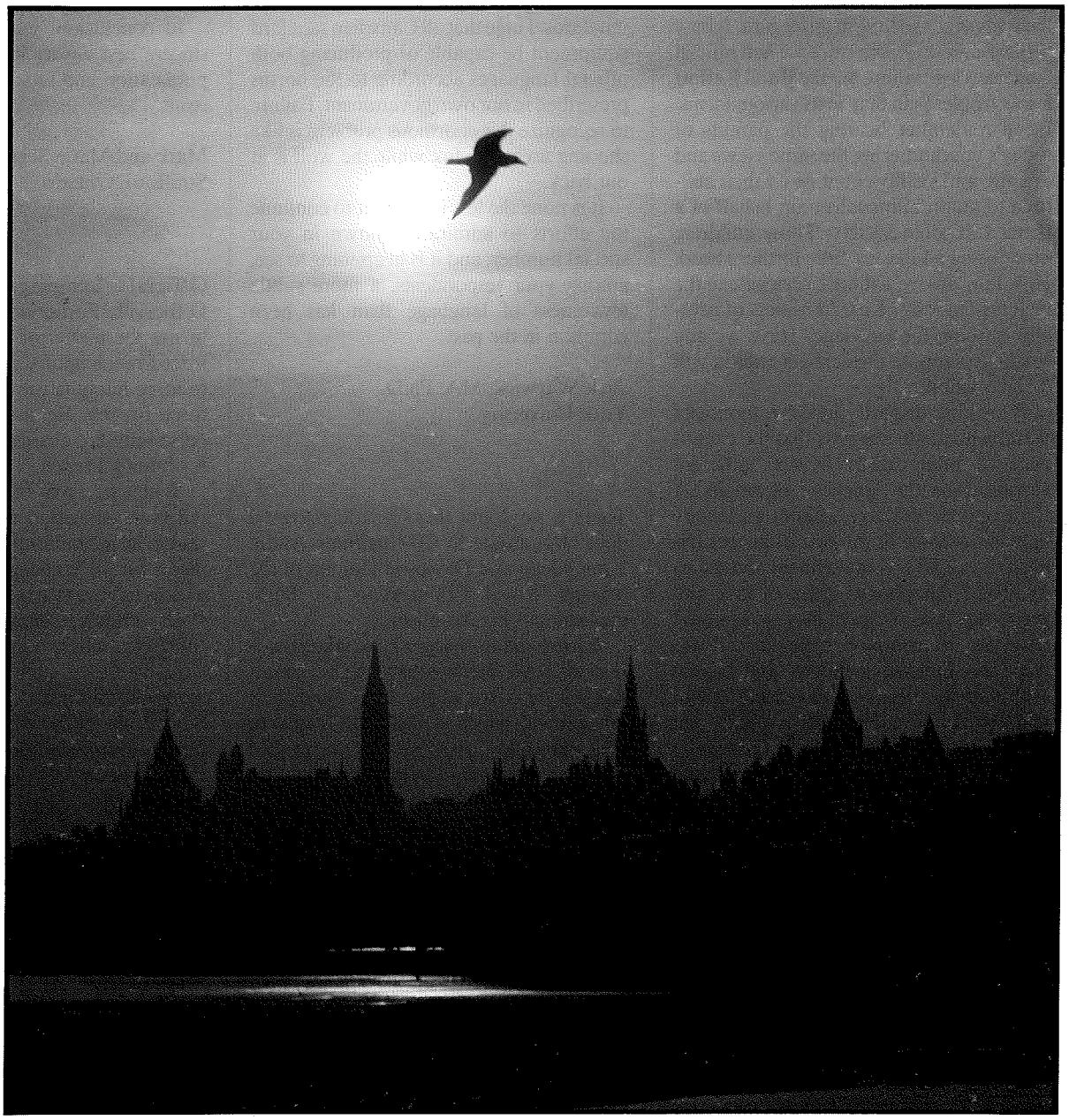
LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY



Year of the Test: Pass or Fail?
FROM LAKE MEECH TO A NEW LANGUAGE LAW

DAVID PETERSON AND FRANCO-ONTARIANS

The Quebec Summit — Special Report
THE UNIVERSALITY OF FRENCH

NEW SERIES

Number **20**, Fall 1987

Letters from Our Readers

After some 30 years of experience in French studies and in organizing classes in French as a second language, I have to point out with some insistence that the expression of good will and concern is not the same thing as achievement. D'Iberville Fortier's article in ***Language and Society*** 18 (September 1986) acknowledges disappointment in the quantity of English speakers acquiring adequate French, and we have to ask why we have advanced so little in this regard. It may well be a mere decade since we had official languages legislation, but the B and B effort is much older than that, in its various forms. I can remember hearing the parents of today's youth uttering the same views and dreams, and visibly counting on their children to attain bilingualism on behalf of a better Canadian society. Those children, now young adults, are little further ahead. How long are we willing to delegate to the next generation the hard business of actually learning the language? Have we any reason to suppose the next generation will do any better?

A striking disparity in the response of your respondents suggests that the experience of bilingualism is very different according to the language of origin. A Francophone declares without ambiguity that competence in the two languages has been rewarded by employment and security. The Anglophones speak of love and friendship. If, as I suspect, they are a faithful reflection of common experience, these responses indicate a precise and factual aspect of the disappointing achievement mentioned above. Hard-earned skills that do not lead to jobs are not sufficiently attractive. The Public Service should be setting a lead in this respect, and large corporations should be encouraged to follow. If our young people were assured that language learning was not only honoured but actually rewarded, I am convinced we would make greater progress.

These problems are being eclipsed by a much more direct threat. Word processing techniques have quite rightly made enormous inroads into our daily life. What is Canada doing about it? Canadian institutions are buying software designed for American conditions. Our keyboards provide for Spanish diacritics, but not for French ones. Our computerized dictionaries provide for usage which has official status in the U.S.A. but not here. If there are Canadian standard specifications for word processing, then I assure you that they are totally unknown in retail trade.

We urgently need Canadian standards, and legislation to ensure that all equipment (particularly keyboards and word processing discs) be prominently marked as either conforming or not conforming to those standards. I urge that all Canadian standard equipment be capable of producing both official languages according to the norms prescribed in our own government. Failure to recognize this enormous problem is like shooing away the fox while the wolf is at our back.

It is none the less important to continue the efforts so admirably shown in your special number, and it is heartening to see, among your respondents, a more subtle awareness of language than has been common in the past.

Jack Warwick, MA, Ph.D.
York University

There is no doubt that Canadians owe a debt of gratitude to Co-Chairmen André Laurendeau and Davidson Dunton of the original Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism.

A great many changes have taken place over the years. Perhaps the strongest memories are the years of the Parti Québécois government, which worked so devotedly to split our nation. However, I have to give credit to a number of ministers, and others of this party who worked so hard and so successfully to make the French language very important not only in Quebec but in the rest of the country.

All the writers selected to contribute their views in the recent issue of ***Language and Society*** [No. 19, April 1987] provided interesting reading. However, we were particularly impressed with the sincerity of the article submitted by David Crombie. The sentiments expressed in promoting linguistic equality brought home exactly our own feelings.

Recent weeks have provided the opportunity for people to express their innermost thoughts about our country. We refer to the Meech Lake accord. A lot of what took place was purely political, so we have to sift through this and recognize what is important to us.

First, and most important, is what will make our nation stronger, and that is unity — no matter the cost. The decisions which were made may prove to be the right ones, but only time will tell.

In conclusion, we extend to you our sincere best wishes for the future of your publication and look forward to the next issue.

Mark and Marie Seguin
Strafford, Ontario

Official Languages Commissioner D'Iberville Fortier wants the government to use the power of the state (courts) to force French upon Canadians. The guise is to force bilingualism but in reality it is to force French. He also wants the right to personally lay charges and use the courts for forcing French.

When he talks of providing minority language education where numbers warrant it, he means for the French. He should mean for all languages and all language groups to have that option, i.e. Ukrainians, Poles, Dutch, Chinese, Italians, Greeks, Inuit, etc., where numbers warrant it.

James N. Clifford
Saint John, N.B.
Excerpts from a letter addressed to the Evening Times Globe, *Saint John, New Brunswick.*

NOTICE

Letters to the Editor, with the writer's name, address and telephone number, are most welcome. The Editor reserves the right to publish letters, which may be condensed. Send to: ***Language and Society***, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, Ottawa, Canada K1A 0T8.

COMMISSIONER OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES
COMMISSAIRE AUX LANGUES OFFICIELLES

New Series, New Directions

Language and Society has a new look, as longtime readers will have noticed. The change in format goes hand in hand with a fresh approach to content. With this issue, readers can look forward to greater variety, a livelier style, and a more practical approach to the interests of those concerned about the present and future prospects for languages in Canada.

True to its original objectives, ***Language and Society*** will continue to carry a good proportion of analysis and opinion, but will devote more space to present and historical experiences of Canadians in the realm of official languages.

Language and Society will address itself to a larger audience, such as opinion leaders, MPs and Senators, journalists, religious authorities, civic and union officials, those concerned with education, minority groups and the private sector — dealing with their concerns and serving as a vehicle for the expression of their views. At the same time, the magazine will be directed to federal, provincial and municipal officials, whose co-operation is critical in improving conditions for members of Canada's two official language groups. With the help of all these groups, ***Language and Society*** will give new impetus to language reform in Canada.

The new mandate and new orientation set for ***Language and Society*** by the Commissioner of Official Languages reflect the need to explore new issues resulting from the gradual evolution of Canada's linguistic landscape.

- Public opinion, particularly among the younger generations, is increasingly supportive of the country's linguistic duality. Despite this, linguistic prejudice still raises its head from time to time in some parts of Canada.
- Plans to reform the Official Languages Act — covered in the first part of this number of ***Language and Society*** — are intended to ensure a more generous and efficient application of the law; but the slow progress made thus far by federal departments and agencies clearly indicates that politicians and public servants will need a determination and firmness that have often been lacking during the Eighties.
- Our minority language groups are still in a precarious situation. Far too many Canadians still do not enjoy the linguistic guarantees provided in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, especially in the educational area.
- Second-language teaching has made undeniable progress but its ultimate goals remain ill-defined and the resources are far from adequate.
- Although first ministers within the Canadian federation have made praiseworthy efforts to improve the climate for national reconciliation, and although Ontario has taken promising action on official languages, there are still enclaves in Canada where speaking French raises hackles.

There is every reason to believe that the Canadian public is dedicated to the ideals of harmony and linguistic justice. If this is true, then the existence of widespread indifference and pockets of recalcitrance only underlines the need for more open dialogue based on an informed understanding of the facts.

Language and Society invites Canadians from all regions and all parts of society to use its pages to debate the future of the country. And we promise to ensure the voices of opposition a place for legitimate expression in our columns.

Canada is far from being the only country in the world searching for wise and reasonable solutions to the kinds of conflicts that can set language communities at odds. We sincerely hope that foreign readers will share their thoughts and suggestions on, for example, language planning.

In this first issue of the new ***Language and Society***, we are proud to present a special report on *la Francophonie* on the occasion of the Quebec Summit, which is the second to be held by heads of government of French-speaking countries. In our next issue we will feature a special report on the English language, marking the October meeting in Vancouver of heads of government from Commonwealth countries.

We would like to take this opportunity to express appreciation for the continuing support of our longstanding collaborators and readers, and we welcome those who now join us for the first time.

Fernard Doré

LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY

This quarterly review is published by the Commissioner of Official Languages for all interested Canadians, and especially for social and political commentators, political and administrative leaders, educators and leaders in voluntary organizations, the private sector and linguistic communities. The review aims at reflecting the linguistic experience of Canadians and at keeping them informed of relevant major events and at encouraging dialogue.

Opinions expressed by contributors from outside the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages do not necessarily reflect the views of the Commissioner.

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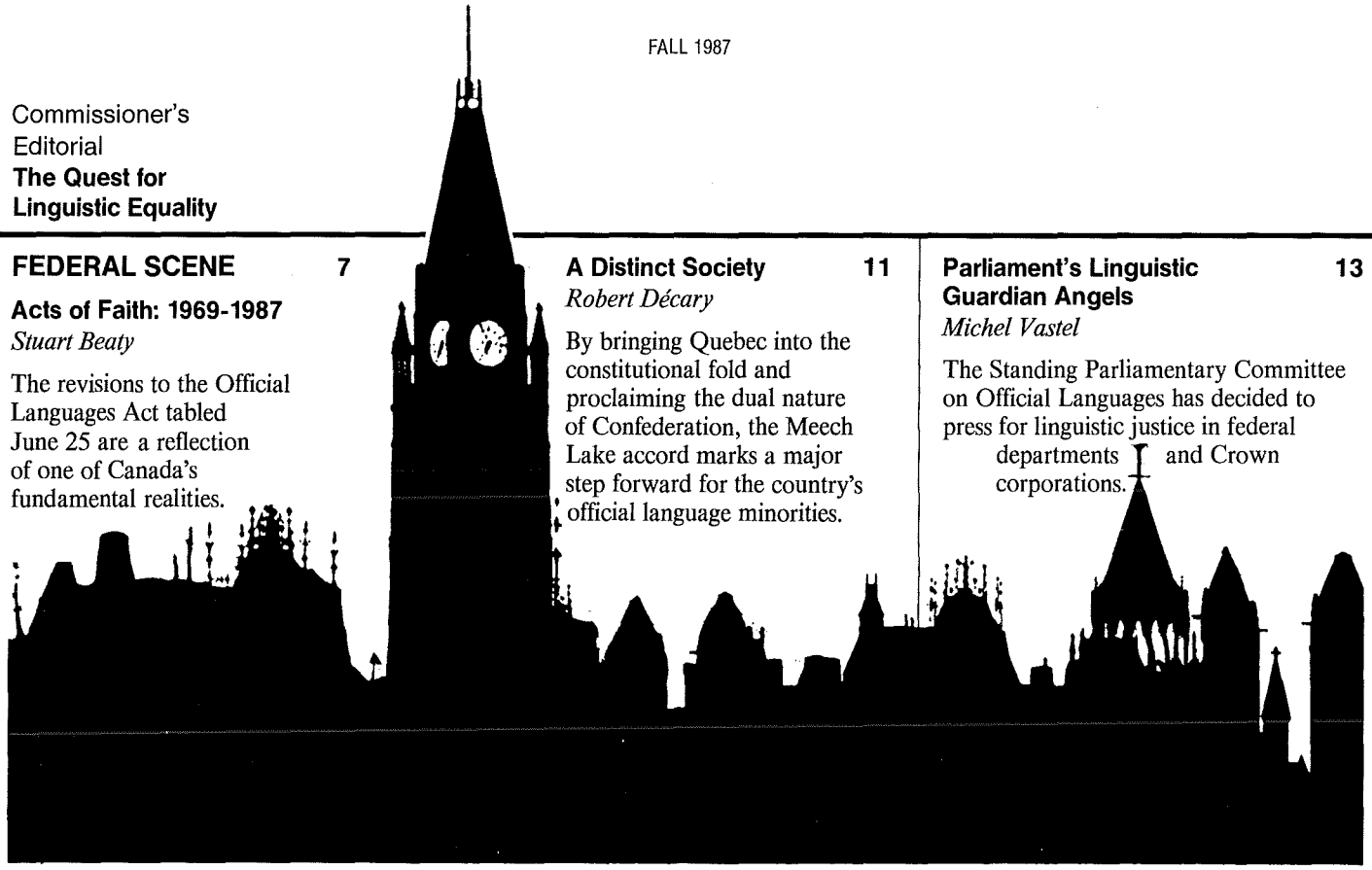
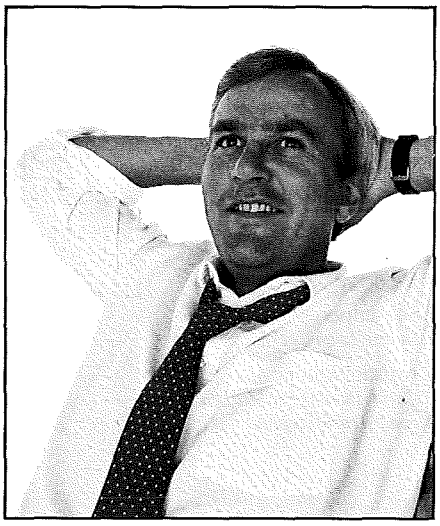




Welcoming Letters

On the occasion of the 20th issue of ***Language and Society***, which is also the first one dedicated to its new approach, please accept my best wishes for your growing success.

The Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages performs a complementary role with the Commissioner's Office in promoting language reform, and it is self-evident that the more fully Canadians are informed as to the situation of linguistic duality in Canada — whether it is in terms of government services or conditions of employment in the public sector, in terms of our justice system or in education — the more likely the success of continuing reform will be. So it is that I especially welcome the advent of a new ***Language and Society*** aimed at a wider audience of thoughtful citizens and carrying news of the latest developments in the linguistic situation in Canada. The presentation of such matters may at times seem to be a complex thing to deal with; I am happy to hear that it will continue to be done in an accurate and informative manner.

Samuel Johnson once said that information is of two kinds. Either we know a subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information about it. It is a matter of congratulation that ***Language and Society*** not only is a source of relevant information, but that it will be disseminating that information in a very attractive form to a wider range of Canadians.

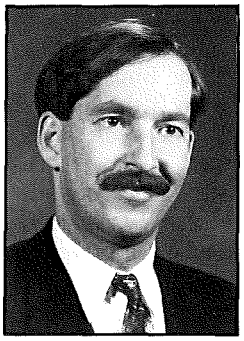
Senator Dalia Wood
Co-Chairperson
The Standing Joint Committee
on Official Languages

One of the slogans of our times is "the future is now". As Co-Chairperson of the Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages, I have taken this sentiment to heart in working with your office on the important task of reforming our language regime and examining proposals for updating the Official Languages Act.

I am thus delighted to welcome the new ***Language and Society***, a magazine of information and opinion on language issues that will strengthen in a tangible way the complementary roles of the Committee and your Office. The Committee, for instance, has dealt with a broad range of problems facing our minorities, and ***Language and Society*** will further discuss these vital concerns in future issues. Similarly, the Committee has emphasized the importance of renewing the official languages program by summoning representatives of federal institutions to explain their delay in complying with the Act, and by tabling a report on their weak performance (June 1987). Here, too, ***Language and Society*** will not only illustrate these weaknesses but will report on success stories in various parts of the federal administration.

My congratulations to you and your colleagues on this excellent initiative.

Charles Hamelin
Co-Chairperson
The Standing Joint Committee
on Official Languages

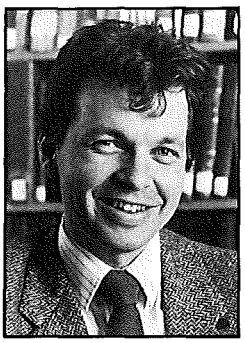


On behalf of our organization, may I first congratulate the Commissioner's Office and the editorial team of ***Language and Society*** on the new direction taken by their magazine. This publication is clearly a major source of information for anyone interested in language issues in Canada.

In our view, the new format will enable the concerns of those affected by this, one of the most important issues for the future of Canada, to be expressed clearly and accurately. We are delighted with your initiative and offer our full support to all involved in producing the magazine. We sincerely believe the new approach will better meet the expectations of your readership.

We have recently seen the signing of a new constitutional accord which will give more explicit recognition to English- and French-speaking Canadians, and the tabling of a new Official Languages Act. There can be little doubt that ***Language and Society*** will provide useful insights into these new realities and help those involved to better understand their implications and consequences.

Yvon Fontaine
President
Fédération des francophones hors Québec



The announcement of a new format for ***Language and Society*** is good news for all Canadians interested in the promotion of both official languages. In the past, your magazine has done yeoman service in informing Canadians about linguistic matters. Your special issues on minorities and on French immersion demonstrate the contribution made by your quarterly to greater understanding of Canada's linguistic duality.

In the near future, several important challenges and opportunities will be faced. A revision of the Official Languages Act has been submitted to Parliament. In addition, Canadians will begin the process of refining the concept of linguistic duality included in the recent Constitutional Accord. In both cases it will be important to have the forum of ***Language and Society*** to help guide interested Canadians through these issues.

In the new format, the inclusion of regular sections that deal with regional and business developments will be helpful. "Regions" should prove to be an important source of information for members of minority linguistic communities, while "Private Sector" will open up new areas for reflection outside traditional discussions of public policy.

We also welcome the idea of a section focusing on the multicultural nature of both of Canada's linguistic communities. This is an area that will become increasingly relevant.

Finally, ***Language and Society*** should be congratulated for its editorial commitment to clarity and conciseness. You have managed to present complicated ideas in an accessible manner to your readers. Good luck with the renewal of ***Language and Society***.

Royal Orr
President
Alliance Québec

Commissioner's Editorial

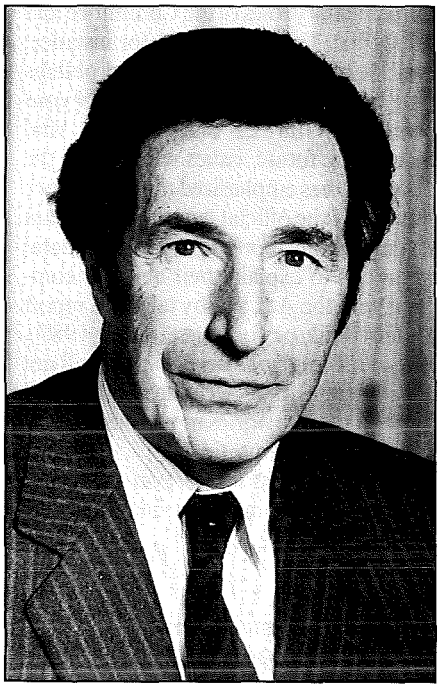
The Quest for Linguistic Equality

On June 25, 1987, the Government of Canada tabled its long-heralded Bill to update the Official Languages Act. The Bill came before Parliament at a time when the Prime Minister and the provincial Premiers had recently agreed on the terms of a constitutional amendment which would, if ratified, enable Quebec to become a signatory to the supreme law of Canada. The coming together of these two events is largely fortuitous. Each bespeaks in its own way, however, a great desire and determination on the part of our political leaders to reinforce the compact between Canada's two main language communities and to define the conditions which seem most likely to lead to a more trusting and productive relationship between them.

There is bound to be an element of risk-taking in any effort to turn our linguistic differences to better account. There are no iron-clad insurance policies against real or perceived antagonisms between language groups, even in a country like Canada which has shown a remarkable and growing maturity in these matters. But the alternative to a greater consensus on the linguistic ground rules is a kind of soul-destroying mutual suspicion or outright hostility which can reduce nations to political rubble.

Language tensions have become a world-wide constant of our political and personal landscapes. We simply cannot afford to allow injustices to poison and undermine our sense of a shared land and a shared purpose. Canada now has its own Constitution and the political wherewithal to adapt it more completely to our needs. What better time to be more specific about our other linguistic commitments as well?

It is nevertheless important to be clear that, while a still unratified political accord and a Bill which has just received first reading may converge as far as their overall purpose is concerned, they have their own separate spheres of operation. Much of the accord deals with aspects of constitutional power sharing which are not directly related to language issues and which are not for me to discuss. It also embodies, however, as "a fundamental characteristic of Canada", our country-wide language duality and the role of Parliament and the provincial legislatures in "preserving" it. The recognition of the duality and its importance to us all is clear and should signify an intention to fully apply and to go beyond the official



languages provisions that are already in the Charter.

The "distinctness" of Quebec, which was already obvious in the British North America Act, is also a given, both of history and of contemporary common sense. Even in Quebec, the heartland of the French language in Canada, that language needs continual care and protection just to hold its own against the immense and all-pervasive power of English in North America and around the world. But that is not to say that the protection of French in Quebec is incompatible with respect for the fundamental rights of its English-speaking communities. On the contrary, it seems that a better balance and a greater mutual respect between Anglophones and Francophones have been taking shape in Quebec in recent years. It is normal that the legislature and government of Quebec be assigned the role of "preserving and promoting" its own unique part of Canada's cultural ecology.

But why should the Constitution not also recognize that the Francophone communities outside Quebec, which have suffered so much neglect, need to be "promoted" by Parliament and the provinces as well? Provincial "reasons of state" appear to have prevailed on this point. But the argument has nevertheless been made, and convincingly, by representatives of the Fédération des francophones hors Québec, with the support of Alliance Québec, which speaks for the English-speaking communities in that province. "If Canada's linguistic duality is to continue to be an essential facet of our country, our governments must commit themselves to an active role in promoting official language minority communities wherever they exist in Canada."

To those who argue that Canada's official languages can never be treated equally from coast to coast, I would reply that that entirely depends on how we choose to understand and apply the term "equally". There is no question that the real-life options of people who find themselves in a minority-language situation across Canada will differ very considerably and for a great variety of reasons. No sane person would suppose that the "institutional bilingualism" of a country can be uniform and undifferentiated. Life is not like that. But we can certainly aspire to a much better institutional approximation of that ideal than we do at present, and there are hopes that the legislative, and even constitutional, proposals will help in that direction.

Language and Society has already reported what seem to us more favourable and more realistic trends in Canadian opinion where notions of linguistic equality are concerned, and these trends have been extensively reported by the media. It is not simply that a large majority of Canadians now declare themselves well disposed towards the concepts of institutional and individual bilingualism in English and French, they also demonstrate a better understanding of what those concepts entail. The Official Languages Bill may in a sense be seen as a statement by the federal Parliament of the opportunities and responsibilities which, from the national standpoint, flow from that public understanding.

We have turned again to the comprehensive analyses of the Laurendeau-Dunton, or B and B, Report for our vision of Canada's potential both as an institutionally bilingual country and as a country where both English and French may flourish. The Official Languages Act of 1969 and the linguistic provisions of the Canadian Charter of 1982 are only the largest and most visible aspects of that earlier vision of language reform. Much has already been achieved in its name.

The Bill tabled last June is in a very important sense an attempt to complete the key features of that master plan for reconciling our language differences. Most noteworthy in this regard is its clear *promotional* commitment to enhance the vitality and support the development of the minorities and to foster full recognition and use of English and French throughout Canadian society. It should, above all, be recognized for its linguistic statesmanship,

and a special tribute is owed to the Prime Minister for insisting on this aspect of the Act's revision.

In the following article, we present a detailed analysis of the background and content of the Bill and some speculation on the likely repercussions of the revised law. Let me reflect here on the spirit which has brought us this important piece of legislation and on the marching orders which it provides. The Bill begins with a preamble setting out the cardinal assumptions about the nature of Canada's linguistic duality, as proclaimed in Section 16 (1) of the Charter, and what, from the federal standpoint, must follow from them when it comes to recognizing, applying and relishing the equality of English and French in Canada.

Though we are certainly not the first to suggest that fundamental and far-reaching legislation cannot be articulated purely in terms of administrative housekeeping, we have stuck to those guns and we feel rewarded by the results. Henceforth, when people speak of the official languages of Canada they will have no excuse for not knowing what those words mean or what responsibilities they lay on the Parliament and Government of Canada, on federal-provincial relations and on federal relations with other sectors of society, with the official languages minorities, and with the Canadian people generally.

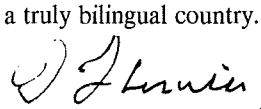
What we have now is something much closer to a comprehensive blueprint of the federal contribution to official languages equality for Canadians in today's world. It speaks to all the main issues in language planning: it enunciates the democratic and law-based philosophy which guides our country; it identifies all the institutional sectors of society in which language equality must be pursued; it specifies those goals and activities of federal institutions which are essential to its fulfilment; it recognizes both the reforming and promotional aspects of what has to be done; and it provides for more effective mechanisms to evaluate progress and enforce solutions.

I will not dwell on specific improvements or the remaining reservations that I and others are bound to have about the Bill, except to say that it largely eliminates the ambiguities that have haunted linguistic equality *within* the federal administration. On the other hand, it leaves some important question marks against the influence of the federal authority over the language practices of Crown corporations that may be transferred to the private or local government sectors, and over mixed private and public enterprises generally. Win some, lose some, no doubt; but I think we may have to come back to this latter issue very soon, especially as the "privatization" process unfolds. These and other more or less technical points will certainly come under scrutiny at the committee stage.

So much for planning our itinerary. It would not do to forget, however, that, even when policies and programs that, for the most part, already exist have been elevated to statutory rank in a new Act, much of the real journey still lies ahead. Nor, alas, can we be totally confident that the engine is in top shape or that the financial gas will see us through. It has become a truism of the official languages trade over the last five years that constitutional enshrinement of language rights in 1982 signalled a marked let-down in administrative enthusiasm. Not even the tantalizing prospect of a new law could blind us to that. Development of a new Act has of course absorbed much bureaucratic energy, but an important number of official languages projects are still in a critical condition, and we cannot wait much longer to reverse the trend towards stagnation. Three conditions will be essential to successfully restarting the application of the Act. Ongoing political attention to its goals; the real commitment of public servants of both language groups; and, most of all perhaps, the people's determination to take the greatest possible advantage of it.

By the time these words are published, some sobering statistics from the 1986 census will be staring us in the face. A cry will go up that the federal effort to contain the erosion of some official languages communities is an expensive exercise in wishful thinking. Unless the measures foreseen in the new Act are undertaken in an immediately practical, constructive and co-operative spirit and meet with truly complementary efforts on the part of the provinces, we could be fighting a rearguard action for decades to come, instead of consolidating and developing our new-found sense of interdependence and hope. With the greatest respect, we cannot help wondering whether an additional $25 million over three years for federal-provincial co-operation to develop minority language services is quite up to that task.

One thing that does cheer us immensely is the generally favourable response the proposed Act has received from all three political parties and from a variety of interest groups. On behalf of my staff, I welcome the new Official Languages Bill and embrace the responsibilities both old and new that it would place on us. We intend to do our part to the full and cordially encourage every Canadian to join in the difficult but enthralling task of building a truly bilingual country.



D'Iberville Fortier

Acts of Faith

Stuart Beaty

What is the relation of the 'old' and 'new' Official Languages Acts to the fundamental political and linguistic nature of Canada? How are the proposals to amend the Official Languages Act tabled on June 25 to be interpreted, applied and enforced?

The Official Languages Act of 1969 was passed by the Parliament of Canada with the support of all political parties. Until now, it has remained unamended. In its present form, the law proclaims the equality of status of English and French as the official languages of the Parliament and Government of Canada and sets out some basic ground rules. It also establishes the position of Commissioner of Official Languages, with powers to investigate and resolve complaints and a general mandate to do everything else in his power to ensure that the spirit and intent of the legislation are fully respected.

The original task

Simple words to describe a formidable task. Commenting on it in his first Annual Report, the first Commissioner, Keith Spicer, noted that:

> "The challenge of 'mediating' and 'auditing' language rights is greatly complicated by several factors: historical misunderstanding; controversy about the constitution; diversity of patriotic viewpoints in a multi-ethnic population; skepticism about the contemporary relevance of bilingualism; fears engendered by the very reforms Parliament deemed necessary. In short, the success of Canada's linguistic revolution seemed to depend first on cooling the climate of discussion on language, on transforming a debate into a dialogue."

It says a great deal for Canadians' willingness "to dialogue" that, as the often ▶

Stuart Beaty is an adviser, special projects, in the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

difficult task of applying the Act in a spirit of reconciliation and good sense has gone on, the climate of discussion has become a lot more balanced and better informed. Diversity of viewpoints and occasional controversy are constants of any continuing revolution, but they need not become unmanageable if the effort is made to win together rather than to lose separately.

Mr. Spicer looked upon the 1969 Act and saw that it was "a bold and soundly constructed law." But while it was detailed on certain points, on others it left much to the discretion of the Commissioner and the

From the outset it was clear that the "regulatory text alone could not change the way Canadians deal with English and French.

makers of government-wide policy. From the outset it was clear that what we might call the "regulatory" text of the law alone could not bring about a revolution in the way in which Canadians are supposed to think about and deal with English and French in the last decades of the twentieth century. This obvious fact was underscored in several ways: by the early establishment of federal programs whereby the Secretary of State's Department could aid and encourage complementary activities in all the other sectors that affect the status and use of English and French in Canadian society; by laying out guidelines for their equal treatment within the federal administration; and by the Commissioner's work to broaden understanding and support among the general public.

Why this and why now?

Quite early there was some wondering out loud whether it might not be best to amend the Act to better reflect the entire spirit and intent of the national commitment to Canada's fundamental linguistic duality. In 1973 Parliament passed an all-party Resolution on the Official Languages in the Federal Public Service which, among other things, gave additional authority to two important propositions. The first was that, subject to necessary and reasonable limitations, public servants should be able to work in either language; the second, that language equality also presupposes the full participation of both language groups in the work of the national government.

Proposals to amend the Act itself have also been presented with some regularity over the years, by Members of Parliament, by all three Commissioners and by Parliament's own Joint Committee on Official

Languages, which submitted 19 recommendations on the subject in 1983. There have been differences of emphasis in each set of proposals, but there has also been a considerable consensus among them about the deficiencies of the present Act and the best ways of overcoming them. While there have been surprisingly few legal actions brought under the Act in the last 18 years,

The need to make the Act fully compatible with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms had become very urgent.

its day-by-day application had nonetheless brought to light a hard core of issues which need to be resolved.

- The law's relation to the fundamental political and linguistic nature of the country: its constitutional context, in short.
- The implications of this national commitment where other sectors of Canadian society are concerned.
- Its primacy over other federal legislation.
- The executory nature of the Act and the need to set out more clearly how it is to be enforced.
- Clarification of how bilingual services are to be adjusted according to regional and other differences: this means, for instance, substituting a more workable concept for the "federal bilingual districts" which were never proclaimed.
- Building into the Act itself the language of work and full participation objectives found in the 1973 Parliamentary Resolution.
- Clarifying the roles of the main federal actors, including the Commissioner, in ensuring prompt and effective application of the Act.

One other overriding consideration in updating the Act has been the urgent need to make it completely compatible with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

A comparison of the two

Whereas the 1969 Act lacked a philosophical context of any kind, the present Bill contains a 10-point preamble which ties it unequivocally to its main constitutional and conceptual bases. The preamble not only sets the stage for the Act proper, it also provides a guide to the spirit of generosity and reform in which the new law is to be interpreted. For good measure, it is followed by a statement of purpose which enumerates the federal areas where official language equality must apply and affirms in ringing terms the federal commitment to promote as well as to preserve the English-

speaking and French-speaking minority communities across the country and to foster fuller recognition of the two languages in Canadian society as a whole.

The sheer bulk of the Bill is, in a sense, deceptive. The points which are really new, as distinct from raising existing articles of government policy to the status of legal requirements, are relatively few. The following are worth noting.

- The requirement that *all* federal statutory and other instruments must now be published simultaneously in both languages and with equal authority, a change from the days when the "urgency" of the public interest could authorize publication in English with "French to follow."
- If its substantive provisions are found to be inconsistent with other federal laws or regulations, the proposed Act will have primacy, except over the Canadian Human Rights Act.
- The President of the Treasury Board or any other designated Minister must consult representatives of both language communities or members of the public generally on proposed policies, directives or regulations to be made under the new Act.
- Its administration is to be reviewed on a permanent basis by a committee of the Senate and/or the House of Commons.
- As in the 1969 Act, Government retains the right to defer or suspend immediate application of the new Act for any period up to January 1, 1991, if such application is deemed to be against the interest of the public served or prejudicial to good government, good staff relations or effective management.

What will we have gained?

As proposed on June 25, the Bill manifestly addresses most but not all of the criticisms and suggestions that have been brought forward over the last 18 years. Among the proposals from the Commissioner, the Joint Committee or minority representatives that have not at present found their way into the legal text are:

- an overall co-ordinating function in the Privy Council Office with ready access to the Prime Minister;
- a requirement that federal official languages rules apply in mixed enterprises where the federal government has a majority holding;
- a provision whereby Crown corporations or federal facilities that are wholly or partly transferred to the private or other governmental sectors would acknowledge some legal obligation to maintain and promote their official languages goals and systems;
- the establishment of an autonomous official languages tribunal with power to make binding decisions on the basis of duly investigated complaints.

As against these and other question marks, however, there are some notable overall gains for the equality of the two languages. The best way to summarize them may be to group the proposed changes under four headings: consolidation, extension, promotion and enforcement.

Consolidation has been achieved by incorporating and detailing constitutional provisions, tying in amendments to other laws and expressing the policy principles of the 1973 Parliamentary Resolution as rights and obligations in law.

Extension is more marginal. It involves two main threads: the use of the official languages before federal courts or their equivalents and the degree of bilingual obligation, if you will, that can be legally transmitted to non-federal parties who have some business or regulatory relationship with Government.

Promotion is manifest throughout. It appears in the preamble, in the goals assigned to Treasury Board and the Secretary of State, and in their respective duties to consult the law's beneficiaries, notably the minorities.

Enforcement lies in the clearer articulation of the Board's and the Secretary of State's management, evaluation and reporting responsibilities, in the strengthening of the Commissioner's powers and in the court remedy provisions.

Starting afresh

Whatever it may lack on specific points, the proposed Act is a lot stronger for being a "package" of principles, goals, mutually reinforcing rights, duties and recourses. So much so, indeed, that the question is bound to occur whether the real revitalization of the official languages program that has been the driving force for a new Act for some years now can live up to such a comprehensive legal game plan. There will always be one key ingredient of effective language reform that cannot simply be legislated by a well-disposed Parliament, and that is a convincing and effective use of political and program resources.

A generally optimistic reception for the Bill is in itself a plus, but it is a little tinged by misgivings in case the real goals of these new legal provisions should get lost among conflicting priorities and excessive bureaucracy. The opportunities for putting language equality on a new footing are immense and exciting, and the 1987 Official Languages Bill looks like the green light we have been waiting for.

Comparison: 1969-1987

Preamble

The 1969 Act has no preamble. The Bill begins by recognizing:

- the basic principles of Canada's linguistic duality and the equal treatment of English and French *by* and *in* federal institutions;
- the national goal of respecting and advancing both official languages without detriment to the interests and aspirations of other linguistic and cultural groups;
- an undertaking to support the development of the English-speaking and French-speaking minorities;
- a federal commitment to work with other levels of government, business, labour and the voluntary sector in pursuing the equality of the two official languages throughout Canadian society.

Purpose

Whereas the 1969 Act declares the equal status, rights and privileges of English and French in the institutions of the Parliament and Government of Canada the Bill also:

- enumerates the main federal areas where official language equality is to be respected: in Parliament, courts and legislative instruments, in serving the public and within the federal administration; and
- makes a commitment to the preservation and development of the official languages minorities and to advancing the status and use of both languages in Canadian society.

Statutory and other instruments

The 1969 Act provides that, while federal rules, orders, etc. are to be published *simultaneously* in both languages, exceptions may be made if translation delays might prejudice the public interest. The Bill removes the exception: *all* such instruments are to appear simultaneously and with equal authority in both languages.

Whereas the Act requires federal official notifications to be printed in at least one English and one French publication in the National Capital Region and bilingual districts, the Bill requires them to be printed, with equal prominence, in at least one publication of each official language — or bilingually — in *every* region where the matter applies.

Administration of justice

The Act allows publication of final judicial decisions by federal bodies that are of ▶

general public interest in one language *before* a translation. The Bill removes this exception. However, *oral* delivery of the decision in one language only is still permitted and is authoritative.

Where federal judicial or quasi-judicial bodies are now required to hear witnesses in either language and to use simultaneous interpretation if needed, the Bill requires *direct* understanding of witnesses by judges or the equivalent and that federal intervenors use the official language preferred by the other party or parties, or both if no one language can be agreed. Court documents, such as summonses, that are part of federal court proceedings are to be available in bilingual format.

The Act speaks of the *duty* of federal institutions to ensure that members of the public can be served by and communicate with federal bodies in their preferred official language under certain conditions (see below). To be consistent with the Canadian Charter, this institutional duty is now expressed as a public *right.*

Four main criteria for bilingual service are present in the Act. It must be available: in federal bilingual districts, of which the National Capital Region is a prototype; at head offices anywhere in Canada; wherever there is "significant demand"; or, in the case of the travelling public, unless the demand is "too irregular".

The "bilingual district" concept has been dropped from the Bill. To be consistent with the Charter, the following criteria are proposed instead. The public has a right to service in its own official language:

- from any head or central office;
- in the National Capital Region and at any other office or facility, in Canada or abroad, (a) where there is a significant demand or (b) wherever it is reasonable owing to the "the nature of the office";
- when travelling and when there is also a significant demand.

"Nature of the office" is to include such factors as public health, safety and security, the location of the office, or its "national or international mandate". More precise interpretation of this and other terms is left to Governor in Council regulations to be published after due consultation with the Commissioner and the communities concerned.

The Bill also proposes that federal bodies with regulatory powers affecting public health, safety and security use those powers, "wherever it is reasonable to do so", to help promote linguistic equality in the bodies they regulate.

Offices or facilities that are designated to provide bilingual service must give clear verbal and/or visual indications of their readiness to do so.

When communicating with the public, federal institutions must use whatever media are necessary for effective and efficient communication.

Language of work

The principle that public servants should, subject to necessary limits, be able to work in either language is not explicit in the present Act, although it was a major component of the Parliamentary Resolution of 1973.

The Bill makes this principle explicit as a *right* from which the duties of federal institutions flow. They are to provide a work environment in which English and French can be used with as much fairness as factors such as public needs and relative numbers will allow, one where:

- personal and institutional services are equally available to both groups;
- widely and regularly used work instruments and automated data systems are equally available;
- both individual supervisors and management groups as a whole have an appropriate bilingual capacity in the more "bilingual" regions;
- in more "unilingual" situations, the treatment of one language group must be at least as good as it is for the other in comparable circumstances.

Full participation

The principle that both language groups be fairly represented and enjoy full participation in the work of Government was also not made explicit until the 1973 Resolution. It is now embodied in the Bill in terms of "equal access to appointment and advancement" for both groups and an appropriate "reflection" of their presence in Canada. The latter criterion, however, must also take account of differences in the mandate, location and clientele of each institution.

"Language of work" and "full participation" rules are also to be made administratively specific through Governor in Council regulations.

Roles and duties

The Act assigns duties to every department and agency of the Government of Canada and to all other federal bodies, with specific reference to serving and communicating with the public. No mention is made of any more general program management responsibility.

The Bill now identifies *Treasury Board* as overall manager and promoter of those principles and programs which affect the federal administration, including Crown corporations and wholly owned subsidiaries. The Board must publish directives, develop regulations, inform the public, evaluate outcomes and report annually to Parliament.

The Act makes no reference to complementary programs affecting other sectors, specific communities or Canadian society as a whole. The Bill assigns to the *Secretary of State* the duty to pursue all those official languages programs that it now manages as a matter of policy. The aim is to encourage the *recognition*, *learning* and *use* of English and French:

- by fostering the vitality and development of the minorities;
- by helping the provinces or other sectors to provide minority education or minority language services; and
- by providing suitable opportunities to acquire English or French as a second language.

Commissioner's duties and functions

Besides giving the Commissioner a general duty to ensure that its spirit and intent are observed, the Act stipulates procedures for carrying out complaint and other investigations and for reporting findings and recommendations to Government and Parliament.

The Bill confirms, expands and reinforces these roles. It makes the Commissioner general guardian of the Act and gives him or her a specific right to examine Governor in Council regulations before they are published. If an investigation ends in a deadlock and the Commissioner has to make a special report to the Governor in Council, Government must respond within a reasonable time.

Court remedy

As things stand, individuals or groups who think their official languages rights have been contravened may go to court under the Charter or seek a remedy through the Commissioner.

The Bill does not affect the right to seek redress under the Charter, but provides a new procedure whereby complainants can take their case to the Federal Court six months after the complaint is lodged with the Commissioner. It also provides that the Commissioner may, with the complainant's agreement, become a party to the case or act on his or her behalf before the Federal Court.

Other changes

Where the present Act requires only that its application not diminish the legal or customary rights of other languages, the proposed Act is also to be construed in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of languages other than English and French, terms taken from Section 27 of the Charter.

The Bill also incorporates, as part of the consolidation process, consequential amendments to the Criminal Code and a number of other federal laws.

The makers of the Meech Lake accord

A Distinct Society

Robert Décary

By bringing Quebec into the constitutional fold and proclaiming the dual nature of Confederation, the Meech Lake accord marks a major step forward for the country's official language minorities.

Has the Meech Lake accord, reached by Canada's eleven first ministers on April 30, 1987, and ratified in its final version on June 3, altered the status of Canada's official language minorities?

The sole purpose of this constitutional exercise was of course to bring Quebec into the Constitution, not to meet the traditional demands of the Francophone minority or those, more recent, of the Anglophone minority. Quebec's objective was to reclaim its place in Confederation, and the socio-political context which Premier Bourassa found himself in forced him first to work toward "cultural security" for his home province.

Quebec's return to the constitutional fold after a five-year absence is good news indeed for Canada's official language minorities. (I assume, for the purposes of this article, that the Meech Lake accord will soon be part of the Constitution — something which, unfortunately, has yet to occur, as a result in part of the appearance of a number of bogeymen come to disturb the national reconciliation.) For what would become of the French fact outside Quebec and the English fact in Quebec if Canada continued to do without that province and if the independence which Quebec has experienced since 1982 became a fact of daily political life? Without Quebec in the national picture, there would be little salvation for the country's minorities.

In symbolic terms, now that Quebec's distinct character has been recognized as a rule for interpreting the body of the Constitution, the law has finally been brought into line with reality.

Recognition of duality

The accord will bring about an important constitutional change. Canada's duality will now be entrenched in the Constitution far more explicitly than through simple recognition of our two official languages and of the right to education. Furthermore, that duality will be defined as "a fundamental characteristic" of Canada, in light of which the Constitution will be interpreted. This is an important step forward: it means that the *entire* Constitution, including the Charter, must be understood in such a way as to recognize that duality. The first ministers have thus corrected an unacceptable weakness of the 1982 Charter. Section 27 provides that the Charter is to be interpreted "in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians", but no mention is made in the document of

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Canadians' bicultural heritage. As a result of the accord, however, Section 23, for example, concerning minority language educational rights will now be interpreted more generously.

The symmetrical description of the official language minorities — "French-speaking Canadians, centred in Quebec but also present elsewhere in Canada" and "English-speaking Canadians, concentrated outside Quebec but also present in Quebec" — is felicitous. The Constitution will thus provide for a legal equality that obviously

As regards official language minorities, the Meech Lake accord maintains the status quo while establishing those minorities as fundamental components of Canada.

does not exist in fact, but in virtue of which Francophone minorities may, where their rights and guarantees are recognized, demand treatment equal to that received by the Anglophone minority in Quebec. The school management issue is a case in point. The fact that the terms "peoples", "communities", "collectivities" and "nations" have been abandoned in favour of "English- and French-speaking Canadians" is not significant, since what is described is the same in both cases. The new expression is less controversial and more likely to find unanimous support. It is a political compromise that appears to have no legal consequences, except that the emphasis is placed on the individual rights of members of minority groups rather than on collective rights, the approach used in the Charter.

Protecting and promoting

Much has been made of the fact that it is the role of the Parliament of Canada and the provincial legislatures to "preserve" this duality (whereas, under the agreement of April 30, they made a "commitment" to protecting it), but not to promote it (which, in light of the province's distinct nature, is Quebec's role). This appears to be a step backward, but it is nevertheless progress compared to the present Constitution, which contains no reference to the role of Parliament or the legislatures in linguistic matters. Compared with Section 16(3) of the Charter (which provides, "Nothing in this Charter limits the authority of Parliament or a legislature to advance the equality of status or use of English and French", but does not encourage Parliament or the legislatures to do so), the protective role now assigned to those bodies appears to extend beyond the field of official languages. It would have been preferable for the legislatures to be given the role of promoting Francophone minorities. That would have forced Quebec, however, to agree to promote the Anglophone minority, something which, in that province's context of cultural insecurity, is simply not possible.

Much has been said about the recognition of Quebec as a distinct society and the role of Quebec's government and legislature to protect and promote that distinct character. Yet much remains to be said.

In symbolic terms, now that Quebec's distinct character has been recognized as a rule for interpreting the body of the Constitution, the law has finally been brought into line with reality. There was something unrealistic and even unhealthy in the refusal of certain prominent figures, among others, to call a spade a spade. That we should now be crying victory because we have gained the obvious shows the inroads made by their stupidity.

In political terms, the recognition of a distinct Quebec and the new role of the Quebec government give the province the responsibility of establishing and maintaining its own cultural security. Quebec will no longer have to ask to be consulted; its power to demand consultation has now been recognized.

Quebec's language rights appear to signify that Quebec is solely responsible

The courts will certainly recognize Quebec's right to require that all signage be in French as well as English and that priority should be given to French in bilingual and multilingual signage.

for its language policy. That responsibility will naturally be subject to the guaranteed rights of the Anglophone minority (Section 133 of the Constitution Act, 1867, and Section 23 of the Charter), which the provincial government now has the role of protecting, and subject of course to the fundamental rights guaranteed for Quebec Anglophones, as for all other persons regardless of their language group, under the Quebec and federal charters. French unilingualism will remain as possible in the future for Francophone Quebecers as it is today, provided it does not violate the constitutional guarantees of non-Francophones. Those who demand total French unilingualism have yet to understand the nature of the regime and country in which they live.

Language of signage

Signage is an important secondary issue. In the private sector, the right to post signs in one's preferred language is part of freedom of speech, and nothing in the Meech Lake accord will change this situation. If Quebec wishes to ban private signage in English, it will have to invoke the override clauses of the provincial and federal charters. This danger existed before the Meech Lake accord; it is still present and remains a

If Quebec wishes to ban private signage in English, it will have to invoke the override clauses of the federal and provincial charters.

political issue. The Anglophone minority has lost no ground in all this. However, now that Quebec has been recognized as a distinct society, the courts will certainly recognize Quebec's right to require that all signage be in French as well as English and that priority be given to French in bilingual and multilingual signage. If the obligation to include French in all signage on a priority basis constitutes a limit on freedom of speech, that limit must surely be considered as reasonable and justified in light of Quebec's status as a distinct society.

Native people and cultural communities

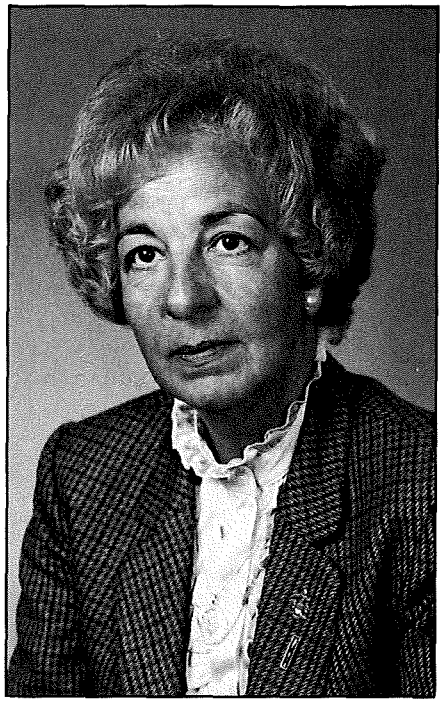
The clause stating that recognition of Canada's duality and of Quebec's distinct character does not infringe Sections 25 and 27 of the Charter (aboriginal rights and enhancement of multicultural heritage) in fact simply consolidates the gains made by the aboriginal peoples and other cultural groups in 1982 and in no way restricts the scope of the new rule of interpretation.

In conclusion, the Meech Lake accord preserves the status quo as regards the official language minorities while making them fundamental components of Canada and while opening the door to a more generous interpretation of their rights under the Constitution. Far from being a step backward, it offers hope of progress and, above all, confirms Quebec as a member of Confederation. The official language minorities should therefore rally around the accord. Consensus is a fragile thing, and rejection of the accord for any reason whatsoever would be perceived as a rejection of Quebec by English-speaking Canada. The official language minorities would thus be well advised to wait their turn rather than to stand in the way of Quebec's return by pressing their case unduly.

Parliament's Linguistic Guardian Angels

Michel Vastel

The Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages has decided to press for linguistic justice in federal departments and Crown corporations.



Senator Dalia Wood

Do contraventions of the Official Languages Act compromise safety on Via Rail trains? Are the police above the law? Do the largely unilingual operations of our Armed Forces endanger the security of Canada?

The Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages has been asking blunt questions like these for the past year. Its co-chairperson since March 1986, Charlevoix MP Charles Hamelin, does not mince words when dealing with recalcitrants. He represents the overwhelming Conservative majority in the Commons, enjoys the sympathy of his boss, Brian Mulroney, and receives quiet encouragement from the political minister for Quebec, Marcel Masse. Early in the Committee's second session last November, Petro-Canada dispatched an observer from Calgary who, with the help of simultaneous translation earphones, did his best to answer his president's anxious question about these Quebec activists: "What are they up to?"

A change in tactics

The Official Languages Act does, of course, have its watchdog, Commissioner D'Iberville Fortier, who each year reports on the ne'er-do-wells of bilingualism. And since last fall its guardian angels have patrolled the corridors of departments and Crown corporations, seeking linguistic justice in public hearings. In the words of Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa-Vanier), a Committee veteran since May 23, 1980, "The Committee has demonstrated that the Official Languages Act poses problems of implementation in terms of both method and scope. I think our work will persuade the government to give it some teeth."

It is not the first time that the linguistic performance of departments and Crown corporations has been closely scrutinized. In 1983, for instance, the predecessor of this Standing Joint Committee — a Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons — gave long and detailed attention to Petro-Canada. But the present Committee is different in two ways:

- it no longer simply grumbles about the bad faith of ministers and deputy ministers responsible for applying the Act; it now insists on their being accountable;
- the federal Conservative caucus is a veritable political hotbed in which — for the first time since official languages policy came into being — the English majority must learn to live with the duality of Canada as a whole and the distinct character of one region in particular.

The Committee's new strategy consists of asking "infringers" to present a plan for change and to return some six months later to report on progress. As D'Iberville Fortier puts it, "The experience of my Office is that if you want an organization to follow through on recommendations or commitments made over the years, an excellent way of getting results is to have a parliamentary committee conduct a *systematic and repeated examination* of what has been accomplished."

The results of this approach will not be known until Parliament sits again in the fall. However, the Deputy Minister of Energy, Arthur Kroeger, who suffered a somewhat brutal attack from Édouard Desrosiers (Montreal-Hochelaga), has already developed a plan for promoting Francophones to the senior echelons of his department; the Solicitor General has reintroduced more generous Francophone participation objectives for the RCMP and has appointed a bilingual successor to Commissioner Simmonds; and the committee that oversees the activities of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service has dealt with the explosive situation of Quebec-based agents, and the Service has made its *mea culpa*.

By contrast, Petro-Canada is dragging its feet in the hope that privatization will release it from the requirements of the official languages policy, and National Defence is retrenching behind the imperatives of military security to elude the Act. In other words, progress requires constant monitoring.

Charles Hamelin, MP

Provoking the dinosaurs

The political dimension of Parliament and its Official Languages Committee is thus of vital importance. By refusing the Committee permission to travel across the country, Parliament unwittingly did proud service to Quebec MPs, particularly the Conservatives, and made federal mandarins very nervous.

The Committee has 24 members, nine senators and 15 MPs. Their participation is very average, less than 50 per cent, and those whose attendance is regular fall into two categories:

- the "old hands", in particular Liberals such as Jean-Robert Gauthier, Warren

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Michel Vastel is head of the Ottawa office of Montreal's *Le Devoir*.

Allmand (Montreal-NDG) and Senator Dalia Wood; Conservative Senator Jean-Maurice Simard; and the former Liberal Premier of New Brunswick, Louis Robichaud. They are known for their experience, wisdom and quiet obstinacy;

- the "new gang", especially young Quebec Conservatives such as co-chairperson Charles Hamelin, Louis Plamondon (Richelieu), Anne Blouin (Charlebourg), François Gérin (Megantic), Ricardo Lopez and Édouard Desrosiers — all impatient, all blunt speakers.

Once in Ottawa, Brian Mulroney's young MPs had to adapt to three types of culture shock: a political system they had never experienced prior to September 4, 1984; membership in the party of "les Anglais", heavily dominated by old Tories from Western Canada, some of them from the time of John Diefenbaker; and an administrative machine that was essentially English.

The shock was brutal and led to highly charged exchanges. To a degree, the Committee became a sort of outlet in which attacks were launched against deputy ministers not just because they refused to respect the official languages policy but because they also refused to be accountable to the elected representatives of the people. (Much the same situation prevailed with the Finance Committee in its hearings on bank failures in Western Canada and with the Consumer and Corporate Affairs Committee with respect to reorganization of Canada Post. Policy application was as important as teaching the minister and his deputy a lesson.)

Thus the situation with respect to the Official Languages Committee is not unique: but it results from the McGrath reforms. However, insofar as it deals with language and culture, it is more explosive and tends to attract greater attention from the media.

"No one is safe from the dinosaur mentality." With these words, Charles Hamelin has imposed a new style on the Committee. His statements, and those of his colleagues, are designed to provoke the "dinosaurs".

Why such activism?

There were many sound reasons to justify this type of political activism. A large number of these new Quebec MPs had barely recovered from the defeat they and other partisans of the YES faction had suffered in the referendum. Arriving in Ottawa less by design than by accident, they decided to take a chance on the Canadian federation and to push it to the limits of its political commitments.

Furthermore, the party's leaders encouraged the militancy of their Quebec members. Taking a page from Quebec's long history of nationalist sentiment, Brian Mulroney and Marcel Masse took up the challenge and set about re-establishing the old coalition of English Canada's Orangists and Quebec's ultra-nationalists — the coalition which had kept John A. Macdonald and Georges-Étienne Cartier in power for 25 of the first 30 years following Confederation, which had defeated Wilfrid Laurier in 1911, and which had supplied the glue for the short-lived tactical alliance between John Diefenbaker and Maurice Duplessis.

Although the Official Languages Committee has pushed its powers to the limits, the operation has entailed some risk. The English media were strongly critical of the Deputy Minister of Energy's policy designed to promote Francophones (attributing it to Marcel Masse), and tensions mounted in the Conservative national caucus.

At a time when the Official Languages Act was being revised and when the Lake Meech accord called for historic compromises by some elements in English Canada, Brian Mulroney's 209 MPs became a kind of sounding-board for major national issues. (Such tensions were not to be found in the Liberal caucus, where Western Canada had so little representation.)

The debate over a new Official Languages Act has thus provoked tensions between Quebec MPs and those from southern Ontario. But this must be seen as a positive sign. Having survived the test of a truly national caucus, the Act will gain legitimacy throughout the country. In a way, this reminds one of the debate in Quebec over school reorganization on the Island of Montreal, which an Anglophone community leader, former provincial cabinet minister Victor Goldbloom, decided to defend.

By requiring deputy heads like Arthur Kroeger (a fluently bilingual Albertan) or ministers like James Kelleher (a unilingual from Ontario) to state their support for bilingualism, the Committee got from the political leaders of English Canada what Pierre Trudeau had failed to extract from them when the bilingualism policy was introduced. The Committee has thus conveyed more clearly the real expectations of Quebec vis-à-vis the bilingualism policy. Its major weakness, however — and this is typical of the 1987 constitutional debate — is to have relegated to second place the needs of Canada's linguistic minorities. The next major step would therefore appear to consist in authorizing the Committee to travel across the country.

A Hard-Hitting Report

The Essentials

The same day Government tabled its Bill to amend the Official Languages Act, the Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages presented its Fourth Report. The Committee had considered the works and testimony of 16 institutions over a six-month period and came out with a Report that was outspoken, hard-hitting and specific. Its overall conclusion was that "the official languages program within the federal public service is not being vigorously pursued and is not receiving the attention it merits...."

Treasury Board's responsibilities

The Committee laid much of this "serious lack of direction and follow-up" at the door of the Treasury Board, the agency which since 1973 has had the responsibility for applying the Act in the federal administration.

The Committee corroborates the view put forward in the Commissioner's 1986 Report that the Board's somewhat inattentive and hands-off style has been reflected in various forms of bureaucratic backslidings. What it comes down to is that when a department or agency is faced with some particularly difficult problem in applying the Official Languages Act, it will tend to do as little as it can get away with. The message is clear: since the official languages program is always going to have its share of difficult problems, the overall manager, Treasury Board, needs to be more systematic in its monitoring, more severe in its judgements and more supportive of constructive change to prevent undermining of the substantial achievements of the last 18 years.

Major problems

The Committee's Report zeroes in on the major outstanding problems and demonstrates their nature. Service to the public in English and French is marred by the performance

of a small number of federal institutions and by a tendency to become more and more patchy outside Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick. The use of French as a language of work outside Quebec is stalled for lack of administrative realism and promotional drive from Treasury Board. Similar failings have affected the goal of achieving full participation of both language groups in the public service. Successes in some areas are offset by at least partial failures in others and it is still not totally clear what can reasonably and finally be achieved.

The Committee stresses the need for the Board to take a vigorous approach and to use the occasion of a new Act to put a lot more conviction, energy and forward drive into its management activities. Four of these are examined in more detail in the Report: identifying the language requirements of federal jobs; filling bilingual jobs; giving a bonus for bilingualism; and providing language training.

Bilingual jobs, unilingual personnel

The Committee's answer to the problem of "bilingual" managers and employees who turn out to be less bilingual than they ought to be is to phase out the elementary or A level second-language requirement and to make much greater use of the advanced or C level requirement in the upper reaches of the bureaucracy. The Report also recommends doing away with any rules that would allow unilingual people to be appointed to bilingual jobs. Instead of paying the bilingualism bonus to all qualified employees in bilingual jobs, the Committee proposes a cut-off that would limit the bonus to those who have at least an intermediate proficiency in their second official language. It is critical, too, of the rules for providing language training at public expense; it wants them to be clarified and applied in a uniform manner.

The Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages has begun to come into its own as Parliament's conscience on the way the federal law and programs are carried out. It concludes its Report by repeating its firm intention to play that role to the full.

A Man of Accomplishment

Tom Sloan

Jean-Marc Legros oversaw the provision of bilingual services by the Canadian Employment and Immigration Commission in the Metro Toronto area.

It will be a long time before Jean-Marc Legros forgets the first three months of 1982; and the same applies to the French-speaking community of Metropolitan Toronto.

It was during those months that, working against long odds, Mr. Legros — then a senior manager with Employment and Immigration Canada (CEIC) — was instrumental in creating a full range of bilingual services for a major federal government department in the area. He took up the challenge in December 1981; by April 1, 1982, a fully staffed French-language employment unit was open for business in central Toronto.

Where there's a will...

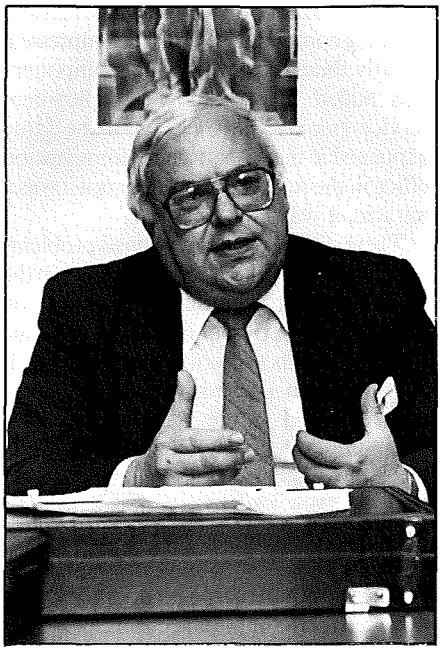
Strictly speaking, this particular success story may not have been a miracle; but it appeared as one to the leaders of Toronto's French-speaking community, who were used to promises, but never to such prompt and complete action on the part of federal authorities. Whatever else it was, the swift implementation of the CEIC bilingualism program for the area was a shining example of what can be done when the will is present.

A big, hearty, friendly man, Mr. Legros is proud of his Toronto accomplishment. As Director of Programs and Services for Metropolitan Toronto, he accepted the challenge of providing bilingual services in the region. It was not an easy assignment. "In terms of services," Mr. Legros recalls, "there was nothing bilingual in Toronto at the time — except for one clerk."

Little wonder that the leaders of the Francophone community, gathered under an umbrella group known as the Conseil des organismes francophones du Toronto métropolitain (COFTM), were sceptical. "They had heard it all before," Mr. Legros wryly comments; but little or nothing had ever been achieved.

The fact that the new office was scheduled to open on April Fools' Day presumably did little to inspire confidence.

Nevertheless, backed by a Treasury Board ruling that Metro Toronto's 225,000 Francophones deserved bilingual services, and strong support from the highest echelons of his own department, Mr. Legros plunged ahead.



Jean-Marc Legros

Scepticism and participation

In a real sense, one of his first major problems was to deal with the scepticism of the Francophones themselves. He accomplished that by first taking the time to listen to their needs and complaints and then by involving them closely in the decision-making process.

The next challenge was to find the people to staff a new French-speaking unit. To his astonishment, more than 50 French-speaking employees were already working in various positions throughout the Toronto area. It was not long before 24 volunteers, including four brought in from Quebec, were selected.

The staff was there, but not quite ready. "They were bilingual, but they had been working in English for so long they had forgotten a lot of technical terms in French," Mr. Legros explains. A training program during the winter months solved this problem, but others continued to crop up. A network of dedicated French-language phone lines had to be put in place as did direct lines from the other offices for Francophone clients. The procurement of bilingual signs might seem a simple matter in a bilingual country, but, as Mr. Legros discovered, the Department of Public ▶

Works has its priorities, so CEIC made its own. It also handled its own translation of office forms and other internal arrangements. The first bilingual typewriters ordered lacked, of all things, French accents.

A challenge met

The challenge was met and the office opened April 1, on schedule, with a tour by some leaders of the Toronto French-speaking community. They were impressed. Shortly thereafter, a bilingual component was added to the student employment service run by the CEIC, and the same happened in the Department's immigration office in the region. Whether or not it was a miracle, it was rapid progress.

There still, of course, remained problems to solve. One of the biggest was that, in the Toronto area, the translation of posted job offers would have required seven full-time translators. The solution was the development of an automatic translation program adapted to the Department's own computers, which went into full operation just one year later. Funding was always limited. "We had to scrounge around," Mr. Legros remembers. But the money was always found.

The provision of bilingual services in an operation of the importance of Employment and Immigration in Canada's largest metropolitan area is not, of course, simply a matter of hard- and soft-ware technology. It is, above all, a human story.

From the standpoint of the French-speaking community, there is no doubt about the success of the operation. Within a few months, the number of requests for French services had skyrocketed into the thousands. "When French services are properly offered to Franco-Ontarians, they use them," comments Mr. Legros.

As for the staff members, although many had signed on only for a transition period, 23 out of 24 were still on the job a year later, bolstered in their commitment by regular social contacts with the Francophone community.

And what about other departments of the federal government? Mr. Legros is reluctant to criticize others, preferring to look on the experience of his own Department as an example. "I'm very proud. We started with nothing, and I could feel the frustrations of the French-speaking community when we were getting under way. I think this experience was good for the federal government, because it showed what is possible. And if it's possible in Toronto, it's possible anywhere," he smiles.

Treasury Board

Of one thing, Mr. Legros is certain. Any department that is serious about bilingualism must have senior executives who are committed to the process. "It isn't enough to have a junior employee, with no real authority, as the officer in charge of bilingualism." He has one specific suggestion: Treasury Board, which has the real authority over federal bilingualism programs, should have more people involved; and certainly it should have an office in a place like Toronto where there are many regional headquarters of federal departments and Crown corporations. "If the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages has an office there to look into complaints, I don't see why Treasury Board shouldn't have one to make sure that bilingual services are available. A visit every two months isn't enough."

A New Identity

John Newlove

Fluently bilingual Anglophones in Canada's Public Service represent the trend in a maturing generation.

Fluently bilingual Anglophones — they're all around us, but sometimes they're hard to spot.

Scott Cooper, a career public servant working as an internal consultant with Transport Canada, says that as a fluently bilingual Anglophone he risks the resentment of other, unilingual, English-speakers. "It's not terribly obvious in most cases, but it happens," he says. English-speaking Canadians are not expected to be bilingual and sometimes they hide it — especially from other Anglophones. "Sometimes the older generation is more apprehensive than it needs to be when faced with fluently bilingual Anglophones."

Anglophone to anglophone — en français

When Cooper joined the Public Service he saw language learning as a wonderful opportunity; but, despite strong motivation, he had personal and systemic barriers to overcome before he was ready to make real progress in French. He found that at first he was in some ways a divided personality. "I was a different person in French, more expressive, less aggressive," but now he is rediscovering a new Canadian identity in himself. And he has found that as an Anglophone travelling in Europe he was identified in part as being uniquely Canadian because he spoke French, albeit with an unusual accent. He considers his bilingualism to be for him an expression of his identity as a Canadian.

In his own work, Cooper says he has been able to create situations where French is used by both Anglophones and Francophones, even in technical meetings and presentations. But the language of work in the Public Service is still largely English. Even Francophones tend not to use French spontaneously. Cooper says, "Bilingual Anglophones and Francophones get jobs in which they then use English most of the time."

Being overtly bilingual

He believes that the attitude is often that "the only true bilingual is a Francophone." Cooper thinks that many Francophones may have become cynical about bilingualism, that the real energy for change must now be found among Anglophones. To him, bilingualism is "a real gift, a personal opportunity", and he says that the time must come when Anglophones will feel as comfortable speaking to each other in French when the situation calls for it as Francophones do speaking to each other in English. He says that the presence of overtly bilingual Anglophones seems to encourage Francophones to work more frequently in French.

As for managers in the Public Service, Cooper says that they can aid bilingualism best by the way in which they manage their staffs, not only by role modelling. He wants managers who don't try to fake bilingualism but instead will support him, and Francophones, in the use of French.

The new generation

"Managerial bilingualism does send out a few signals, but it doesn't result in cultural change. That's a longer process requiring more subtle and longer-term support." But Cooper is optimistic about the future. Though at the moment bilingual Anglophones may feel as if they are part of a misunderstood and undervalued minority — "We're quiet, we're not visible to other Anglophones, we feel we can't be outspoken about bilingualism," he says — change is coming. "I think it's a generational thing. As the baby boom generation matures, we're going to find a great surge foreward in openness." When this happens, Cooper says, Anglophones will be learning to use French not so much as a tool on the road to faster promotion and more money, but because they see bilingualism as a chance for personal growth, for the broadening of their cultural horizons and the deepening of their sense of themselves as Canadians in the world at large.

"In the future, having more Francophones in the Public Service won't by itself

change our language of work." But as a new and expanding generation of fluently bilingual Anglophones emerges, paradoxically, the problem of equitable participation by both official language groups will become part of the past. But, says Scott Cooper, "We'll only get full participation once we get the language of work situation straightened out." And that can only happen, he firmly believes, once the presence of bilingual Anglophones has become the common and accepted norm in the Public Service of Canada.

Controlling Bilingualism

Tom Sloan

Fifteen years after the start of a protracted fight which won French-speaking pilots and air traffic controllers the right to use French as well as English under certain circumstances in Quebec, another dispute over bilingualism has broken out in Transport Canada.

This time the issue does not involve the professional use of French in air traffic control, but relations between Anglophone and Francophone controllers working together in western Canada.

Transport Canada is officially investigating complaints by eight French-speaking controllers-in-training alleging discrimination in three western airports, as a result of which all have permanently or temporarily abandoned their profession. The complainants have been supported by l'Association des gens de l'air du Québec, the association grouping Francophone pilots and controllers in Quebec.

The controllers involved in the dispute are all graduates of the air controllers school at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, south of Montreal, founded in 1981 with the sponsorship of the federal and Quebec governments. The controllers were asked to relocate in the West following a finding by Transport Canada that there was an excess of controllers in Quebec and a shortage in other parts of the country. All had some training in English as part of their Saint-Jean course, as well as two final weeks of pronounciation drill at the Transport Canada Training Institute, a bilingual facility in Cornwall, Ontario.

In their complaints to the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages and to Transport Canada, the trainees objected to what they described as a climate of hostility they said was common to airports in Whitehorse, Kamloops and especially Winnipeg. Harassment allegedly included anti-Francophone signs on the noticeboard in one place, objections to their French accents and refusal to allow them to speak French to each other. In addition, they were told that the practice of simply saying "bonjour" to French-speaking pilots was no longer allowed.

Masterfile

The trainees involved suggested that the situation resulted, in some cases, from individual prejudice and in others from concern that the presence of the bilingual trainees threatened the jobs of the English-speaking controllers.

As this issue of ***Language and Society*** goes to print, there are still several French-speaking trainees working in western airports. In the next issue of the magazine, we shall have an analysis of Transport Canada's report on its internal investigation into the matter.

Cheers

Via Rail has at last taken steps to allow the assignment of bilingual employees to its trains.

Transport Canada is planning to post more linguistically appropriate signs in Canadian airports. The Department now has a manual to govern standards.

Fisheries and Oceans opened the Maurice Lamontagne Institute in Mont-Joli, Quebec. Francophone researchers employed by the federal government in marine fisheries studies will be able to pursue their careers in their own language.

Tears

Defence — The Department has refused to include a recruiting ad for the primary reserve in a western French-language newspaper on the grounds that it would be too expensive.

Petro-Canada — The public relations branch in the company's Calgary headquarters was not able to supply a Francophone journalist with information in French about the Crown corporation's participation in the 1988 Olympics.

Environment — In the West, English-only posters announced Environment Week. Will the Department be ordering the use of posters in both languages in Western Canada?

At the same Department, 17 years after the Official Languages Act was proclaimed, one still cannot find signage in French at Banff National Park. Japanese, yes, but not French....

French Services in Ontario

An interview with David Peterson

by Adrien Cantin

According to Premier David Peterson, Ontario has reached a point in its history where it could no longer continue to ignore the rights of its Francophone minority.

On November 18, 1986, the Ontario legislative assembly unanimously passed a bill guaranteeing the Francophones of that province gradual access, in their own language, to all government services by 1990.

The French Language Services Act applies to the headquarters of all Ontario government departments and to their offices in 22 designated regions. Those regions include the cities of Toronto, Ottawa, Windsor and Sudbury, the Ottawa River Valley and northeastern Ontario.

Furthermore, by December 31, 1991, the Ontario government will be required to have translated all public and general provincial laws that will still be in effect on that date.

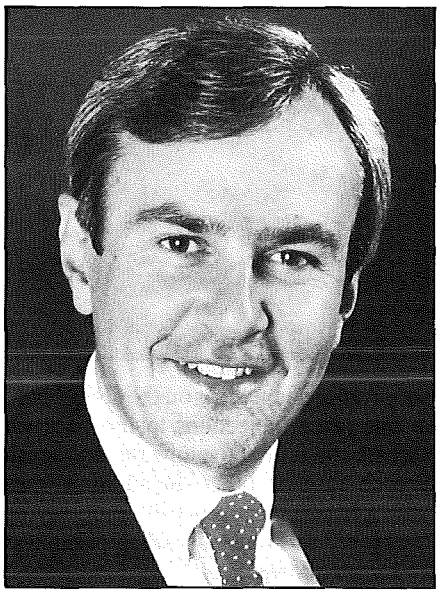
This is a major change of direction for the government of Ontario, which, to date, has provided, but not guaranteed, services in French to its official language minority.

Some 18 months after it came to power, the Liberal minority government has thus fulfilled one of its promises, one that caused considerable concern within the party itself during the election campaign. Readers will remember the impassioned and bitter debate on a similar bill tabled by Liberal Albert Roy in 1979 and subsequently rejected by the government of William Davis.

In an interview Mr. Peterson recently granted to ***Language and Society***, the Ontario premier said that the province had reached a point in its history where it could no longer continue to ignore the rights of its Francophone minority.

Language and Society: *Mr. Premier, how do you perceive the Franco-Ontarian community, and what is your government's policy with respect to that community?*

David Peterson: We feel the Franco-Ontarian community is a dynamic community whose future is important to us. That community has always felt alienated; it has always felt it has not received a fair shake. Ontario is a province where the language issue has long been a source of political conflicts, sometimes subtly, sometimes openly, but I think that we (the new government) have changed that. At least I hope so because that is one of my greatest wishes. And if, as a result of my intervention, young Franco-Ontarians feel a little more confident living here, while retaining their language and culture, I feel I will have accomplished something.



David Peterson

I want French-speaking Ontario to be completely integrated; I want it to participate fully in decisions and to be able to exert influence in all fields. That influence should not be limited to language and culture, but should extend to all aspects of Ontario life. I want Franco-Ontarians to sit on the boards of directors of universities and colleges, hospitals, the Liquor Control Board, everywhere where the Francophone perspective must be expressed. I think that once it is fully in effect, the French Language Services Act will be a major step forward.

Language and Society: *Despite considerable political debate, much of it recent, Ontario had not previously guaranteed the province's Francophones the services they demanded in their own language. How do you explain the fact that you were able to obtain the unanimous agreement of the legislature on this issue?*

David Peterson: First let me say that that doesn't surprise me. What was needed, I think, was the political will to do go after an agreement. And we did just that, by consulting and reassuring all parties concerned.

The leadership didn't come from me alone; it came as well from people from all parts of the province. Look at the success of French immersion classes in Ontario and all the parents who want their children to learn the other language. I believe there is more generosity than bad faith here, and I think that the government was able to channel that generosity.

As in other endeavours, it all depends on how you deal with the issue. If political leaders fear a strong reaction and adopt a defensive attitude, they make it possible for that reaction to occur. For our party, though, the matter was ultimately not all that difficult because our position was clear from the outset.

Language and Society: *Do you mean to say that Ontarians would have been prepared to provide guarantees earlier?*

David Peterson: Yes, I think so, but earlier leaders were frightened by the idea. I think that serious errors of judgement were made concerning the generosity and open-mindeness of Ontarians.

Language and Society: *But even so, don't you feel that you took a political risk?*

David Peterson: During the last election campaign, some of my opponents began their speeches by saying, "I'm talking about jobs; Peterson is talking about bilingualism." Well, what I was talking about was my dream, this mutual understanding, this type of society that I wanted to see created. The public reacts to political leadership, and political leaders must take firm positions on such issues.

Language and Society: *In a Canadian perspective, what are the consequences of Ontario's setting French-language rights down in the province's laws?*

David Peterson: Canada has long experienced linguistic, cultural and political tensions, and the Quebec question has very often been at the center of those tensions. I hope that we were able to inspire a certain confidence in the other provinces regarding the way to treat their Francophone minorities fairly.

Language and Society: *Will Ontario one day become officially bilingual?*

David Peterson: There is no doubt about that. An agreement was reached 120 years ago between the two founding nations. The issue of the other ethnic minorities remains to be settled, but the original agreement was between Anglophones and Francophones. It is on the basis of that pact that we have been able to build a country of immigrants that is unique in the world.

Adrien Cantin is a news and current affairs reporter with Radio-Canada in Toronto.

Language and Society: *If Quebec became officially bilingual, would that speed up the process in Ontario?*

David Peterson: I don't see things in that light. I've often heard it said that Ontario should not adopt two official languages since Quebec chose not to do so. I find that argument offensive. I will never bargain with people's rights. That would be like taking hostages on both sides, and I'm not about to indulge in that kind of practice. Those are not the sorts of things one negotiates in secret. Rather I would hope that we will be able to appeal to people's generous side.

A Major Challenge

Bernard Grandmaître Speaks Out

Adrien Cantin

Bernard Grandmaître

According to Bernard Grandmaître, Ontario minister responsible for services in French, "The French Language Services Act, adopted in 1986, is a major challenge for the Government of Ontario because it is very rare that a piece of legislation affects all the activities of a government."

In less than three years, the headquarters of all provincial departments and their offices in 22 designated regions will be required to answer requests for service in French when that is the preferred language of the client. "However," Mr. Grandmaître hastens to point out, "a number of provincial government departments and agencies already offer a range of services in French."

"There are two areas where a very great effort will be required," Mr. Grandmaître says, "and they are social and community services and the health sector." The minister admits that, for the moment, the province does not have, for example, all the doctors, social workers and psychologists it needs to provide adequate services to the province's Francophone population.

The problem of recruiting qualified personnel could also arise in other fields, and it is for this reason in particular that implementation of the French Language Services Act has been scheduled to phase in over three years, ending in 1989. "It may be stressing the system a bit to bring in the Act over three years," says Grandmaître. "It's impossible to train a psychiatrist, for example, in so little time. But we needed a plan, a program for the future, a point of departure."

The minister suggests that it was for that same reason French-speaking Liberal MLAs were embarrassed to demand official bilingualism. "It would have been totally unrealistic on my part," he says, " to demand that we be able to provide all those services to the Francophone population without having the tools and staff to do so."

Under the French Language Services Act, however, the government has no choice. Some Crown corporations and services may obtain temporary exemptions if they can justify delaying compliance with the Act. In most cases, however, offenders risk being dragged before the courts after January 1, 1990.

Mr. Grandmaître is counting on the French Language Services Commission to ensure that the Act is gradually implemented. "The Commissioners have been hand-picked," he says, "and we have selected them for their commitment to the Ontario Francophone community. The Chairman, Mr. Gérard Bertrand, was recruited in Ottawa, where he was Chief Legislative Counsel in the federal Department of Justice. He is also a former regional president of the Association canadienne française de l'Ontario, Ottawa-Carleton Section, a position he held for five years. Mr. Bertrand is an exceptional catch for the Government of Ontario, as indeed are all the other members of the Commission. We needed people of this calibre, because the Commission has a great deal of power, and Franco-Ontarians would have accepted no less."

Since the French Language Services Act was adopted, there has been much less talk within the government about official bilingualism for Ontario.

Once the Bill had passed second reading in the legislature, Mr. Grandmaître said, "I am convinced we have succeeded in providing solid guarantees for French-language rights and in designing a practical and realistic system to provide government services in French."

The **Ontario French Language Services Commission** set up shop a few months ago near Queen's Park in Toronto.

The Commission comprises five Commissioners, including the Chairman, Mr.Gérard Bertrand, who is a permanent employee of the agency. The Commission's mandate is to ensure that, by November 18, 1989, the Government of Ontario is capable of meeting its legal obligation to provide services in French to the general public.

By the end of the summer, all government departments, secretariats and Crown corporations concerned were expected to submit to the Commission a schedule for implementing the French Language Services Act in their respective areas. The Commission intends to discuss those schedules with the managers concerned to make any necessary recommendations and to give the green light for their implementation.

Michael Goldbloom

Lindsay Crysler

What does Michael Goldbloom, the retiring president of Alliance Québec, see as the advantages and disadvantages flowing from Meech Lake?

Michael Goldbloom was back in his law office. He had not been there recently. Intensive participation in Canada's language debates over the past five years has kept him away from his job.

After three years as vice-president and two as president of Alliance Québec — often described in the media as "the English-language lobby group" — he had passed the gavel to other hands the previous weekend. Now, surely, he could settle down to his practice of labour law in the Montreal firm of Martineau Walker.

Meech Lake and minorities

The day before this interview the country's first ministers had emerged from a marathon

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Lindsay Crysler is director of the Department of Journalism at Concordia University in Montreal.

bargaining session to reach an agreement on amending the Constitution. Goldbloom has spent several hours of the night poring over the carefully-crafted paragraphs.

Goldbloom's quiet, open friendliness does not mask his concern, nor some disappointment. "One has to be pleased that Quebec is in," he says. "To have failed after the Meech Lake accord would have been disastrous." But, "it does not go as far as is required to protect linguistic minorities."

Then, in his typically moderate tone, he adds: "Potentially, it could do so — *if* Quebec plays the role of advocate. At Mont Gabriel [where the road to Meech Lake began for Quebecers a year ago], Rémillard [the province's minister for Canadian intergovernmental affairs] said Quebec wanted to work for the interests of Francophones outside Quebec. This," he says, indicating a heavily annotated copy of the new agreement on his desk, "does not meet the test."

He says it does not deal with the right of official language minority communities to control their own schools, nor with the need to remove the "where numbers warrant" criterion which limits the right to receive minority language instruction. It does not recognize that there are French communities in each province, a point which Mr. Goldbloom and the Alliance feel is extremely important. The amendment merely recognizes "the existence of French-speaking Canadians, centred in Quebec but also present elsewhere in Canada."

Another problem, indeed, perhaps *the* problem for members of the constituency for which he has laboured for 10 years, is that the amendment commits all governments to "preserve" duality in Canada, "but only Quebec," he says with some animation, "will preserve and promote that which makes it distinct....The role of Parliament in protecting minorities seems to be eroded — they could have done better for minorities." However, Mr. Goldbloom says the new amendment "is saying that Quebec's distinctiveness is not French alone — that is positive."

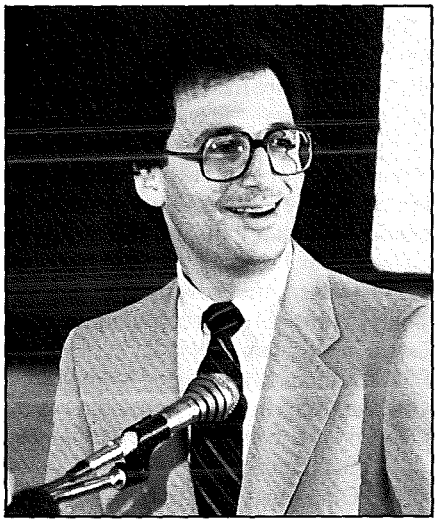
Individual rights

"There is one overriding problem," he continues, "and I don't want to be paranoid about this — I hope it will work out all right. They were careful to provide safeguards for government powers, the spending power, for instance, but they left out fundamental democratic rights, so the Charter of Rights is affected... maybe. We asked 'Don't leave out the rights of individuals.' Do the Charter rights of Canadians vary, according to who they are? If the answer is 'yes', that is not fair. I am not saying that the sky is falling, [but] we can protect the distinctiveness of Quebec *and* protect minority rights."

Mr. Goldbloom believes that limitations on rights did not begin at Meech Lake. "We have to concede that the problems began with the 'notwithstanding clause' in the 1982 Constitution. It should have been dropped this time. Otherwise, at any time, by any government, basic fundamental rights can be abrogated. It makes nonsense of the Charter."

Alliance Québec

Michael Goldbloom has spent much of his adult life at, or near, the forefront of Quebec's linguistic/cultural battles. He was there in 1977 when several disparate groups



Michael Goldbloom

and institutions — all claiming to speak for the English community — appeared separately before the National Assembly committee studying the Parti Québécois' proposal which became Bill 101.

As he recalled in his farewell address to members of Alliance Québec: "No two briefs were the same, and the English-speaking community paid a serious price for its inability to generate and present a consensus. Camille Laurin was given all the latitude he needed to demean and dismiss the concerns of our community."

It was that experience which drove him and a few other young Quebec Anglophones to organize Alliance Québec, determined it would speak for a whole community in all its diversity.

He is confident this community has now passed the test. As president, he was always "conscious of speaking for our chapters and the institutions — whether the teachers' union or Centaur Theatre." The battles of recent years, particularly that for the preservation of English-language social service institutions, and the right to such services in English, "was the most concerted effort ever made by the English community in Quebec."

"It's rare there are clear victories. You never win one hundred per cent. But when was the last time a Quebec government passed legislation guaranteeing rights for Anglophones?"

Sign language

Mr. Goldbloom leaves some pieces of unfinished business. Chief among them is the awaited decision of the Supreme Court of Canada on Quebec's language of signs legislation. He is especially concerned that in appealing the Quebec Court of Appeal decision that it could not prohibit languages other than French on signs, the Quebec government relied not on technical legal reasons, but "on the argument that language rights are of lesser importance than other fundamental rights and therefore enjoy a lesser protection."

He becomes agitated talking of the current government's conduct on the sign legislation. He says the government promised changes during an election campaign but has backpedalled ever since. He uses words like "totally unacceptable" and "reprehensible".

Nevertheless, Michael Goldbloom preserves a balanced view: "English on commercial signs is not crucial to the survival of English in the province. But it is a very strong symbol of the kind of society it will be. I am confident the government will have the good sense to do what is right — and what Quebecers say is fair."

The past, the future

Goldbloom is proud of the fact that the Alliance has "acted consistently with its rhetoric across the country." He recalls "writing to Don Getty when Léo Piquette had his problems, or going to Manitoba two years ago when they were having their difficulties over language, or intervening in the Ontario debate over minority-language schools."

He is happy that "the Charter...has given the linguistic minorities a common ground of principle. There are some fundamental values that the English of Quebec and the French outside Quebec share. Minorities are an emerging force in the country."

No doubt if the coalition needs a hand in the foreseeable future, Michael Goldbloom would answer the call. "It's been a privilege to help shape, even in a small way, our society. It's been an intensive issue." Nevertheless, he would prefer now to step back a bit and practise some labour law.

"It would still interest me to play a role of some kind," but it won't necessarily be in politics.

Mr. Goldbloom is essentially a quiet, private person. "Public exposure has not been a drug," he says.

Bill 101: Ten Years Later

Two observers of the political scene in Quebec — Hal Winter, a former reporter for the Montreal* Star *and* The Gazette*, and Gilles Lesage, parliamentary correspondent for Montreal's* Le Devoir *in Quebec City — look back at 10 years of Bill 101.

Where the Wizards Went Wrong

Bill 101 has brought surprising success in areas where disaster had been predicted.

Hal Winter

Looking at life in Quebec as the Charter of the French Language celebrates its 10th birthday, a striking paradox emerges: where disaster had been foretold, it has brought surprising success; but it has failed sadly in those areas where it promised salvation.

Over the months of bitter debate before the legislation was adopted in August 1977, dire warnings were our daily fare. A massive exodus of capital, jobs and people was predicted...and with its economy crippled, Quebec would separate into the isolation of a North American cultural ghetto. Unmoved, the sponsors of the Bill reiterated that, come what may, the solemn first duty of the government must be to protect a threatened birthright, to ensure survival and development for French language and culture.

Today — after a full decade under the stringencies of the language law — Quebec is thriving. The economy is strong and growth is good. The future is packed with promise for a dynamic new breed of bilingual, internationally-oriented entrepreneurs. Far from precipitating the province into separation, substantial evidence suggests the existence of the Bill was a powerful factor for the victory of the federalists in the 1980 referendum.

The groundwork for the emergence of today's Francophone business leadership was laid by the Quiet Revolution of the Sixties.

On the debit side, however, apart from a cosmetic facelift for Montreal — and some dubious statistical gains — the basic language situation is little improved. Indeed, the savants seem united in deploring a decline in quality. There has been no real resurgence of pride in that cultural heritage the Charter was designed to enhance for the benefit of future generations.

Inevitably, of course, a question must arise about the extent to which this specific language legislation at a given moment of Quebec's history can be credited with the social peace, economic prosperity and political stability the province enjoys today. The answer is complex, involving a number of contributory factors spanning the past quarter century.

The Quiet Revolution

The original groundwork for the emergence of today's fresh wave of Francophone business leadership was laid by the Quiet Revolution government of Jean Lesage in the early Sixties. One of the architects of success was Quebec's first education minister — Paul Gérin-Lajoie — whose reforms brought schooling into line with the technological and management requirements of twentieth-century North America. At the same time, a new spirit of business and administrative competence was born.

Lesage, however, could not have introduced a Bill 101 without damaging his credibility on international money markets to the point where financing of economic development would have been ruinously costly. Instead, his team prepared for the future with the setting up of the Caisse de dépôt et placement (Quebec's powerful deposit and investment institution) as a buffer against the bond market dictates. Meanwhile, this same era saw the language issue take the centre stage with the formation of the federal Bilingualism and Biculturalism Commission in 1963 and of Quebec's own Gendron Commission in 1968, after a language-based riot in the Montreal suburb of Saint-Léonard.

At the same time, passions were further inflamed when, in an attempt to avoid Saint-Léonard-type incidents, the Union Nationale government of Jean-Jacques Bertrand brought in Quebec's first language legislation — Bill 63. It purported to guarantee all language minorities access to English schools across Quebec. This was interpreted by an increasingly incensed French-speaking population both as an insult and a betrayal. Thus the scene was set for the social upheavals of the early Seventies.

The October Crisis

The new Bourassa government was barely in power when it faced the October Crisis of 1970. The province was shaken by the kidnapping of a British Trade Representative and by the murder of Labour Minister Pierre Laporte. Ottawa invoked the War Measures Act. Armed soldiers patrolled streets in Montreal. There were countless arbitrary arrests. Stunned Quebecers listened while a radio station broadcast a revolutionary manifesto from the Front de Libération du Québec. Trade unions got in the act with calls for the overthrow of the established system and the setting up of a new order. There was talk of establishing a "parallel government" and the province seemed headed for chaos.

What was behind all this unrest? Well, as the B and B Report and similar studies made abundantly clear, French-speaking Canadians were discriminated against for one basic reason: they spoke a language different from that of the majority. Though a host of other social and economic reasons were invoked for the wave of disturbances, it was apparent that everything revolved around this fundamental problem of language-based inequity.

Political solutions

Clearly, a solution to the language problem had to be political. Premier Bourassa intended to achieve this with Bill 22, a language law almost as sweeping as Bill 101. But, in the climate of the times, it was too little too late. The drive of discontent had already been channelled into a well-organized Parti Québécois. The rest ▶

of Mr. Bourassa's support, which came from Anglophones representing some 20 per cent of the electorate, deserted en masse. Thus a combination of widespread language-based alienation and an ill-timed language law aimed at correcting this brought René Lévesque to power in 1976.

For all its independence ideology, the Parti Québecois recognized where its real power base lay, so the very first measure of its mandate was Bill One (which later became Bill 101). Knowing that passage of effective language legislation might mean defeat in the independence referendum three years later, Premier René Lévesque was adamant. "We knew we were probably sawing off the branch we were sitting on," says former Parti Québécois Finance Minister Jacques Parizeau. "But Lévesque insisted that this highly emotional language question be settled first... so that when the referendum vote came, the people could make a calm, rational choice."

For those dedicated to independence, Bill 101 has worked only too well.

Dignity and opportunity

Bill 101 worked and worked only too well for those dedicated to independence. Most thoughtful observers today agree that once dignity and opportunity were restored — once the solid symbolism of the official language was in place — there would no longer be much reason to seek political sovereignty. Subconsciously, it was recognition that the only real difference between Quebecers and other North Americans was language. If that could be secured by their own existing government, why cut other profitable ties?

Thus, at one stroke, the threat of separatism was headed off and social peace restored, paving the way for economic revival under the new Bourassa administration. "We've matured...achieved a genuine rapprochement," says Energy Minister John Ciaccia, "and the result is that the next decade belongs to Quebec." No one in the present government, therefore, wants to upset things with any real change to the existing language law. Cultural Affairs Minister Lise Bacon, nominally responsible in this field, would rather talk about the coming meeting of *la Francophonie* in Quebec City. Even traditional English education and business institutions do not really want a return to former days.

At McGill University's Education Faculty, Professor Morton Bain is enthusiastic about the changes in student quality wrought by Bill 101. Exposure to French, especially in immersion courses, has brought about a "regeneration," he says, "and because of their sharpened minds, their special skills, our graduates are now in demand all across Canada."

The business world

English-language businessmen have also discovered the benefits of operating in a bilingual world. Those who could not adapt fled Quebec after the language law, taking along a number of jobs and special skills. "But those who survived," explains Montreal Board of Trade Vice-President Alex Harper, "have acquired a new self-confidence, a resiliency and ability to deal with other-language situations elsewhere." Even if Bill 101 were to be abolished tomorrow, he adds, the English business world in Montreal would keep on operating exactly as it does today.

In the French-speaking business community, results have been spectacular. The exodus of English management cleared the way for a rapid rise to the top of a whole new generation of MBAs who were formerly frustrated by the upper layers of established tradition. Where jobs and skills disappeared, they created new ones. The threatened investment boycott failed to materialize.

The quality of language

On the downside, this leaves the quality-of-language question which preoccupied Gérin-Lajoie two decades earlier as a lingering headache for his successor, Education Minister Claude Ryan. Bill 101 has not succeeded in making young French-speaking Quebecers speak or write with more clarity or precision. Nor does it appear to have improved the quality of instruction. There are more students of "ethnic" origin enrolled in French schools, of course, but too many of these opt for English at the college level, as the law permits. Even if more and more immigrant children are forced through the system, will this amount to preservation of language and culture? The average number of children in a Quebec family is today down to 1.4 — below the 1.7 Canadian average and far from the 2.1 average required to maintain existing population levels. Can Quebec's cultural heritage be carried on by relying on an influx of immigrant generations with no traditional ties to the language and who switch to English at every opportunity?

These are questions that no language legislation can resolve. Thus the failure of the Charter in such fields was preordained. Bill 101's spectacular, if unplanned, success in other areas, however, brings to mind the lines of Robert Browning: "For thence, — a paradox which comforts while it mocks, — shall life succeed in that it seems to fail...."

A Safety Net

Gilles Lesage

A decade after adoption, whole sections of the Charter of the French Language have been reduced to pulp. What little remains must be protected.

It was a long, hot summer — the summer of 1977. As that summer came to a close, the National Assembly passed the Parti Québécois' Bill One (Bill 101), known rather grandly as the Charter of the French Language. This major legislative Act reflected the anxiety of Francophone Quebecers about the future of their language: their intense need for cultural security and their desire for collective self-expression without excluding freedom or openness to others.

Uneasiness then and now

It was René Lévesque — a man who symbolized Quebec's frustrations and tensions — who, better perhaps than anyone else, expressed this uneasiness. He deplored the coercive and constricting aspects of the Parti Québécois' *pièce de résistance* — especially with respect to language of education, because the law emphasized the majority's collective aspirations rather than individual freedom. A number of people shared his concern and hoped that the goverment would be in a position to loosen the coercive screws after a few years.

Their expectations were fulfilled in part in December 1983. By then responsibility in the matter had passed from Camille Laurin, father of ethnocentric psychoanalysis in Quebec, to Gérald Godin, journalist and poet. More sensitive to minority complaints and less suspicious of the contribution of religious communities, Mr. Godin presided over the removal of a certain number of "irritants", such as obligatory bilingualism, which were often of particular concern to Anglophone Quebecers.

In spite of these welcome changes, tensions and suspicions remained. On the one hand, the pressure of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and various court decisions was reducing whole sections of the Charter of the French Language to pulp. On the other, nostalgic partisans of freedom at any price seemed

determined not to rest until they had succeeded in re-establishing the old order — even to the point of bringing back the infamous Bill 63.

Francophones, exhausted by continual struggles, had become less vigilant. They were also getting tired of the many restrictions — not only linguistic ones — imposed by a quasi-State of Quebec whose bureaucratic tentacles were reaching farther and farther.

Trying to tango

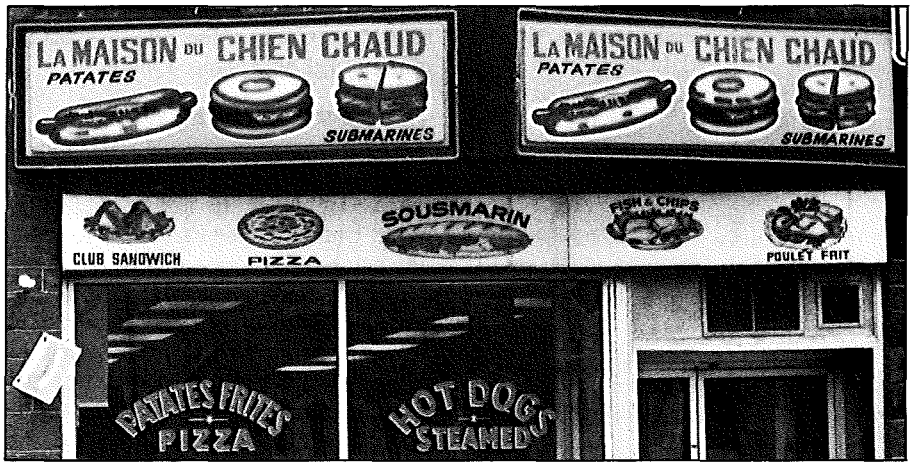
Back from his long voluntary "exile", Robert Bourassa was well aware of this general disenchantment, which related not only to the pomp and vanity of the Parti Québécois but also to its best work — such as Bill 101, or what was left of it. The Liberal leader understood the situation so well that he became all things to all people. He promised Francophones he would maintain the essence of the Bill and he hinted to Anglophones — who had rejected him largely because of the adoption of Bill 22 in 1974 — that he would tone it down. He was believed by everyone, including those Quebecers who spoke other languages and found themselves, as usual, shunted aside by both groups.

Mr. Bourassa was trying to square the circle. As a result, his return to power was marked, throughout 1986, by ambiguity. He hesitated over enforcement or non-enforcement, over probes, tests and soundings. As he told radio host Pierre Bourgault, "It's a hell of a problem."

Awakened from their lethargy by cultural lightning rods for the collective consciousness such as Gaston Miron and Yves Beauchemin, Francophones began quietly repeating: "Don't touch Bill 101!" Meanwhile, Alliance Québec and all those who had been champing at the bit for 10 years pressed the government to keep its promises.

These last were somewhat appeased in December 1986 by Bill 142, which guaranteed Anglophones the right to health and social services in English. But, having underestimated the strength of an opposition fuelled by the Parti Québécois in the National Assembly, the government was forced to put Bill 140, which modified the linguistic structures created by Bill 101, on the back burner. The proposed reforms were modest enough and probably useful, if only to check bureaucratic proliferation.

More experienced this time, Mr. Bourassa needed no second warning. To head off the impending crisis, he decreed "social peace" and ordered his ministers to keep it. And, in spite of what he had said during the year, the Court of Appeal's judgment forbidding unilingual French public signs did not stir him to action. He would wait for the ultimate verdict, that of the Supreme Court, while hoping that time would do its work — that Quebecers would finally recognize the great and soothing virtues of his Bill 22, the law that had made French the official language of Quebec (or so its title said) while still recognizing the usage of two languages. The rest could be worked out: all sorts of heaven-sent compromises were possible. It was to be conciliation and persuasion instead of coercion and constraint, discreet surveillance rather than linguistic policing.



Bilingual signage

Mindful of those sounding the alarm — some from within his own caucus — and of others proclaiming the overriding importance of individual rights, Mr. Bourassa seeks "consensus" in the form of unanimity. But it is impossible to attain it. A third of the cabinet is now busy in committees and subcommittees trying to square the circle. Ministers are racking their brains to come up with linguistic amendments in the fall.

Closely-watched lives

Certainly, Quebec has changed a great deal in 20 years. Francophone nerves are not so highly strung — but the linguistic issue is still a very sensitive one, especially in the Montreal metropolitan area, where it really counts. A general lethargy may seem to justify the devastating title of a documentary on the 1980 referendum: "Materialism and Indifference". But, in spite of undeniable progress and greater confidence in their future options, Francophones feel all too painfully the precariousness of their situation.

They are French-speaking North Americans and North American they intend to remain — but they are different and more watchful. They remember what has happened in Louisiana. Yes, it is true that the quality of written and spoken French should be improved, especially in educational institutions and in the media. No form of protection and promotion can be discounted. It is better to convince than to triumph by force. But the legislative arm is not superfluous. Quite the contrary. French-speaking North Americans, no matter how tolerant and conciliatory they are, know that they constitute a mere two per cent of the total population, and that this percentage is likely to diminish by the turn of the century. This means they are caught between the devil and an Anglophone sea.

Confidence conceals a hint of distress. The time has not come for relaxation. Quebecers do not reject openness or respect for cultural differences, but they want to experience this diversity *in French*. Walking the tightrope is dangerous, but it is also necessary and rewarding. In a sense, Quebecers have shifted from an ethnocentrism to a pluristic point of view. But their basic quest has not changed. It is a quest which, without bravado or stubbornness, excludes absolute freedom of choice.

The majority of Quebecers recognize federal responsibilities and respect the competence of judges. But orientations and outlines, parameters and boundaries must first be set by the elected representatives of the people — above all, by those in the National Assembly of Quebec.

Laws are not untouchable. Corrections, adjustments, adaptations are periodically desirable and even necessary. But dealing with the language question calls for extreme caution. Like Solange Chaput-Rolland (*Le Devoir*, 28 February 1987), I believe Bill 101 must stay in force for five more years. It has cost all Quebecers dearly; it should not be an electoral issue. It expresses the soul of Quebecers, who are as attached to justice as are their fellow Canadians elsewhere.

Do we have to fall back from Bill 101 to Bill 22 and then plunge into a legislative void?

No. Far better to keep our eyes fixed ahead on what matters most.

FFHQ

The FFHQ celebrated its 12th birthday this year by holding its annual general meeting in Quebec for the first time. The choice was one of several gestures which made it clear that the Association, under the dynamic leadership of a new president described by journalist Lise Bissonnette as "young and talkative", is looking to strengthen its ties with the province.

The task is not easy. FFHQ president Yvon Fontaine, an Acadian lawyer, is well aware that the Association has often had to navigate in cross-currents, some of them generated by the Quebec government. Nevertheless, the FFHQ is setting up an office in Quebec City and is trying to establish links by concentrating on non-divisive issues such as cultural and scientific exchange and business connections.

Fontaine is firm that he will not be dragged into an alliance with forces outside Quebec which oppose the new constitutional agreement. "The Toronto opponents of the accord are trying to lure us into participating in their coalition," he said, "but they are false friends."

They are "false friends" because the FFHQ applauds the recognition given Quebec as a distinct society in the new constitutional agreement. The FFHQ sees this as a belated but extremely welcome acknowledgement of an important fact — one which is fundamental to the survival of French culture in North America. "We will never want to oppose Quebec on this issue. We nevertheless feel cornered and hostages to both sides," added Fontaine. Events at this year's general meeting did little to dispel this sensation.

The waters of the Meech Lake accord began to look murky when Léo Piquette found he was not allowed to use French in the Alberta legislature. Instead of official support from Quebec, Mr. Piquette received only unofficial sympathy. This was not what Mr. Fontaine had expected.

He had heard Quebec Intergovernmental Affairs Minister, Gil Rémillard, tell the FFHQ general meeting, "In addition to the principle of duality, we in Quebec obtained a commitment [at the Meech Lake discussions] for legislative assemblies to protect their minorities."

By insisting on stronger ties with Quebec, by insisting on a rapprochement and refusing siren calls from a Toronto group, Fontaine is taking an independent and positive approach to a longstanding challenge.

L'affaire Piquette

Hazel Strouts

On April 7, 1987, Léo Piquette, NDP MLA for the Alberta riding of Athabasca-Lac la Biche, and resident of the small Francophone town of Plamondon, stood in the Legislature to ask a question in French.

That question was heard across the country and even across the Atlantic.

Mr. Piquette's question was about French-language schooling in Alberta. He had cleared it beforehand with Nancy Betkowski, Minister of Education and one of two bilingual members of Premier Don Getty's cabinet. She had agreed to answer in French.

The speaker stops a question

But the Speaker, David Carter, stopped Mr. Piquette from using his mother tongue, which is also one of Canada's official languages. Mr. Carter then referred the issue to a legislative committee.

The Globe and Mail, Toronto

Alberta bound

The advice of that Committee is that any member of the Alberta Legislature has the privilege, but not the right, to use any language when asking a question, provided that it is cleared beforehand with the Speaker and that the member provides translations. Commenting, Premier Getty is quoted as saying that though the Canadian Constitution gives French special recognition, the Legislature does not have to treat French any differently from Cree or Ukrainian.

As if this were not enough of a shock to members of one of the country's official language groups, the Committee also called on Mr. Piquette to apologize for showing insufficient respect for the authority of the Speaker.

Asked to comment on this incident, the Commissioner of Official Languages said that if French can be treated the same as any language other than English, what was the significance of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which the Alberta premier signed and which recognizes English and French as Canada's two official languages.

The Piquette Affair has caused a furore. One of the most interesting results is that Mr. Piquette's support comes not only from French-speaking sources, but from almost all the leading English-language media. He is also supported by his counterparts in Quebec, the English-speaking minority led by Alliance Québec.

The French fact in the West

Another notable result of the Piquette Affair is the awakening of Canada's English-language press to the French fact in the West. Until now, the Prairies were generally perceived as a vast area where almost everybody spoke English, though perhaps with a Ukrainian or a German accent. Now, Canadians have discovered that this is not the case. They have learnt that although only five per cent of the Alberta population may be French-speaking, this five per cent is concentrated in some 40-odd villages where daily life is lived in French.

The experts argue

The constitutional experts and the lawyers continue to argue. Does an MLA have or not have the right to speak in either of Canada's official languages in Alberta, or indeed in any of the other provinces which do not explicitly permit French to be spoken (British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland)?

The Alberta Legislature Committee summoned five witnesses to discuss the issue. All but one gave evidence which favoured Mr.Piquette's position. An argument put forward by witnesses, including former Senator Eugene Forsey and University of Alberta professor Ken Munro, supported Mr. Piquette by referring to the North-West Territories Act and the Alberta Act, which govern legislative proceedings in Alberta.

The North-West Territories Act, 1890, they testified, is still in force in Alberta. It was never repealed. This Act stipulates that the Territorial Legislature, its laws, courts and day-to-day legislative journals should all be bilingual.

The Alberta Act, passed in 1905 when Alberta became a province, did nothing to alter the language provisions of the earlier Act.

Meech Lake and the Minorities

Regardless of its final disposition, the Meech Lake constitutional accord has been subject to some criticisms from the two principal minority official language organizations in Canada, the Federation of Francophones outside Quebec (FFHQ) and Alliance Québec.

While expressing "relative satisfaction" with the terms of the agreement, the FFHQ said in a June statement that linguistic duality in Canada cannot be defined in terms of "a French-Quebec/English-Canada axis." Rather, the Federation said, it should be defined "according to an axis founded on the basic equality of the Francophone and Anglophone societies of Canada." Understood in this fashion, "Canadian duality is in no way opposed to the aspirations of Quebec. It completes and enriches it."

Specifically, the FFHQ objected to the term "not limited" to describe the situation of the French-speaking minority outside Quebec, preferring the word "present", which it considers less restrictive. The group also called for an explicit statement that both Parliament and the provincial legislatures have a duty to promote Canadian duality as well as simply to protect it.

Alliance Québec suggested the wording of the agreement should be made clearer in order to emphasize the historical presence of both English- and French-speaking minorities throughout Canada. With reference to English-speaking Quebecers, AQ said: "We are not an extension or intrusion of English Canada into Quebec. We are an integral, historic component of Quebec society. We are Quebecers, and this is our home."

Referring to the distinctiveness of Quebec society, the Alliance suggested that "part of what is truly unique and special to Quebec is the unfolding of cultural and linguistic diversity within a predominantly French-speaking society." The goal should not be a melting pot, the Alliance said.

There was agreement between the two minority groupings on the need to "promote" as well as to "protect" Canadian duality. Alliance Québec also asked for the inclusion of a final clause to the new Constitution Act: "Nothing herein shall derogate from any rights or freedoms accorded by or under the Constitution of Canada."

States General: Manitoba

"States General" is a term rich in historical meaning in France where, among other things, it conjures up scenes at the beginning of the 1789 Revolution. In French-speaking Canada, the symbolism is not quite so dramatic, but it does signify a meeting that is out of the ordinary.

The States General of French-speaking Manitoba will take place in Saint Boniface in March 1988. It will be an extraordinary meeting of an extraordinary people. Franco-Manitobans have fought through years of oppression and indifference to maintain their language, their identity and their dignity. They see the 1988 meeting as an important step in a struggle which appears to be approaching a successful conclusion.

There is little doubt that the Francophone community of Manitoba is undergoing a swift and profound change. From the constitutional and legal standpoint, it has made substantial progress in the past few years. On the institutional side, it has created, over the last 15 years, an important and dynamic infrastructure. And, in professional and financial terms, it is evolving rapidly.

There have been several factors which have helped to improve the position of Franco-Manitobans. Among them have been the tenacity and hard work of the leadership of the community. Outside factors include changes in the national mood. There is no doubt that the Official Languages Act of 1969 greatly improved the situation of Franco-Manitobans as well as that of members of other Francophone communities outside Quebec.

Now that Franco-Manitobans have finally started to reverse the long trend towards the abandonment of their language and culture, something else is happening. English-speaking Manitobans are discovering the advantages of learning French. The number of Manitobans whose mother tongue is English and who now say they are bilingual increased by 50 per cent between 1971 and 1981, to 29,000. Tens of thousands of Anglophones have also discovered in French immersion the ideal way of ensuring the bilingualism of their children.

This phenomenon of immersion, as well as that of the "bilingualisation" of the English-speaking population in general, poses a challenge to the Franco-Manitoban community for the 1990s and beyond. The thousands of Anglophone students now registered in French schools will, in the next 15 or 20 years, form a new élite which might gravitate towards the French institutions of Manitoba. Those whose mother tongue is French will have no choice but to mix with their bilingual, but Anglophone, compatriots. The probable consequences for the Franco-Manitoban community, until now relatively homogeneous and inward-looking, merits special consideration.

The Franco-Manitoban community has every reason to congratulate itself on the legal, constitutional and institutional progress it has made over the last two decades. It can also rejoice at the quite dramatic and positive gains it has made in terms of jobs and revenue. As the year 2000 approaches, the French-speaking community of Manitoba continues to form a dynamic society, despite a century of serious difficulties. In order to fulfil itself in a society in constant change, Francophone Manitoba must adapt itself to new conditions and assure itself a certain level of control over its future.

That, as Franco-Manitobans see it, is the challenge and the opportunity they will be facing at the 1988 States General.

Franco-Columbians

The 1987 Congress of British Columbia Francophones was attended by representatives of 32 local and regional associations.

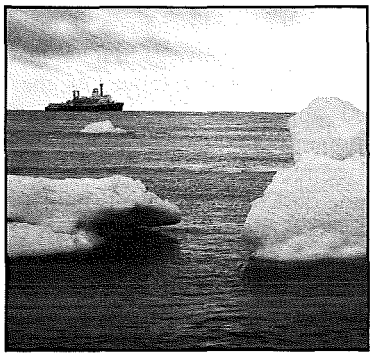
The theme was "Francophones in the year 2000" and participants reaffirmed their commitment to a very beautiful part of Canada and their determination to maintain their presence and to enlarge their community by the end of the century.

The Franco-Columbian community of some 48,000 people has access to two French-language schools, one in Vancouver, one in Victoria, and a third will open in North Vancouver this fall. It also has four community centres, in Powell River, Kelowna, Nanaimo and Prince George.

Representatives inspected a model of the community centre planned for Vancouver, on 16th Avenue in the parish of Saint-Sacrement, where the LeNormand and LaVérendrye apartment complexes already bear witness to a French influence.

Challenges

Basing his plea on the 1982 **Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms,** Daniel St-Jean has taken his case against the Yukon Territory's Automotive Vehicle Act before the British Columbia Court of Appeals, which acts as an appeals tribunal for the Yukon Supreme Court. The case, which goes back to 1983, involves a unilingual English ticket which, Mr. St-Jean asserts, should also be in French.



Mike Van Duffelen

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Section XIV(1) of the Criminal Code, which guarantees a trial before a judge or judge and jury who understand the official language of the person accused, has been proclaimed in effect in New Brunswick, Ontario, Manitoba, the Northwest Territories, the Yukon and, most recently, in Prince Edward Island. Justice Minister Ray Hnatyshyn announced last April that Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia would soon join the list.

Did You Know?

- There are still some French-speaking British Columbians without access to Radio-Canada's French-language television service?
- All the guides at Expo 86's Canadian Pavilion in Vancouver were bilingual?
- According to the 1981 census the assimilation rate of the Fransaskois was 58 per cent?
- The Franco-Manitoban Cultural Centre is a Crown corporation?
- Franco-Manitobans have created more than 30 French-language groups and institutions since 1975?

Immersion 1987

Susan Purdy

Bilingualism in Canada will be a success, but it needs continuing commitment at all educational levels.

For those interested in the official languages of Canada, 1987 has become an eventful year. Given the Meech Lake constitutional agreement and a proposed new Official Languages Act, it may be useful to reflect on the past and to consider the future.

The national association of Canadian Parents for French (CPF), which I represent, continues to grow by leaps and bounds, as does the immersion phenomenon that it parallels and reflects. What started as an experiment in St. Lambert, Quebec, has now spread to every corner of the country and influenced all levels of education from pre-school to university. It has become very clear that Canadians outside Quebec want to have their children learn French and that some are making a concerted effort to master the second language themselves. This tells me very clearly that the dream of a bilingual country, where English and French are equally at home, is not pie in the sky, but a reality in the making.

Part of the dream

But immersion is only part of this dream. The positive results achieved through this method of teaching have resulted in great pressure being placed on educators to come up with a more effective core French program so that more children can benefit from effective opportunities to learn.

Regardless of the results of improved core French, one can hardly foresee a time when immersion will not be required.

The most important component in any classroom is the teacher. A prerequisite of good language teachers is fluency in the language, and it is reasonable to expect that immersion graduates will be the best source of candidates for fluent language teachers in the English school system in the future. Experience, particularly in the western provinces, has shown that imported first language teachers are not always successful. English-speaking communities lack social support networks for these teachers, who generally stay for only a limited time. Immersion graduates appear to be the answer to this sort of problem.

I do not say that the immersion program is perfect. Children starting in primary or elementary school achieve a high level of fluency by grade six with generally good proficiency in both official languages. Unfortunately, very often this proficiency is not maintained because the amount of time spent working in French decreases very significantly in the higher grades. Late immersion students also achieve very good levels of fluency, but they too are confronted by the lack of French at the secondary level. The political reality in high schools has meant that there has been little of the flexibility required at the secondary level to introduce a program that generally requires new staff fluent in French.

Masterfile

Immersion students

Administrators have been faced with difficult situations and too often the solutions that are possible have not been in the best interests of students. Classroom situations exist at the secondary level in which students are more fluent than the teacher in front of them. It is no wonder, given these types of situations and very limited choices in subject matter, that immersion students opt out of French at the high school level.

The problems within the system have meant that maintenance and continued development of good French skills acquired at lower levels are very difficult when the time studying in French is limited. As well, success at the secondary level depends a great deal on the motivation of the administrators and the number of students involved. The challenge in the next decade will be at the secondary level.

Universities, for their part, are tackling the problem quite well. There seems to have been little reluctance to recognize the needs of the new French immersion students. Many institutions are scrambling to see that good programs are in place for immersion graduates. CPF likes to think that it has played an important role in alerting our higher educational establishments to the needs of their future students.

Susan Purdy, national president of Canadian Parents for French, lives in Fredericton.

The effect of immersion on Canadian education has been striking in two ways: it has allowed the public school to offer the student an additional skill and it has broadened the horizons of our children beyond their communities.

The bilingual dream

To those who say the bilingual dream has failed, I reply: Open your eyes and look around. English-speaking Canadians don't have wooden tongues. Given the opportunity, they can learn languages as well as anyone else in the world. The success of immersion, especially where it has the support of administrations, is wonderful!

Bilingualism in Canada will be a success, but it will need continued commitment at all levels. When young Canadians (40 years old or under) were asked if bilingualism would work in Canada, the polls showed that their overwhelming response was "Yes". Unfortunately, many of our politicians and educational leaders fall outside this age group, and they do not always share the same enlightened view of Canada. Often they cling to the past, desperately trying to turn the clock back to an English-only society. We must work tirelessly to convince these people that young Canadians have a different vision of their country.

Values and individuals

The Meech Lake agreement has drawn attention to the French fact outside Quebec. Our elected politicians have been made aware that there is increasing support for the French language and culture as a part of the Canadian mosaic that is not limited to Quebec. The amendments to the Official Languages Act recognize this fact.

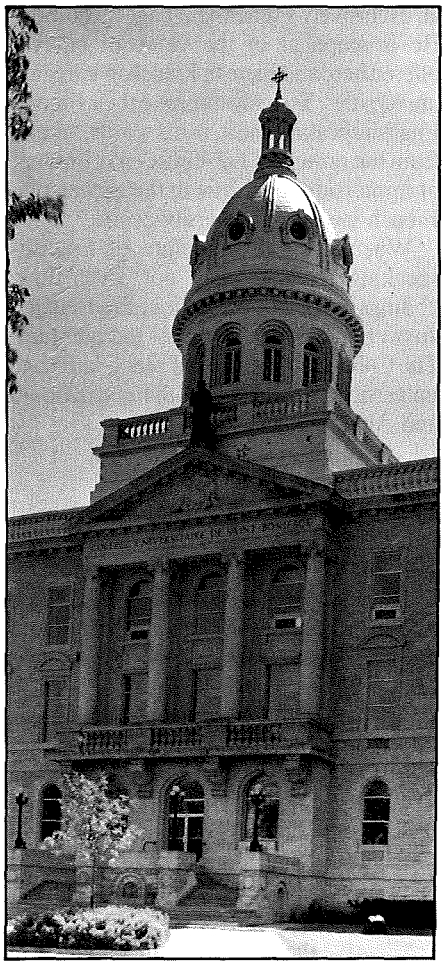
Canada is not just a northern extension of the United States. It is a unique community with a heritage of two founding nations, English and French, blended with the other cultures of the world. There is space for everyone in Canada, but there is neither room nor necessity for an introverted educational system that teaches children only one language and one culture. If we want young Canadians to grow up as enlightened and productive citizens of this country and the world, the time to start is now, and the easiest and best way to start is by learning a second language.

Politicians come and go. There are some great men and great women among them, but I suggest that what makes a country great is not just its individuals but its values as well — values such as tolerance and understanding. The challenge for all of us in the next decade will be to ensure that large numbers of Canadian children have the right and the opportunity to broaden their horizons by learning their second official language.

A Symbol of Leadership

Jean-Paul Molgat, with Thérèse Aquin

With quiet enthusiasm, Rector Paul Ruest traces the evolution and describes the future direction of the Collège de Saint-Boniface.



Collège de Saint-Boniface

For nearly 170 years students destined to become the leaders and defenders of Manitoba's French-speaking community have received their training and inspiration in the classrooms of the Collège de Saint-Boniface, the intellectual heart and soul of the French fact in that province.

Rector Paul Ruest described for ***Language and Society*** the Collège's position in today's French-speaking world and among the universities of Manitoba, as well as the role he intends it to play in relation to the Anglophone community. Dr. Ruest, who has a doctorate in education, has broad experience in the field. Prior to assuming his present duties in 1981, he had been a teacher, school principal and school board director. But his interest in the future of this institution flows from his roots as a Franco-Manitoban and his own years at the Collège, from which he graduated with a BA in 1967. His words reflect an intimate understanding of those who have been moulded

The community draws on the Collège and the Collège on the community.

by the Collège and recognize its fundamental importance: "The community draws on the Collège and the Collège on the community. In other words, they have a symbiotic relationship. Without support from the community, the Collège would not exist; and this support is willingly given because the Collège is the symbol of Franco-Manitobans' vitality and of their will to survive."

The standard-bearer for *la Francophonie*

The Collège receives continued support from an impressive number of its graduates, who are deeply committed to ensuring that the type of education it offers shall continue. They are found on its Board of Governors and on the various bodies set up to help it carry out its work. These same people, trained to fight the good fight even as they learned to appreciate Racine and Molière, are also active members of groups battling to preserve the French language and culture in Manitoba. In Paul Ruest's words: "This particular fact distinguishes them from the graduates of English schools, many of whom are to be found in the Rotary or Lions clubs. Our Collège instilled in many of its students the will to identify strongly with the Franco-Manitoban community." Throughout its history, the Collège and its students and graduates have manned the barricades every time a threat was posed to the French language.

Changes over time

Ever since its foundation by Mgr. Norbert Provencher in 1818, the Collège de Saint-Boniface has provided Manitoba with an annual supply of well-educated young people. From its beginnings as a small *collège classique* that taught, among other

▶

Jean-Paul Molgat is a journalist with St. Boniface's *La Liberté*.

things, Latin to young white and Métis boys of the Red River Colony, it was in turn run by the Oblates, the secular clergy, the Jesuits and, finally, lay teachers. In 1969 it became one of Manitoba's four university centres, and to this day it is the only independent French-language post-secondary institution in Western Canada.

In 1877, without abandoning its unique status, it and two English colleges together founded the University of Manitoba. To Mgr. Alexandre Taché, the Bishop of Saint-Boniface, one of its founders, the sole purpose of this university (based on the University of London system) was to award degrees. Only later did it become involved in teaching and assume a role parallel to that of the Collège. The two institutions still have a special relationship. The University of Manitoba validates the Collège's degrees by recognizing it as an affiliate, and gives its Rector the right to sit on its Board of Governors.

As Paul Ruest notes, "the term 'collège' should be taken in the American sense: an institution of higher learning equal to a university." In other words, the Collège de Saint-Boniface is as much a "university centre" as the University of Manitoba itself.

The curriculum

Until 1972 the Collège de Saint-Boniface restricted itself to offering programs leading to a BA or B.Sc. It then entered a period of growth, creating a teaching institute designed to serve Canada's West and North. This institute became its Faculty of Education and, along with the Arts and Sciences faculties, formed its "university sector". This large sector has an enrolment of some 600 students and includes programs leading to a master's degree in education and a diploma in translation. It also trains elementary and secondary teachers and specialists in the teaching of French as a mother tongue and as a second language. In recent years it has added a technical (community studies) sector and an adult education department. The community studies program, which has an enrolment of approximately 100 students, offers diplomas in bilingual secretarial skills, business administration, pre-school education and computer science. The adult education sector has over 1,500 students enrolled in a wide variety of courses. The majority of students in these three sectors are women.

A new challenge

The French immersion phenomenon has presented the Collège with a somewhat unexpected challenge. Without abandoning its principal goal, which is to train and educate future leaders of the Francophone community, it has gradually opened its doors to Anglophones capable of continuing their studies in French. Today one in seven of its students is Anglophone, most of them graduates of immersion programs.

According to Paul Ruest, the Collège "is the very best place possible for Anglophones wishing to continue to study French and live the unique experience of daily contact with a minority." With quiet enthusiasm, he outlines the benefits they can draw from an exclusively French-language institution. He is sceptical of the value of courses offered here and there in French in bilingual universities. To truly improve their French English speakers must, in his words, "move from the protected hot-house environment of immersion to mature in the garden of a French-language university centre."

When asked if an influx of English-speaking students may not, over time, "bilingualize" the institution, the Rector's answer is categoric: "Out of the question! The Collège will remain a French-language university centre serving both Francophones and Anglophones."

Know thyself

Three years ago the Collège decided to get involved in ethnology studies and founded a research centre on Francophone minorities in Canada. Was this decision based on a desire to continue the humanistic tradition that had existed from the Collège's foundation — the "know thyself" of Socrates — or was it based on curiosity about what makes society tick? The centre specializes in issues relating to the Franco-Manitoban minority but takes an interest in similar research conducted at the universities of Ottawa and Moncton. To quote the Rector: "This subject lends itself to interdisciplinary studies."

Clearly, the Collège Saint-Boniface is consolidating its position in the university world while remaining faithful to its long-standing credo: to support and further the French fact in Manitoba.

Challenges

An evaluation report on the first 17 years of the **Official Languages in Education Program,** begun by the Secretary of State Department in 1970, has called for increased funding for the program and new efforts to deal with the needs still unmet in both minority language education and second-language instruction across the country. The program involves an annual federal disbursement of about $200 million to the provinces.

The report, prepared by Peat, Marwick and Partners, was released in May. It had high praise for the achievements of the program in improving the availability and the quality of minority education across the country, especially for Francophone students living outside Quebec. Nevertheless, because in many areas expectations were greater than the results achieved, it noted the existence of some dissatisfaction on the part of minority groups.

The principal needs identified in the report include the creation of services in under-populated regions where no service presently exists, reinforcement of provincial infrastructures, and promotion of applied research to judge the quality of official language programs.

* * *

The **Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages** has suggested the convening of a First Minister's Conference early in 1988 to discuss what it referred to as "persistent difficulties" in minority-language education at all levels. The recommendation was contained in a report tabled by the Committee in the Senate and the House of Commons in June. The report noted that official minority official-language education "has been, and continues to be, a subject of controversy in a number of provinces." The Committee said it had heard testimony that most provincial legislatures still do not comply with constitutional requirements regarding access to such education. It also heard from witnesses who claimed that federal financial assistance designed to support official languages in education is sometimes used for other purposes.

In Brief

Will the special problems of official language minorities in Canada be on the agenda of a national forum on post-secondary education to be held in Saskatoon, October 25-28? About 600 participants are expected to attend the event, sponsored by the federal government and the Council of Ministers of Education.

* * *

The annual symposium of the Society for Educational Visits and Exchanges in Canada (SEVEC) will take place in Quebec City on October 29-30, with about 300 teachers, school board members and interested parents expected to attend. The Society, which arranges cross-cultural exchanges for an estimated 10,000 English-and French-speaking elementary and secondary school students annually, is a non-profit group, receiving aid from both the federal and provincial levels of government.

Bilingual Business

John Newlove

Most private and voluntary associations want to set their own language policies and programs.

Service-oriented Canadian businesses are ready to lead the way in language.

The Institute of Association Executives, a 1,250-member organization, published a bilingualism policy for its members in August 1986. In October the Canadian Bankers' Association, with 71 chartered members, seven of which are major banks operating on a national basis, followed suit. The Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association had already established a policy for its 110 members in March 1986.

Services can be broadened through greater co-operation between the private sector and the federal government.

Other major associations and groups are considering issuing policies for their members. Typically, these policies assert three general principles:

- member organizations should be able to communicate with their national association in the official language of their choice;
- the public should be able to receive information from the national association in either English or French; and
- member organizations are encouraged to provide their services in both languages, where there is a significant demand or, in the cases of the Bankers' Association and the Life and Health Association, where it is reasonable to do so.

Policy statements go on to outline criteria and procedures for determining demand, for providing service to the public, for implementing particular aspects of the policy and for obtaining government assistance.

In the voluntary sector a similar process was followed by the Coalition of National Voluntary Organizations. The NVO, which represents 135 voluntary bodies, adopted an official languages policy in November 1986.

Federal assistance

Since 1970 a federal program to assist public, private and voluntary organizations in developing their bilingual capacity has been run by the Secretary of State's Department, with a budget ranging from an initial $200,000 to $1.9 million in 1985-86.

In 1977 and 1980 the program published "36 Ways to Put Bilingualism to Work for You" and "Second Language Training in the Work World", but, aside from this, the main emphasis has been two-fold. There has been financial assistance to national voluntary organizations — in 1984 grants ranging from $1,000 to $20,000 were made to 130 volunteer organizations. And information, advice and technical assistance are given to private organizations on request.

Both the mandate and the funding priorities of this program were examined in 1986 as part of the federal government's larger official languages review.

The questions were:

- What is the best way to establish and maintain active co-operation between private sector representatives and government?
- What forms of technical and other government assistance would the private sector find most useful?
- What are the ways and means of providing the private sector with privileged access to government's official languages resources?

In brief, how can the private and voluntary sectors, working with government, meet the need of Canadians for service in the official language of their choice?

Private sector associations

Though the processes of sensitization, promotion and practical co-operation with government are still rudimentary, there is wide interest in improving them. The great majority of national associations are open to constructive suggestions for improving their bilingual capacity and that of their members.

Private sector representatives were particularly interested in ways of ensuring voluntary compliance to self-imposed standards and ready to commit themselves to structures which would make the most efficient use of information and of government and non-government resources.

The availability of services to Canadians in both English and French can be broadened and improved through greater co-operation between the private sector and the federal government. Private sector networks have a great potential to multiply initiatives. They offer a resourcefulness which government has hardly begun to tap.

Most private and voluntary associations approached have proven amenable to setting their own policies and programs. The national associations form a natural network for promoting further development. They can act as clearing-houses for other private sector initiatives that might be packaged and marketed with government assistance, though this assistance does not ▶

necessarily mean more funds or government spending but rather a better use of available resources.

A more creative partnership

The main conclusion of a study conducted by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages in 1987 was that it is essential that the private sector and government enter into a more creative partnership if Canadians are to be offered a useful range of English-French choices.

Earlier, in a November 1986 speech to the Ottawa-Carleton Board of Trade, the Commissioner had said, "We all know that bilingualism is an expression that is easily stereotyped or misunderstood. It is certainly a lot more than two languages on postage stamps or reversible cereal boxes.

Business can be more inventive in finding the means to satisfy customers' linguistic needs.

"Perhaps the term becomes more concretely understandable when I say that one thing it surely means is a day-to-day requirement for service in one's own language, not someone else's. When I speak of service to business people, I am conscious of speaking about something that is very much part of their basic vocabulary.

"I am not here to advocate that the Official Languages Act be extended to the private sector.

"My basic assumption is that promoting language rights in the private sector makes sense from a business viewpoint. There is plenty of evidence that it does indeed make very good sense for business leaders not only to respond to a growing appetite for service in both English and French, but to apply their own entrepreneurial, leadership and 'can-do' skills to broadening the base for an effective and forward-looking language policy."

Mr. Fortier pointed out that a Canadian Facts survey has shown a positive change in attitudes to bilingualism at all levels of the Canadian population nation-wide, led by the young and particularly by young Anglophones. Two out of three Canadians between 15 and 24 said that official language minority groups should receive services from business in their own language. He asked: "Who are the principal consumers of services today and where is the demand most likely to come from in the future?"

Government, the Commissioner said, is ready to help business to develop and exploit the language skills that it will need and business, in turn, can be more inventive in finding better ways to satisfy customers.

Brave New Breed

Lindsay Scotton

Entrepreneurs who are comfortable and active in both the English- and French-speaking milieux are profiting from the best of both possible worlds.

Toronto businessman Peter G. White represents a brave new breed of Canadian entrepreneur. On one hand, he exemplifies the traditional English-speaking Canadian business establishment, on the other, a new wave of truly national corporate manager, equally at home in the offices and at the boardroom tables of Quebec as he is in the rest of Canada.

White, executive vice-president of Hollinger Inc., a holding company controlled by financier Conrad Black, is perfectly bilingual and comfortable with the nuances of both of Canada's founding cultures. With a foot in both Ontario and Quebec, White wears the traditional conservative blue business suit — but he celebrates St. Jean Baptiste Day with gusto.

Hollinger takes over

This linguistic and cultural duality will stand him in good stead. Hollinger Inc. recently acquired Unimedia Inc., which owns the daily newspapers *Le Soleil* of Quebec City, *Le Quotidien* of Chicoutimi, Ottawa's *Le Droit*, and several French-language weeklies in Quebec and Ontario.

The take-over was not without controversy, and the controversy was based on language and cultural identity.

Even though both Conrad Black and Peter White are bilingual and both were raised and educated in Quebec, the acquisition of a French-language media network by a company based in English Canada raised a tempest of concerned outrage in Quebec. The Parti Québécois opposition, the Quebec Federation of Professional Journalists and the Fédération nationale des communications — representing journalists' unions — all objected vigorously. Hollinger Inc. was referred to bitterly as "an Anglophone group".

In order to reassure those Quebecers worried about the sovereignty of their local press, White pledged in early June that neither *Le Soleil* nor *Le Quotidien* would be resold to buyers outside Quebec without the provincial government first having a chance to find a Quebec purchaser. In a letter to Quebec Communications Minister Richard French, White also promised that the head offices of the two newspapers would remain in Quebec City.

A necessary asset

So, for Peter White as for his boss and old friend Conrad Black, bilingualism is more than an asset — it is a necessity of his continuing business success.

"It's quite clear that we wouldn't have, and possibly couldn't have, bought

Peter White

Unimedia if Conrad and I couldn't speak French," White says simply. "There are lots of people who want to move into the newspaper and media community in Quebec. It just isn't possible for someone who speaks only English."

He points to the experience of Montreal *Gazette* publisher Clark Davey, who printed and distributed the fledgling Montreal French-language tabloid *Le Matin* under contract earlier this year. *Le Matin* printed only 38 issues before it folded.

"Clark Davey doesn't speak French — that's why he got his fingers burned so badly," says White.

A career begins

The 48-year-old Peter White was born in Brazil, but was raised and educated in Quebec. His English-speaking parents were far-sighted enough to send him first to Bishop's College and then to Switzerland

Lindsay Scotton is a journalist with the Toronto *Star*.

for his studies. White says his Swiss experience was very beneficial, since his school friends in Quebec were mainly English. "You can't really learn a second language when you're speaking the first language with your friends all the time," he admits.

After four years at McGill University, he went on to take his law degree at Laval University, graduating in 1963.

By the early 1960s, he and his old school chum Conrad Black had already started to establish the base for their multi-million dollar Quebec media and industrial interests.

There were investments in French-language newspapers in Cowansville and Baie Comeau — the home of another college friend of both Peter White and Conrad Black, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney — and in the English-language newspaper, *The Sherbrooke Record.*

White moved to Ontario in the early 1970s, living and working in London and Toronto and dividing his time fairly equally between politics and business. He had worked with Maurice Sauvé and Daniel Johnson, and soon he became heavily involved in Brian Mulroney's post-election transition team, helping to select and recruit political personnel for the Prime Minister's Office. Until just over a year ago, he worked in the PMO as a special assistant in charge of appointments.

His facility in French was a benefit in some circles, but it was a non-starter among his colleagues in the corporate world. "While French was definitely an asset in politics, in Ontario of the 1970s French was not an asset in business. There was no business being done in French in either London or Toronto — it simply wasn't an issue."

Peter White says he is "personally delighted that, now, at an advanced age, I am working with two languages," even though it did take some time for his ability to span two cultures to emerge as a corporate as well as a personal asset.

The new entrepreneur

"Today's entrepreneurs are a new breed," he says. "There are the native French speakers who are also moving into the English-speaking corporate world — and there are the young Anglophones in business who speak French in Quebec and love it. The fact is, today, if you want to do business in Quebec you have to speak French."

It is a far cry from the old days following the first election of the Parti Québécois to provincial power in 1976. In the hysterical months that followed, members of Montreal's business community — English-speaking almost by definition — moved in droves to Toronto under the perceived threat that some of their operations might have to be carried out in the majority language of Quebec.

"That was a blind, ignorant reaction to the events of the time, and I think that there is not the same problem in the business environment in Quebec today," says White.

Lost opportunities

In fact, business opportunities are being lost today because some entrepreneurs who do not have good French-language skills do not even bother to attempt expansion into Quebec.

At Hollinger, Jack Boultbee, financial vice-president and treasurer, is going back to school to learn French in his mid-forties. A chartered accountant, he says has had the desire to become bilingual for years, but he knows that without the impetus of his company expanding its Quebec holdings, he probably would not have found the time. Today, the time he spends learning a second language is time invested in keeping his career healthy.

"What I'd really like is to find a course that's 30 minutes to bilingualism," says Jack Boultbee with a grin. "I know it's not going to be that easy to learn French, and if we hadn't acquired Unimedia, I never would... but I will now, because that's the only way to operate."

"What English-speaking businessmen are doing by not speaking French is forfeiting the market," Peter White says flatly.

It is not something he is likely to allow to happen to Hollinger Inc.

Two Tables

Francine Labrie

The Stone House, a restaurant in St. John's, Newfoundland, sets an example for a Crown corporation.

There is more to the French gastronomical experience than simply dining on palate-pleasing dishes. Equally important are prompt, impeccable service and the use of French to describe French cuisine.

Gastronomes in St. John's, Newfoundland, are no exception to the rule. They, as much as anybody, enjoy being served in the language of Brillat-Savarin.

Promises, promises

That seems to be the promise made by two of the best restaurants in the provincial capital. The first, the fashionable Cabot Club in the majestic Hotel Newfoundland,

The proprietors of the Stone House

is operated by its owner, Canadian National Railways. The second is the nearby Stone House, run by two young entrepreneurs, Kitty Drake and Penny Hansen.

The menus, in suitably bilingual format, make it difficult to decide between the two. Both offer impressive lists of the masterpieces that have made famous the names of France's great chefs. To all appearances, all the ingredients are there for a dining experience "à la française" worthy of the best French restaurants.

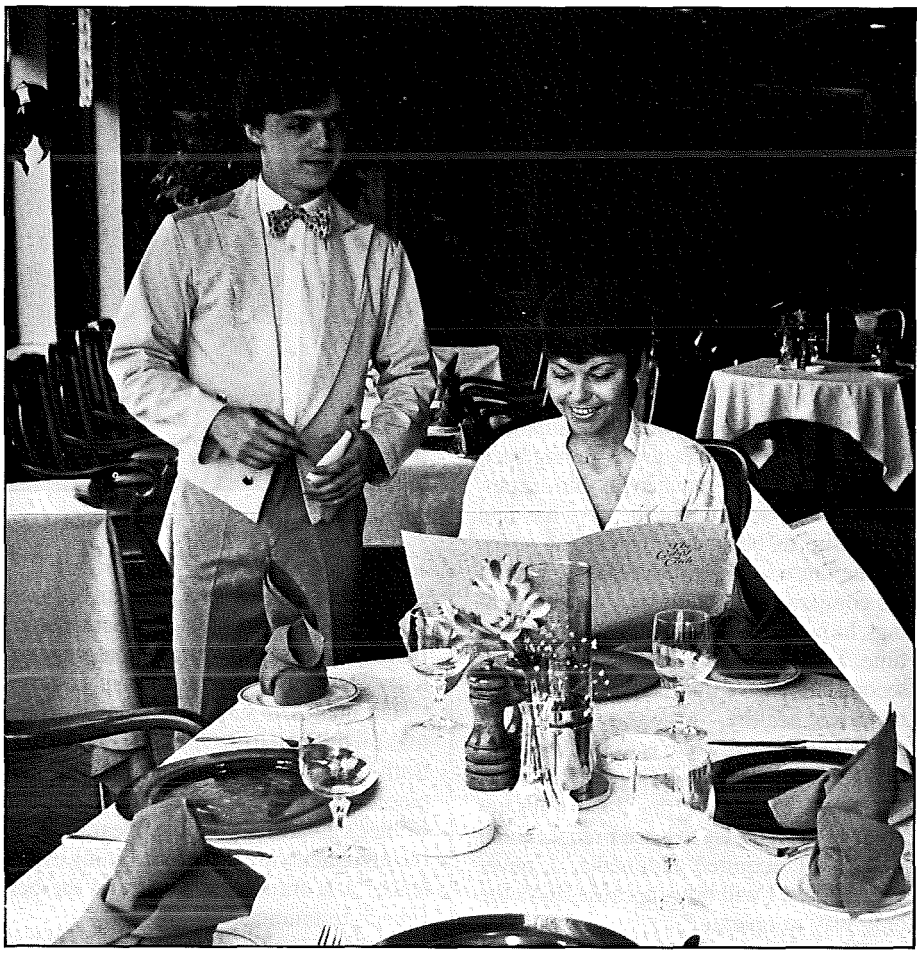
But there's a hitch. Diners at the Cabot House needn't try to order their meals in French. Although the restaurant belongs to a Crown corporation, which is required under the Official Languages Act to provide service in English and French, requests for "paupiettes de veau à la bordelaise" or "carré d'agneau aux herbes de Provence" will be greeted by maître d', waiters and hostesses alike with the standard, "Sorry, I don't speak French."

Although only a superficial bilingualism is in effect at the Hotel Newfoundland, things are entirely different at the Stone House. The owners and maître d' of that private business have long understood the importance — and rewards — of providing courteous service in Canada's two official languages. The Stone House is frequented by the city's Anglophone community, of course, but also by a large number of resident and visiting Francophones and Quebecois and Acadian public servants and businessmen passing through the province's capital.

Numbers warrant

The two young owners' original purpose in making the Stone House a truly bilingual establishment was to cater to the residents of Saint Pierre, many of whom are regular ▶

Francine Labrie is director of the Newfoundland journal *Le Gaboteur.*



The Cabot Club

visitors to Saint John's. But, aided and abetted by the Francophone community of the city, they soon realized how profitable it could be for them to serve this far from negligible clientele in French.

A few government departments, including Employment and Immigration Canada, consider Francophones living in Newfoundland numerous enough to warrant assigning bilingual staff to their regional offices. Every year, St. John's attracts a certain number of Francophone professionals, who would not hesitate to extend their stays if they could find more services in French. Of even greater impact, however, is the capital's annual invasion of tourists from Quebec (more than 12,000 Quebec visitors took the island ferry in 1986) and Saint Pierre and Miquelon (2,000 visitors).

How can the lack of French-language services at the Hotel Newfoundland be justified in these circumstances? Mr. Kevin R. Emblem, the hotel's director of human resources, says, "There are very few truly bilingual candidates here for the positions we offer."

It is more likely, though, that union contracts force managers to give current hotel staff precedence when vacancies occur. Since Francophone employees can be counted on the fingers of one hand, and open positions require no special language skills, the linguistic imbalance constantly grows.

To correct the situation and to provide travelling Canadians with services in the language of their choice, it is important that CN adopt a true bilingualism policy, making knowledge of English and French a professional requirement, not simply an asset. Otherwise, it may lose some of its clientele to the private sector, which has understood that, in linguistic as in other matters, the customer is always right.

Press Review

Tom Sloan

The first press reactions to the amendments to the Official Languages Act, tabled by the federal government in June, showed a rare approach to unanimity on the part of some of Canada's newspapers, both English and French. The move was hailed in both official languages as a major step towards linguistic justice and the government was congratulated for its efforts.

Noting that the new law had, essentially, been endorsed by both English- and French-language minority groups, Paul-André Comeau, director of *Le Devoir*, wrote: "The Conservative government can therefore claim, on this issue, 'promise kept'... to the satisfaction of everyone concerned."

The principal remaining question mark, according to Mr. Comeau, is the notion of "significant demand" for language services, which remains part of the Act. "Which criteria will guide the administrators in order to determine from what moment a demand becomes sufficiently important to justify the creation of services in the language of the minority in one particular region of the country? The leaders of the Francophone minorities in various provinces are right to be concerned about the looseness of this particular section." Despite this reservation, Mr. Comeau had high praise for the proposed new law, which he described as "enriched and expanded".

Under the title "An Excellent Reform", Pierre Tremblay of Ottawa's *Le Droit* stated that with the new law, "Brian Mulroney is well on the way to keeping his promise of 'national reconciliation'. The constitutional accord reached by the 11 [first ministers] legally establishes a new alliance between the two majorities; the reform of the law on official languages also legally reinforces the place of the minorities."

Mr. Tremblay gave special marks to the government for giving the language law precedence over other legislation, for strengthening the ombudsman role of the Commissioner of Official Languages, and for emphasizing the promotion of both official languages across the country.

There was full concurrence from the Montreal *Gazette*, for which "The Mulroney government is continuing the great enterprise of guiding this country, firmly and fairly, toward a linguistic balance that hardly seemed possible only a generation ago."

According to the *Gazette* editorialist, the law is both a welcome, if overdue, attack on longstanding injustice and a realistic preview of the future. "Perhaps the most satisfying element of the new Bill is its genuine commitment not just to protect official-language minorities throughout Canada, but to promote the vitality of their communities and to foster 'the full recognition and use' of the minority language in every province....in its essence the bill is a resolute attack on the injustices that for so long had been compromising Canada's future, and a noble successor to the 1968 bill."

As for *The Globe and Mail*, its editorial, titled "To Bilingual Cheers", noted approvingly that: "The bill to redesign the Official Languages Act has, in fact, inspired

hearty cheers even on opposition benches, where a certain amount of automatic carping might have been expected."

The Globe gave the final word to Language Commissioner D'Iberville Fortier's description of the Bill, along with its own imprimatur: "Mr. Fortier chose his word well. Magnificent."

In Montreal's *La Presse*, associate editor Michel Roy wrote: "Thanks to this new law, Canadians will eventually be able to communicate more easily with their federal institutions and obtain from them services in the official language of their choice."

Nevertheless, while giving the Bill high marks, Mr. Roy has a reminder for his readers: "Let us not forget that this progress is not due only to the government and politicians. It is above all to the evolution of Canadian public opinion that we must give the credit. What appeared inconceivable in 1969 has happily become possible and workable in 1987."

Writing in *Le Soleil* of Quebec City, columnist Vianney Duchesne has high praise for the government for promoting minority language rights, and thus strengthening and clarifying the Meech Lake agreements. Mr. Duchesne also had personal praise for Brian Mulroney: "The Prime Minister is respecting his 1985 promise by opening the door to linguistic equality."

Those efforts will, however, need the full support of others. "The Canadian population recognizes much more clearly the reality and the demands of bilingualism than it did at the moment of the definition of the goals in 1968. However, the pressure must continue... even in a province as Francophone as Quebec, where some businesses are returning to English unilingualism."

Full support for the proposed new law was also present in the editorial page of *The Ottawa Citizen*, which described it as "... a spirited and practical act of reform... a clear expression of political resolve to promote linguistic equality." *The Citizen* had no doubt that, in its practical reforms as well as in areas such as increased funding for second language training, the legislation will have popular support.

Despite *The Citizen*'s optimism, unanimity was not complete. There were dissenting voices. One of them was that of Claire Hoy of the *Toronto Sun*. In a column titled "It's Unfair in Every Language", Mr. Hoy excoriates the proposed law as "this exercise of linguistic blackmail against the English-speaking majority." In Mr. Hoy's eyes, the stated goal of equality of opportunity is a smokescreen: "Problem is, they don't mean equality. This revised bill is designed not to facilitate both languages equally, but to further spread the mandatory use of French."

Other Languages, Other Lives

Margaret Negodaeff

Though events shaped Sarah Silou's destiny, it was her talent for languages and her will to succeed that led her to her present career.

Until Sarah Silou entered primary school she had neither spoken English nor lived in a town. Born in 1950 in the Northwest Territories near Baker Lake, she lived in igloos in the winter, tents in the summer.

Now she is a scholar. She has mastered Inuktituk, English and French and has made valuable contributions to Canadian society. She has "dabbled" in Danish and is well on her way to becoming fluent in Russian.

One of seven children, at an early age ("far too young") she sat in on Bible classes in order to learn Inuktituk syllabics. At seven she entered elementary school and found the English language "very exciting — like a new toy to play with."

In those days, Baker Lake had neither a junior nor a high school. Teenagers were sent to Churchill, where they lived in dormitories until they graduated.

A different turn

Ms. Silou's life took a different turn when she was invited into the Edmonton home of Alice and Thomas Walker, whose grandchildren she had looked after in Baker Lake. Mrs. Walker, a teacher, encouraged the young woman to study and to excel.

Sarah Silou feels the Edmonton experience was invaluable in helping her later to clarify what she describes as the "Native-white encounter". In essence, she says, it provided her with a more balanced perspective on cultural issues which often erupted into conflicts. Being nurtured by a non-Native family, she adds, prevented any bitterness in the more political years that followed.

In Edmonton Ms. Silou won an award for a "very northern" story about a white fox which her father had caught and offered back to God in thanks. A second award, for a French *concours oratoire*, was bestowed on her by the University of Alberta in her final year of high school.

She had studied law at the same university by correspondence during her last two years of high school, and just before she finished high school, she was sought out and recruited by the Indian-Eskimo Association of Canada (now the Canadian Alliance in Solidarity with the Native Peoples). A "very special man", Tagak Curley, recommended that she be sent to the University of Toronto's Osgoode Hall to collaborate in translating *Inuit and the Law* into Inuktitut.

Ottawa

By 1971 Sarah Silou had moved to Ottawa with the newly-formed Inuit Tapirisat of Canada. For a few years she edited and produced *Inuit Today* (now *Inuit*) magazine. She also prepared publications for the Arctic Ambassadors, a group which had been formed to help circumpolar youth share their cultures, problems and aspirations. Later, she moved to Eskimo Point as an Information and Public Relations Officer for the Inuit Cultural Institute, an organization created to retain and nurture the Inuit language and traditional culture.

In 1977 Ms. Silou returned to Ottawa as a social counsellor with the Inuit Education Branch of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. She began to feel the need for "something more" and decided to improve her French. "I had a sense that I had to develop myself further — to continue to learn more about Canada in general," she says.

With a grant from the government of the Northwest Territories, she enrolled in a second-language degree program at Laval University.

So many avenues to be explored

Ms. Silou felt it imperative to immerse herself not only in the French language but in the entire Quebec culture. It wasn't easy, she says. "Learning another language can be personally traumatic — a real strain. It's not just the language — it's a genuine cultural shock to live in such a different environment." Initially, she felt terribly isolated, not just from her Native associates but also from her Western Canadian background.

With the exception of some patients in local hospitals whom she visited from time to time, there were few Inuit in Quebec City. Later, Ms. Silou established more contacts by interpreting from French to Inuktitut and vice versa for provincial cabinet ministers on trips to northern Quebec. "It was very touchy, very political," she says. "Even with different accents and dialects, people were in essence saying, 'Are you with them, or are you with us?' "

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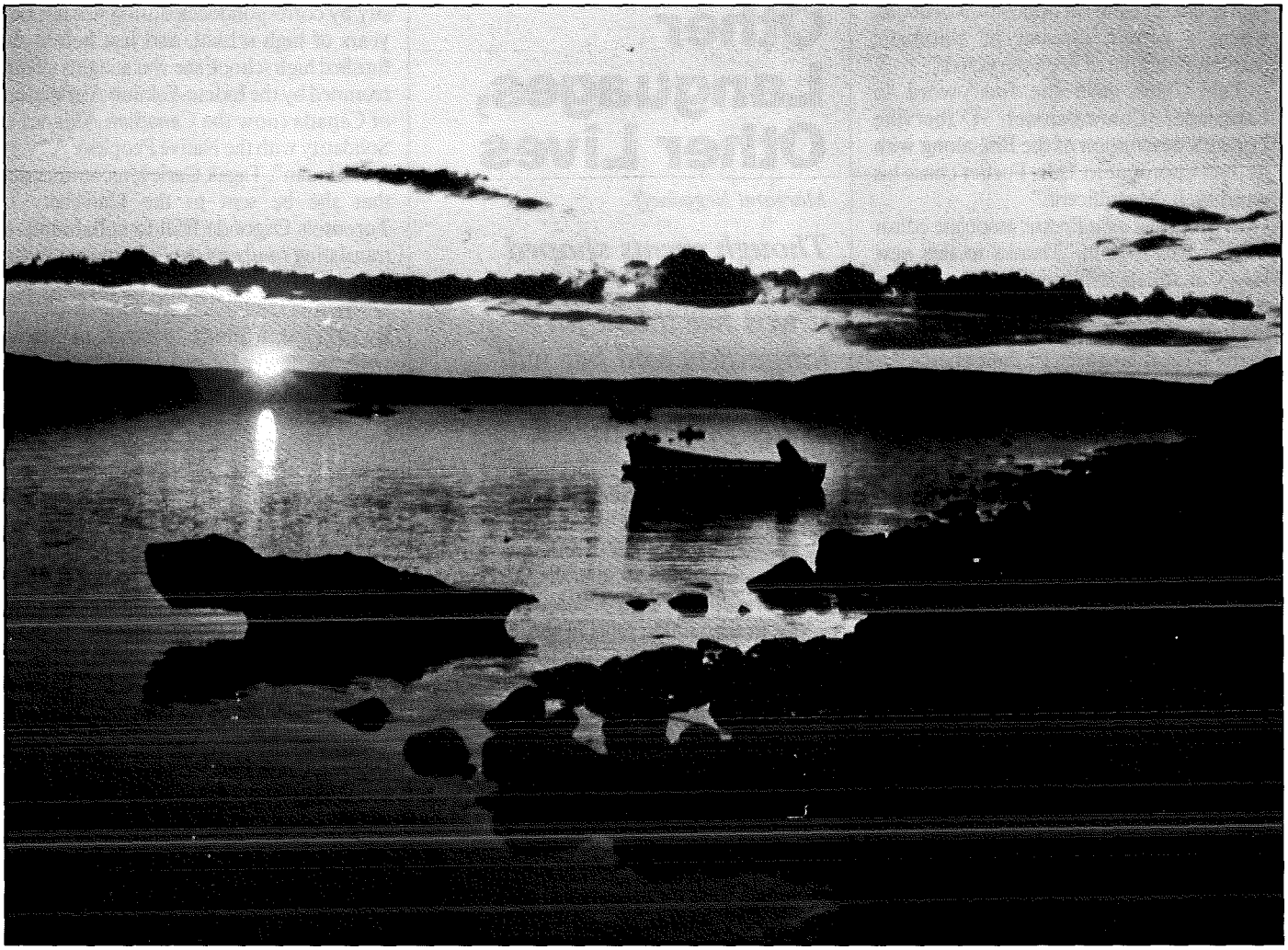
Margaret Negodaeff is an Ottawa public affairs consultant and free-lance writer who specializes in social issues.



Mike Van Duffelen

Keewatin Sunset, Northwest Territories

Ms. Silou's relocation to Quebec entailed some natural misgivings, but she found the idea of becoming fluent in French exciting. She lived with a family which took in federal employees and diplomats learning French and then with relatives of Gérard Pelletier who helped clarify her understanding of the "French-Canadian perspective".

She submitted a formal proposal to the Quebec cabinet, suggesting that she prepare a study on that province's historical and political development. It became, she says, not just a provincial study, but a look at the entire Canadian developmental process. She eventually translated her work into Inuktitut.

A Quebec friend had suggested that she learn Russian. Canada and the U.S.S.R. were embarking on serious scientific and cultural exchanges, particularly in the Arctic regions. As a Northerner, he thought, Ms. Silou might find it useful to study the ensuing documentation in its original language.

At first, she didn't take the suggestion seriously, but the idea stuck with her. When she moved to Montreal with Radio-Canada's Service Québec Nordique, she also enrolled in a Russian course.

Part of her Laval curriculum had required her to study in France. Her experience at l'Université de Provence (Aix-Marseille I) confirmed her conviction that multilingualism was nothing out of the ordinary and, in fact, was desirable. She continued both her French and Russian studies in Europe, and finished her Russian classes when she returned to Canada.

The U.S.S.R.

Ms. Silou is now planning a trip to the Soviet Union. Through the Canada-U.S.S.R. Program of Academic, Scientific and Cultural Exchanges and Co-operation, she hopes to study education and teaching methodology at both Moscow University and at the Gertzen Institute in Leningrad prior to submitting her MA thesis on the circumpolar north "from a Canadian perspective." Naturally, she wants to visit the Soviet north, which may be possible through the Canada-U.S.S.R. Arctic Science Exchange Program.

Ms. Silou would be an asset to the program, says an Indian and Northern Affairs official. With her facility in three Canadian languages and her knowledge of Russian, she would be an ideal person to work with the recently-formed Inuit Circumpolar Conference. An advantage is that the Soviet Yuit people speak Yupik, a language closely resembling Inuktitut. Her latest venture is to see how quickly she can grasp the various Soviet dialects.

The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada has given her a grant for a minimum stay of four months.

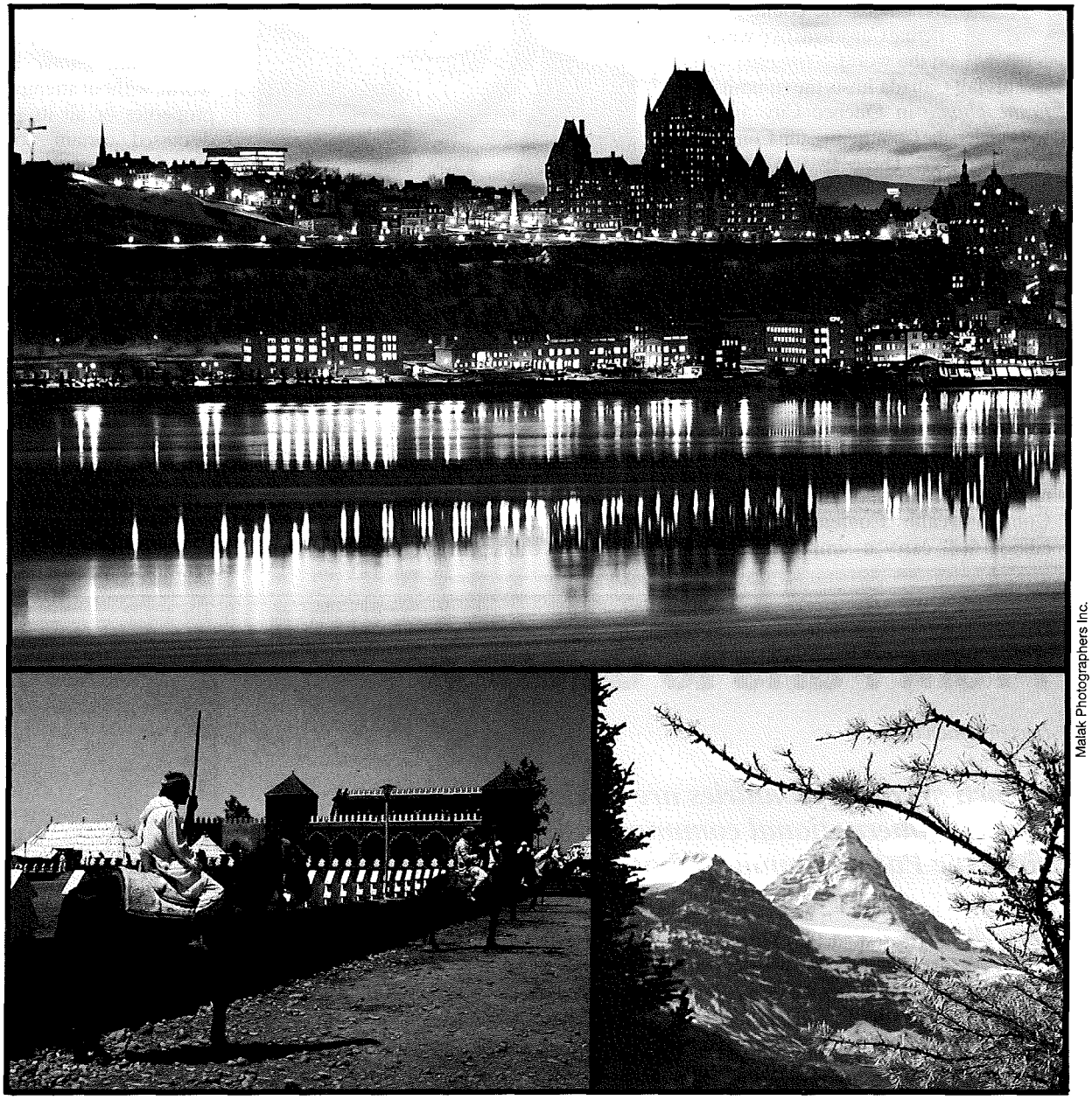
Canada's language policies

Ms. Silou admits to mixed feelings about Canada's language policies. "Unless English Canadians tell the Inuit that they themselves are comfortable with French, I don't think my people would accept it as another official language," she says.

She stresses that she cannot speak for the Inuit or for any other cultural group, but she does wish that there were "some way in which we could strike a balance on language and cultural issues. Now that I see things from a more global perspective, I realize we need more communication — there are so many avenues to be explored. I'd like to be part of the process."

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."

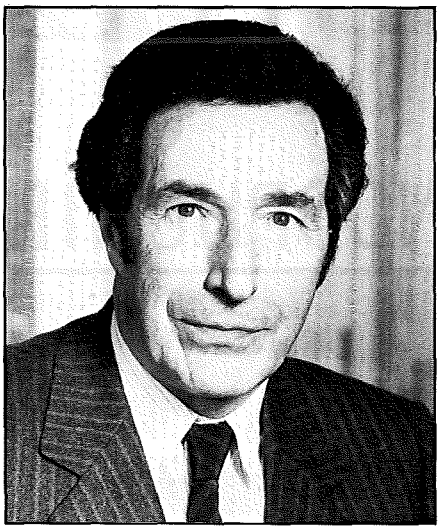
Cù Huy Cân, Head of the Vietnam delegation, Paris Summit.

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

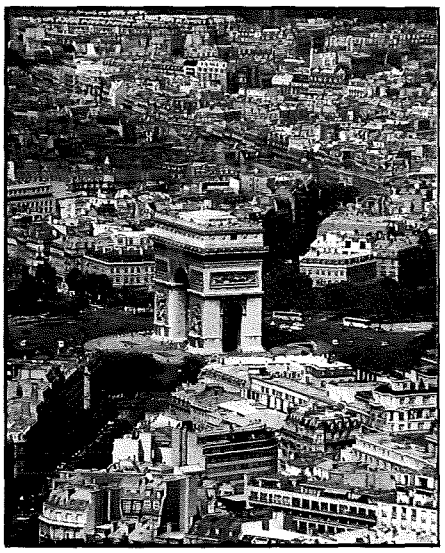
From Paris to Quebec

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.

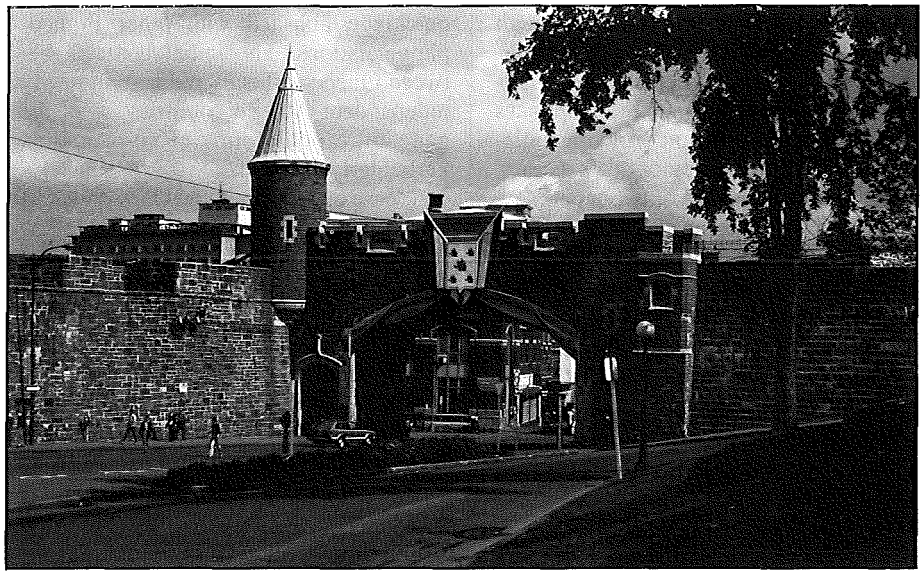
After the success of the first summit, this second meeting is critical. The Quebec Summit must not fail. It must offer answers to a number of fundamental questions raised in Paris and should redefine the Francophone community to include several states, such as Algeria, Egypt and Vietnam, which do not 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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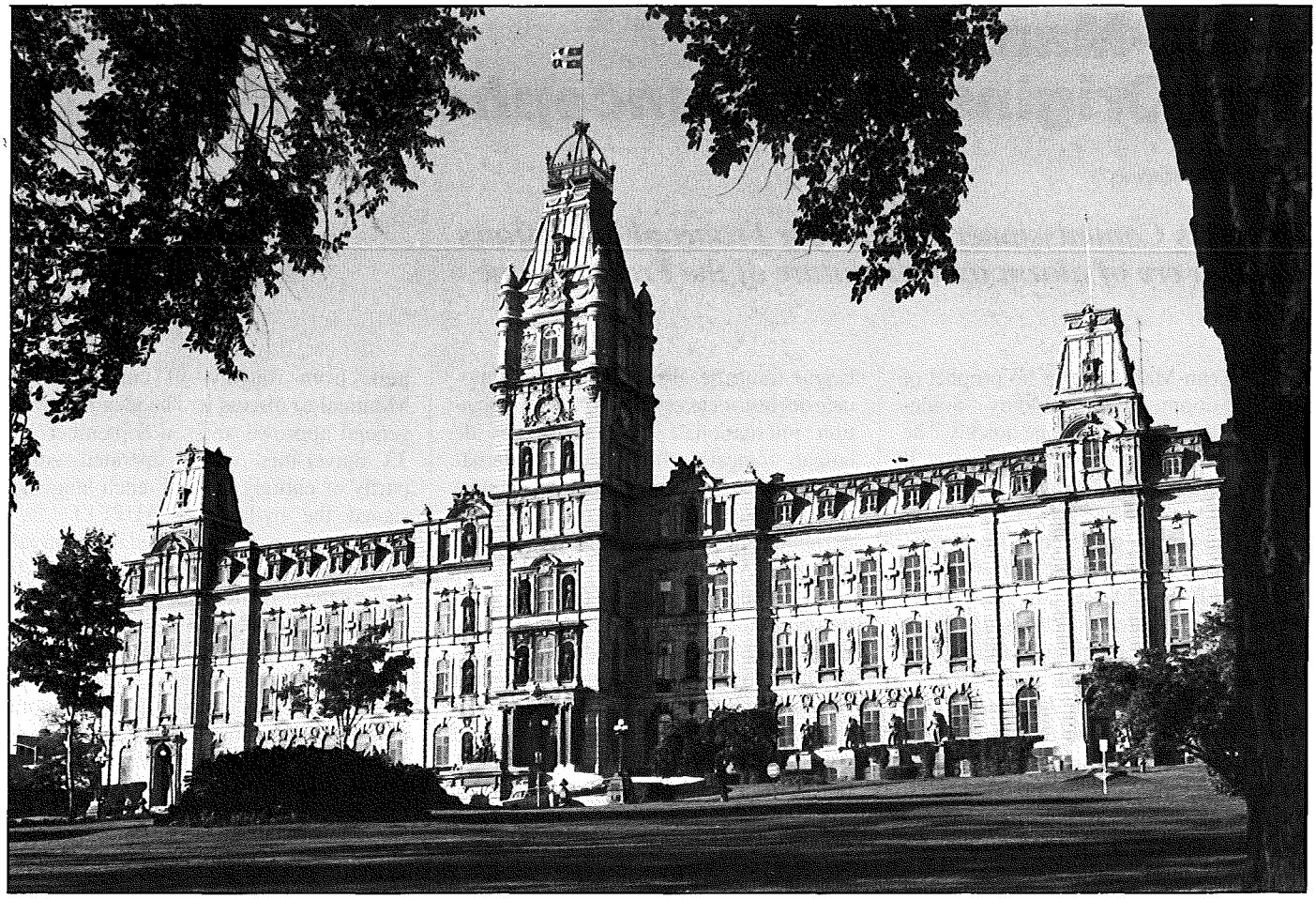

The Quebec National Assembly

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 founded. 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

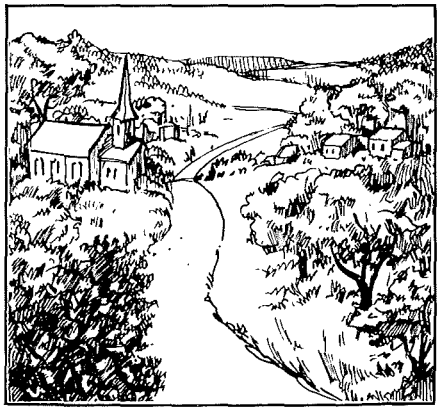
Canada's *francophonie*, as both beneficiary and donor, shares each of these dimensions. First there is the source itself, France — a country distant yet close, past yet present. Despite the vicissitudes of history, the brutality of events, and broken political ties, the French settlers remained in Canada 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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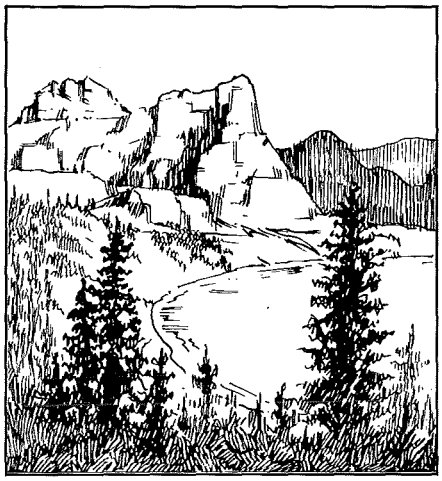
be, these elements should not obscure the fact that each participant uses the relationship to express its own essence: its history, perception of self and of others, expectations, understanding of the future — characteristics that distinguish it from others and reflect its own culture. It is at this 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 northeastern 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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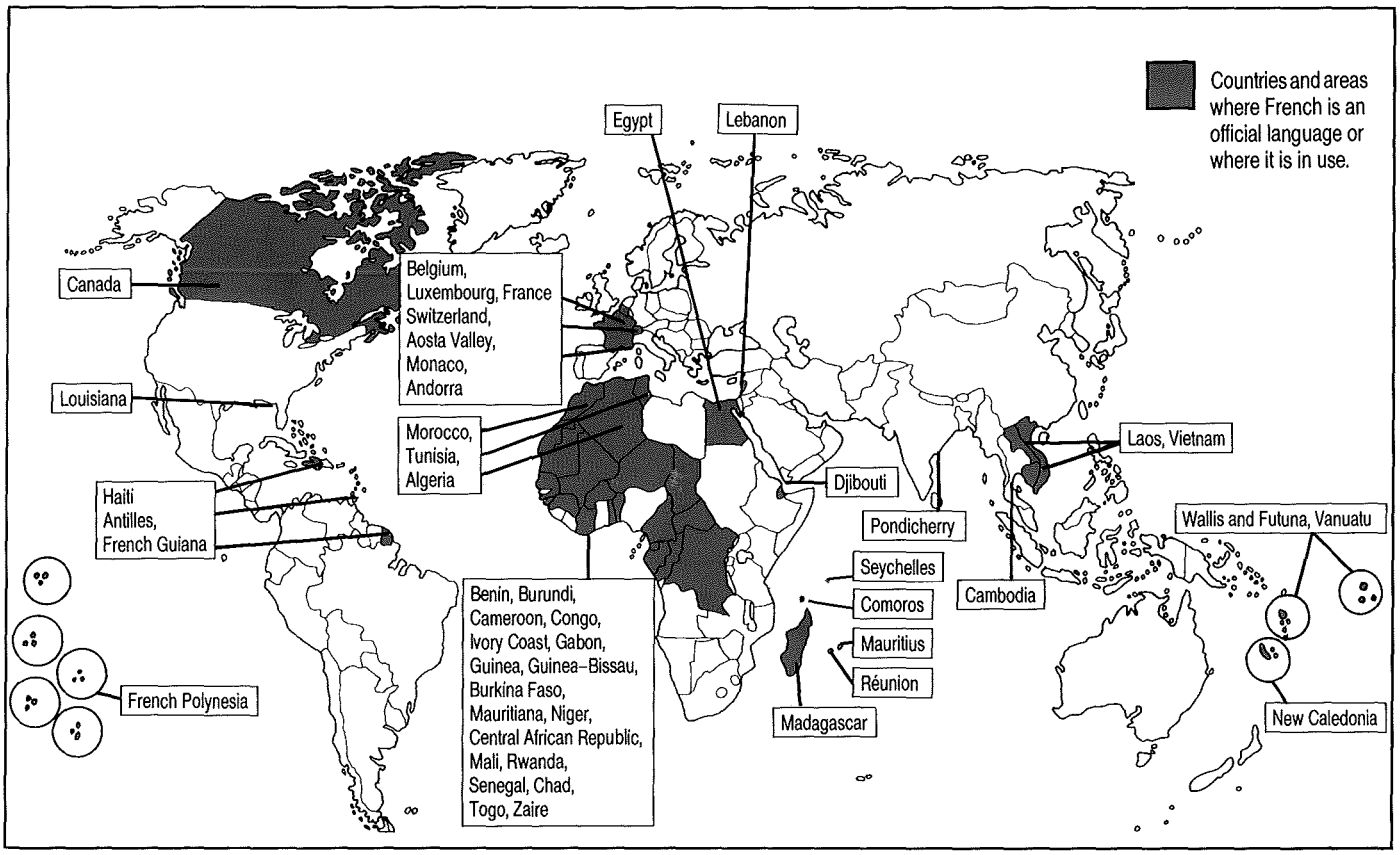


French in the world

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.

Unity 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

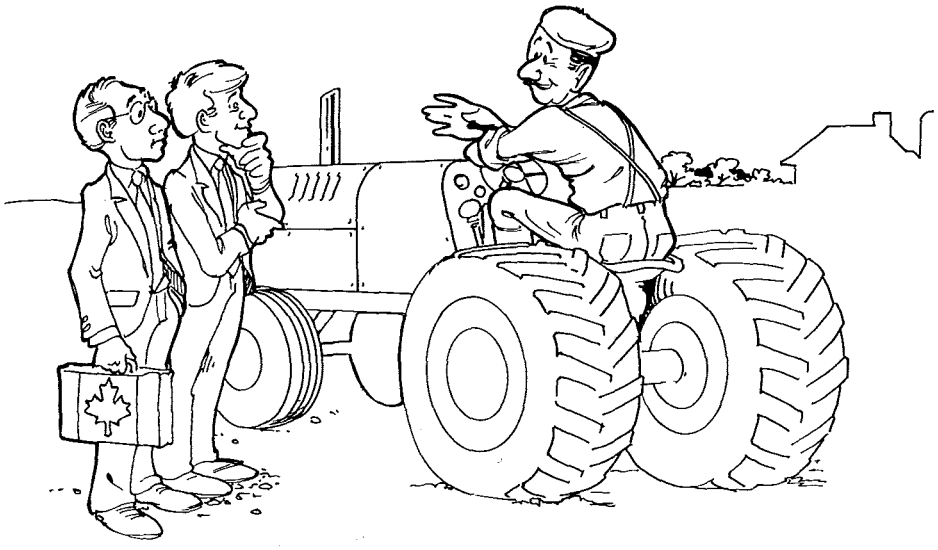
What will be the state of the French language in the year 2000? Will there be 240, 260, 300 million Francophones among the one billion speakers of Romance languages and the six billion inhabitants of the planet?

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.

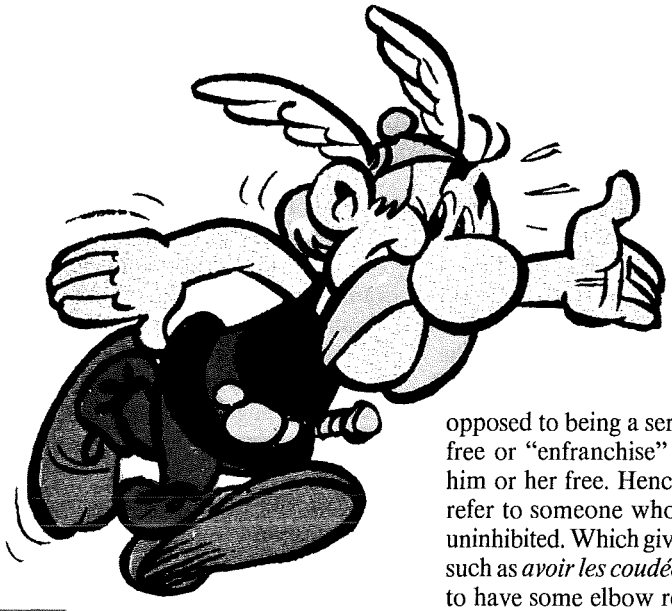
Ici on livre

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.