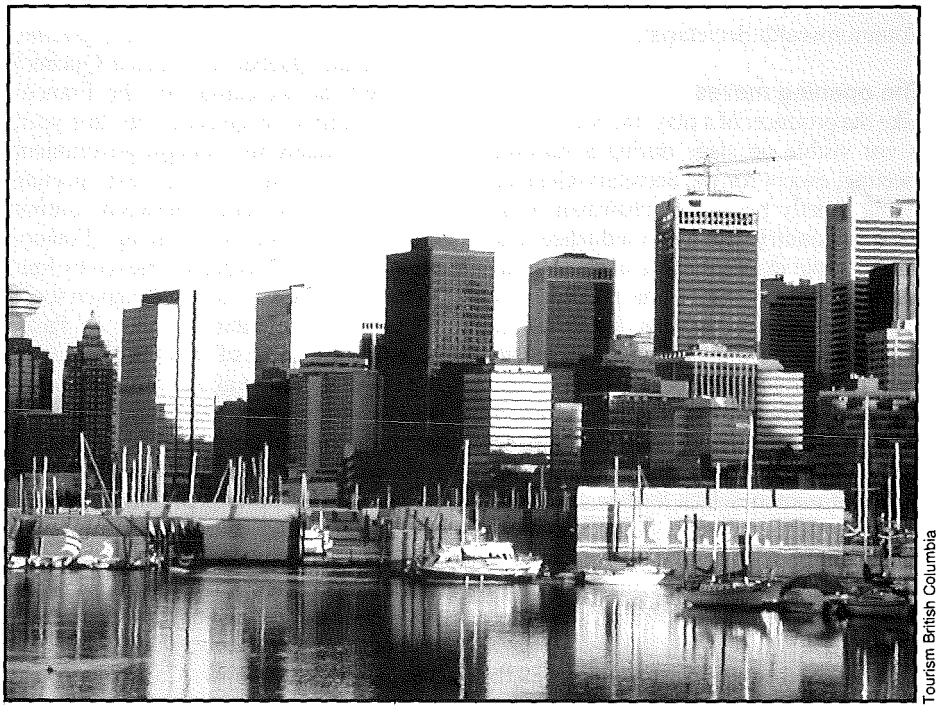
The Commonwealth of peoples

Beyond the official organization is the very active "unofficial" Commonwealth of non-governmental organizations, a vast international network of professional, service and cultural organizations, the real lifeblood of the Commonwealth. There are some 200 of them associated with the Commonwealth. They include the Commonwealth Association of Architects, the Commonwealth Engineers Council, the Commonwealth Legal Bureau, and so on, covering virtually every field of human endeavour. The Association of Commonwealth Universities and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association provide obvious institutional links. The Commonwealth Foundation encourages and supports these professional and other associations with bursaries and grants. No less importantly, the Commonwealth Games, held every four years, and the Commonwealth Arts Festivals which accompany them demonstrate the spirit of Commonwealth friendship and multi-racialism in ways that are visible, popular and entertaining. In fact, the Commonwealth idea takes many useful forms and its less than formal ties can be a powerful force for cohesion when the whole structure shows signs of becoming politically unglued. ■

The Commonwealth in Canada

Member states of the Commonwealth met in Vancouver from October 13-17. **Clyde Sanger,** ***former Director of the Commonwealth's Information Division and now an Ottawa-based writer and journalist, surveys the results and explains the workings of the organization.***

More than Politics



Tourism British Columbia

Vancouver skyline

From the newspaper accounts, one would have thought the issue of sanctions on South Africa preoccupied the Commonwealth leaders in Vancouver to the virtual exclusion of all other business. In fact, they debated the subject for only four and a half hours in their executive sessions, even if journalists concentrated on this question during many press conferences. Likewise, the unique case of Fiji's membership — or, as it was eventually agreed, lapsed membership — was discussed and decided mostly in small groups and with senior Secretariat staff.

A glance at the 118 paragraphs in the conference communiqué gives a better idea of the extraordinarily wide range of activities in which the 49 countries have co-operated and some inkling of the many issues on which they have tried (with success in most cases) to find common ground.

Four issues

It is interesting to look at four examples from the Vancouver Summit.

First, the Commonwealth leaders agreed on a crisp one-page Declaration on World Trade, which indicates a close identity of views as they move into the first stages of the "Uruguay Round" of GATT negotiations. It deplores the rising spiral of protectionist measures and, in particular, calls for the "reform of all trade-distorting agricultural policies, both domestic and international". The leaders want early action on agriculture in the GATT negotiations, which is not the sort of criticism aimed at Europe's Common Agricultural Policy which France would find it easy to approve.

Second, they decided to set up an expert group to study the Impact of Structural Adjustment on Women. The Commonwealth now holds meetings every three years of Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs. These ministers have felt that the stern measures which many developing countries are having to take, under pressure from the International Monetary Fund, to devalue their money and to cut social services will fall especially heavily on women. The expert group will circulate its findings, first to these ministers and then to Finance Ministers, for comment before a report comes back to the Heads of Government when they meet in Kuala Lumpur in 1989. It is likely to be a thorough investigation which will carry weight.

They also looked at developments since 119 countries signed the Law of the Sea Convention five years ago. Progress has certainly been made on the remaining problem area of seabed mining, India has registered its stake as a "pioneer investor" in a seabed site, and "most Heads of Government [appealed] to all states to sign the Convention and proceed with the ratification process without delay". It requires ratification by 60 states before the Convention comes into force, and so far only 32 states have done so. Canada, after playing a leading role in the negotiations up to 1982, has been less vigorous in completing the process, even though we gain tremendous benefits from the treaty, which covers everything from Arctic pollution to the management of East Coast fisheries and special arrangements for salmon.

The final example is the enthusiastic reception the Commonwealth leaders gave to the Briggs Report (see page 41), proposing a small agency to organize co-operation between the many groups engaged in distance education (in Canada, TVOntario, Athasbaska University and the British Columbia Knowledge Network). They found it, in Rajiv Gandhi's phrase, "both imaginative and far-sighted". Commonwealth Education Ministers had already called the Briggs proposal "practical and likely to be effective"; and the Canadian government suggested refinements and offered $12 million seed-money for the network's first five years. At least nine other countries (including Brunei, whose Sultan is the world's richest individual) promised to contribute; so money is no problem. The Canadian plan for five regional units was adopted, and Vancouver was picked as headquarters for the central co-ordination unit. A cheerful Flora

►

MacDonald said she hoped the network would produce materials not only in English — but also in French for the half-dozen Commonwealth states with large French-speaking populations.

Beyond language

A joyful innovation at Vancouver was the series of cultural events that was organized around the conference. Journalists and visitors were cheered that the customary hour of waiting in their seats for the Heads of Government to arrive for opening ceremonies was softened with a recital by the Vancouver Chamber Choir.

Some of these events went beyond any spoken language. In the glorious setting of the Museum of Anthropology a Commonwealth photographic exhibition — *Images* — was hung. The theme of the 260 photographs was "Life in the Commonwealth" and, perhaps typical of the crosscultural contributions, the winner was an Englishman, Paul Trevor, with a set of black-and-white photographs of pilgrims at a Hindu shrine in Tamil Nadu.

But the most remarkable, most joyous, event was the Drum Festival with some 75 master drummers and percussionists, dancers and singers from 10 countries. The inspired idea of the Canadian artistic director, John Wyre, was to avoid a series of separate performances and to have the music flow continuously between all the groups who remained on stage for two memorable hours. To see Colin Offord of Australia, ingenious maker of mouthbows, move forward with anklets jingling for a shuffle dance opposite the fluid figure of the Ghanaian drummer Abraham Adzinyah; above all, to hear the Indian tabla player Pandit Sharma Sahai "talking" back and forth to two Sri Lankan drummers, and then have the beat picked up and enlarged by steel drums from St. Lucia and Antigua, was an unforgettable sun-burst of cultural harmony.

Finally, there was the Small States Exposition, in which two dozen countries filled booths with samples of their export products and held two days of conferences on investment and on tourism. There was a technological gap between, say, Vanuatu with only its pink sea shells and Jamaica with fashionable garments and pewter moulded after the 300-year-old style retrieved from the Port Royal earthquake; but bonhomie helped to bridge it.

This exposition, the Drum Festival, a Commonwealth film festival and the Briggs Report did not capture the headlines during the Vancouver Summit. But they tell you more quietly what, despite the frustrating differences over South Africa, helps to hold this quarter of humanity together in pleasing friendship. ■

The Commonwealth Way

The Vancouver meeting was another illustration of how, even in politically trying times, the Commonwealth continues to work. In part this is because Commonwealth summits have a well-established structure. After an open plenary meeting and the preliminary courtesies, the leaders begin a series of closed sessions to discuss the world political situation. This is followed on another day by a discussion of the economic situation. Talks then move on to the bread-and-butter subjects of various Commonwealth programs. Meanwhile, senior officials are meeting to expand, delete or clean up phrases in a comprehensive communique which has been drafted in advance by old hands at the Commonwealth Secretariat.

The opening moves

Like the producer of a play, the Secretariat is not visible on stage during a summit meeting, except for the Secretary-General sitting quietly beside the chairman from the host country. But it can influence to a considerable extent the line of discussion, although not determine the precise lines spoken. It matters greatly, for instance, which leaders are invited to make public speeches during the plenary session on the opening day, because these will be reported fully in the newspapers and can set the agenda and the tone for later discussion. Again, it matters which leaders are asked to make opening statements in the political and economic debates, because

"blest is he who has his quarrel just,
but twice blest he who gets his blow
in fust."

Months before a Commonwealth Summit, earnest consultations go on in Marlborough House, the London headquarters of the Secretariat, about the list of opening speakers. In 1979 at the Lusaka Summit, when the Rhodesian issue came to a climax, Malcolm Fraser, the Australian prime minister, was chosen to be among the four speakers at the open plenary. He not only made an influential speech but became a pivotal figure in the negotiations that followed. Again, Michael Manley of Jamaica was asked to speak at the start of the economic debate that year, and his eloquent exposition of the problems of a developing country dependent on a few products for foreign exchange had a real impact on the discussion.

If this sounds like manipulation, it is certainly kept within limits. The list of opening speakers has to be agreed with the chairman and in practice is mostly restricted to veterans, unless a newcomer hails from one of the larger countries. Vancouver saw 12 new heads of government, compared with the Nassau Summit in 1985; but they all came from smaller countries and were not expected to play major roles on this occasion.

A permanent Secretariat marks the Commonwealth as a different structure from la Francophonie.

The Secretariat

The existence of a permanent Secretariat marks the Commonwealth out as a quite different structure from *la Francophonie*. Canada and Quebec (or Canada-Quebec) provided the secretariat for the Francophone Summit in Quebec City this year, and presumably the Senegal government will do the same for the next meeting of Francophone states. Between summit meetings co-operation among Francophone countries has been achieved by four "network groups", which were given some 90 tasks at the 1986 Summit in Paris. Significantly, most of these tasks were in the areas of culture and communications, language industries, and scientific and technical information.

In contrast, the Commonwealth Secretariat contains several divisions, dealing with health, law, education, rural development and half-a-dozen more subjects in which member states have a mutual interest in functional co-operation. The basic structure of these divisions was built during the 10 years from 1965 when Canada's Arnold Smith was Secretary-General, and the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC) was also launched. Another Canadian, Jean-Marc Léger, was the first Secretary-General of l'Agence de coopération culturelle et technique (ACCT), created in 1970. There were good relations between the two, but their organizations took different directions: l'Agence focused on cultural and linguistic subjects, while the Commonwealth Secretariat and CFTC concentrated on functional co-operation and technical assistance.

In the Legal Division, for example, a small staff under New Zealander Jeremy Pope has tackled many tasks. A far-reaching one has been the program, started in 1974, of training drafters of legislation in many Commonwealth countries. Over the years more than 300 have been trained, often at regional courses in Africa, Asia and the

South Pacific. For the smallest countries, as in the eastern Caribbean, a regional legal unit has been set up to give expert advice. It is an area where a common language and shared traditions open the way for co-operation. The Legal Division also has its own Commercial Crime Unit, to help in the fight against international fraud. The growing problem of the abduction from one country to another of children by a parent is another of its concerns.

The Secretariat, with a staff of about 420 drawn from some 30 countries, is a small body to carry out all the jobs assigned to it by the Heads of Government and the Health, Law, Finance, Agriculture and Industry Ministers at their periodic meetings. The practice has grown of bringing in experts from various countries to study current problems and to write, by the standards of other international organizations, very frank reports. The candour, as well as the consensus, in these reports is possible because of familiarity with a common working language and similar ways of thinking. I have never heard of semantic arguments over definitions.

Under the present Secretary-General, Shridath Ramphal, the Commonwealth has come together to produce some imaginative reports on economic issues. One of the earliest was on the feasibility of a Common Fund to support buffer stocks of a number of primary products. Another team under Dudley Seers mapped out plans for the rehabilitation of Uganda after Idi

There is a particular emphasis on the young people who will determine the future.

Amin's horrific era. In 1983 Professor Gerald Helleiner of Toronto, who had also been on the Seers mission, headed a group which recommended ways to reform the international financial and trading system in its report *Towards a New Bretton Woods*. And in 1984 a group under Lord Lever produced a well-regarded document on debt problems a year or more before the subject was being widely discussed.

The Kirby Report

This useful work, exploiting some of the best brains and most relevant experience in the Commonwealth, puts a particular emphasis on youth. For a year an expert group under Australian Peter Kirby studied the problems of youth unemployment. Two Canadians, André Juneau and Carl Wright, were on his team. Their report, recommending structural adjustment in developing countries to remove, for example, the urban imbalance that has discouraged young people from staying in farming, was discussed at Vancouver.

The Briggs Report

In arguing that practical education — literacy, numeracy and problem-solving — is as crucial as life-skills are to making young workers more adaptable, the Kirby Report complements a report dealing with the needs of students at a higher level, which is the work of a team under Lord Asa Briggs. As I already noted, the Briggs Report recommends an ambitious scheme of co-operation in distance learning and suggests creating a University of the Commonwealth for this purpose. It stops short of recommending a university which would enrol and teach individual students, and proposes only a small professional and administrative staff of about 60 after five years and a budget of about $17 million.

A common working language and similar ways of thinking make for candour and consensus in reports.

With what may sound a modest proposal, it may seem odd that Mr. Ramphal in his introduction is fired "with a sense of excitement" and exclaims: "Seldom has a group of the great and the wise produced a Report which is so visionary as well as practical." The reason is that the Briggs Report builds on so much solid experience in Commonwealth countries. It gives plenty of examples, including Britain's Open University, Canada's Athabaska University, the satellite work done in the Caribbean and South Pacific and the radio schools of Australia. It argues convincingly that the various media — printed modules, audiotapes, video techniques (TVOntario gets a good mention) — are converging. And it recommends a partnership between universities, since they know local needs best, rather than a large central institution.

Young leaders

Canada made its own contribution to the preparations with the Young Leaders conference that took place in Ottawa for a week in September. It was an original idea to invite a group of under-35s who had already shown leadership qualities in every sector from business to religion from 36 Commonwealth countries. The proof of success will only be seen if such a network survives and expands, but it was clearly a lively attempt to make the Commonwealth attractive and relevant to the young people who will determine its future. ■

Commonwealth Principles

On the Fortieth Anniversary of the United Nations in 1985, the Commonwealth leaders meeting in Nassau issued a declaration based on the following principles.

- We commit ourselves and our nations to work tirelessly in the pursuit of a world marked not by disorder and the use of competitive power but one governed by the principles of collective international co-operation and respect for the rights of all nations and peoples as the necessary foundation for lasting peace and assured economic and social development.
- We reaffirm our commitment to the principles and precepts of the Charter of the United Nations and to the goal of strengthening the United Nations system as the central instrument of peace, security and co-operation among nations. As we ourselves categorically reject the use or threat of force as a means of settling disputes, we appeal to all governments to work to strengthen the institutions which contribute to orderly resolution of differences between nations and which sustain peace.
- We rededicate ourselves to the principles of self-determination, non-racialism, human freedom and equality, and co-operation between nations in the service of international understanding, development and world peace, which have guided the Commonwealth throughout its evolution.
- We pledge ourselves to play a full part in revitalizing international co-operation for development and concerted action to confront the crucial issues of international economic inequality.
- We call upon the world community to construct a framework of collective security based on mutual trust and shared interest. All nations have a stake in disarmament. We therefore look for urgent agreement in reversing the arms race and on significant reductions, and eventual destruction.
- We invite all peoples and nations to join in a universal effort to fulfil these objectives.

Do We Know Something?

*T.K. Pratt**

Canadian English will persist and even flourish, though some regional dialects may go under.

Recently I had to move my office. "What's this?" said the friend who was helping me. He picked up Avis and Kinloch's bibliography, *Writings on Canadian English*, and then Ruth McConnell's textbook, *Our Own Voice: Canadian English and How It Is Studied.* "Canadian English?" he said as he dropped these and other such books into a box. "There's no such thing!"

I knew what he meant. Other English speakers in the Commonwealth — hearing our "r" after vowels and our flat "a" in words like *dance, half* — usually take us for Americans. Americans themselves only occasionally spot the tight Canadian vowel of *out, shout, house* and similar words. Mostly, though, they assume we're from another state.

Wouldn't it be truer to the facts just to talk about "North American English"? Within which, we could say, there are regional dialects — whether from the Deep South, or Boston or Newfoundland. Actually, I don't think it would. Because Canadians themselves know that, in this as in other matters, they are not American. The differences between Canadian and American English are subtle, but they add up. The total will vary, naturally: not every Canadian has every feature. But Americans must live in this country for many years before they stop drawing attention to the way they speak. Which means we Canadians *know* something.

Canadian raising

A prominent piece of knowledge, though usually unconscious, concerns that vowel "ou" that Americans do sometimes recognize in our speech, along with its sister, "i". Most Canadians will make a tighter sound for the "i" of *wife* than for the "i" of *wives.* The tendency is so widespread in this country that even though it is found elsewhere, scholars call it "Canadian Raising", a reference to the raised position of the tongue needed to produce the more constricted vowel.

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Another vowel sound that very often sets Canadian English apart is "ah". Neither Commonwealth nor American speakers rhyme *pod* and *pawed, cot* and *caught, coffee* (first syllable) and *cough.* We do — and this especially contrasts with the more open American sound in the first word of each pair.

This is nooz to us.

Then again, for Americans but not most Canadians, the "y" sound is missing in some words before "u", so that *news* sounds like *nooz.* In this respect we talk like the British. Which we also prefer to do in *-ile* words like *sterile* (not "sterill") and *-ti* words like *anti* and *multi* (the last syllable is "ee" not "ay"). And in some individual words too — *lieutenant, lever, ration, route, zebra* — Canadians prefer the British over the American model.

In vocabulary too Canadians show that their link to the British Isles is stronger than that of their southern neighbours. We take out a *bag*, not a *sack*, of apples, wash the fruit under the *tap*, not the *faucet*, sit down to eat it with the *blinds*, not the *shades*, up, and reflect how nice it is that this is *Boxing Day*, not *the day after Christmas.* Of course we have sometimes changed British usage to suit our own purposes, which is the case with a number of political terms like *reeve, riding* and by *acclamation.*

The English language in this hemisphere went to America first.

Still other words and phrases — like *baby bonus* and *sleeper pass*, a football term — are Canadian inventions. The *Dictionary of Canadianisms* is a hefty collection of these. It includes Canadian-born words that are now world English, like *portage* and *cache*, both of which, of course, reflect the French influence in Canadian life. That influence can give quite a different flavour at times to our native English. Names like *Revenue Canada* and *Theatre New Brunswick*, for example, are deliberately constructed to produce a kind of bilingual sound.

Down the Trans-Canada

If we can call *eh* a word — as in "Nice day eh?" — then it, too, readily distinguishes the Canuck. Not that the Americans or the Commonwealth don't use this handy interjection. They do, but not so often, especially

Can we call 'eh' a word?

to punctuate narratives: "We was bootin' 'er down the Trans-Canada, eh, when I look in the mirror, eh, and I sees this flashing red light, eh, and she was gainin', eh?" In this last example and others, we see it is not so much that Canadians do this while Americans do that, it is a case of more versus less. *Pop* is a universal drink in this country, but only a regional one in the United States. Similarly, *cupboards* has a wider range here, often including what Americans would only call a *closet.* There is no doubt about it, the English language in Canada *is* basically American. But it has something added to change the flavour.

A lot of people assume that English came to Canada in much the same way that it came to the rest of the Commonwealth, directly through British conquest and settlement. In fact it was usually an indirect, two-stage process. The English language in this hemisphere went to America first, to the east coast colonies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There it started at once to diverge from its parent, becoming both innovative (creations like *backwoods*) and conservative (failing to participate in pending British innovations like the dropping of "r" after vowels). It was also greedy. Indiscriminately it soaked up words from other languages: *moose* from the Indians, *prairie* from the French, *mosquito* from the Spanish, *cookie* from the Dutch, *semester* from the Germans. In this melting pot the various British dialects of the settlers swirled into a new amalgam, one that gradually split to form three broad new American dialects, now called Northern, Midland and Southern.

Loyalists

It is the general Northern and north Midland dialect of American English that interests Canadians, for this is the speech that is the foundation of English in this country. It came here in the late eighteenth century with the many Loyalists who did not want to be part of the American Revolution. This was the second stage in the production of Canadian English. These Loyalists, about 30,000 in all, settled both in the Maritimes and in what is now

My bunk was next to Gerald Gidge's and it was built of board and one end fastened to the wall of the camp.

canada n also **canady**. Cp *DC* ~ n 1–5 for sense 1.

1 The areas of mainland North America located esp near the St Lawrence River; the Dominion of Canada excluding Newfoundland and Labrador; the MAINLAND.

[1583] 1940 *Gilbert's Voyages & Enterprises* ii, 404 [Hayes' narrative] That which we doe call the Newfound land, and the Frenchmen Bacalaos, is an Iland, or rather (after the opinion of some) it consisteth of sundry Ilands and broken lands, situate in the North regions of America, upon the gulfe and entrance of the great river called S Laurence in Canada. 1708 OLDMIXON 6 Thus they who are Intruders, by their Industry, and the Convenience of their Neighbourhood with *Canada*, the Counry, such as it is, of the French Dominions in *America*, have got the better Part of this Island, and have a more numerous Colony and better

hibition of export from Cana Prince Edward's Island. 1850 ernment is divided from that stream. . .which I [as Bishop] 1933 GREENLEAF (ed) 314 M Canady; / Love Sally, we mus leave my blue-eyed girl, / All face cold-hearted strangers / 1916 GRENFELL 44 They say Canady to get his sight cured *Introduction* 3 On December of Canada and Newfoundlan in the Senate Chamber at Ott of Union between the two co *Telegram* 12 Jan, p. 3 And th a 'frigid air mass' was moving Canada—leaving us to wond cal weather we've been havin weeks.

2 Attrib **canada board**: rial made of compacted ch 1973 WADEL 62 Inside the

The Dictionary of Newfoundland English

Ontario and Quebec. Either they founded new settlements or tended to become leading citizens of the old ones. A generation or two later, at least 80,000 "Late Loyalists" moved into Ontario.

These loyal speakers of English had strong political and economic ties with their British "home", and standard British English was for them the prestige form. But in fact their speech was already *basically American*; it was the northern American English of the late eighteenth century. Later immigrants assimilated to this model, even the large new waves from the British Isles, whose numbers soon swamped those of Loyalist stock. It was a remarkable example of "When in Rome, do as the Romans do."

The differences between Canadian and American English are subtle.

When, still later, the West began to be opened, the settlers were in the first instance speakers from Ontario and the northern United States. Once again there was a base line, the *same* base line, to which later immigrants would conform. Hence the extraordinary uniformity of Canada's standard English, over the vast distance from Quebec to Vancouver Island. It is a homogeneity of a size unparalleled by any dialect or language in the world.

Sugar and spoice

In the Maritimes the tale has a different twist. Although Loyalists came here too, they were not so many and they were different. They came mainly from New England, where the original dialect mix from Britain contained more of the southeast than did the mix that went to Quebec, Ontario, and the West. Above all, Scotch and, to a lesser extent, Irish dialects entered the Maritimes in greater proportion, and so remained less diluted.

The Maritimes dialect is not, in fact, nearly as divergent from the national standard as some English dialects can go around the world. In the cities it is hardly to be found. On the other hand, there are still interesting things to watch for. There are common Scottish words like *storm-stayed* 'forced to stay at home by a snowstorm' and unusual Irish ones like *clart* 'a bad housewife'. There are words from the Micmacs (*pung* 'a kind of horse-drawn sleigh'), from the Acadian French (*aboiteau* 'dike with a sluice gate') and from the Loyalists (*double runner*: variously a child's sleigh, a bobsled, a sled for hauling logs). As one might expect, there are many dialect words to do with fishing: *fiddler* 'a small salmon', *flake* 'drying platform', *lolly* 'mushy ice'. The folk speech of the Maritimes is often colourful and earthy, with phrases like *flying axehandles* 'diarrhea', and *poor man's fertilizer* 'late spring snow'.

Special pronunciations, meanwhile, would include *aunt* as "ont", *calm* as "cam", *vase* rhyming with "face", *wash* as "warsh", and the letter *H* as "haitch". And a hint of a real accent can be found running through words with *o* said like the "oo" in "good" (*once, lovely, does*), or with a sort of double "ss" sound in *present, result, position*. On Prince Edward Island, and Cape Breton, a prevalent vowel is "oi" for "i": "A good woife is sugar and spoice."

Some of these features are also shared by Newfoundland. But here the story must be retold from the beginning. Newfoundland speech is fed by a unique confluence of two streams, one from Ireland and one from southwest England, both different from the London standard. Add to that almost 400 years of relative isolation, and we truly have a regional speech that differs markedly from general Canadian.

Even Newfoundland grammar stands out. It includes older past tense forms (*clom* for *climbed*), possessives with *n* (like *hisn*), the verb *be* for continuous activity (*I be watching*), and the Irish *after* to indicate completion (*I'm just after finishing my dinner*). But chiefly it is the Irish and West Country sounds that catch the ear. As for Newfoundland words, they can be very old — like *bavin* 'kindling' — or quite recent, like the well-known *screech*.

Compared to Newfoundland and the Maritimes, then, there is not a lot of what could be called "regional" dialect in Canada. It is often tied solely to different regional occupations rather than to linguistic history: lumbering in British Columbia gives *highrigger*; farming on the prairies gives *to sodbust*. But in any language there are *other* kinds of variation. Scholars are looking at these now in Canadian English with increasing interest.

They have found, for example, that there is a much greater difference between female and male speech than was previously supposed. Several researchers are examining the prevailing hypothesis that, faced with a choice between standard and non-standard Canadian English, women choose the standard much more than men do. Similarly, a recent study of Ottawa speakers has thrown into relief the relationship between several speech habits and the speaker's social class. Matching studies in Toronto and Vancouver, meanwhile, reveal that "Canadian Raising" is increasingly unstable among young people. In other words, Canadian English is changing.

Will our regional dialects persist?

What will happen next? Will our regional dialects persist? I suspect that most of Maritimes English will go under, while even that of Newfoundland will be greatly diluted. I will not say *when*, but every study of the language in these regions points to the remorseless encroachment of general Canadian. And how will the national dialect itself fare against American? My guess is that Canadian English will, in fact, persist and even flourish, though not in the same form, beyond the foreseeable future. Why? Simply because English-speaking Canadians do not wish to be any more American than they already are. And speech follows attitude, consciously or unconsciously. It always has. ■

O Canada Revisited: A Cultural Update

*Norman Snider**

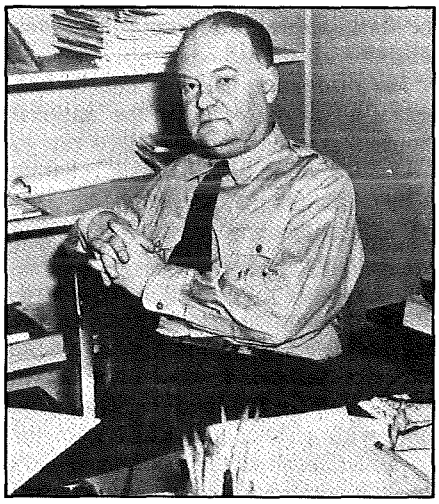
English Canadian literature: the local has found an international audience. Cinema and television production may lag a little, but it's never over if those interested in English Canadian culture work to ensure that there is no return to the wilderness.

English Canada as an international cultural entity was "discovered" by Edmund Wilson in 1965. At the time, Wilson was perhaps the foremost American man of letters and arbiter of taste, working a vein of criticism that made strong connections between literature and society. It also happened that Wilson had for some years neglected to file income tax returns and was in severe difficulties with the IRS, a situation which necessitated his taking refuge in Canada.

The result was a classic work titled *O Canada: An American's Notes on Canadian Culture*. The book not only served to present what Wilson considered an impressive cultural achievement to the rest of the English-speaking world, it analyzed it in terms of the society from which it sprang. Wilson concentrated almost entirely on the literary scene, ignoring film, theatre, the visual arts and dance. It is interesting to compare what Wilson found here in 1965, in terms of Anglophone literary culture, with what has developed since. (This essay will also touch on developments in the English Canadian cinema and television.)

Strange fugitives

Although Wilson found much to admire in this country, it seemed to him that Canada's cultural growth faced a considerable difficulty. There was, for one, a peculiar social climate that, despite the achievement of writers like Stephen Leacock and Bliss Carman, discouraged artistic expression. What's more, Canada was culturally remote from the rest of the world: for English-speaking readers of other countries the Canadian background was not just indifferent to the arts; it was hostile. In the estimation of the Calvinist burghers of English Canada, according to Wilson, the chief aim in life was to work very hard and make money; the artist was a weakling and a trifler — a man without a regular job. Nor was he the only outside observer to detect a grim cultural landscape: that ferocious soul, Wyndham Lewis, painted an equally bleak picture in *Self-Condemned*, his account of artistic Toronto in the 1940s.



Edmund Wilson

However, against this unpromising backdrop Wilson found many encouraging signs. There were two major novelists: Morley Callaghan and Hugh MacLennan; on the criticism front there was Northrop Frye; in poetry there were Irving Layton, F.R. Scott and Douglas LePan. (Wilson, for all his perspicacity, seems to have missed such accomplished poets as Earle Birney and A.M. Klein.) His enthusiastic appreciation of Callaghan, whom he compared to Chekhov and Turgenev, served to reintroduce that author to the United States, where he had been read in the 20s and 30s, and to re-establish his reputation here at home.

A fine and private place

There can be little doubt that Morley Callaghan was the first modern Canadian novelist in English, but his true position, despite its relevance to the development of literary culture in this country, is sorely misunderstood. A friend of Ernest Hemingway and Scott Fitzgerald, and belonging stylistically to the 1920s, he is mistakenly compared to those more cosmopolitan authors. Seen on his native ground, Callaghan more closely resembles a novelist like Theodore Dreiser, the lonely talent erecting a considerable body of work in an uncomprehending wilderness. Although Callaghan's novels and stories are leaner and more austere than Dreiser's, they share a similar raw quality, a sense that their work has been torn from the untutored provincial life around them. Although their own books are very different from Callaghan's, Canadian novelists of succeeding generations like Mordecai Richler and Margaret Atwood have paid tribute to his example as proving it was possible to remain in this country, write about Canadians and still enjoy a wider readership.

Close to the sun again

The situation described by Wilson in 1965 has changed: English Canada has a literary scene that is notable for its vitality and, given the relatively small size of the country's population, exceptional in its accomplishment. Novelists like Richler and Atwood, Timothy Findley, Robertson Davies, Robert Kroetsch, W.P. Kinsella, Brian Moore and the late Margaret Laurence; short story writers like Alice Munro, Norman Levine and John Metcalf; poets like Leonard Cohen, Michael Ondaatje and Susan Musgrave. The best Canadian writers, like Callaghan, tend to be robust and individualistic artists.

These writers are avidly read in New York and London — not to mention Rome, Tokyo or Stockholm — not because they are Canadian but because their way of writing about the human condition is compelling in itself. Marshall McLuhan's concept of the global village might seem to have been tailored to Canada's cultural self-interest: if, by virtue of electronic communications, we are living in a smaller planet, English Canada has become that much less remote from the rest of the world.

Yet, paradoxically, the work of these writers is also intensely local. The small town Ontario of Alice Munro, the Montreal of Mordecai Richler, the West of W.P. Kinsella or the Toronto of Margaret Atwood are minutely particularized. Where the work of Morley Callaghan, concentrating on personal individual destinies, often seemed to take place in an undifferentiated North American setting, Davies, Richler, Atwood and Munro sometimes seem to indulge in orgies of local colour.

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It is probably no accident that these authors emerged at a time when Canada was coming of age in a political sense. Stimulated by the ebullient rise of cultural nationalism in Quebec, English Canadian writers gained more confidence in the artistic validity of their own experience. It is a testament to the maturing of Canada that so many good books by so many authors have emerged. English Canadian literature no longer requires Wilson to come here and make his "discovery": the books speak for themselves. Richler's *Joshua Then and Now*, Kroetsch's *Studhorse Man*, Moore's *Black Robe*, Atwood's *Life Before Man*, all are unique individual achievements of the highest calibre.

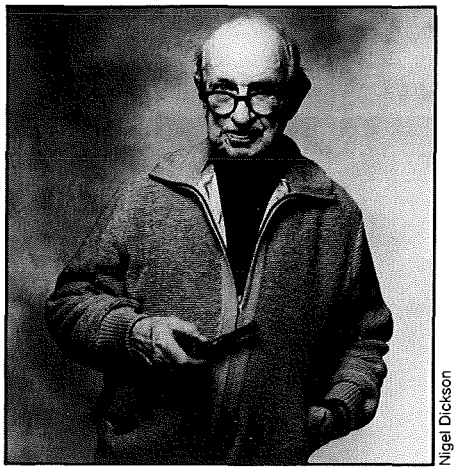
They shall inherit the earth

The climate has changed too. With the support of the Canada Council, provincial arts councils, creative writing programs in an expanded university system, a burgeoning publishing scene, and a greatly expanded media world, a literary milieu has arisen which is far more hospitable. One reason for this more satisfactory state of affairs is undoubtedly a publishing industry subsidized by the state. For critical observers it may be a question of writerly honour that no credit for this progress be given to governments, no matter how many millions they pump into the arts, and despite the fact that many a talented scribbler has been encouraged with the taxpayer's cold cash. In reality, except for the occasional blunder by ministers or bureaucrats, the "arms-length" relationship between writers and the state has been observed with exacting scrupulousness. While the achievement of Canadian writers is all their own, and while it is clear that writers of such calibre would have emerged in any event, the state has undeniably provided a nourishing milieu. Blessed with thousands of readers, the English Canadian writer of accomplishment is no longer an oddball but a national hero, at least on a par with other professional celebrities.

A broken journey

The English Canadian cinema was still in its infancy in 1965. It has since grown apace. It may still suffer today in comparison with its Australian counterpart, but it has succeeded in producing many talented directors — Don Owen, Allan King, Ted Kotcheff, Don Shebib, Norman Jewison, Philip Borsos — and one film *auteur* of international stature, David Cronenberg. Films such as *The Fly*, as well as Borsos' *Grey Fox* and Kotcheff's *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, have played around the world to enormous critical and commercial acclaim. What is unique about Cronenberg's career is that it flourished almost in spite of an official Canadian Film Development Corporation and Telefilm policy which initially resisted the conventions of cinematic science fiction (a staple from *Nosferatu* to *2001*) in favour of a parochial reliance on the Canadian documentary tradition and the embalming of literary classics such as MacLennan's *Two Solitudes*.

Instead, Cronenberg, in films like *Scanners*, *Videodrome* and *Rabid*, has elaborated a vision that combines the shock tactics of a dark romantic like William Burroughs with the detachment of a director like Stanley Kubrick. Acceptance of Cronenberg's films was slow in Canada. Establishment critics were unwilling to believe in the legitimacy of science fiction as a cinematic genre or countenance



Nigel Dickson

Morley Callaghan

Cronenberg's near-medical investigations of disease. If he at first seems to be a sport of nature in the realistic, documentary milieu of English Canadian cinema, his work too bears a distinctive local stamp. His concerns with electronic technology directly parallel those of McLuhan, Gould, Innis and Grant. His cities are clearly northern; the light in his work is not the Italianate glow that bathes the work of contemporary Americans from Coppola to Cimino, but hard, clear, crisp: observably Canadian.

The loved and the lost

The documentary tradition, a part of the Canadian scene since John Grierson's founding days at the Film Board, has continued strong at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. With its special mandate to present Canadian subjects to a Canadian audience, CBC's cinematic achievements tend to be limited, but its co-production of Robert Collison's television film about the charismatic union leader Bob White was in the best tradition of King's *Warrendale* and Beryl Fox's *Mills of the Gods* — full-length documentaries — a tradition that in recent years had been badly neglected. In drama, the successes of the CBC have often used historical subject matter: Martin Lavut's film, *Charlie Grant's War*, about a Canadian's involvement in the European holocaust, or the Canadian-English co-production, *Going Home*, about disturbances among Canadian troops stationed in Wales after the First World War.

Cronenberg is a film auteur *of international stature.*

If the promise that Edmund Wilson saw in English Canada in 1965 has to a large degree been fulfilled, difficulties remain. The climate for literary and cinematic culture is more hospitable. Successful festivals and readings lend excitement to the life of many cities. But the continued existence of a vital literary and cinematic culture depends not only on the emergence of talented artists and continued government support but also on enthusiastic country-wide involvement.

The language barrier between Quebec and English Canada can sometimes seem insuperable. While the rest of the country has been responsive to Quebec films like *Decline of the American Empire* and Quebec novels like *The Alley Cat*, Quebecers seem largely impervious to the achievements of English Canada. Now that Quebec has emerged from its period of introspection and is looking less to Europe and more to the United States for cultural models, it would be ironic beyond measure if what it discovered there was the art of English Canada.

Of things to come

The arts in English Canada, as elsewhere, depend on a committed audience. Progress since 1965 is easily measurable and must be considered one of our national achievements. However, the Money Society of the 1980s at times threatens a throwback to the hostile conditions of which Edmund Wilson complained. The early years of this decade, with their cutbacks in public support, were bad for the arts in this country. The achievement of English Canada in literature, film and television has been hard won, the result of many solitary struggles and heroic individual victories. In the Information Culture of the industrialized West a great deal of a country's prestige depends on the stature of its artists. It is up to those with a committed interest in the culture of English Canada to ensure there is no return to the wilderness of the past. ■

Antic Fantasticoes

*Charles Haines**

Clarity of language is essential if we are to express our thoughts and feelings accurately and truly. If we love our language, we will want to use it well.

There are a number of possible replies to the purists that say English is not going to the dogs any more because it is already there. One is that there is simply more English around, spoken and written, its warts, scars and swollen joints plainly in evidence. Radio and television spew language 24 hours a day. Public announcements in airports and supermarkets are constant and inevitable. Magazines, newspapers and books are big business. A greater percentage of the population today than a century ago has a chance to use language publicly. More people, more mistakes.

Some mistakes — if they are mistakes — seem more offensive than others. "Between you and I", "there's four people in the room" and "if he would have told me" are detested by all good purists; but a few of even the exigent have given up the struggle against "hopefully".

Ours is not the first generation of language vipers.

Some of the jargon, endlessly repeated, is depressing at first and finally numbing; for instance: *bottom line*, *scenarios*, *closure*, *prestigious*, *shelf-life*, *state of the art* and "Don't pit bull me!". Only foolish purists, though, think mistakes and ugliness of this kind are new, that ours is the first generation of language vipers. Romeo's friend Mercutio, the day before he died, inveighed against Tybalt for his flowery jargon:

> The pox of such antic, lisping, affecting fantasticoes, these new tuners of accent! "By Jesu, a very good blade! a very tall man! a very good whore!" Why, is this not a lamentable thing... we should be thus afflicted with these strange flies, these fashion-mongers....

***Charles Haines, the author of a book on usage, *English Is Chaos*, lectures on English literature at Carleton University in Ottawa. For two years he was the 'language judge' on CBC's "Morningside".**

A chair is not a table

A useful over-simplification suggests two broad divisions of language: vocabulary, or choice of word, and syntax, or arrangement of words. People that want to campaign against language misuse can then decide whether the chief enemy is *infer* for *imply*, *flaunt* for *flout*, *whose* for *who's*, *it's* for *its*; or *is different than*, *the reason is because*, and *to boldly go*.

Carleton University Information Services

Charles Haines

Perhaps the division ought to be expanded immediately to take note separately of spoken and of written English. There are, after all, offensive mispronunciations that are heard but rarely written: *nucular*, *Febuary*, *libary*, and *twelf* are particularly annoying, but many discriminating ears prefer *applicable*, *despicable*, *exquisite*, and a few more, with the accent on the first syllable. Worse, though, than even mispronunciation is the aimless interjection of useless sounds and information, most often these days of "you know" and "like": "How's the weather?" "It's you know like raining."

If it can be agreed that there is finally good language and bad, wrong English and right (and finally there must be: a chair is not a table, a cow is not a bull, though Orwell's war-is-peace, freedom-is-slavery idea touches the point where political policy, psychology, philosophy and language meet), not only the purists, but teachers, journalists, students and people who write airport announcements must be interested in finding out where the bad and the wrong have come from and how they can be banished or corrected.

Description, prescription

It is not essential for immediate corrective purposes to look very far for the sources of language weakness. In North America, at least, 1961 was for some people the first year of the current decline. That was the year *Webster's New International Dictionary* (Unabridged), Third Edition, came out, published by G. & C. Merriam, edited by Philip Gove, and compiled as a descriptive rather than a prescriptive work of lexicography. People cannot turn to Webster's 3rd to find out infallibly what is right in English and what is wrong, and they are not supposed to be able to. They go to it to find out what is being said and written by the majority — or was about 1960. Webster's 3rd does not declare by any means that whatever is, is right, but many users of it have inferred that it does.

"Speak — that I may see thee!"
Ben Jonson

The descriptive dictionary may have helped to open the gates to "It's better to speak and write badly than to keep yourself bottled up"; and, partly because one of the five Gove dictionary-making principles was "The spoken language *is* the language" — a principle that seems to make short unpleasant work of much of literature, not to mention most memos — grammar, in the sense of Latin grammar, and Latin too ("Who speaks Latin?"), was dropped from the curricula of many schools and universities. Now, 25 years later, it is not unusual for a university instructor who suggests to a student "Cut down on the number of your adjectives" to be asked "What's an adjective?"

To defend the release from Latin and prescriptive grammar by saying that languages are living things and will grow as they will grow is all very well, and the parallel with plants and beasts and humans is a pretty one and not unrefreshing; but there is the question, too, of pruning branches, smoothing fur, trimming nails and hair. It is one thing to read and hear in Europe about "Passport Control". It is quite another to say seriously, "If he'd pulled the trigger, he may have killed me."

That is not growth. It is pernicious sprawl.

Growth and change must be watched and regulated. The questions are "How much?" and "By whom?" Which is not to argue covertly in favour of a language academy masquerading as a prescriptive dictionary. It is perhaps to heed Confucius:

> If language is not correct, then what is said is not what is meant; if what is said is not what is meant then what ought to be done remains undone; if this remains undone, morals and art will deteriorate; if morals and art deteriorate, justice will go astray; if justice goes astray, people will stand about in helpless confusion.

When people love language, they will use it well.

The well-turned phrase

How is language to be made correct? The short, simple, effective answer to that question comes in two words: Love language.

If users of English loved it, loved the feel and the sound of a well-turned phrase, loved fine speech in the mouth as they love the consistency of a good steak, the coldness of a good glass of beer on a hot day; loved English and took care of it as some people love and care for their cars, wardrobes, coin collections, their health, the problem would not be hard to solve. The thing to do is to induce love. Language use, it must be taught from elementary school to Ph.D. exams, is more a matter of pleasure and beauty than it is of rules and strictures.

Language use is more a matter of pleasure and beauty than it is of rules and structures.

In any English-speaking nation there can grow up a healthy form of national pride that centres on language. *Fair dinkum, metal surface, good as gold* are phrases the meaning of which may at first escape Canadians. That does not make them wrong or bad English. New Zealanders and Australians may have trouble with *screech, grits* and *reserve*, none of them bad English.

Eh?

The competition set up by different flavours of these kinds in a language is a healthy one. Flavours are not right or wrong, but only appropriate or not, or, to risk a pun, in good or bad taste. As a chair is not a table, a Canadian is not an Australian. To complain about the constant "—eh?" in parts of Canada is perhaps justifiable but also not pedagogically welcome, or even necessary. "Eh?" is a sort of badge, while the "like" in "like raining" is a wart.

It is partly a question of pride, and of not only national pride. Ben Jonson said, "Nothing so shows a man as language." (The whole question of sexism in English is a large one not susceptible of quick and easy answering). "It is a glass wherein he stands revealed. Speak — that I may see thee!"

Not to be giddy about this thing, but finally people do what they want to do. They go to war and fight and kill because they want to go to war and fight and kill. Otherwise, they would not. When people, encouraged, induced, taught to do so, love language, they will use it well, express their feelings and thoughts exactly and truly, and go a long way toward clearing up the helpless confusion we are standing about in right now. The true arbiters of usage are people who love language, because most often what people love they know and understand. Love has its rights and privileges, and its obligations.

If we really want to use language well, we will.

It's as simple as that. ■

D is for Dictionary

Sarah Hood

In a few small offices at the University of Toronto one man's vision is producing a research tool to affect the work of scholars around the world.

In the late 1960s Angus Cameron, then an assistant professor of English, became frustrated with the reference books available and organized two international conferences to discuss the feasibility of producing a completely new dictionary of Old English. In addition to consulting older dictionaries, Cameron used microfilm and photocopies to assemble the entire canon of Old English texts and entered it all into a computer.

"Because computer time was so expensive, we couldn't key in our material directly. We therefore had to choose between optical scanning and punch cards, which gives you an idea of how early we got started," said Antonette Healey, the present co-editor. "As we were entering the material, the three optical scanning companies we used went out of business one after another — but we got it finished in time." Computer sorting produced a concordance, published on microfiche. The packet of fiches, small enough to fit in a desktop file box, is equivalent to 126,876 pages, and illustrates each word with a full sentence.

The first part of the dictionary itself, Fascicle D, has just appeared, also on microfiche, and C will soon follow. The whole collection, which will contain some 40,000 head words, will take about 15 more years' work. The final paper version will incorporate comments and corrections from scholars around the world. "The beauty of microfiche," says Healey, "is that we can make corrections and republish as we proceed. Besides, even a student can easily afford it."

Unfortunately, Angus Cameron died young in 1983, but he has left his project in good hands. The Dictionary of Old English now employs 11 staff members at the University of Toronto, including Healey and co-editor Ashley Amos, and is funded by, among others, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the University, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (U.S.A.) and the Xerox Corporation. An international advisory board and the contributions of specialist readers keep the project firmly in touch with the rest of the academic world.

Scholars from as far away as New Zealand visit to consult the world's only complete collection of Old English texts. Linguists and computer specialists are as much interested in the project as are students of Old English; furthermore, since the dictionary extends to 1150 A.D., it dovetails with the Oxford English Dictionary, which excludes all words that fell out of use before then. This date is important in the history of English, since it took about a hundred years for the effects of the Norman Conquest to become evident in the recorded language.

(*The Microfiche Concordance to Old English* and Fascicle D of *The Dictionary of Old English* are available from the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto.)

English for Export, Canadian Style

*Lyn Howes**

If it is true that our world is a global village, then the language of the village market place is largely English. As more countries participate in international exchanges, so the demand for good teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) increases. For over a century Canada has contributed to the supply of English teachers abroad, and Canadian teachers have earned a reputation much greater than their numbers would suggest.

Missionaries

The story began in the mid-nineteenth century when advances in transportation made foreign travel easier. Canadian missionaries found their way into all corners of the world. Many of them took on the role of teachers, and language was often the first thing they taught. These were the first Canadians to be involved in EFL. A decline in missionary work has coincided with the rise of international aid. Since 1945, aid to developing countries has become policy for most industrialized nations, and organizations such as the American Peace Corps, the British Volunteer Service Overseas and Canadian University Services Overseas (CUSO) owe their origins to this concern. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) manages Canadian aid resources both directly through its own projects and indirectly by subsidizing non-government organizations involved in development. Whether the projects are in agriculture, sanitation, education, resource development, environmental protection or medical assistance, to be most effective they will often require some preliminary instruction in English. Today many Canadian EFL teachers are involved in one way or another with an aid or development project.

Convolutions

Happily, as the demand for well trained teachers has increased, so has the supply. Immediately after the Second World War, Canada faced a crisis in the area of language training. This was due to increased immigration and to an awakening of our responsibility to teach our official languages well and thus live up to the vision of a bilingual Canada. Universities as well as local and federal government agencies met the challenge and developed excellent training for teachers and language programs designed to meet Canadian needs. Indeed these initiatives have proved so successful that now, 20 years later, we have more qualified EFL teachers than we need, which leaves an ample surplus to meet the increasing demand from abroad.

Less happily, the current network of Canadian EFL programs abroad is so complex it is difficult to understand. CIDA, for instance, provides large sums to support projects in developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. But CIDA officers tend to be assigned to a country for a specific developmental purpose and work on their projects in relative isolation. This results in projects that are sensitive to local cultures but, as far as language programs are concerned, to almost no sharing of expertise and knowledge across projects. There is no centralized assessment of CIDA's language training needs. For each new country targeted for large human development projects the training process is reinvented: the expense of developing teaching materials, the setting up and planning of teaching centres, the recruitment of teachers, the evaluation of the project and placement of trainees in Canadian institutions — all tend to be duplicated.

Many such projects are subcontracted to non-government organizations such as CUSO, World University Services of Canada, the Canadian Bureau of International Education, the Association of Canadian Community Colleges and refugee organizations such as Oxfam and Save the Children Fund. It is difficult to know for sure exactly what goes on in these organizations when it comes to language training. What is known is that lack of co-ordination results in periods of inferior service as each project learns anew how to establish and conduct suitable language programs.

A lot of Canadians have simply answered advertisements in newspapers to teach at universities or language schools in the People's Republic of China or for private schools in Japan and the Arabian Gulf states. The teaching situations they encounter may range from basic blackboards and overcrowded classrooms to air-conditioned facilities, small enrolments and all the latest in equipment and materials. Salaries too vary from bare survival rates to fees which actually allow for savings. There are also opportunities for the wandering teacher who arrives in a country and answers local ads. Most of these jobs pay poorly because the teachers are often working without professional credentials and employers can take advantage of them. This is particularly true in Europe where Canadians do not have the benefits of Common Market status and corresponding work permits.

The demand abroad for good EFL teachers has increased.

But wherever the Canadian EFL teachers teach, they will find that their government provides too little in the way of support services. American and British missions and offices quite often offer libraries with everything from instructional material to audio-visual aids. Canadians must rely on the material they bring with them or on the generosity of their British and American cousins. Students may not even realize that their teacher is a Canadian. Many a Canadian teacher abroad could find a ready use for National Film Board films, CBC videos and a wealth of other fine Canadian materials, but no one is minding the shop. A commercial as well as cultural opportunity is being missed.

EFL Canadians

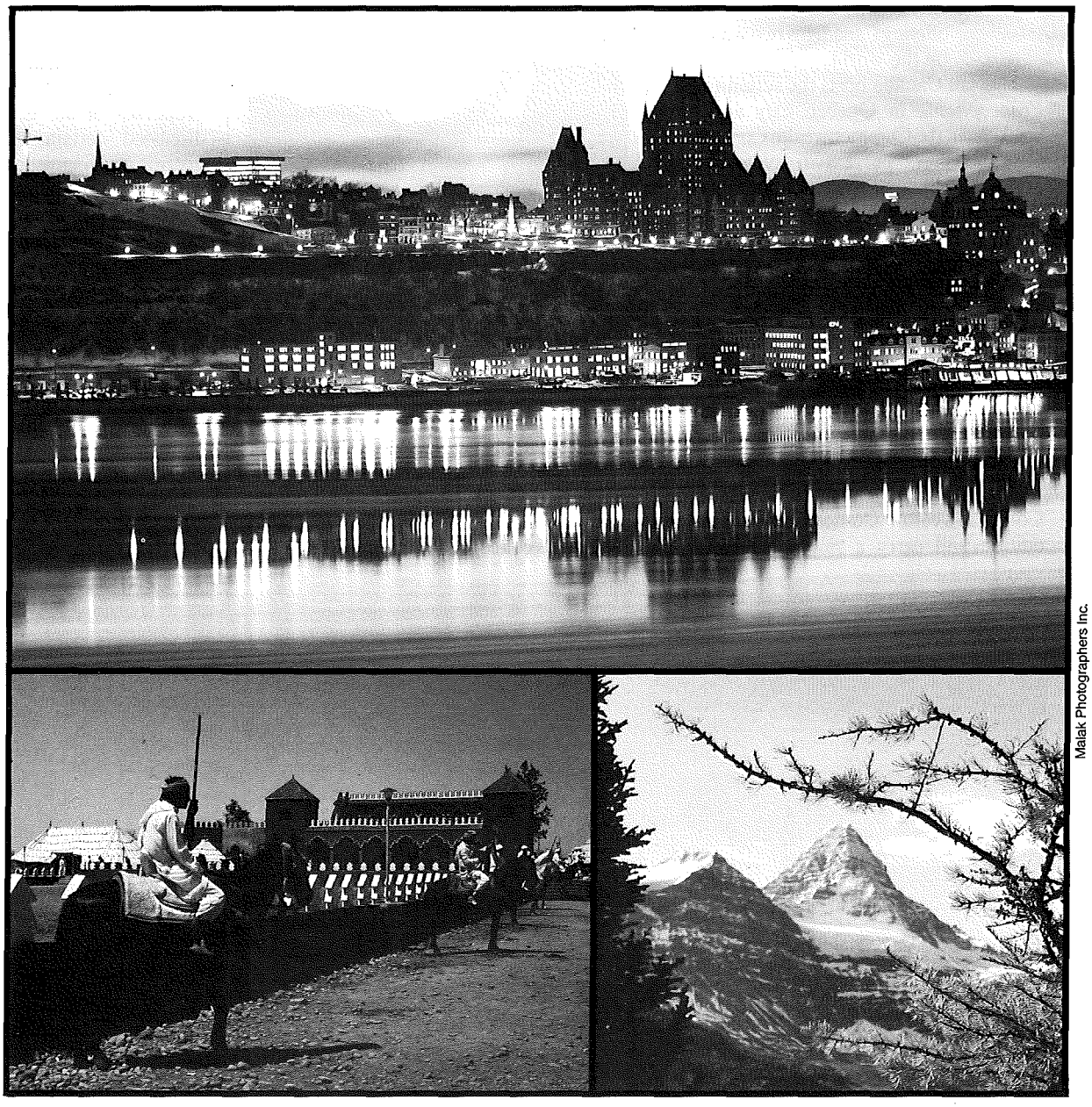
When Canadians go abroad to teach English, they bring an expertise enhanced by cultural sensitivities that increase their effectiveness. Canada has lived the colonial experience, but not as the imperial power. To that extent Canadians can avoid some of the stigma which may attach to citizens of other countries. They generally also know firsthand how difficult it is to learn another language. They understand this problem intimately from their own plurilingual situations and in the light of the country's officially bilingual status. It helps them to carry both empathy and an informed respect into the classroom.

Canadians do not make up a large proportion of EFL teachers abroad, but the quality of their contribution is significant. It is twofold: a contribution to world development certainly, but no less to the image of Canada in that world. It is, alas, a resource that is under-utilized. It brings neither the cultural nor the commercial rewards it could in a world hungry for English-language instruction and increasingly geared to service industries. ■

***Lyn Howes is Co-ordinator of Special Programs at the English Language Institute of the University of British Columbia, Vancouver.**

SPECIAL REPORT

LA FRANCOPHONIE



Michel Belley

Malak Photographers Inc.

THE UNIVERSALITY OF FRENCH

This special report was prepared under the direction of André Creusot.

A Message from the Commissioner

"Promotion of international understanding is undoubtedly one of the missions of French civilization."

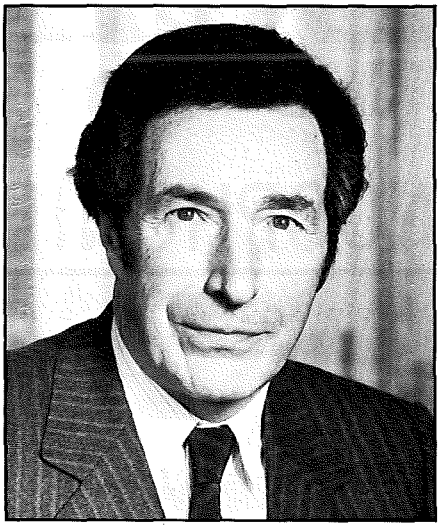
Cù Huy Cân, Head of the Vietnam delegation, Paris Summit.

Canada's linguistic duality strengthens the country while offering Canadians two windows on the world.

This fall Canada hosts the summit of *la Francophonie* in Quebec City and, six weeks later, the Commonwealth Conference in Vancouver. These two events bring home the bilingual nature of our country, the equality of our two official languages and the links that this duality and this equality forge between us and two of the world's great language communities.

Canada's active participation in these two major cultural streams is part of an ongoing series of exchanges characteristic of our country's evolution.

Language and Society could not let this occasion pass without recognizing the Quebec Summit by publishing a supplement on *la Francophonie*. In honour of the Commonwealth Conference, our next edition will carry a similar supplement



on English in Canada and throughout the world.

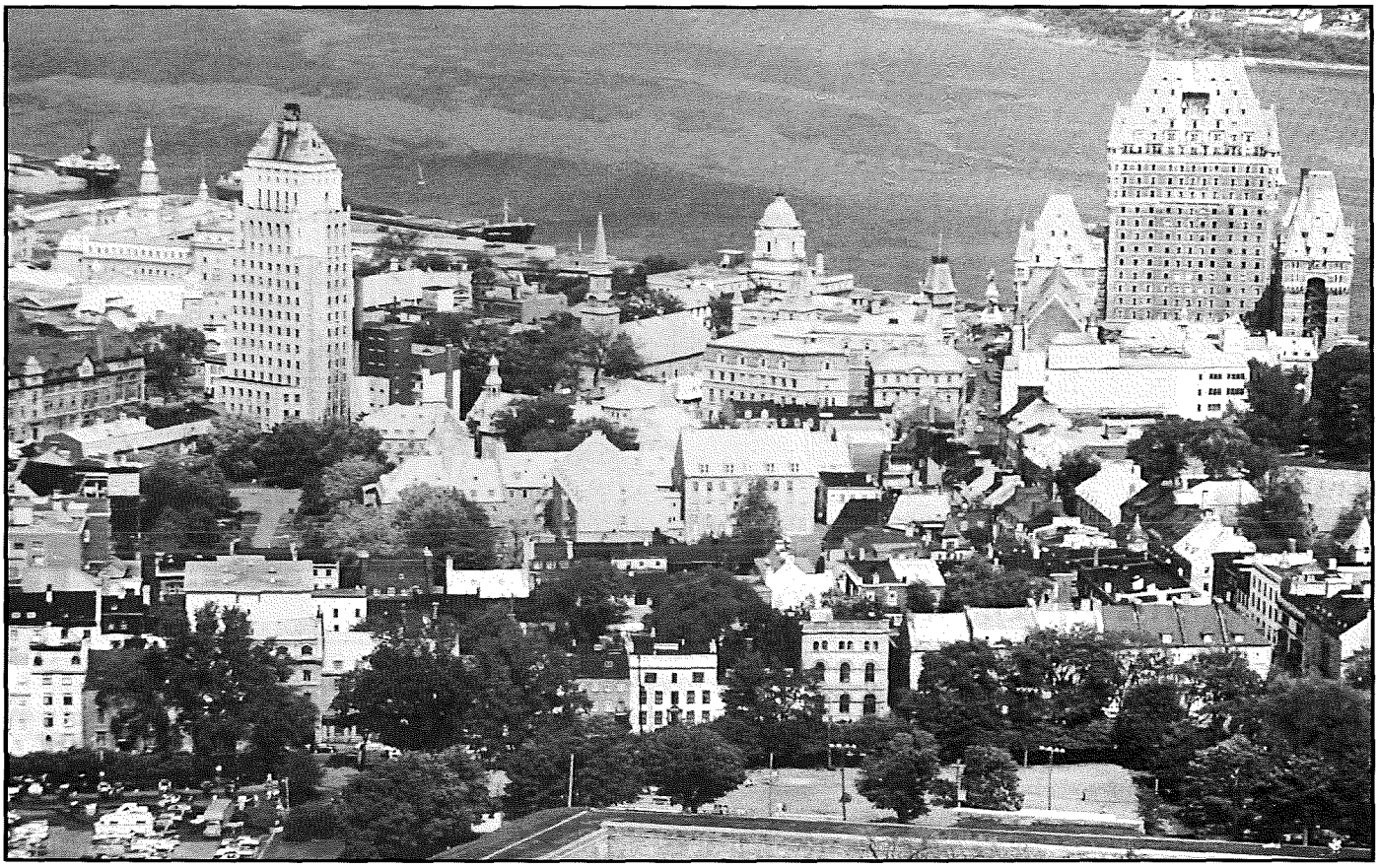
The second Francophone Summit, taking place in the city founded by Samuel de Champlain, reflects the strong wish of French-speaking Canadians and the Canadian government to play an appropriate role in the Francophone world. Canadians have an innate interest in other French-speaking countries and regions. Our country fully accepts President Senghor's concept of a "cultural dialogue": Canadian Francophones are not interested in one-way relationships. Our linguistic connections allow us an approach to human affairs which respects differences.

Francophone communities across the world recognize aspects of themselves in each other, and they are seeking to establish a stronger international Francophone community through increased dialogue. We look for the active participation of all members of *la Francophonie.*

In this supplement to ***Language and Society*** we have focused on certain features of *la Francophonie* in Canada and the world, without attempting to identify all its properties or all its problems. We have discussed certain political, geographic, historic and linguistic aspects and we hope our readers will let themselves be enticed by these glimpses into exploring different horizons in the great Francophone world community.

May I take this opportunity to salute Francophones both in Canada and throughout the world, as well as Francophiles, and to express my strong wish that these exchanges will open up new avenues leading to deeper understanding.

D'Iberville Fortier



Surveying the Francophone Summit

*Michel Roy**

La Francophonie *was not motivated by aspirations to cultural imperialism. Instead, it has the potential to serve as a prestigious channel for political action and a useful counterpoise to the present balance of world power.*

Years of patience, years of disappointment. Then a bright ray of promise. It is February 1986. The first conference of Francophone countries takes place in Paris, raising hopes that an international community of French-speaking peoples can one day become reality.

A second summit in September 1987 sees the heads of state and government from 30 countries meeting in Quebec City. Now this summit too is history. But it has left an impressive record of achievements, pointing to a conclusion that is a matter of fact rather than conjecture. Although *la Francophonie* is a fledgling organization that has yet to make its mark, the peoples of its member countries, through their leaders, have reaffirmed their will to create a community uniting them for mutual benefit, and are committed to pursuing the key objectives of co-operation, exchange, development and joint political action through solidarity and co-operation.

Abstract words, and ones that may prompt an indulgent smile. Yet they convey not just pious hopes but a reality that has been gaining substance since the Paris conference.

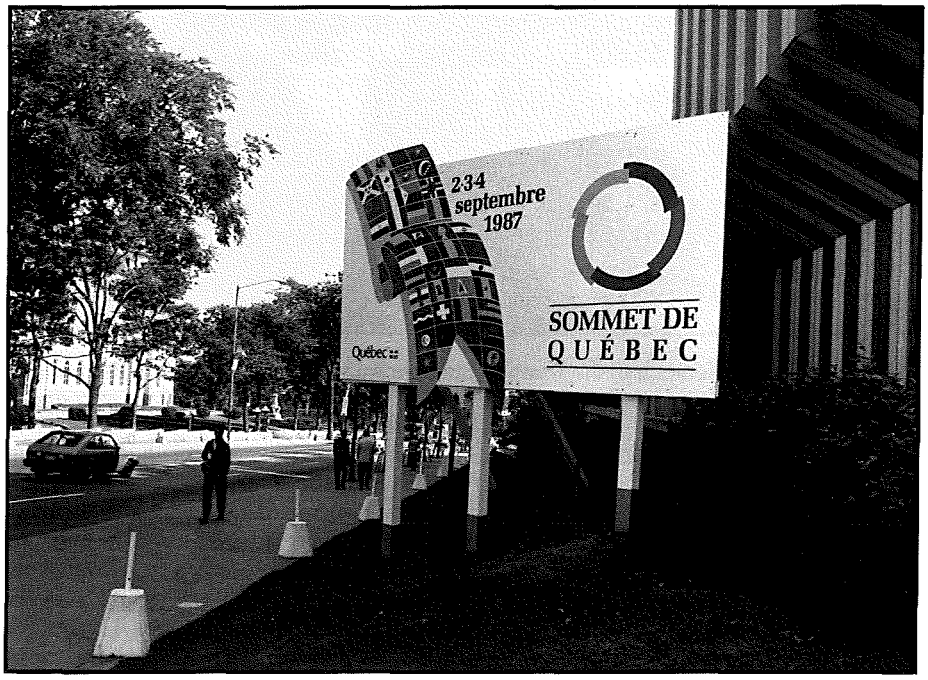
Dispelling misconceptions

It is time to dispel one misconception about that reality that clings like a burr. This new family of nations with its great diversity of cultures, languages, geography, resources and social conditions — differences even more pronounced than within the Commonwealth — was not created in order to defend the honour or promote the glory of the French language. Any such ambition would in fact be foreign to the spirit of the founders, the most famous of whom came from Africa — presidents Léopold Senghor, Habib Bourguiba and Hamani Diori. Those early leaders, humanists first and foremost, were concerned with fostering a dialogue of cultures, a free exchange of ideas, a marriage of technologies, the well-being of peoples.

Nonetheless, it is true that the use of French is the only common denominator in such a heterogeneous group that is capable of nourishing the new international community through the phases of growth and development.

The Francophone heads of state and government, in the Declaration of Solidarity they adopted (at the suggestion of Canada and Quebec) at the conclusion of the September summit, recognized that their common venture was "inspired by the use, to varying degrees, of the French language as a source of knowledge, dialogue, development and innovation". Later in the text they referred to the "consolidation of a sphere in which the use of a common language fosters the free circulation of cultural goods, the exchange of scientific knowledge, the transfer and adaptation of new technologies".

Having avoided any reference to the grandeur of French culture and the greatness of the French language — which would only have lent support to the unfounded supposition that *la Francophonie* was motivated by aspirations to cultural imperialism — the leaders of the Francophone community put the emphasis on co-operation and aid to development in their Declaration. At the same time, they were not unaware that the end result of using French for exchanges of knowledge, sharing of information and transfers of technology would inevitably be to enhance the status of this language, already understood and spoken by some 150 million people around the world.



Early organizations

Numerous specialized organizations and associations established since the Second World War have pursued this objective in their own areas and their own ways: the Union internationale des journalistes et de la presse de langue française (1950), the Association des universités partiellement ou entièrement de langue française (1961), the Association internationale des parlementaires de langue française (1967), and the Conseil international des radios-télévisions d'expression française (1964) among others. Then, in 1970 at Niamey, the intergovernmental Agence de coopération culturelle et technique was founded.

►

***Michel Roy is associate editor of Montreal's *La Presse*.**

The last press conference of the Quebec Summit: Abdou Diouf, François Mittérand, Brian Mulroney and Robert Bourassa.

Public opinion at that point, however, was preoccupied with the political squabbling between Ottawa and Quebec and its ramifications for Quebec's status within the new organization and did not pause to consider the higher ideals of Francophone solidarity.

From these examples it is evident that long before President Mitterand convened the first Francophone summit in 1986, the spirit of *la Francophonie* was abroad in the world and was taking concrete form in the work of various non-governmental associations and organizations, in ministerial conferences on cultural affairs, education and communications, and in a variety of international meetings. Niamey represented a critical stage in the early history of *la Francophonie*, 17 years ago. After that, it was just a matter of waiting for the right moment to hold the first summit and begin the task of building a real community with a wide range of programs that would be carried out in French.

Potential and prestige

This community in the making originally saw the light of day because the countries and peoples that comprise it had in common the use of French — an official language in some cases, a secondary or marginal language in others. But for all its member countries, especially those in the Third World, *la Francophonie* is proving that it has the potential, a potential increasingly realized since the Quebec Summit, to serve as a respectable and even prestigious channel for political action and a useful counterpoise to the present balance of world power. For the disadvantaged countries of Africa, it is another door to the northern hemisphere, giving them access to a share in the wealth of Europe and North America. This is the essential purpose of *la Francophonie.*

The implications for French

But what are the implications for the wider use of French? It is clear that solidarity among French-speaking countries will promote and foster use of the language, since French will be the language of technology transfer and the vehicle for cultural and technical exchange among the 40 countries and territories of *la Francophonie.*

What this means in concrete terms can best be understood from a few examples: creation of a Francophone agency for TV production to counter the world-wide predominance of American and British programming; extension of the TV5 network to the Middle East, North Africa and Europe; application of new technologies to the use and teaching of the French language; establishment of an open university or "university without walls", with headquarters in Montreal, to ensure a continuing exchange of Francophone researchers and professors between North and South; development of French-language software for use in distance learning, data banks and computers.

As an instrument of learning and development, French will thus permeate the French-speaking world and its use will gradually be extended to countries that have traditionally been locked into American technology and the language of their supplier in the absence of alternative French-language aid programs.

French is not really in retreat today, to borrow the words of Claude Hagège, it is just that English is forging ahead more quickly. The logical approach, Hagège suggests, is to maintain the international status of French, not to seek a victory over English.

The results of the September summit show clearly that *la Francophonie* can be counted on to do just this and to ensure that French will advance at a faster pace in future. ■

Africa and *la Francophonie*

*Makhily Gassama**

Cultural development without economic development is a dangerous bait; economic development alone is a fatal trap.

In this, the last quarter of the twentieth century, we must find it in ourselves to strike a fair balance between the positive and negative realities of today's world. The list of problems is endless: the despair generated by spreading areas of conflict and the frequency of civil wars; the interference of certain powers in the affairs of other countries; the sophistication of weapons of mass destruction; the growth of terrorism (including that of the state); the crisis facing multilateralism; and the dreadful deterioration of exchange rates. And yet, after centuries of strife-ridden cohabitation, after General de Gaulle's tumultuous African tour and after 25 years in which most African states gained independence, yesterday's colonizers and colonized today share the political will to use a common language to discuss and establish a new order of co-operation that safeguards their respective interests and dignity.

Better still, the governments of Canada, Quebec, Belgium and the Belgian French-speaking community have successfully transcended internal differences to join as one with other members of their linguistic family. The heads of state and government who accepted President Mitterrand's invitation to meet in Paris in 1986 laid the foundations for a significant new order of co-operation.

La Francophonie is, above all, a child of Africa, a factor that imbues it with vitality and a bright future. Our stubbornness, our conviction and our political will to draw from the history of mankind the wherewithal to build and develop a material, social and spiritual framework have led us to regroup around the French language, a language whose virtues and powerful beauty we keenly appreciate even if, for part of our history, it served as a formidable instrument of enslavement. If our leaders, fresh from the bonds of colonial rule, have dared to act in this manner, it is because they are firmly convinced that we have truly conquered this language, given it more suppleness, forced it to express our feelings and ideas, and made it espouse a new world to which it was not born. From an instrument of servitude, we have fashioned a tool to build that new world.

And if it is true that every language is born to build solidarity among the diverse elements of a group, to bind them in a seamless whole, and if the words of that language finally transcend utilitarianism to express feelings and sentiments, then any community resulting from use and love of the same language is one which may become respected for its strength or lamented for its weakness. In a world confronted by so many insoluble problems, we Africans, Americans, Asians and Europeans have chosen strength.

Is it therefore surprising that *la Francophonie*, as conceived today, is involved in all sectors of development? And that it does so notwithstanding the narrow-minded purists who continue to defend the French language as if it were the very breath of God, evolving independently of humanity, that collection of mere beings who require so little comfort to enable them to act, to build, to sing, to subsist?

For us Africans, and for those of us of the Sahel region on which Heaven so unremittingly fails to smile, French will either be the language of economic and social development or it will be nothing at all. This position has been substantiated time and time again in the many interventions of Senegal's head of state, President Abdou Diouf, at the first two summits and by the recent interventions in Quebec City of Presidents Mathieu Kérékou of Benin and Mobutu Sese Séko of Zaire.

Never before in modern times have 40 or so nations agreed to work together to solve the problems of economic development by basing their action on a cultural phenomenon: the use of a common language. The founders of *la Francophonie* recognized that the many aspects of development must be integrated and conducted simultaneously. Development policies should not include notions of priority. Cultural development without economic development is a dangerous bait that will bring the mob into the streets. And economic development without cultural development is a fatal trap for any leader: it creates an anarchy that begets monsters. No; priorities are foreign to social development. In our two decades of African independence, we have seen ideologies crumble because they had no solid economic development base; and, to the astonishment of experts who had underestimated the social importance of cultural values, we have witnessed the failure of extremely solid economic proposals whose success appeared to be a scientific certainty.

La Francophonie will thus be both cultural and economic or it will be nothing at all. And the French language will be its life-giving sap, its source of strength to meet the continuing challenge of serving free and equal peoples bound by a sense of fraternity.

But for *la Francophonie* to become a cultural entity, it must also show respect and proper support for the differences among its members. Every community on our planet today deserves respect and admiration because each, through the strength of its civilization, has managed to be present at the rendezvous of the twentieth century. Fragile civilizations, along with the peoples that built them, have shrunk into obscurity. Africans, despite their economic weakness, owe their presence among other nations to their personal genius, their determination to overcome obstacles and their faith in humanity. Will *la Francophonie*, synonym for dynamic solidarity, dare to turn up its nose at their societal values which, like a locomotive, have patiently drawn them from the shadows into today's world? Is any self-proclaimed universal civilization capable of absorbing them and making them forget everything to which they owe their existence in today's world? What civilization would dare to risk an attempt to take over their spirit and absorb them by ignoring their values? Absolutely impossible!

The giants of the Western world, a world increasingly blinded by science and technology, make no such error. André Malraux, like all men of genius, towered above the crowd and, at the first general meeting of the Association internationale des parlementaires de langue française in Versailles, correctly predicted the birth of a "culture of fraternity". "Our problem," he said, "is not one of conflict between national cultures. The question is, what ►

***Makhily Gassama is Senegal's Minister of Culture.**

particular spirit can a national culture contribute to the world at large." The culture of *la Francophonie* will thus be composed of a full range of cultural values, and will be the world in microcosm.

No one today could deny the existence of a Francophone literature distinct from that of France; examples include the literatures of Senegal, Quebec and Zaire.

Our task will not be simple. We shall have to develop the teaching and publication of our best cultural creations in a multilateral framework. An organic community like *la Francophonie* can no longer tolerate a situation in which teaching evolves in our different countries without consideration for the literatures of other countries. The best literary productions of Africa are worthy of a place in the curricula of Western schools just as the great authors of France are taught in ours.

Similarly, the French literature of Canada should be introduced in African and European classrooms. In a word, all our institutions should be open to the cultural values of the Francophone world. That is what we mean by reciprocal enrichment and mutual understanding. And there lies the future of the French language.

All this calls for certain prerequisites: in this sector, we must support publishers of the Francophone Third World and they in turn, given the limitations of domestic markets, must co-operate with one another. Co-publishing will thus be encouraged, not only between publishers of the South, but between them and those of the North. In this way, the various partners will be able to base their production on broader and more credible markets.

If we are to achieve these goals, the book market must be better organized. Through our Francophone organizations, publishers, bookstores and governments must make a concerted effort not only to organize the circulation of books and associated products but to reform tax systems that put intellectual products beyond the reach of the average citizen.

No one can deny the vitality of cultural industries in the developed world and their considerable contribution to the economic development of Western countries. But there is a general tendency to minimize the role that cultural industries are called upon to play in the economic development of countries of the South. In the interests of *la Francophonie*, it is high time that Africans stop being viewed as vulgar consumers of imported products. Would it not be in the interest of major promoters of Western cultural industries to invest in countries of the South to enable them to become producers or co-producers? There is production, there is distribution and there is marketing: surely what would be lost in one area could be recouped in another? In other words, *la Francophonie* will be considerably weakened if it fails to involve the private sector in the development, implementation and financing of its projects. This, in our view, is made all the more necessary by the fact that our heads of state and government have agreed that *la Francophonie* should henceforth embrace all sectors, including the important communications sector.

Lastly, as noted above, *la Francophonie* will also be an economic entity. A language is worthless if it is unable to serve as a developmental tool; given the diversity of peoples who use French and the firm will of those peoples to develop in a context that is no longer economically viable, the French language must henceforth move toward utilitarianism. It is utterly foolish to suggest that English owes its expansion to factors other than the United States' major development of economic co-operation throughout the world. It is precisely for this reason that we unanimously applaud Canada's great decision to forgive the debts contracted by the Francophone countries of Africa and its projects to support multilateral co-operation in the energy and agriculture sectors.

With the Paris and Quebec City summits behind us, *la Francophonie* is no longer a dream. Armed with concrete projects, it is now a reality, a genuinely new order of co-operation based on what President Abdou Diouf has called "reciprocal and continuing exchange". ■

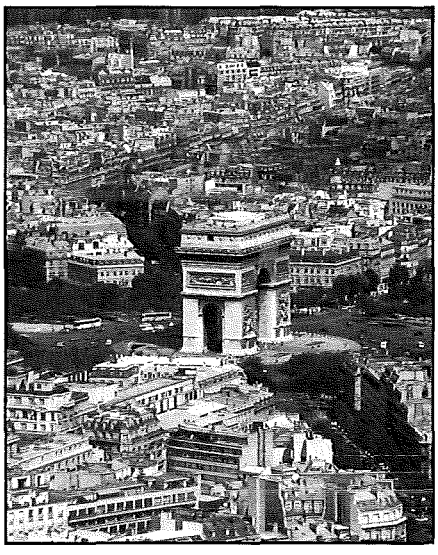
From Paris to Quebec

Lucien Bouchard

French-speaking countries are working together to build a strong international community. What has been done since the Paris Summit? What remains to be done?

The greatest success of the Paris Summit was that it took place at all. In spite of some scepticism, the encounter gave new impetus to *la Francophonie*, which, until then, had been largely a matter of hope and had caused great disappointment. The Paris Summit had not been expected to provide anything much in the way of concrete results, but, in fact, it reasserted the notion of solidarity between people sharing a language and a culture. It also gave the heads of state and government leaders who attended the opportunity to express themselves jointly on major topics such as the Middle East, southern Africa and the world economic situation. The dozens of projects launched consequent to that Paris meeting gave new meaning to the concept of *la Francophonie*. And an important appointment was made: Quebec City in September 1987.

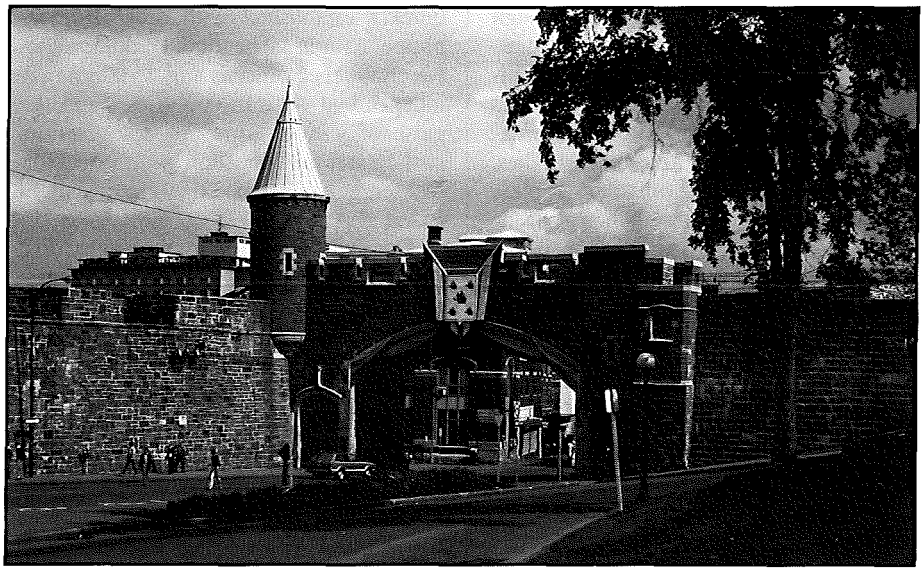
After the success of the first summit, this second meeting is critical. The Quebec Summit must not fail. It must offer answers to a number of fundamental questions raised in Paris and should redefine the Francophone community to include several states, such as Algeria, Egypt and Vietnam, which do not now recognize themselves as Francophone countries. The meeting's preliminary name — Summit of Heads of State and Heads of Government of Countries Using French as a Common Language — does not have media appeal. We need a shorter and more lively formula. We also need to envisage the French-language



Michel Belley

L'Arc de Triomphe

Lucien Bouchard is Canadian ambassador to France and head of the committee planning the Quebec Summit.



La porte Saint-Jean, Quebec City

community in more concrete terms, ones which allow for the growing importance of new technologies. Most importantly, the Francophone world must not take up a defensive attitude: the French language cannot be promoted from behind some sort of Maginot Line. It is not only a question of defining new objectives but also of finding new methods and new financial structures. The Quebec Summit must give shape to all of these concerns; a solemn declaration stating the goals and methods of future conferences might also be appropriate.

The Paris Summit set a number of wheels turning, including the development of a two-part agenda by the Sherpas' Committee, made up of the personal representatives of heads of state and government. The first part of this agenda focuses on defining the Francophone world's major objectives and on discussing international political and economic questions. Controversial issues brought up too early might lead to the splitting apart of the Francophone community that is being built, but overcautiousness is also dangerous. The new sense of solidarity must find significant expression. We must create a forum for discussion where leaders of French-speaking countries can take common positions on major current issues.

The second part of the agenda will be devoted to technical co-operation projects. Some may fear that in developing this kind of co-operation, the Francophone community will lose touch with its founding principles. These fears must be dispelled. French-speaking countries cannot afford to be inactive in areas which will be of critical importance in the future.

In Quebec, leaders will naturally be asking about the steps taken to implement decisions made in Paris. These steps have been grouped by themes, each being entrusted to a flexible organization known as a "network". Each network has a director assisted by representatives of other governments to ensure that the projects carried out are truly international.

For instance, members of the energy network have written a handbook on energy use, created an Institut de l'Énergie, and worked with the University of Montreal to help train oil industry specialists from all Francophone countries.

Although leaders were less precise in their instructions for agriculture, the responsible network has prepared a number of stimulating recommendations for the Quebec Summit. Of particular interest are those dealing with the training of agronomists.

Members of the communications and culture network worked on a great number of projects, many of which have been completed. A new French-language television network is to begin operations in North America; it is hoped that a Francophone agency will create a French-language image data base; and two pilot projects using satellite transmission for remote training programs have been launched. Books are a thorny issue. As a first step, six or seven volumes will be distributed and sold at low prices in countries that lack books in French, and these might eventually form the basis of a series.

The Follow-up Committee created at the end of the Paris Summit has been concerned with the Francophone community's scientific and academic situation as well as its co-operative efforts; it has sought to create interconnections between computer programs and to make them more accessible. It will introduce the first museums inventory of Francophone countries, along with a program for the dissemination of scientific works in French. A conference held in Paris at the end of June dealt with the use of French in international institutions. Finally, a fund has been set up to help finance the education of Francophone children.

Although it created networks and a Follow-up Committee, the Paris Summit did not indicate how these were to be financed. As a result, the structure of these groups, working empirically on a volunteer basis, has not been very clear. However, once joint efforts led to a better definition of Follow-up Committee procedures and network directors' mandates, the Agence de coopération culturelle et technique (ACCT) began devoting 30 per cent of its budget to Paris Summit projects.

Without prejudging Quebec Summit decisions, we may predict that they will seek to clarify the ACCT's role. The Agency is a very important organization. Founded 17 years ago, it is one of the Francophone world's great accomplishments. It must therefore be maintained and developed. In Paris, leaders showed they were aware of this when they gave the ACCT wider responsibilities. Reform proposals — some of a purely administrative nature, some intended to increase its efficiency and some aiming at spending more on programs and less on the organization itself — will be submitted to leaders meeting in Quebec. As for the Canadian government, it hopes to maintain the present formula, at least during a transitional period.

For Canadians, the Quebec Summit has a symbolic value. It is the most important operation ever attempted jointly by the federal government and the governments of Quebec and New Brunswick. The task is a delicate one, but success will have major consequences for Canada both at home and abroad.

On the domestic scene, national reconciliation is a major political theme. Over the past two years the federal government has pursued a policy of co-operation with Quebec, allowing the Paris Summit to take place by accepting the presence of the Quebec premier, who does not represent a sovereign nation, at a gathering of heads of state. The New Brunswick premier was granted the same privilege. The federal government is also expressing its new attitude through financial support, raising its annual contribution to international Francophone activities from seven to $19 million.

The summit will strengthen Canada's influence abroad. Our country belongs to the Commonwealth and the G-7. Membership in the Francophone community offers us a third opportunity to form natural and strategic alliances.■

The Reason Why

Paul-André Comeau

The voices of Ottawa and Quebec have harmonized in the concert of French-language countries and governments.

Unlike Tennyson's Light Brigade, students of history like to examine The Reason Why. Hence the proposal that a cause-and-effect relationship is to be found between the rise of Quebec nationalism in the early Sixties and the subsequent Canadian foreign policy thrust toward *la Francophonie*.. This hypothesis helps explain an important historical fact. Before French-speaking African countries began to win their independence, Canadian diplomats had little reason to bother with "States" that were, in fact, simply colonies raised to the rank of "members of the Francophone community" at the founding of the Fifth Republic by General de Gaulle. Some would argue that if the government of Canada had not been goaded by Quebec separatism, it would not — at least at that time and in that manner — have committed itself to the path leading to the second summit of *la Francophonie*. Others might disagree, while federalists would point out how quickly Ottawa discovered the virtues of joining *la Francophonie* in order to balance its role within the Commonwealth.

For Canada, this path to co-operation has been, to say the least, curious and complex. While the federal state and one of its member provinces have each at times cast spokes in the wheel, their fundamental support for this undertaking has never flagged. It would be pretentious to claim that the Ottawa-Quebec dialectic was the only impetus for an organization of Francophone nations that has now grown well beyond infancy. But it is impossible to unravel the intricate skein of events that served as markers in the short history of this close-knit group of Francophone nations without making repeated references to the early dialogue — often strained but at bottom fruitful — between Ottawa and Quebec City.

Francophone summit meetings, which are gradually becoming institutionalized events, developed from strong ties established between France, the other western Francophone countries and the 40 or so nations in which the French language and culture have historical roots. But although the Quebec City summit draws its inspiration from the international relations, affinities and solidarity that unite Francophones throughout the world, and from the initiatives of governments and other bodies, these factors are not the only ones at play. We would be gravely mistaken in attributing this diplomatic structure simply to the Francophone policy objectives of the government of Canada. Nor should we ignore Quebec's contribution to this world-wide Francophone movement.

Paul Gérin-Lajoie

Trials and tribulations

Credit for the concrete translation into action in North America — if not the political concept itself — of an international *francophonie* goes to Paul Gérin-Lajoie, the Oxford-trained constitutional authority who was Quebec's first minister of education. The concept, which is in some ways analogous to that of the Commonwealth, took shape at a time when Mr. Gérin-Lajoie was seeking to establish the legal foundations for Quebec's first ventures onto the international scene. There is no point in dwelling here on the theoretical aspects of extending abroad certain powers over which Quebec, as a province, has exclusive jurisdiction. Suffice it to say that this concept — and, ultimately, this reality — played a key role in the transformation of Quebec. Some 20 years later, this movement can be seen as the beginnings of the "national affirmation" of a society emerging from splendid isolation.

Although early agreements and exchanges were negotiated with the government of the Fifth Republic, in concrete terms the focus of Quebec's interest in *la Francophonie* was not exclusively Paris. Fuelled by a nationalist movement that expressed itself in many ways, ties were quickly established with other Francophone nations. The initial contacts between Quebec officials and certain newly independent African countries — in the guise of various forms of co-operation, particularly in education — produced a real sense of concern in the Department of External Affairs.

The Canadian diplomatic service first reacted by organizing a series of ostentatious field manoeuvres. It was only later that it created a real program aimed at French-speaking countries. In a joyful rush, diplomats and politicians discovered a Francophone Africa previously almost ignored by the Anglo-Saxon mandarins in charge of a Canadian foreign policy traditionally geared to close ties with Commonwealth countries.

Even before it developed a genuine development aid policy, Canada had been participating, through the Colombo Plan, in development efforts in certain English-speaking countries, including those of Africa. In no time at all, the federal diplomatic service invented a program of grants and subsidies, cobbled together aid mechanisms, and set up embassies in several countries of Francophone Africa. This was the period of goodies from Santa Claus.

Africa was also the scene of much wheeling and dealing over the creation of l'Agence de coopération culturelle et technique. In this period of fiery outbursts and declarations, tension mounted in the Paris-Quebec City-Ottawa triangle. With the benefit of hindsight and a cooler climate, we can now see the concrete results of quarrels over flags and hotly debated policy stances and — more importantly — appreciate the imagination of those involved. Thus was born l'Agence, harbinger of the Francophone summits.

Quebec was accorded the status of a participating government in this international organization, a major departure from convention and a precedent in international public law. It was a status that New Brunswick, too, would soon acquire. This precedent was to help create the protocol which, 20 years later, determined the meaning and nature of Quebec's participation at the Francophone Summit. Given the increased role that l'Agence is likely to play in following through on decisions taken at the Quebec City Summit, it is of some significance that the efforts and energy of two orders of government coexist in harmony within an international co-operative body.

Parallel activities

While progress was being made along this

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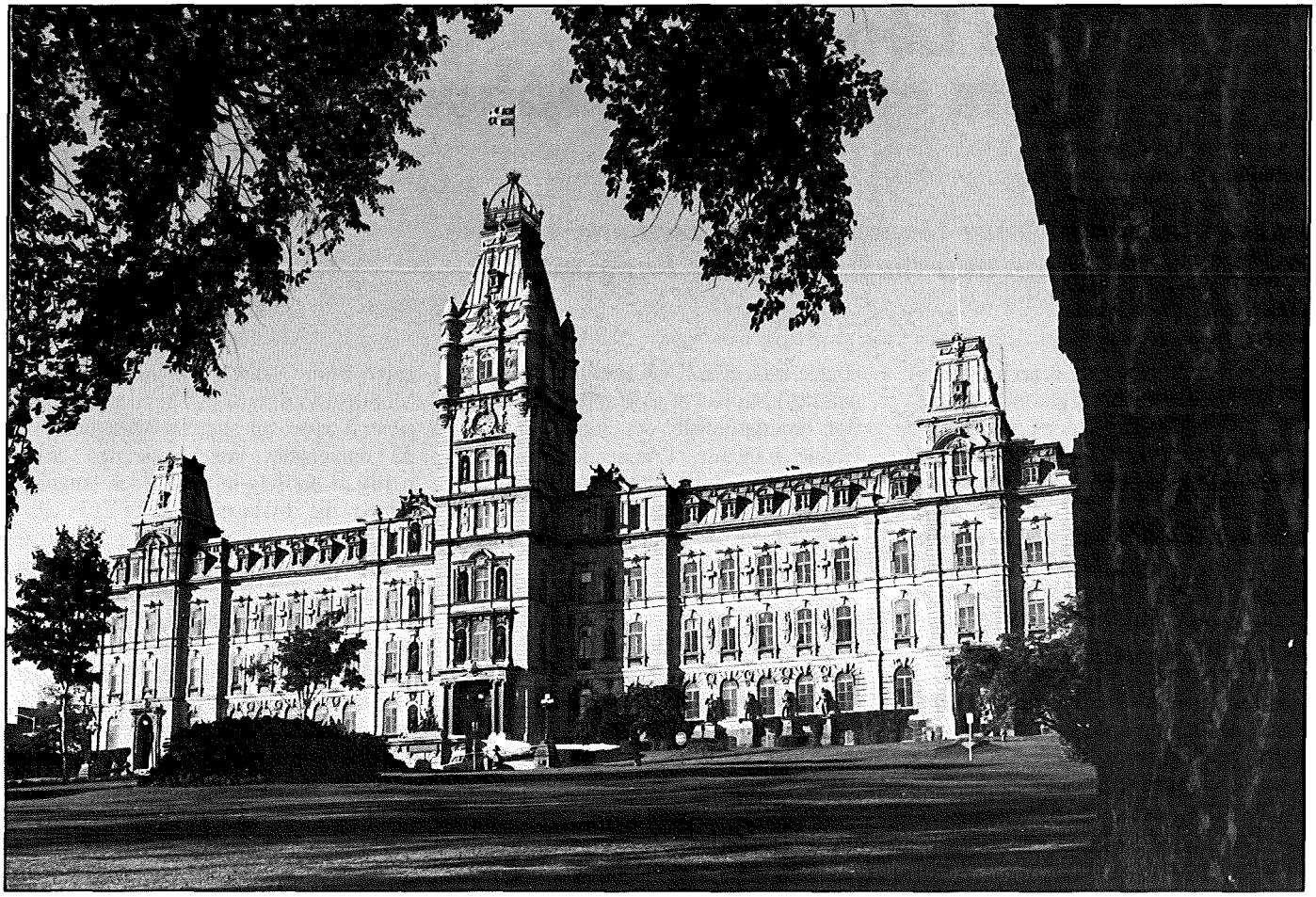

The Quebec National Assembly

bumpy path, other initiatives gave a wider meaning to the concept of Francophone solidarity. Governments built upon private sector initiatives, such as the creation of l'Association des universités partiellement ou entièrement de langue française, thanks largely to federal funding, and the birth of an impressive group of associations and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Thus, as a corollary to la Communauté radiophonique des programmes de langue française, a body composed of public radio stations in France, Belgium, Switzerland and Canada, federal officials were instrumental in establishing le Conseil international des radios et télévisions éducatives francophones, an organization that promotes exchanges and co-productions among all Francophone countries.

However, the efforts of *la Francophonie* in this initial stormy period were probably most evident in the field of co-operative development. An entire branch of the Canadian International Development Agency was soon devoted to Francophone countries. Co-operation, new programs and substantial budgets flowed from the political will to assume a new approach to diplomacy reflecting both cultural duality and a number of deeply rooted interests.

The road to the summit

Our analysis must not neglect the major events that marked relations between Ottawa and Quebec in the Seventies and early Eighties. The election of an independentist government in Quebec in 1976 not only increased tensions but gave the federal diplomatic service a sense of urgency. The real results of the clash of policies between the two capitals is not easy to assess objectively. While initiatives and projects designed primarily to "occupy" political ground were massively increased, negotiations for the Francophone Summit on which leaders of Francophone Africa had set their hearts came to a standstill.

In the fall of 1985, right in the middle of the Quebec election campaign, Paris, Ottawa and Quebec City finally reached an agreement. Politicians and diplomats managed to draw up a subtle protocol that united the recognition of a unified Canadian foreign policy and that of Quebec's indispensable contribution to a *Francophonie* that was developing institutional foundations. This opened the door to the Paris and Quebec City Summits.

The summits illustrate an aspect of federal policy towards the French fact throughout the world. This policy cannot ignore two components which, in different ways, form its very foundation: the direction taken by consecutive Quebec governments; and the direct and impressive role played by private companies and NGOs in developing this age of *la Francophonie* evoked by poet-president Léopold Senghor.

The accession of African countries to independence, Ottawa-Quebec tensions, a change in mentalities, all these factors played a part in gaining full recognition for the French fact in federal diplomacy. In Quebec, obtaining such recognition was one of the reasons for the creation of the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs. From its early beginnings as an instinctive reaction, policy with regard to *la Francophonie* has become a more coherent activity based on the idea of Canada's duality for some, of Quebec's distinct character for others. Nothing is carved in stone.

The leap has been impressive for bilateral relations. Agreements among Francophone countries have led to the development of projects that should give new impetus to the North-South dialogue. And, going back to the beginnings of this adventure, the Francophones of Quebec and the rest of Canada can contribute to this undertaking while working for their own cultural development. ■

Jean-Marc Léger: The Origins of *la Francophonie*

Bernard Descôteaux

Quebec's Commissioner General for Francophone Affairs raises a cry of alarm over the future of the Francophone cause.

Jean-Marc Léger is no prophet of doom, but he is gloomy. "Something has to be done quickly," he says. "We don't have 50 years. If we can't establish something permanent in five or 10 years, then...".

The sentiment comes not from weariness, but rather because Mr. Léger, a veteran of the 30-year struggle for *la Francophonie*, foresees serious danger in the near future, something he thinks may even be "a catastrophe for humanity".

In an interview with ***Language and Society***, Mr. Léger said that in his view history is speeding up, and that the driving force behind that acceleration is the dizzying rise of cultural and communications industries which will ultimately "standardize and sterilize most cultures and even creativity itself." The Francophone world, Mr. Léger says, must develop ways to ward off this danger, which threatens *la Francophonie* and other cultures as well.

A time for action

The challenge for the Francophone world has long been to create structures and institutions embodying the idea of *la Francophonie*. Although that process is well under way, the time for concerted action has come. A devotee to the cause from its inception, Mr. Léger knows that the greatest danger is the development of what he calls "a cocktail party Francophonie of speeches and receptions", and he believes the danger will be event greater if this grand scheme becomes the exclusive domain of governments and administrations, and lacks popular support.

Mr. Léger remembers that *la Francophonie* was not always a government issue. "One day, governments said: reality is there, it can't be denied. We now have to get together to develop, structure and consolidate it."

La Francophonie was originally the business of a number of non-government organizations (NGOs). From 1952 to 1970, Mr. Léger says, "It was they who kept the idea alive, who embodied and illustrated it." Those organizations include l'Association internationale des professeurs de français, le Conseil international de la langue française, l'Association internationale des historiens et géographes, l'Association internationale des journalistes de langue française, l'Association internationale des parlementaires de langue française and l'Association des universités partiellement ou entièrement de langue française (AUPELF).

At its inception, then, the idea of a unified Francophone world was not something which governments had grafted artificially onto an existing situation. "It sprang from a deeply felt desire," says Léger, who would like matters to remain that way and governments not to be the only organizations carrying the torch.

Jean-Marc Léger

Early days

Mr. Léger has a personal commitment to *la Francophonie*, one which he developed as a journalist. After helping, in 1952, to found l'Association internationale des journalistes de langue française, he became president of the organization in 1960 and immediately opened it to African journalists. "Like Mr. Jourdain, I was working for *la Francophonie* without knowing it," he says.

Writing for *Le Devoir* at the time, Léger wondered whether an association of French-language universities similar to the organization already existing within the Commonwealth could be found. The notion appealed to Mgr. Irénée Lussier, Rector of the University of Montreal, and in September 1961 he invited his counterparts from roughly 40 universities to Montreal to discuss it. The idea met with general approval and, on September 13, 33 universities which operated either partly or entirely in the French language signed the by-laws of AUPELF. Its headquarters were established in Montreal.

Though many of the universities already had bilateral relations with other universities in major cultural areas of the globe — the Arab world, the Caribbean, the West and the Far East — AUPELF very quickly became the most important Francophone association, opening a European office in Paris in 1965 and an African bureau in Dakar in 1972.

Quebec's role

Quebec played a central role in the Association. Mr. Léger, who was elected Secretary-General, recalls that while Quebec was in the throes of its Quiet Revolution a new generation of academics, in search of breathing room, reached out for contacts with foreign countries. AUPELF organized seminars to enable Quebec professors to forge ties with foreign colleagues and to take an active part in building the Association. Mr. Léger believes that during the first 15 years their intellectual contribution was a determining factor in AUPELF's development.

At the same time, the Quebec government began to develop an interest in things international. It was guided in this respect by Paul Gérin-Lajoie's theory that Quebec should seek relations beyond its borders in fields which, constitutionally speaking, were under provincial jurisdiction. Quite naturally, that interest led the province to give active support and financing to AUPELF. The Association extended invitations to its seminars to various governments, which in turn sent senior public servants and, from time to time, ministers, to attend them. As a result, when General de Gaulle arranged an invitation for Quebec to attend the Common Conference of Ministers of Education of France and

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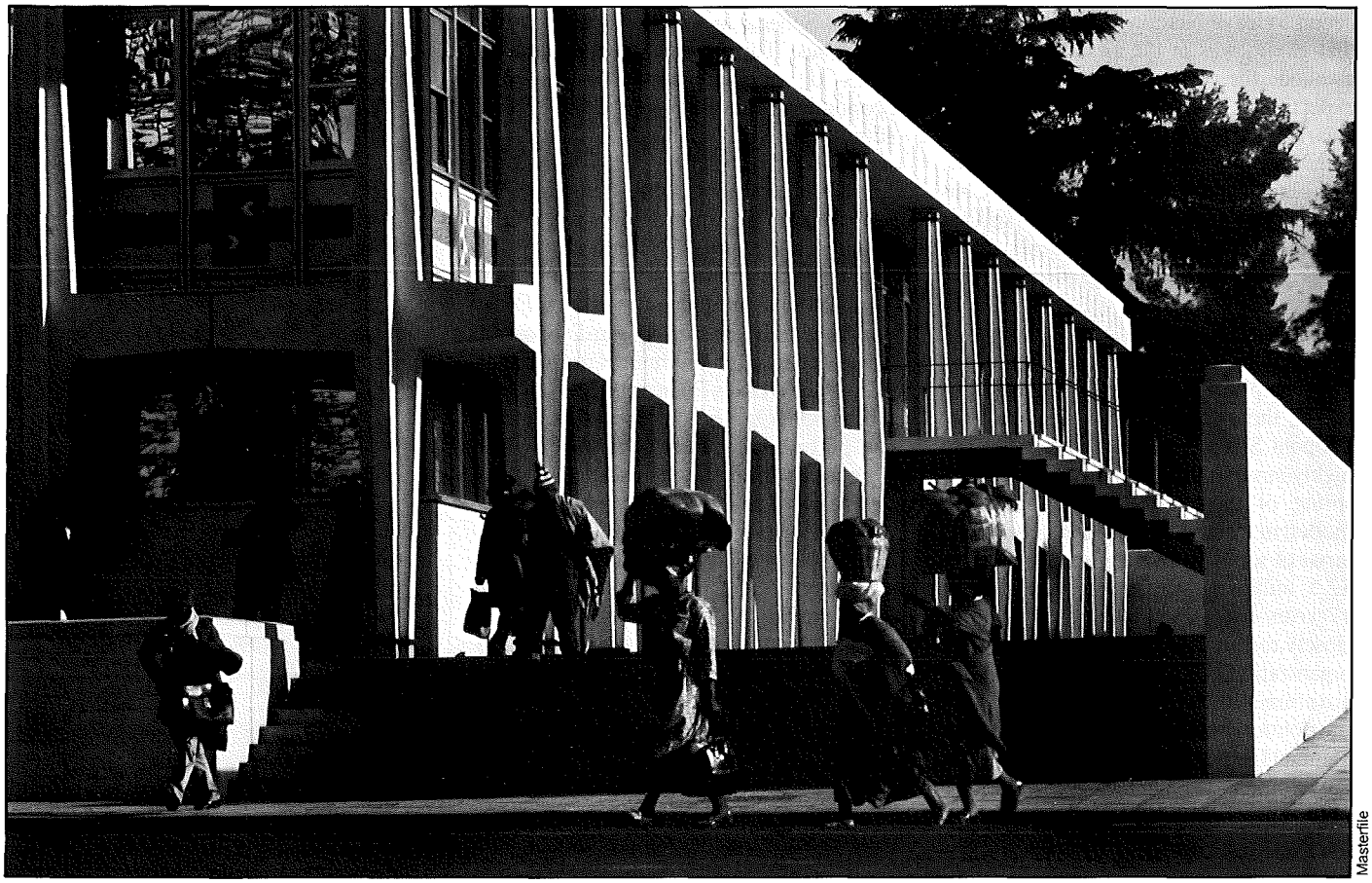


Masterfile

Francophone Africa, in Libreville in 1968, the province's delegates found themselves on familiar ground.

The Libreville conference, which Mr. Léger attended, was a major turning point for *la Francophonie*. AUPELF had attended these conferences as observer since 1965, but Quebec was the first outside government to participate in the biennial conferences, which had hitherto been restricted to France and its former African colonies. "It was really quite moving to see our flag among those of 16 sovereign nations," Léger says, remembering the meeting at which Jean-Guy Cardinal, then Quebec's Minister of Education, was the object of particular attention from conference organizers.

The government of Canada reacted to what it viewed as a serious diplomatic incident by breaking its ties with Gabon. It also succeeded in obtaining an invitation to the following conference in Kinshasa and obliged the Quebec representatives to attend as part of the Canadian delegation. Referring to this compromise made by Quebec, Mr. Léger says, "We could not ask our African friends to make a greater sacrifice for our cause than we were prepared to make ourselves."

Quebec representatives nevertheless travelled to Niamey in 1969 to take part in a conference called by the president of Niger, Diori Hamani, in his capacity as president of the Organisation commune africaine et malgache (OCAM). The purpose of the event was to discuss a plan submitted by Léopold Senghor in 1966 to institutionalize *la Francophonie*. At this meeting of ministers the idea of creating what was to become the Agence de coopération culturelle et technique (ACCT) was accepted.

"Something has to be done quickly, we don't have 50 years... if we can't establish something permanent in five or 10 years, then...".

An interim committee was established to draft the by-laws of the future organization. The name of Jean-Marc Léger was naturally put forward as secretary to the committee, mainly, Mr. Léger says, because of the success achieved by AUPELF. For one year, Mr. Léger travelled throughout the French-speaking world obtaining support for the plan from Francophone countries and determining what they expected from it. In March 1970 delegates from all the countries contacted, except Algeria, Guinea, the Congo and Morocco, attended the Niamey II conference to launch the organization.

The main problem raised at the second conference was the status of Quebec, an issue involving Canada, Quebec and France. According to Mr. Léger, the Africans were at first surprised, then somewhat irritated by this dispute among "great white leaders" which threatened the whole project. France was loyal to Quebec and came up with a compromise that brought all three parties to an agreement. That compromise appears in Article 3.3 of the ACCT's charter: "In full respect of the sovereignty and international jurisdiction of member states, any government may be admitted as an active member of the institutions, activities and programs of the ACCT, upon approval by the member state" to which the government in question is subject.

The door was opened for Quebec, and the Canadian and Quebec governments were left to decide jointly on terms and conditions of Quebec's membership in the organization. Negotiations went on through 1971, but the Quebec government was unable to secure the full benefit of Article 3.3, to which Canada had agreed only half-heartedly. Mr. Gérard Pelletier, who represented the Canadian government, succeeded in convincing Ottawa that a refusal would have serious consequences, and the green light finally came late on the evening of March 19, when the conference was winding up and some delegations had

begun to leave Niamey. Mr. Léger recalls that gloom was in the air as participants awaited the response, without really expecting it to come. The next day, the Charter was signed by 21 governments, including those of Quebec and Canada. "Since then," says Mr. Léger, "Quebec has managed to improve its position," and has become, to all intents and purposes, a full-fledged member of the organization.

Making progress

Although the plan adopted at Niamey was a first step toward a united Francophone world, the actual situation was far from Léopold Senghor's dream of an organic, highly-structured Francophonie. The offspring of the Niamey conference was modest in scale and its resources — a secretariat of some 10 persons and a budget of $2.5 million — paltry at best. Today, 17 years later, ACCT corresponds more closely to President Senghor's vision. The organization has 39 member countries and governments and is preparing to become the political and administrative arm of the biennial Conference of Heads of State and Government, which has been a regular event since 1985.

"The French language must be seen as a kind of guardian of the universal. Since it is in the front rank of those world languages competing with the influence of English, it will have a truly major historical role to play."

The modest nature of the undertaking was necessary in 1970. The time was not right, says Mr. Léger, who quite naturally became the first Secretary-General of the new organization. As Mr. Léger recalls, France, which a few years earlier had experienced the failure of the Communauté française, its attempt to renew ties with its former African colonies, wanted proof that the governments involved really intended to found an effective organization. It would certainly not be out of the question to consider supplementing this first experiment at a later date with periodic meetings with heads of state and government. "But we had to be realistic," says Mr.Léger.

France had always reacted with circumspection to calls from African countries for political institutions for the Francophone world. It had no wish to be in the vanguard of that particular movement. But Mr. Léger recalls that even the African countries felt the plan submitted to OCAM by the president of Senegal in June 1966 was far too ambitious. The scheme involved major fields of human activity — science, economics and politics — and called for a summit meeting of heads of state and government. The plan was ambitious, Mr. Léger says, but Léopold Senghor "was a visionary. He wanted to give strength and authority to the community of Francophone countries."

In 1976, in an attempt to take *la Francophonie* another step forward, Léopold Senghor called for a summit of the heads of state of the world's Francophone countries. The issue of Quebec's status at such a meeting postponed matters until 1986, when Quebec and Canada reached an agreement on the subject.

If, after the second summit this September in Quebec City, these meetings occur regularly, it will, says Mr. Léger, bring about major and desirable changes to ACCT. That institution seems destined to become the secretariat for the summits, even though some have long hesitated on this point, feeling it would be preferable to have a parallel, political secretariat. However, Mr. Léger says, the Francophone world does not have enough resources to risk squandering them in this way.

To be or not to be

The Quebec Summit will be extremely important for the development of *la Francophonie* because, quite apart from the issue of structures, many projects await implementation. In response to the various dangers on the horizon, the structure must be unassailable, says Mr. Léger. He points to the need to ensure a strong Francophone presence in the audiovisual sphere, to introduce a common market for cultural products, and to awaken public opinion through the media and education.

The stakes are much greater than they appear at first glance. "The Francophone world is not the only one at risk," Mr. Léger says. "The French language must be seen as a kind of guardian of the universal. Since it is in the front rank of those world languages competing with the influence of English, it will have a truly major historical role to play. If Francophones are unable to aspire, on behalf of all cultures, to renewed creativity and a necessary minimum influence throughout the world, others will be even less able to do so."

In Mr. Léger's opinion, failure in this respect would be catastrophic. "We will all be victims of cultural impoverishment," Mr. Léger says. "For Quebec, there is even a risk of 'cajunization', as it were. Failure here will reduce us to fighting rear-guard actions and taking improvised measures. It will leave us blind and impotent in the face of assimilation."■

Grand Prix de la francophonie

Lebanese poet and playwright Georges Schéhadé is the first recipient of the Grand Prix de la francophonie, created through a Canadian initiative. At the time of the first Francophone Summit, Canada set up a fund to be administered by the Académie française. Now enriched by contributions from two Canadian businessmen and the French government, the fund will also honour contributions to *la Francophonie* in the fields of science, technology and information technology. Also recognized this year was the research team of Martial Bourassa from Quebec and Jean-Paul Chachera from France, who received the Médaille de la francophonie for *La maladie coronaire.*

After TVFQ, TV5

For many years, the Communauté des télévisions francophones was responsible for occasionally bringing programs from the international Francophone community to Canadian TV screens. In 1979, a Franco-Quebec agreement gave birth to TVFQ, "the television of France in Quebec" — an entire channel devoted to programs from the three French public networks.

The idea of offering Francophone viewers productions from other French-language countries spread and in 1984 Belgium, France, and Switzerland joined to create a European network broadcasting programs from the public networks of each country. Canada and Quebec joined TV5 officially in 1986, but broadcasts remained limited to Europe.

Extending TV5 to North America, the last step required to make the exchange complete, is planned for early 1988. For TV5's Canadian première the Anik C-3 satellite will broadcast the five partners' programs to Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime provinces. Cable companies will then be free to transmit the programs to their subscribers. TV5 will carry a variety of Canadian and world features and a weekly African presentation.

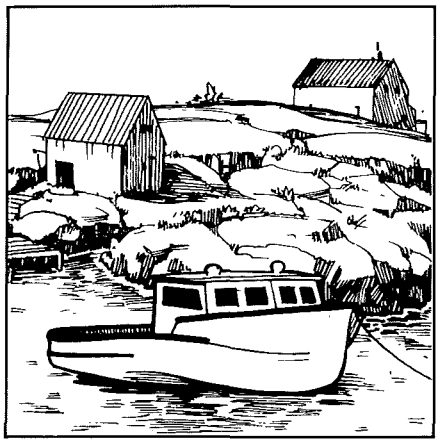
It is to be hoped that this international network will continue to expand for the greater enrichment of French-language television.

Heritage and Partnership

Naim Kattan

Through its diversity,* la Francophonie *points the way to the future by exemplifing the need to respect the individuality of others.

The French fact in Canada has a long history and a promising future. To be born Francophone is to inherit a major civilization and, most important of all, an infinitely rich language. Like any language, French is both expression and substance; first, the expression of a people, today of a world community, and the substance of a culture. That culture is not limited to Molière, Racine, Descartes, Baudelaire and Bergson. It extends beyond France to the world at large, the world of Senghor, Cendrars, Grandbois and Maeterlinck: a vast and universal heritage reaching to the four corners of the earth.



Eastern Canada

Because of its population, France is the major centre, the original seed and root of *la Francophonie*, from Africa to the Americas. But France is no longer the only beneficiary of its heritage, no longer the producer or guardian of these multi-faceted riches. French today is no longer simply a European language, but one that finds currency in the Americas, in Asia, Oceania and Africa. It is both vehicle and instrument, modality and substance — a common legacy enriched and shared by the Francophone countries that have become a vast international family of nations.

The North American source

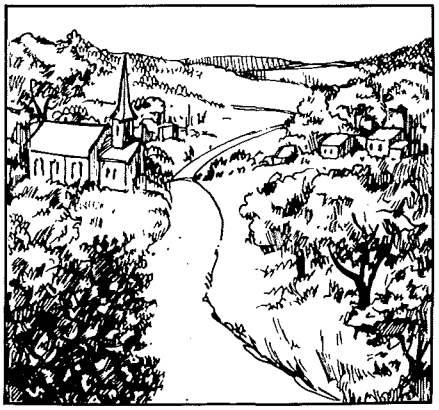
Canada's *francophonie*, as both beneficiary and donor, shares each of these dimensions. First there is the source itself, France — a country distant yet close, past yet present. Despite the vicissitudes of history, the brutality of events, and broken political ties, the French settlers remained in Canada and made it their homeland. The link with France — that mix of disappointed love, resentment and sadness, nostalgia and anger — was maintained, charged with dreams, misunderstandings and expectations. New France became Quebec, a part of America. This new homeland for *la Francophonie*, the strongest and most extensive in North America, henceforth became the rallying point for Francophones scattered across the continent, particularly for those in Canada. Through its laws and policies, Canada is a country whose duality is, if not warmly embraced, widely accepted. And one fact is beyond question: the heritage of Canadian Francophones is a living one, and they have clearly expressed the will to preserve and enrich it. The vitality of a culture manifests itself in the manner in which those who embrace it meet its challenge. We need look no further than to those Acadians, Franco-Ontarians and Franco-Manitobans who, far from accepting atrophy and decline, have shown that they intend to flourish.

That, in fact, is the other dimension of Canada's *francophonie*. Our memory of the past must be faithful to the promise of a future if it is to act as stimulus for the present. It is this will to act today and to explore new horizons that creates new links. Even though there is no single centre through which they pass, the many Francophone communities scattered throughout the world are as one in their wish to assert their autonomy and together build a whole greater than the sum of its parts.

The manifestation of "Frenchness"

Through the English language, Canada has an uncertain, disquieting and unequal relation with the United States. As time goes by, its historical links with Great Britain are becoming loyal memories and, in the shadow of its gigantic neighbour, English Canada is now a minority threatened by absorption. However, by vigorously expressing their "Frenchness" in a bid to avoid assimilation, French Canadians give this English-language minority, itself a threat to them, the support it needs to avoid being swallowed up by the United States. Born of an alliance of two minorities, each striving to survive, Canada lives in a state of tense and fragile duality: thus the unremitting need to re-express the bond that lies at its very foundation and which unites it in the face of danger.

By affirming its cultural and linguistic autonomy, Quebec gives every Francophone community in Canada, as well as Canada itself, the right to speak as part of *la Francophonie*, which includes France. Relations and exchanges among Francophone countries are built on the concept of liberty and thus equality. Each makes its contribution to, and draws support from, the whole. It is therefore essential for Canadian Francophones to belong to this whole and to establish direct communications with Europe — not just with France but with Belgium and Switzerland, too — and with Africa, Asia, Oceania and the Caribbean.



Central Canada

The influence of a language is not limited to those who learned it at their mother's knee but extends to all individuals and peoples who adopt it as an instrument of communication. This, indeed, is the yardstick for measuring its universality. And it is essential for Francophones themselves to recognize the universality of French in order to appreciate the place they and it occupy in the world at large.

In a number of countries French coexists with other languages. This, in addition to posing a threat and being the source of tension and conflict, offers obvious advantages. For instance, the Francophone heritage is enriched by Arab civilization in North Africa and the Middle East, by African cultures in the rest of Africa, by the link with German culture in Switzerland and Dutch culture in Belgium, and by a long association with the Anglo-Saxon culture in Canada.

The meeting of individual cultures

The most visible contacts between Francophone countries are the political and legal links. Essential though they may

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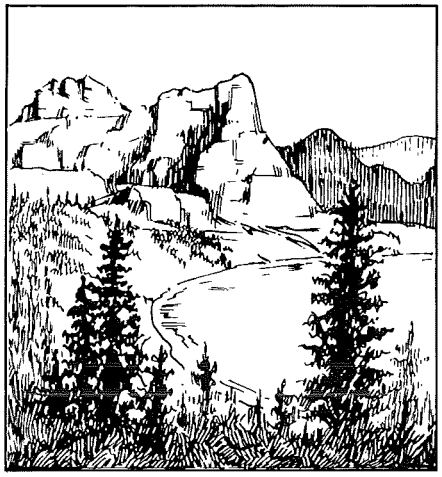
be, these elements should not obscure the fact that each participant uses the relationship to express its own essence: its history, perception of self and of others, expectations, understanding of the future — characteristics that distinguish it from others and reflect its own culture. It is at this more profound level that the most significant and durable ties are formed.



Western Canada

It is not utopian to dream of Canada as a meeting point for peoples and states of *la Francophonie*, the Commonwealth and English-speaking America, each recognizing and benefiting from the specificities and diversity of the others. This would be the starting point for a vision of world civilization that would preserve the authenticity of cultures and safeguard their specificity against the threat of empty, anonymous universalism posed by the power of new technologies. Viewed in this context, *la Francophonie* would exemplify the importance of diversity and the need to defend the personalities of nations and individuals. This is one of the future's most important challenges.■

Antonine Maillet

In January 1987 Antonine Maillet became the fifth Canadian and the first Acadian to be named to the Haut Conseil de la francophonie. This international organization, headed by French President François Mitterand, is composed of 33 French-speaking public figures from the arts, letters and sciences, drawn from five continents. Antonine Maillet is the author of *La Sagouine* (1974) and *Pélagie-la-Charrette* (1979), which won the Prix Goncourt.

Internationalism and *la Francophonie*

Michel Tétu

Used by a multitude of cultures on five continents and adapted to Western science and technology, the French language is truly an international vehicle.

La Francophonie is carving out a place for itself on the international scene through meetings of heads of state, cultural exchanges and economic agreements. The very idea of *la Francophonie*, however, remains difficult to define, both because it is recent and because it refers to a complex reality. Some see it as a simple aggregation of the world's French-speaking inhabitants, others as an instrument of cultural and economic development. Still others detect vaguely dubious political intentions. The purpose of *la Francophonie*, they feel, is merely to act as a counterweight to the Commonwealth or as a front for efforts by France to keep its former colonies in a state of dependency.

This ambiguity was resolved in part by the first Francophone summit held in Paris in February 1986. When he came to power shortly afterwards, French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac immediately appointed a Secretary of State for *la Francophonie*, Lucette Michaux-Chevry, who told *Figaro Magazine*, "There is a growing awareness of *la Francophonie*. France has no monopoly on French."

Two obstacles nevertheless lie in the way of all attempts to define clearly what is meant by *la Francophonie*: its geographical boundaries and demographic size (which expands or contracts according to survey parameters and researchers' moods) and the wide diversity which is obscured by an appearance of sameness.

"There is a growing awareness of la Francophonie. *France has no monopoly on French."*

French in the world today

Determining the size of the world's Francophone population is no easy task. Sources give wildly differing figures, ranging from 100 million to 150 million and beyond. Simply adding up the populations of countries where French is spoken to some extent gives an impressive total of 380 million. The figure is deceptive, however, because, unlike South America, for example, where most of the population speaks the same language, the so-called Francophone countries have widely varying percentages of Francophones. The correct figure would appear to be about 120 million.

Whatever the case may be, in the list of the world's major languages, French comes after Chinese (approximately 935 million native speakers), English (300 million), Spanish (266 million), Arabic (166 million), Bengali (160 million) and Portuguese (132 million, including 122 million in Brazil).

To a greater extent than most of these languages, however, French, like English, is an international language, for it is used on five continents. Chinese is spoken on one continent only, as is Bengali. Such is also the case of Malay-Indonesian (122 million native speakers), Japanese (121 million) and German (118 million).

Francophone countries are traditionally classified according to the extent to which they use the French language.

The first category includes countries and regions where French is spoken as a mother tongue: France, parts of Belgium (Wallonia and Brussels), French-speaking Switzerland, Luxemburg, the Aosta Valley in Italy, Monaco, and the Channel Islands. In addition are French Canada — above all Quebec, but also other regions across the country — and small areas in the north-eastern United States and Louisiana.

The second group consists of countries where French is an official language or a language of usage. A distinction must be drawn here between Creole-speaking countries and overseas French departments where the inhabitants' mother tongue is very similar to French (Guadeloupe, Martinique, Haiti, French Guiana, Réunion, Mauritius and the Seychelles) and countries where French has come into contact with very different national languages (Madagascar, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, Tunisia and Lebanon).

The third category includes countries where, for historical and political reasons, French is still used in certain situations,

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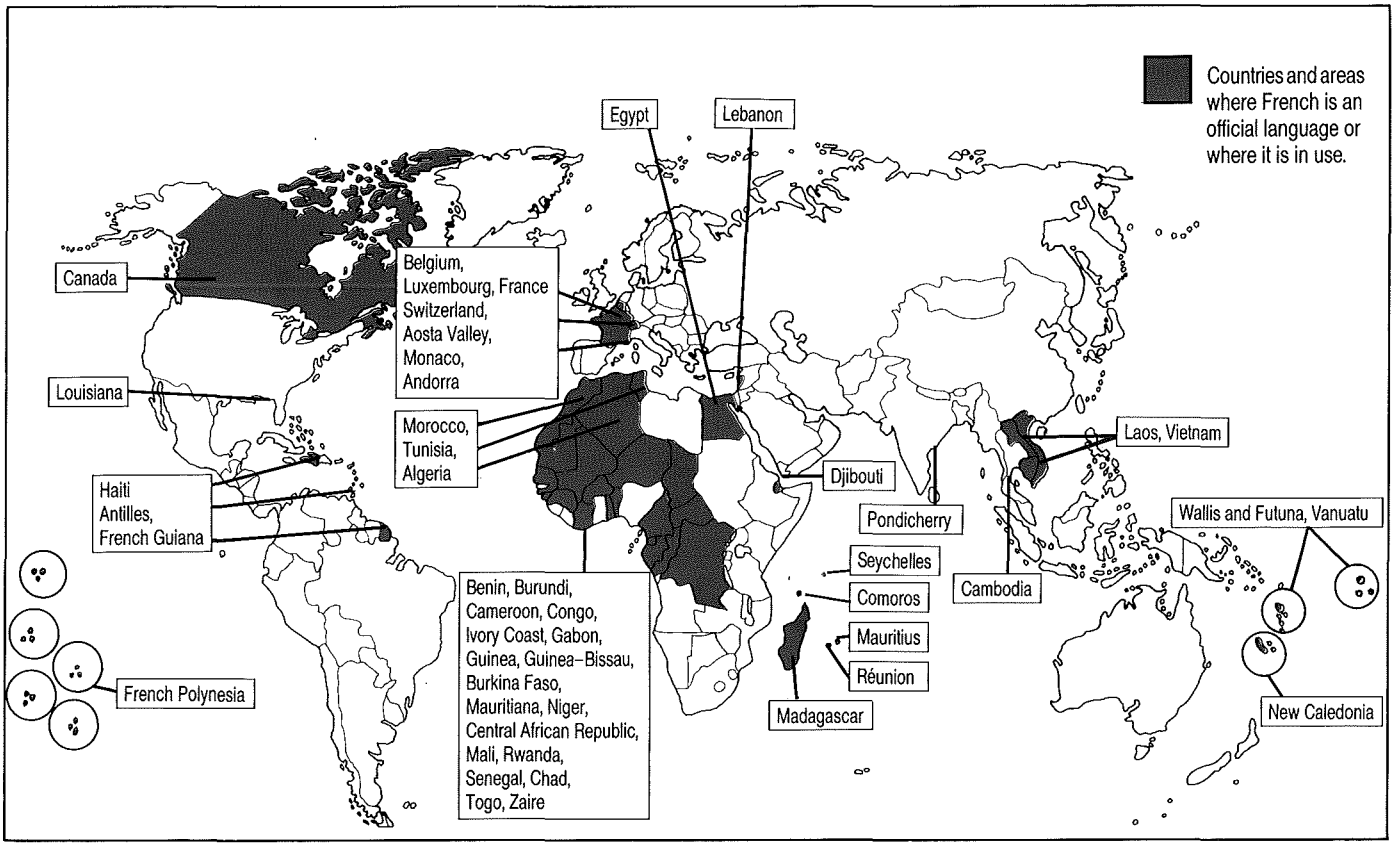


French in the world

particularly at the United Nations and for international exchanges. These countries are Syria, Egypt, a number of Indo-Chinese states, Romania and Bulgaria.

The last category is that of countries where French is the major second language. These include a number of Latin American countries where the élite speaks French and the language is taught in schools and universities. Although these nations are not included in the figures on Francophone countries, it is estimated that 20 to 25 million of their inhabitants speak French or at least are capable of reading it.

As one may imagine, it is extremely difficult to calculate precisely the number of Francophones outside the first category. In fact, however, the universality of a language is not measured merely by the number of people who speak it. If the French language is universal, it is not, as Rivarol said, because it is "the only one that makes integrity part of its spirit," but rather because it is the vehicle for a host of living cultures.

Utility and diversity

Addressing the fifth Biennale de la langue française in Dakar, the late Maurice Piron said in 1973, "*La Francophonie* is a double-edged sword. It is a rallying point for French-speaking countries, but their meeting can give rise to either unity or diversity."

Demographic considerations aside, a more fundamental question remains: what kind of French do Francophones use as a vehicle for their culture? We often hear talk of a standard, supposedly universal French, a French common to all Francophones. But that is more wishful thinking than reality.

> *"Beyond economic and even political interests, French-speaking peoples feel a special bond that is both intellectual and emotional."*
> Georges Pompidou

The standards set by the Académie française and illustrated by France's writers were no doubt universally adhered to in the nineteenth century. It was not without reason that one West Indian early in this century lamented the fact that, after 100 years of independence, Haiti's literary world consisted solely of men who hoped the citizens of France could read their works without guessing the colour of their skin.

At the same period, Anglo-Saxons in the New World had distanced themselves from their mother country while in Spain, around 1870, the Royal Academy published a dictionary in which the origin of each word was indicated (Chile, Mexico, Argentina, Castile). In French, on the other hand, local and regional characteristics were systematically suppressed unless they appealed to a certain taste for the exotic.

As a result of the Second World War and the era of decolonization, France's linguistic hegemony has been broken. Although it was a vehicle for ideas of freedom in the eighteenth century, the French language had very often become the language of colonization. To assert their freedom, former colonies had to speak Malagasy, Wolof or Arabic, or to adapt French to local experience in naming their countries, wildlife, plant life and culture.

Maurice Piron emphasized this fact in Dakar. "The more a language spreads, the more it tends to diversify. Physical distance from the guiding centre which is France acts as an accelerator in the process of linguistic evolution. The diversity which spoken French thus takes on in the various places where it is found is of course a disadvantage as far as communication is concerned. If those spoken forms continue to diverge, communication may, in certain instances, even become impossible." All of which explains Mr. Piron's proposal at the time to establish a general inventory of French language usage in the Francophone world.

Piron's ideas very soon came to fruition. In the early 1970s, the *Petit Larousse* dictionary contained only four words of African origin. Some 10 years later, the four

major dictionaries of the French language rivalled one another in their acceptance of Belgicisms, Helveticisms, Canadianisms, Africanisms, etc.

But, as the French language spreads and diversifies, one wonders whether its particular characteristics do not tend to diminish or even gradually disappear. "In this process," says linguist André Martinet, "the intrinsic qualities of the languages themselves appear to play a very limited role." The influence of a language or the disappearance of a dialect have nothing to do with the characteristics of that language or dialect. After all, a language, it has been said, is merely a dialect with an army.

French in the year 2000

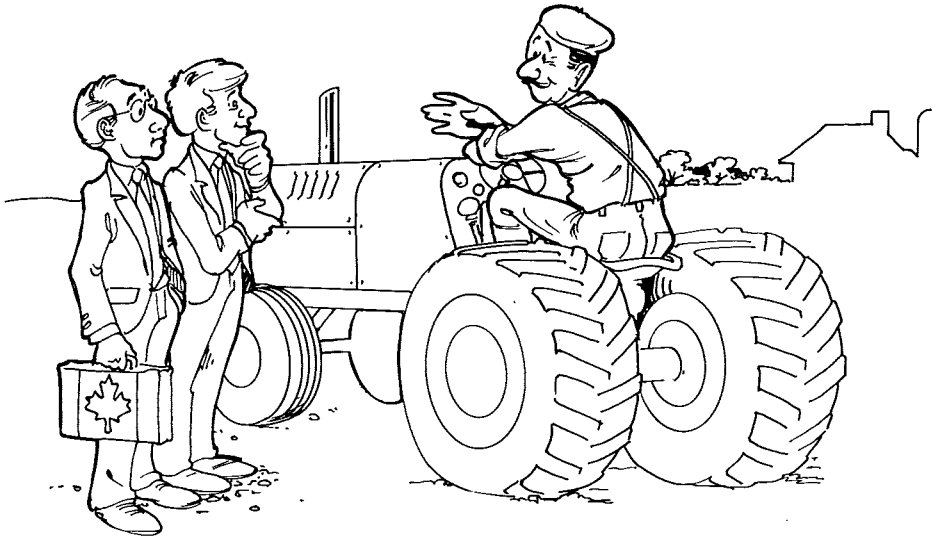
What will be the state of the French language in the year 2000? Will there be 240, 260, 300 million Francophones among the one billion speakers of Romance languages and the six billion inhabitants of the planet?

New technologies may alter the international linguistic balance.

Since it has evolved in such a way as to accommodate new cultures, in particular contemporary Western technological and scientific culture, French will very likely remain one of the world's two leading languages. After constantly losing ground over the past 50 years, it is today making considerable headway as a result of the African demographic explosion and current progress in teaching populations with little education. In addition, new technologies such as computer-assisted translation will certainly play a major role in the years to come and may even alter the international linguistic balance.

The French language has an advantage in all this in being firmly established on five continents and, consequently, of being used in almost all international organizations and of reflecting world cultural trends. However, Francophones will have to bring all their resources to bear and join with the speakers of the other Romance languages, to resist the pervasive influence of the English language.

As Thierry de Beaucé, former Director of the French External Affairs Department's Cultural, Scientific and Technical Relations Branch, said in an interview with *Le Point* on April 27, 1987, "French is now a universal language in that it expresses a plurality of passions, religions, cultures.... We must make French intellectuals realize anew that the survival of their words, and their possibilities for thought, are tied to the international audience created through the French-speaking world." ■



Accepting Pluralism

Jean-Claude Corbeil

The French language is "the common wealth of all those who speak it and we would be wrong to confine its defence and illustration to France."

Valéry Giscard d'Estaing

At a conference on French lexicography in Quebec, the relation between the usages of Quebec and France, the forms under which Quebec words should or should not appear in "French" dictionaries, had been hotly debated all day. As I left the room, I met a German colleague who asked me a very simple question: "Why isn't a Francophone allowed to come from wherever he comes from?" For the French-speaking world, this is a central issue.

Schools, dictionaries and grammars must express both the plurality and the equality of French usages if they are to give a true reflection of the French-speaking world.

Defining the problems

Because French is an international language used, for different historical reasons, in a number of countries, it cannot be viewed as "belonging" to France — nor, consequently, can French institutions be granted exclusive authority over it. When we speak of the French language today, we must carefully distinguish at least three different problems. First, the internal issue: French in France and the relation between "normal" usage, regional usage, and regional languages such as Alsatian, Breton, Basque, Occitan. Secondly, the relation between the French of France and that of other countries that use it, particularly those where it is a native language: this is both an internal issue — since each country has a right to define its own French-language standards — and an external one, since the national standards in question must not be too different from those of other countries. Finally, the relation between French as a European language and the national languages of countries where it was introduced through colonization. At issue here is the definition of an acceptable and functional French/national language bilingualism, which in turn will determine the status of French in such countries.

Toning down the differences

French is a means of international communication for all those who use it, native speakers and others. There are considerable advantages, therefore, to maintaining a relative linguistic uniformity and reducing linguistic variation.

Why? There are many reasons. Most of them have to do with pronunciation and vocabulary, a very few with syntax and

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almost none with morphology. In phonetic terms, the word "accent" vaguely denotes a number of phenomena related to pronunciation and intonation. One thing is sure: French is not spoken the same way by everyone, even in Paris, much less so in countries on the periphery of the Francophone world. I don't see how it could be otherwise; nor does there appear to be any reason to worry about it as long as differences of pronunciation or intonation are minimal.

Questions of vocabulary are more subtle and complex in that the gradation from necessary variation to stylistic variation is almost imperceptible. In order of decreasing necessity, we may distinguish:

a) Words applying to specific institutions — political, administrative, economic — of a country or a region. Thus, in Quebec the terms *cégep* (the educational institution between high school and university), *caucus* (strategic meeting of a party's elected representatives) and *caisse populaire* (credit union) are used; the *bourgmestre* (mayor) is purely Belgian, while *arrondissements* (administrative subdivisions), *cartes grises* (vehicule registration cards) and *syndicats d'initiative* (regional tourist bureaus) are to be found only in France.

b) Words applying to phenomena whose existence, or importance, is peculiar to a country or region. Many examples come to mind in the areas of flora (Quebec's *épinette*, North American spruce, or the African *baobab*), fauna (Quebec's *perchaude* or yellow perch, Senegal's *capitaine*), climatology (Quebec's *poudrerie* — windblown snow — or the Saharan *oueds*), cooking (*tourtières* from Lac Saint-Jean, Moroccan *couscous*), clothes, housing, etc. But the same process also occurs in specialized vocabularies where differences of equipment, production methods or administrative procedure give birth to different terms for different concepts. Since accounting, for instance, is not the same in Quebec, France or Belgium, in this field each country uses both a common terminology and a set of words and definitions of its own.

c) Synonymic variations as such, where two or more words refer to the same thing. A few examples: for weekend, France has *week-end* and Quebec *fin de semaine*; mitten is *moufle* or *mitaine*; wool cap is *bonnet* or *tuque*; fruit cake is *cake* or *gâteau aux fruits*; seventy is *septante* or *soixante-dix*; sock is *chaussette* or *bas*; eraser is *gomme à effacer* or *efface*; a battered old car is *tacot*, *clou* or *minoune*. Innumerable other variations are an endless source of jokes, confusion (*déjeuner* is lunch in France, breakfast in Quebec) and, especially, arguments which all seem to follow the same script — "Who's right?" "Who's wrong?" "Where's the dictionary?" "Which dictionary?" "Here's a better one." "It's not in the dictionary!" "So what!" And so on.

Linguistic variation

Until now the French have had a tendency to impose their own usage — especially that of the urban bourgeoisie — as a common language, with the naive and somewhat insultingly simplistic view that they provide the pattern for the French language and that it is up to other people to follow it. I recall discussing politics with a French farmer. After a few minutes, he paused and said to me very seriously in his rich rural accent: "For a Canadian, you speak French very well." Interesting comment: it shows the man's deep sense of linguistic security, his complete certainty of being in the right; it is also disturbing, because it reveals a kind of spontaneous linguistic imperialism in someone who has no involvement in the matter.

French is not spoken the same way by everyone even in Paris, much less in countries on the periphery of the Francophone world.

It is my belief that our future as a linguistic community depends on the modification of this attitude. We must recognize the existence of accents and differences of vocabulary, stop dreaming of one French language that would be the same for everyone, and especially put an end to the irritating game of remarking on each other's speech mannerisms.

Instead of linguistic standardization, I believe the Francophone world should adopt a two-part strategy of communicating while allowing for linguistic variation. The first step is to favour the common language and thereby learn to neutralize variations. The second is to admit and accept differences, which implies a spirit of openness to whatever we find odd. Development of this strategy, minimizing differences on the one hand and perpetuating them on the other, depends on the relationship between the speakers involved, on their respective linguistic competence, in short, on the context of their conversation, including the subject being discussed. The strategy itself, based on flexibility and common sense, calls for good judgement from all parties. This is the only way of avoiding the two pitfalls that threaten us: Parisian linguistic imperialism, which stunts the diversity of the Francophone world by impoverishing other regions or countries, and militant linguistic folklorism which is a menace to mutual understanding between Francophones. In fact, we have no choice. Our next step must be to change the ideology of linguistic unification and the institutions that derive from it and serve it. Schools, dictionaries and grammars must express both the plurality and the equality of French usages if they are to give a true picture of the French-speaking world.

As Quebecers, as Canadians, we are compelled to take up a strategy of linguistic variation in order to express our individuality and to maintain communications with others. We know the same is true for all those who, like us, are peripheral: we will follow our linguistic destiny alone, or with those who share it.■

Voices from the Past

More striking than any linguistic treatise, the reconstructed voices of Louis XIV and Napoleon are a vivid reminder of how much French pronunciation has changed over the centuries. At the Pompidou Centre in Paris, the visitor travels back through time to hear Louis XIV rolling his r's and saying "moué" for "moi" while Napoleon speaks with a regional accent, his voice rising and falling in the rhythms of his native Corsica. Films have taught us to imagine these personalities and their contemporaries speaking the language of today. Of course, nothing could be farther from historical reality; language knows as much variety in time as it does in space.

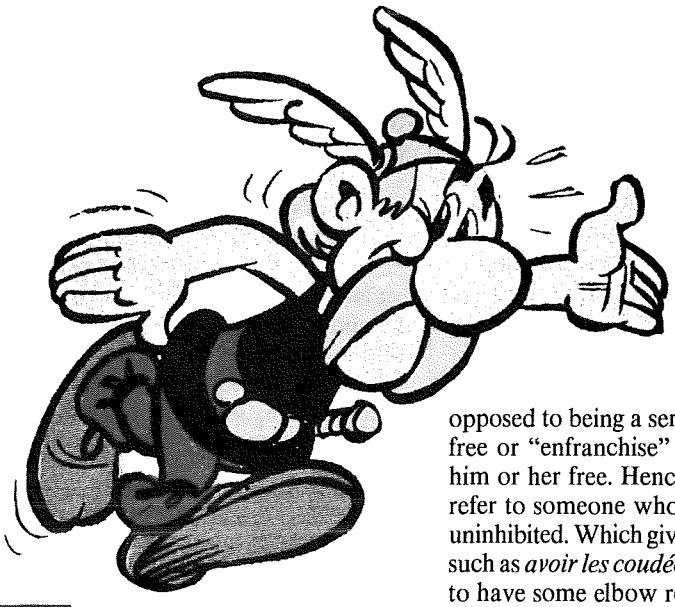
Ici on livre

A book collection program launched in France last spring is offering French novels, textbooks, science books and detective stories in good condition a second life. The aim of the project is to help stock library shelves in the world's most disadvantaged French-speaking countries. While the program's name plays on words ("Ici on livre"), its intention is serious, reflecting the emphasis placed on concrete action and co-operation by the heads of state of *la Francophonie*.

From *franc* to *la Francophonie*

René de Chantal

How wonderful it is to trace the evolution of words.



First came Frankish or more precisely, the Franks, one of the many tribes which occupied the right bank of the Rhine. As early as the third century, some Franks had formed the habit of crossing the Rhine in order to pillage Roman Gaul. By the fifth century they had settled there permanently.

If the Franks on the right bank of the Rhine gradually became absorbed within other language groups, those on the left bank ultimately gave their name to all the subjects of the King of the Franks. Thus Gaul came to be known as France, a name which to this day in German is *Frankreich*, "The Kingdom of the Franks".

Rich as it is in things to teach us, let us trace the history of the word *franc*.

Following the track

To begin with, the words *Franc* and *Franque* or *Frank* and *Franke* described all the Germanic tribes that invaded Gaul. At the time of the Crusades, such was the prestige of this designation that Easterners called all Europeans *Franks*. One curious survival from that period is the use to this day of the term *Frank* to refer to any Western European living or trading in the Levant. *Langue franque* — for which English uses the Latin form *lingua franca* — is the name given to the jargon made up of Turkish, Arabic and Romance languages used by the sailors and traders who frequented the ports of the eastern Mediterranean coast.

Something like a mountain

The adjective *franc* has two sides. Its primary meaning is "one who is free" as opposed to being a serf or a slave. Thus to free or "enfranchise" a serf means to set him or her free. Hence the word came to refer to someone who is free and easy or uninhibited. Which gives rise to expressions such as *avoir les coudées franches* meaning to have some elbow room or a free hand. The same idea occurs in *corps franc*, a small relatively independent infantry unit specially trained to carry out difficult missions away from the main force. In other words, the *corps franc* or its members, the *francs-tireurs* or free-shooters, make up a commando, to use a word of Portuguese origin.

Language of yesteryear? Not in the least. In soccer, a *coup franc* or free kick is an unopposed shot. And as states have increased the tax load, a new shade of meaning has attached itself to the sense of unrestricted, the sense of "exempt from charges, interest taxes or duties". Thus we have *ville franche* (free city) and *franc de taille* (exempt from tallage); letters may be *franc de port* when no stamp tax is payable, and a duty-free port is a *port franc*.

At the time of the Crusades, the East used the word Frank *for any European.*

The other side of *franc* carries the senses of "clear, unhesitating, true, complete or openly expressed". The notion of loyalty or of not being deceitful is common to the expressions *franc parler* (free speech) or *jouer franc jeu* (to play fair). Even animals share this admirable characteristic since a horse that pulls its weight without the need of a whip is said to be *franc du collier* (a hard-worker), and by a twist of natural justice, the same term can return from animal to humankind when the latter acts openly and unreservedly. And in Canada, we use *bois franc* to denote hardwoods.

Humble origins

One branch of *franc, Francia, France* leads to *français*, to mean not only of or belonging to France, but also its language, *le français* thanks to the spread of *le francien* — a humble dialect of Île-de-France — after political unification was achieved.

Now spoken world-wide, this language has picked up a number of amusing, even pejorative terms, according to the region, to refer to the person who speaks it. In the Midi, for instance, *franchicot, francimant* and *franciot* are applied to Frenchmen from the North or who do not understand Provençal, or even to Southerners who put on a Northern French accent. In Belgium, the word *fransquillon* has the same disparaging sense in the mouths of Flemish-speakers. *Frankaoui*, meanwhile, was used by the French settlers of Algeria to speak of metropolitan French people.

Usage has the last word

Let us leave aside the many other offshoots of that family tree and concentrate on two of its more recent flowerings: *francité* and *francophonie*.

The earliest attested use of *francité* goes back to 1943, when Henri de Ziégler, the Swiss writer, was looking for a term to express the kind of supranational homeland that is made up of all the French-speaking people in the world. He wrote: "I gradually arrived at the conception of an ideal nationality beyond my own native land, or rather both within and beyond it at the same time: the French language and culture, the *francie* or *francerie* or *francité*, call it what you will." The word recurs in the work of Roland Barthes in 1957, alongside *basquité* and *sinité*.

Attested uses of *francophonie* are rare before 1962, the year in which the magazine *Esprit* devoted an issue to "French: A Living Language", which launched the term *francophonie* as part of the vocabulary of a number of writers, notably Léopold Senghor. The magazine's editors, Jean-Marie Domenach and Camille Bourniquel, gave notice in their foreword of their intention "of taking the measure of *la Francophonie*, without confining it", as they put it, "to a national goal, without making it some kind of subtle revenge for frustrated imperialism."

If three of the authors who wrote in that issue of *Esprit* used the word to mean the community of French-speaking countries

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which was struggling to be born at the time, Léopold Senghor's view of it was quite different. In a resounding address on "*La Francophonie* as Culture", delivered at Laval University in 1966, he made his position clear. After reminding his audience that *la Francophonie* was his initiative, he went on to define it as "a mode both of thinking and of action: a way both of formulating problems and of resolving them. Once again, it is a spiritual community, a 'noosphere' which encompasses the earth. *La Francophonie* goes beyond the language; it is French civilization or, more exactly, the spirit of that civilization, that is to say French culture or what I would call *francité*."

This was the first time the two terms, *francophonie* and *francité*, were compared. One has the feeling that, in bringing them together, Léopold Senghor is hesitating over the choice. His difficulty is understandable. Had he not, in 1962, used the word *francophonie* to signify a spiritual reality rather than a socio-cultural whole? For Mr. Senghor, *francophonie* is a humanistic spirit fed by French cultural values —

francité, in fact; but after 1962 the term *francophonie* was no longer his alone. It had escaped, so to speak, as all human vocables do in time, and had quickly taken on the sense of "the totality of French-speaking countries."

Habib Bourguiba, President of Tunisia — *la Francophonie*'s other godparent — expressed the wish in 1965 that "a sort of Commonwealth" be set up to comprise those countries which have French as an official language and those where it is a working language or language of use. This marks the point at which the "community" sense of the word began to gain the upper hand. Later, in February 1968 in Ottawa, President Bourguiba was to say: "We have

come to realise that the use of the same language produces a common state or frame of mind among its users. It is from this common spiritual inheritance that what we have called *la Francophonie* can come into being."

One might have thought that President Senghor had had the final word on *francité* in his 1966 speech in Quebec City and established its use for the future; indeed, a number of Canadians went to work in that direction. But it now looks as if actual usage, mistrusting the qualitative nature of *francité*, has finally settled on *francophonie*.

Borrowings

What are we to make of this hurried historical overview of the word *franc*? The first thing that comes to mind concerns the myth of the "purity" of the French language. At every point in its history, but especially in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, purists have come forward to denounce the danger, as they saw it, of using the old provincial or regional words that have stayed in use or of borrowing from other languages.

The first thing to remember, however, is that the idea of linguistic purity is no less misleading than the concept of racial purity. French, for instance, is founded on a form of primitive Romance which in turn is made up of a substratum of Gallic and a certain admixture of Germanic. It is thus a blend of the vulgar Latin or Roman vernacular brought by Roman legions, of the Celtic spoken by the Gauls and of the Frankish dialect spoken by the barbarian intruders from across the Rhine.

Languages are enriched by borrowing from other languages as well as by exploiting their own resources. It is an illusion to think that it can be fixed once and for all in a single form which some would consider perfect because it was hermetically sealed; one might just as well try to embalm it. A living language has its own force and movement, an energy of its own, every bit as much as any other living organism. An organic form of this kind, sharing as it must in the great natural cycles, both responds to and works upon its given environment in a perpetual exchange of action and interaction.

This ecological view of language is particularly true of the lexicon. *Le français* originates as the language of *les Français*. But it has also become the language of millions of French-speakers outside metropolitan France. And since the contribution of Africans, Belgians, Swiss and Canadians to the definition and spread of *la Francophonie* is far from being insignificant (not to mention the support they have provided to the political concept of *la Francophonie* and its resources), it seems highly desirable that so-called "regionalisms" of every source and description should be considered part of the common wealth of the French language. It is in that light that we should interpret the wonderful formula that Léopold Senghor offered us in his Quebec City address when he invited Francophones around the world to "the rendezvous of giving and receiving" which is what *la Francophonie* is all about.■

Adapted from the French by Stuart Beaty.

The Assembly of Francophones

The 10th Assembly of Francophones of America took place in Quebec City in June. This mini-summit brought together 600 representatives of associations dedicated to the Francophone cause some two months before the Francophone heads of state were scheduled to meet. In honour of the occasion, a million and a half copies of a special publication on *la Francophonie* were printed and distributed as a supplement to North American French-language newspapers. Organized by the Secrétariat permanent des peuples francophones, the Assembly gave participants an opportunity to consider the Paris and Quebec summits in a North American context and to strengthen the sense of solidarity among North American Francophones.

Out of Africa

"In my humble opinion...it is desirable that outside France itself there should be — I cannot call them 'French languages', but variations, Belgicisms, Senegalisms, and so on."
Léopold Sédar Senghor

Léopold Sédar Senghor

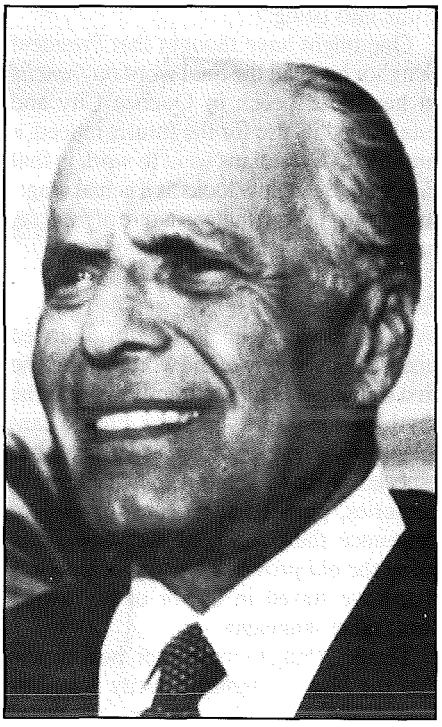
La Francophonie was born in Africa. Presidents Senghor of Senegal and Bourguiba of Tunisia offered, between them, the vision and authority needed to turn the dream of a Francophone community into reality.

"I did not invent *la Francophonie*, it already existed," President Senghor once remarked with modest humour. In the early Sixties he described the French community as a "common linguistic space in which people and cultures come together," as an "intellectual and spiritual community whose national, official or working language is French," as a "dialogue of cultures". Léopold Senghor is the poet-prophet of *la Francophonie.*

"Despite fears to the contrary, *la Francophonie* is not a denial of national cultures, of Negritude or Arabism. It is a new element that has been grafted onto our culture.... We think in terms of symbiosis and complementarity," he wrote in 1967. "*La Francophonie* is that essential humanism that is making its presence felt around the globe, a symbiosis of the dormant energies of all the continents, of all races that are now awakening to their need to draw closer together."

In 1969 Senghor described *la Francophonie* as "an expression of the human spirit endlessly striving to come together and constantly surpassing its limits to adapt to a constantly changing world."

The same ambitious vision, the same wide perspective is revealed in the words of President Bourguiba: "In Africa, *la Francophonie* represents a reality. Not only does it link together countries where French is the official language and countries where it is the language of work, but it also makes them participate in the same cultural universe, helps them discover what unites them beyond a common language. What I would like to see established among them is a sort of Commonwealth, a community that would respect national sovereignty



Habib Bourguiba

while harmonizing the efforts of all member countries," he affirmed in 1965.

This idea of an environment where liberty, co-operation and mutual assistance can flourish is not a vague abstraction. In Montreal in 1968, he said: "You may know that realism has always inspired my actions, from resistance to conducting the affairs of my country. I can assure you that I would not spend my time promoting the concept of *la Francophonie* if I had not experienced its deep and compelling reality, an experience that must precede definitions."

On that occasion President Bourguiba said: "The power of French to instil a common way of thinking is so great that there is a community of spirit among people who speak the language. Given its 'structuring' power within a nation, why should French not have a similar effect among all the communities that speak the language, that use it in their daily lives and work and in their international relations as well — especially when the language has at one time or another served them as an instrument of protest and of self-affirmation, and especially when it has been the vehicle for so many hopes, dreams, fears and needs shared by these communities, these countries, these nations and the States of which they are a part."■

Superfrancofête

In August 1974 Quebec City was chosen by the Agence de coopération culturelle et technique to host the international festival of Francophone youth better known as the "Superfrancofête". For a week the city was the focus of young Francophones throughout the world. Thousands of delegates from 25 countries participated in artistic, cultural and sports events, giving concrete expression, for the first time, to the infinite variety of the French-speaking family. The uncontested highlight of a week of fraternity was a concert by three world-famous Quebec *chansonniers*, Félix Leclerc, Gilles Vigneault and Robert Charlebois. They represented three generations of artists and offered three highly individual forms of expression, yet they struck a common chord, electrifying the crowd with their different rhythms and different kinds of artistic sensitivity.