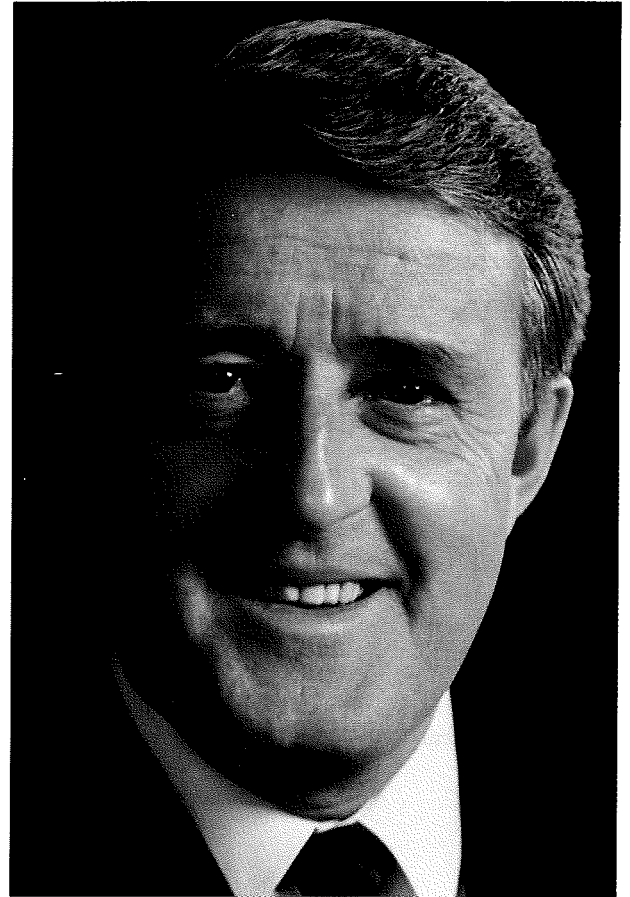


LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY



1969



1988

**SPECIAL
REPORT**

**25 YEARS LATER
The B and B Commission**

QUEBEC'S BILL 178: FOR OR AGAINST?

Number 27, Summer 1989

**THE COMMISSIONER'S 1988 ANNUAL REPORT:
FOR A TRUE RENEWAL**

BELL CANADA: THE LANGUAGES OF WORK

Letters

President Mitterand Praises Language and Society



At a reception at the Élysée Palace marking the opening of the most recent meeting of the Haut Conseil de la Francophonie, held in Paris February 7-9, President Mitterand publicly praised Canada's participation and commented on the excellence of the special reports published by *Language and Society*, "The Universality of French" and "Canada and the Commonwealth of English".

Esperanto

If Mr. Desaulniers [*Language and Society* No. 26] thinks that the degree of universality of a language can be gauged by its use at international congresses, it should be worthwhile to note that hundreds of international meetings of speakers of Esperanto take place each year on the five continents...

Martin Lavallée
Member of the
Esperanto-Societo Kebekia
Saint-Amabel, Quebec

Over-representation

...Given the extensive documentation for our findings of Francophone over-representation in the federal Public Service — and the very heavy over-representation in the fourteen most important key agencies cited in our report — and the considerable media interest in this, you might consider that this warrants a mention in your magazine, which purport to provide a review of media coverage of language issues in Canada....

Nicholas Patterson
Executive Director
Canadian Development Institute
Ottawa

Editorial note: In *Language and Society* No. 25, Winter 1988, on page 5 Mr. Fortier said: "On over-representation of Francophones in certain institutions, it is true, especially for many small agencies. Across the whole Public Service, Francophones now hold slightly more jobs than their percentage of the population would justify. But we're talking about the federal Public Service alone. Take only two of the largest Crown corporations, which also fall under the *Official Languages Act*. By themselves, they turn the whole discrepancy around."

ERRATUM

The caption under the photograph on page 16 of *Language and Society* No. 26 should have identified Glen MacKenzie as the bilingual journalist from the *Winnipeg Free Press*.

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. Unsigned articles, as well as titles and sub-titles, are by editorial staff.

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**LANGUAGE
AND SOCIETY**



SPECIAL REPORT 25 YEARS LATER
The B and B Commission

QUEBEC SELL ITS FORT OR AGONY?
THE COMMISSIONER'S 1988 ANNUAL REPORT
FOR A TRILE RENAISSANCE
BELL CANADA: THE LANGUAGES OF MEDIA

Cover:
Prime Ministers Pierre Elliott Trudeau and Brian Mulroney. During their administrations two Official Languages Acts were proclaimed, in 1969 and 1988. See our Special Report in this issue.

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



**LANGUAGE
AND SOCIETY**

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SPECIAL REPORT

25 YEARS AFTER THE B AND B COMMISSION

*25 participants and journalists consider
the past and the future in a 44-page document.*

Pages R-1 to R-44

Quebec under Bill 178

Michel Roy*

Spring has arrived, but Canada is in a sullen mood.

If political types were to paint Canada's portrait, they might use these sombre tones, striking contrasts and touches of light.

— In the House of Commons John Turner condemned Bill 178, denounced the notwithstanding clause and deplored the "terrible message of intolerance" that the Quebec National Assembly had sent to the rest of Canada.

— Even the Prime Minister stigmatized the notwithstanding clause, blamed his predecessor for it and declared that the Constitution, with that clause, is not worth the paper it's printed on.

— Robert Bourassa, in response to criticism from the English-language press, who dislike both Bill 178 and the notwithstanding clause and aren't much more enamoured of the Meech Lake accord, told English editors to accept their responsibilities. Speaking in Toronto, the Quebec premier enjoined his black-tie audience and the country as a whole: "Wake up, Canada! Stop saying things that harm national unity!"

— Jean Chrétien told a business group in the Outaouais that he can't understand why the people of Quebec were so courageous in November when they approved free trade and so cowardly in December over the sign issue.

— New Brunswick Premier Frank McKenna fears we may revert to the age of "two solitudes", the exact opposite of Pierre Trudeau's vision of Canada over the past 20 years, with Quebec becoming essentially French-speaking and the other provinces mainly English-speaking. Mr. McKenna told the Canadian Club of Montreal that the

Meech Lake accord and the notwithstanding clause are a threat to Canadian unity. To break the stalemate, he proposed nothing less than a royal commission of inquiry such as that conducted by André Laurendeau and Davidson Dunton in the 1960s.

— A commission of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba traveled throughout that province to hear Manitobans' reactions to Meech Lake, which Winnipeg is being asked to ratify, and learned that 90% are opposed to it and many are hostile toward Quebec.

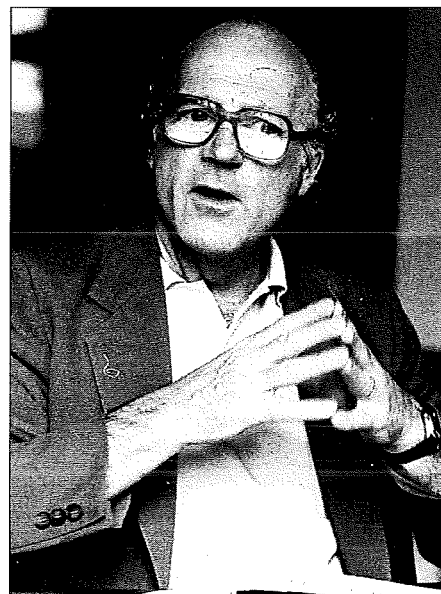
— Jean-Claude Malépart, Liberal MP for Montréal-Sainte-Marie, spoke out in the Commons against those who criticized Premier Bourassa for using the notwithstanding clause to pass Bill 178. He defied party leader John Turner on the issue and deplored the position taken by Prime Minister Mulroney.

— The Commissioner of Official Languages, D'Iberville Fortier, said Bill 178 is not a real threat to Quebec Anglophones, but admitted that their demographic importance is in constant decline. He spoke of "fundamental rights," and would rather have seen Quebec opt for the solution proposed by the Supreme Court, namely, bilingual signs with French predominating.

— A new political party, the Equality Party, has been founded in Quebec to defend the rights and freedoms of the Anglophone community and other minorities.

— At the tip of the Gaspé Peninsula, members of an old English-speaking community vigorously demonstrated their opposition to Bill 178 during a visit by Premier Bourassa. The premier and his government, they said, are erecting an ever-growing wall between Anglophones and Francophones, of which the topmost stone is marked "178".

— Over the last three months, articles by academics and intellectuals in English Canada deploring and condemning Quebec's "violation of fundamental rights" since Bill 178 was adopted have appeared nation-wide. D.C. Donderi, an associate professor of psychology at McGill University, in an icy article in the *Montreal Gazette* of April 17, said that Bill 178 divides the world into two parts: the English provinces and the rest of the western world on one side, and Quebec on the other.



Michel Roy

— A meeting in Montebello in mid-April to reflect calmly on the Liberal Party's future showed that there were significant ideological differences and deep divisions among Grit thinkers on the major issues confronting Canada. The split over Bill 178 was obvious. Anglophones expressed virtually unshakeable opposition to the Meech Lake agreement, while Francophones considered the accord a key to their very existence. Former minister Serge Joyal even said that Liberal Party opposition to Meech Lake would be "an error as damaging as the hanging of Louis Riel."

Gloomy forecast

This impressionistic — at times surrealistic — portrait remains unfinished, but we can plainly see that dark clouds have been gathering since the end of 1988. The cause is clear: the passing of a law which reaffirms that exterior commercial signs shall be in French only, notwithstanding the freedom of

*Michel Roy is a former Editor-in-Chief of Montreal's *La Presse* and *Le Devoir*.

expression provisions of the Canadian and Quebec charters. But in addition to Bill 178, we must also blame the Meech Lake accord — whose actual terms are not widely known — for raising English-Canadian hackles against Quebec, which is thought to have an insatiable thirst for power. That is why some commentators in the English provinces, to whom the problems of coexistence seem irreconcilable, give vague expression to a substantial body of opinion, undoubtedly based more on reflex than on reflection, by suggesting, insinuating or stating outright that it may be better, all things considered, to let Quebec separate.

The old malaise

People in Quebec over 50 years of age are convinced: Canada's old malaise, which has returned so many times since 1867, has set in once more. Anglophone opinion — in the form of concern, worry or hostility — is again turning against the stubborn Francophone community, against Quebec, the inscrutable element which always gets its way! The signs are unmistakable. One has only to read the letters to the editor, or, if one lives in Montreal, to listen to English-speaking residents or speak to shopkeepers in the English neighbourhoods. There are rumblings of discontent and incomprehension is rife. The forecast calls for more of the same: misunderstanding, exasperation, prejudice and mistrust.

Instinctive reaction

The deterioration of the social and political climate causes concern, worry, and even feelings of guilt in some political circles and a few intellectual groups. To understand what is really going on, one must realize that Quebecers' attachment to their language and culture grows stronger when they perceive a threat to these elements, even when no real threat exists. It is an instinctive reaction that borders on the irrational and which the Quebec government, especially a Liberal government suspected of being soft on the language issue, could not even hope to quell. For this reason, despite the party program and Mr. Bourassa's promises to the Anglophone minority in 1985, the government would have signed its own death warrant in 1988 if it had accepted bilingual signs with French predominating. Such a policy would, however, have been accepted by the majority if it had been adopted by the Parti Québécois in 1984 or even by the Liberals on their return to power in

1985. But, fuelled by militant movements for the defence of the French language, the dispute was inflamed to such an extent that nationalists and students — eager to jump on any bandwagon — would have regarded the slightest tempering of Bill 101 as a treasonous act. Nervousness and tension in the media, which were already alluding to social and political crisis in the wake of the Supreme Court decision, created real fear in the minds of most people.

Nervousness and tension in the media created fear in the minds of most people.

Uncertainty

Their many differences aside, intellectual, academic, labour and political groups in Quebec generally insist that fundamental freedoms must be respected. If the use of the notwithstanding clause had deprived the Anglophone community and other minorities of a "fundamental freedom", Quebecers would have reacted differently, despite the primacy of collective rights over individual rights when the security and existence of the Francophone community are at risk.

It is the very conception of the learned justices of the Supreme Court, that is, their debatable interpretation of the relationship between freedom of expression and the freedom to post signs, that creates doubt and disappointment in the minds of Quebecers. In the Canadian and Quebec Charters, freedom of expression has always pertained to intellectual and religious communication, artistic creation, political discussion and writing, and cultural and social activity.

On December 20, 1988, while defending Bill 178 in the National Assembly on behalf of the Bourassa government, Claude Ryan pointed out that "commercial expression, that is, promoting and advertising goods and services for profit, is in my opinion a matter of freedom to do business rather than freedom of expression *per se*."

Limits

Mr. Ryan, the minister responsible for implementing the Charter of the French Language, addressed Quebec's Anglophone community again on March 15: "Despite what you may hear, don't believe for a moment that your freedom to express yourselves, form associations, demonstrate your convictions, criticize your governments or defeat them in an election was infringed or threatened in the slightest....The quality of life which we enjoy here in Quebec necessarily implies an acceptance of certain limitations on the freedoms to which we have grown accustomed. But, until now, the freedom to which these limitations applied with respect to language were always considered historical freedoms whose terms can be adapted to changing circumstances. To my knowledge, at least in the recent past, they have never been true fundamental freedoms."

That was the reply of the government of Quebec to those who criticize it for infringing a fundamental freedom. The minister believes that the obligation to use French only on signs constitutes a reasonable exception under Section 1 of the Charter, which provides that the rights and freedoms set out therein are subject to such limits as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.

But as Canada's highest court, in their philosophical and sociological perspective, declared that freedom of commercial expression has the same import as freedom of expression, the only course open to the government of Quebec was to invoke the notwithstanding clause and, in so doing, affirm the supremacy of parliamentary democracy over the courts with regard to major political and cultural issues. That is why the notwithstanding clause exists, to serve as a safety valve in a changing society.

But should we not always defer to the decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada? "Since the charters were adopted," replied Professor Henri Brun, Dean of Law at Laval University in Quebec City, "that is no longer possible. The Supreme Court now exercises a highly political role, and this fact can only alter the manner in which individuals and groups view that institution. In this case, it would have been dangerously frustrating for the people of Quebec if the notwithstanding clause had not existed or had not been used to nullify the effect of a decision which confuses apples with oranges. In the name of social order, it was necessary to invoke the notwithstanding clause." ■

Montreal and Quebec's English-Speaking Community

Gretta Chambers*

For the usefulness of a viable English-speaking community to be recognized, it must find a power base. Its only venue is Montreal. It will be influenced by the shape and substance of what Montreal becomes.

The foreseeable future of Quebec's English-speaking community is assured in some form or other. There is too much of English Canada invested in Quebec for it to disappear even in the medium term. Generations of English-speaking Quebecers have indelibly marked this province. The political nationalism of the last 20 years has shaken but not dislodged an Anglophone community whose self-image is one of belonging and building. No matter how French Quebec becomes, its English fact will not willingly give up its stake in the province. What kind of a future it can expect, however, will depend on how adaptable it is willing to be and how persuasive it is capable of becoming. It will also be influenced by the shape and substance of what Montreal becomes. And then there is the demographic problem.

English-speaking Quebecers aren't having any more babies than their Francophone compatriots. Their relative demographic weight within the province is shrinking as immigrants are channelled through language laws into the French-speaking majority. Unless the Anglophone birth rate rises or reinforcements from English Canada come to its rescue, English Quebec won't be able to count on its numbers to keep it in fighting-for-survival trim.

Power

Although there are similarities between Quebec's demographic relationship to Canada and English Quebec's to

French Quebec, there is also a basic difference. Canada, for all the spasms of resentment that sometimes overcome English Canadians, knows it needs Quebec to secure its own distinctiveness. Quebec is very much part of its "a mare usque ad mare" vision of itself. Quebec's power within Canada is political in more than the sense of electoral numbers. French Quebec, on the other hand, would rather not need English Quebec. English Quebec's power within Quebec has not been political in nature for generations. The government of Quebec has been controlled by the French-speaking majority since well before Confederation. English-speaking Quebecers have traditionally taken little interest in provincial political power. Their power, and it was considerable, was economic. Once Francophone Quebecers moved into the economic sphere *en masse*, taking mandatory use of their language along with them, Quebec Anglophonia suddenly appeared to lose its *raison d'être*. Francophones, as they became more and more involved in all facets of Quebec's economy, seemed almost to be echoing the words of the musical "Annie Get Your Gun": "anything you can do, we can do better."

A heterogeneous amalgam

Quebec's English-speaking community has come to view itself as a heterogeneous amalgam of people whose lingua franca is English and who therefore need and are entitled to social, health and government services in their language because of the status of English as an official Canadian language. Quebec Anglophones come together around their institutions. It is when those institutions look threatened that they tend to speak with one voice. And it is those

very institutions that have come to be seen as a threat in some quarters of French Quebec.

Generally speaking, Francophones do not yet see English Quebec as a diffuse, apolitical, strictly linguistic alliance. They still tend to be influenced by Quebec's historical English fact. Long-established English institutions are viewed as poles of attraction for immigrants and as reminders of past economic and cultural dominance.

Since the coming of age of Francophone affirmation with the Quiet Revolution and the drive to become "maîtres chez nous", French Quebec's political and intellectual leadership has encouraged the notion that English Quebec's essence is now irrelevant to the development of Quebec society. It is as though French Quebec were still haunted by the Conquest and determined to once and for all reduce its effects to as minimal significance as possible. Admitting that collectively Anglophones can play a valuable supporting role in the evolution of the "distinct society" is not a concession Francophones, collectively, are as yet prepared to make.

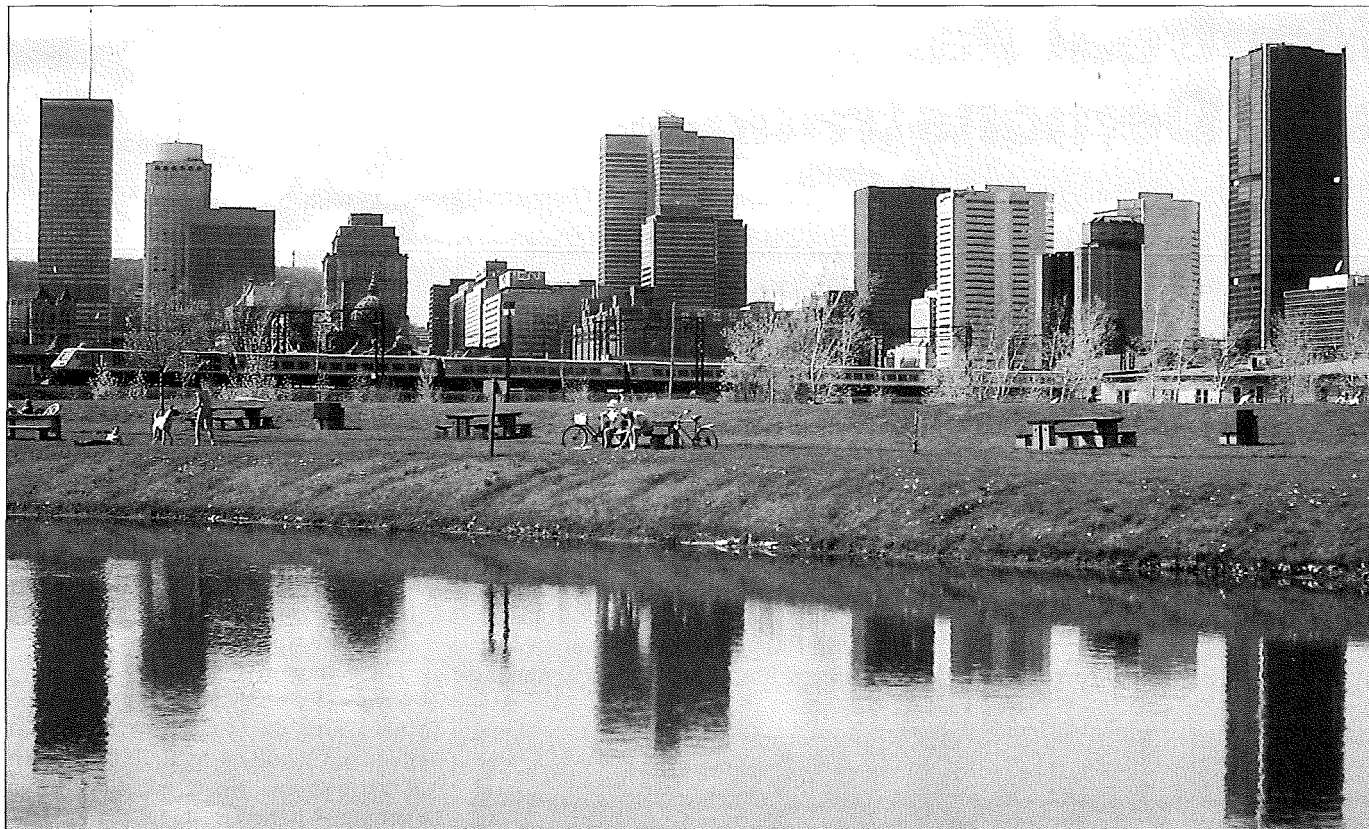
What Quebec Anglophones lack at the moment is power. No amount of accommodation short of total silence would, of itself, be sufficient to completely win the confidence of the French-speaking majority. English Quebec finds itself in a quandary. Is it to become simply another traditional linguistic minority, banking on constitutional guarantees, when they cannot be overridden, to protect its acquired rights, using its influence, where numbers warrant, to elect the odd member of the National Assembly or House of Commons? Or is it to broaden its horizons and find a provincial vocation for itself?

If English-speaking Quebecers were not plunged in a kind of political identity crisis brought on by Premier Bourassa's decision not to fully honour the Supreme Court ruling on the language of commercial signs, the future of their community would seem much better assured. The debate surrounding Bill 178 has thrown up a lot of historical resentments and latter-day insecurities that cloud the outlook. But, on the ground, English- and French-speaking Quebecers work together and are doing so better and better every year.

A Montreal culture

There is the beginning of what one might call a "Montreal culture" which is getting to be more and more inclusive

*Gretta Chambers is a Montreal journalist, broadcaster and political commentator.



rather than holding to the exclusive, English here, French there, mindset of the past. This trend towards individual inclusion is important to foster not only for the eventual collective good of the English-speaking community but also for the development of Montreal.

Montreal is the centre of Quebec's English fact. It is also the motor of the province's economy and cultural dynamism. As Montreal goes, so goes the province. Quebec Anglophones have an enormous stake in Montreal. If they can lay claim to it, they will be doing themselves and the province a huge favour. The list of things that need doing in Montreal is too long to go into here. Suffice it to say that an Anglophone presence, as opposed to the English fact, is not seen as an intrusion in business circles. As long as the English do not try to take all the room, growing numbers of Francophones are beginning to see their usefulness in extending Quebec's scope into the English-speaking world that Quebec needs for markets, ideas, know-how, technology, all manner of modern-day interchange.

But in order for the usefulness of a viable English-speaking community to be recognized, it must find a power base. Its only venue is Montreal. The trouble is Montreal has very little power over itself.

Unfortunately, in Canada cities are

the creatures of provincial governments. Those which are not capitals and therefore do not enjoy seat-of-government status have to fight harder for their own identity. Montreal has, over the years, slipped more and more under the tutelage of the government of Quebec. And that is what is going to have to change if the city is ever to be the world player it has the human and material resources to become. This fact is being borne in to Francophone Montrealers with every passing day. Becoming a power in its own right will be a political battle in which Anglophones can be just as instrumental as Francophones, their goals and motivations being similar.

The common enemy of English- and French-speakers who want to get on with developing Montreal-the-international-city is undoubtedly the bureaucratic mentality of a Quebec City view of Quebec society, that it must retain a kind of cultural purity or else be doomed to debilitation if not outright disappearance. It is an elitist attitude repeated so often by public opinion makers that it has somehow become conventional wisdom.

It is very much in the interests of Quebec Anglophones that Greater Montreal wield the balance of power rather than leaving it in the parochial clutches of regulators wary of a city whose past they see as too English and

present as too multicultural. If Montreal weighed its economic and cultural worth on the scales of Quebec politics, English Quebec would not be an endangered species because of a hostile environment.

English and French have proven they can work together effectively in the administrations of the Montreal Urban Community. What is now needed is a common vision for the city, one which puts its needs, requirements and future first, not the protection of linguistic turfs.

In that context, English Quebec could develop a power base. It would assume a promotional role rather than being constantly cast as the misfit (*empecheur de tourner en rond*). And just as Francophone minorities across the country began to do much better as soon as French Quebec became a force to contend with, so the outlying reaches of English Quebec, the off-Island communities on the South Shore, the Eastern Townships, the Outaouais and, elsewhere, the Gaspé, would benefit. They would have someone of their own at court, provided of course Montrealers at large can negotiate their own unity and manage to gain some control over the Island's infrastructures and operations.

If Montreal ever again lives up to its potential, there will be room for everyone. ■

Montreal Parades and Demonstrations

Hal Winter

*Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat.*

Rudyard Kipling

Nor did they collide, those marching factions from East and West, that bright spring Saturday on the streets of Montreal.

From the traditional Francophone bastion of the city's East End filed 60,000 protesters chanting slogans

under wind-whipped fleur de lis banners, streaming westwards with a warning: "Quebec must be French, in body and soul...".

That same March 12 afternoon, thousands more Montreal citizens from the West End Anglophone enclaves took to the streets, not to protest but to uphold

a tradition they see as a constant in a society convulsed with change.

The Francophone rally — organized by the militant Mouvement Québec Français — was to castigate Premier Robert Bourassa for "undermining" Quebec's Charter of the French Language with his Bill 178 "inside-outside" legislation on signage.

The West End march — nothing more than Montreal's time-honoured St. Patrick's Day Parade — began to be seen by some as a sort of counter-protest by the embattled Irish and their friends, a somewhat pathetic reminder that "Hey...we're still here, too."

Although along different routes, these two marches were on convergent paths. And there was the inevitable speculation about what would happen should there be a face-to-face confrontation of apparently antithetical ideologies.

But there was no clash.

The language protesters, reinforced by a solid contingent of students from Université du Québec à Montréal, ended at Champ-de-Mars in the shadow of the balcony where, one fateful July evening, Charles de Gaulle added his famous "Vive le Québec libre" contribution to the political turmoil of the 1960s.

Here they demanded not merely a halt to any further erosion of Bill 101 by Supreme Court decision and legislation in compliance, but an unequivocal return to the hardline French-only doctrines of the Parti Québécois framers of the original Charter.

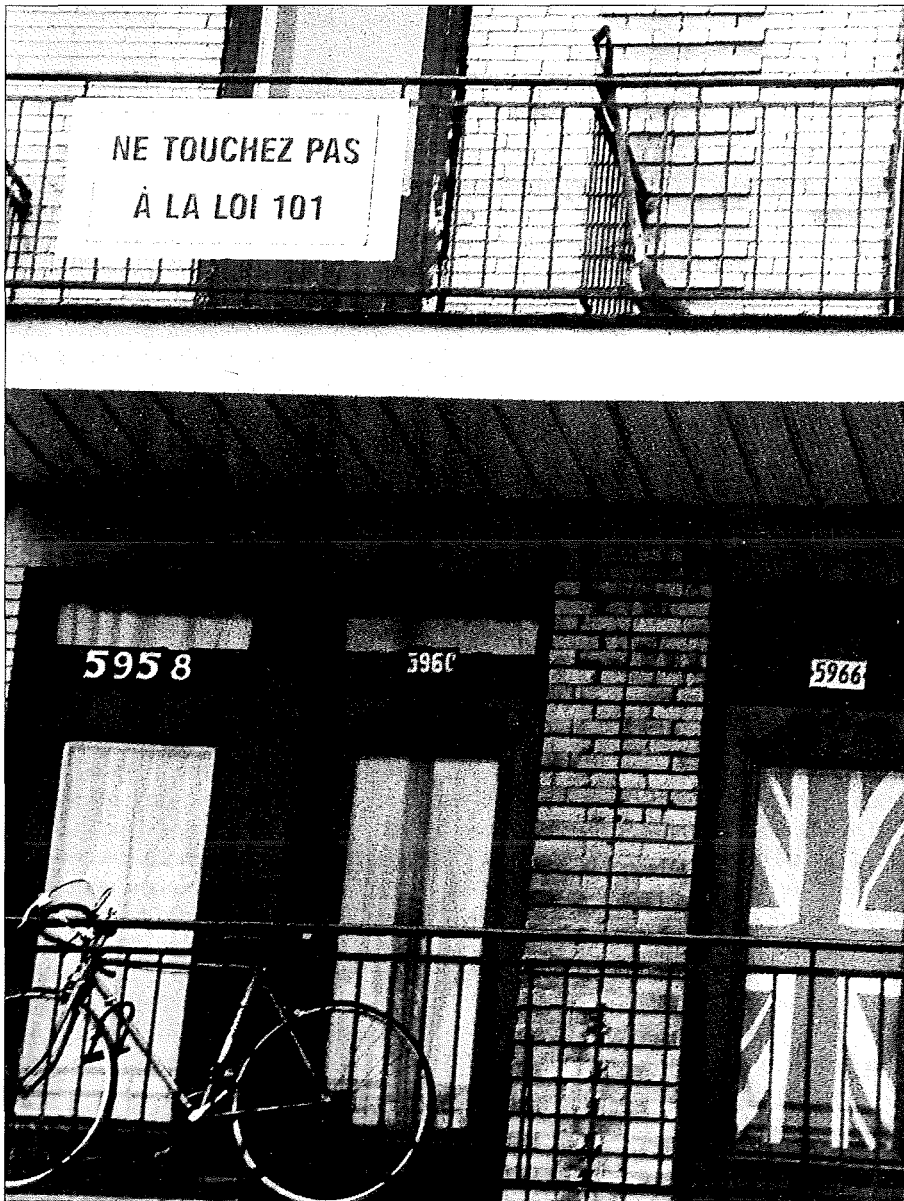
The oratory failed to match the lofty rhetoric of de Gaulle. But Opposition Leader Jacques Parizeau indicated in near-tearful television interviews that the march was indeed a moment of high emotion for all right-thinking Francophone Quebecers.

As for the Irish parade, it sort of ambled along in its old half-amused manner, until marchers and onlookers repaired to wet their nostalgia at local hostleries or impromptu parlour parties.

Old timers couldn't help recalling the more innocent days of a couple of decades ago, when Montreal's two main street events were the March 17 St. Patrick's Day Parade and the June 24 Défilé de la Saint-Jean-Baptiste.

Here, East and West did indeed meet...if only for a season of good-natured intermingling as English- and French-speakers got together to help each other celebrate their patron saints.

But, of course, we've all grown up now. And, along with our neighbours, we've turned our attention to more serious matters. ■



The 1988 Annual Report

Peter Cowan*

The Annual Report reaffirms support for the official language minorities, provides a statistical and analytical overview of their present situation and assesses the strengths and weaknesses of bilingualism at the federal level.

The Commissioner of Official Languages' 1988 Annual Report is a watershed between the first two decades of promoting official bilingualism and the language policies that should apply as we move towards the next century.

Canada is a very different society from what it was when the first Official Languages Act was passed in 1969. The fundamental goals of official bilingualism remain, but the 1988 Official Languages Act lays the foundation for policies tailored to a changing society. D'Iberville Fortier's Report suggests the course to follow.

In a section entitled "Blueprint for Action: Key to the Future", Fortier discusses how, in his view, the Meech Lake accord provides the basis for the federal government and the provinces to reinforce the standing of official language minorities.

Guidelines for government

He stresses that the cabinet-approved regulations that will give practical effect to the new Official Languages Act must be carefully crafted and enacted soon.

"Our thesis is that, however improved the 1988 Official Languages Act may be in relation to earlier legislation, it is not likely to bring about substantial change unless the promotional nature of its Preamble is fully reflected in the leadership, spirit, management, structures and rules that will give to it its full meaning," writes Fortier.

He suggests broad guidelines for the government to follow and draws attention to new issues — such as the

*Peter Cowan is an Ottawa-based public affairs consultant who, as a journalist, has followed the evolution of bilingualism since the early 1960s.

Canada-United States Free Trade deal and privatization — that will affect language policy.

Unfortunately, so much attention has been focused on the admittedly important issue of how Fortier perceives the fortunes of Quebec's English-speaking minority that the blueprint has been denied the wide public examination it merits.

First there was last year's imbroglio over the use of some words in the summary of the 1987 Report. Then, the Supreme Court made its ruling on Bill 101's provisions affecting commercial signs. Premier Robert Bourassa invoked the notwithstanding clause and his government passed Bill 178, limiting bilingual signs to the inside of commercial establishments and angering both the English-language minority and nationalists.

Many wondered if Fortier would back down on Quebec's English-speaking minority, or endorse the use of the notwithstanding clause. He did neither.

His tone on the English-speaking minority in Quebec was different and some commentators, especially French-language journalists and nationalist leaders, claimed wrongly that he had softened his previous stand.

On minority language rights, Fortier is consistent with his past positions. The Annual Report offers thoughtful analysis of the situation of Canada's official language minorities. Fortier stresses the differences of the respective challenges facing French-speaking Canadians outside Quebec and English-speaking Canadians in Quebec, illustrated by case studies of the Francophone community in Welland, Ontario, and the Anglophones of Quebec's Eastern Townships.

He does conclude that the English language is not threatened in Quebec, but adds, "This, however, does not

mean that the community that speaks it, for whatever reasons, is not threatened."

He makes the point that Quebec's English-speaking community is weakened by demographics that work against it. And, Fortier writes, it would have been preferable for Premier Robert Bourassa to ensure "the predominance of French without resorting to the notwithstanding clause limiting fundamental rights."

The basic goals of official bilingualism remain, but the 1988 Official Languages Act lays the foundation for language policies tailored to a changing society. It strengthens the Commissioner's hand by emphasizing his ombudsman's role and expands his ability to use the legal system to redress language grievances.

Ombudsmanship

Throughout the Report Fortier makes clear his resolve to be an ombudsman first and foremost.

He stresses the importance of the federal role, through such institutions as the Department of the Secretary of State, in encouraging the provinces and supporting them in programs to bolster official language minorities.

The chapter on complaints is replete with horror stories. In discussing the federal Public Service, he identifies the areas of strength and weakness and deftly explodes the myth, current in some circles, that Francophones have taken over the federal bureaucracy.

In these respects, Fortier is true to the traditions established by his predecessors.

Blueprint

The fresh thrust is in the "Blueprint for Action". While conceding that the final form of the Act's regulations and application are up to the government, Fortier proposes:

- that regulations reflecting the Act's letter and spirit be adopted promptly;
- that a continuing communications program be established for Canadians generally, as well as federal government managers and employees, so that all are aware of government policy, their rights and responsibilities;
- that adequate financial resources be allocated to language programs;
- that the federal government do follow-up studies to ensure its policies and practices contribute as fully as possible to the Act's objectives;



- that the federal government conduct continuing studies on the impact of privatization on provision of service in both official languages to ensure progress is maintained and language policy obligations are respected;
- that the federal government, in co-operation with the government of Quebec and other interested parties, conduct regular studies of free trade's impact on French language and culture in Canada and take needed corrective measures;
- that support be given to federal cultural agencies in their protection and promotion of Canada's linguistic and cultural identity;
- that measures be taken to ensure the greatest possible harmonization of national commitments undertaken in the fields of official languages and government policy on multiculturalism;
- that the federal government, at one of the next constitutional conferences, propose to the provinces a formula to support the development of official language minorities across Canada. The formula would reduce current imbalances in the status of English and French by extending services to minorities in the appropriate language.

Government determination to privatize, either by contracting out work or by selling off Crown corporations, creates new challenges in ensuring respect for language rights.

Free trade will affect Canadians' lives profoundly. The suggestion that its impact on French be monitored is timely.

The proposal for a constitutional formula to ensure that the rights of official language minorities are respected is long overdue.

Furthermore, as we move into a period of change, a continuing communications program to make Canadians aware of their rights and obligations under the new Act is appropriate.

Fortier's Annual Report reaffirms support for official language minorities. It provides a statistical and analytical overview of where they stand. It assesses the strengths and weaknesses of bilingualism at the federal level. It tells us where we are now by reminding us of our successes and failures with bilingualism during the past two decades.

But, most important, it points the way from here. ■

The Press and the Annual Report

Tom Sloan

*And diff'ring judgements serve but to declare
That truth lies somewhere, if we knew but where.*

The words of poet William Cowper apply well to the reactions of Canadian editorialists to the 1988 Annual Report of the Commissioner of Official Languages. They ranged from the cynical and querulous to almost the adulatory. Whatever the reaction, much attention was given to a comparison between this year's handling of Quebec's treatment of its Anglophone minority, compared to last year's, when the Report made the general observation that, in order to promote French, it was unnecessary to humble English. Quebec legislators officially censured the Commissioner for the statement, which they called an unwarranted attack on the province's language policies.

Minority Anglophones

One of the cynics was George Springate in the *Montreal Daily News*. "Once bitten twice shy...Canada's official languages commissioner was whipped into line last year when the Quebec National Assembly officially rebuked him...he is now nothing more than a weak and mild civil servant. He has lost his bite." The *Toronto Star* agreed: "...the watchdog has been cowed." To Adrien Cantin of Ottawa's *Le Droit* it was "the report of a scalded cat...It is a timid and declawed paw that he points at the federal government and the provinces."

Writing in Montreal's *La Presse*, Pierre Vennat took a slightly different line. "This time, Mr. Fortier has tried to show a greater sense of nuance." But it was precisely the nuances that bothered the *Edmonton Sun*. "Fortier's report states that although English is not threatened in Quebec, Anglophones themselves may feel endangered. The inference is that while the language itself must be treated with kid gloves, the people who speak it can be harassed, humiliated and deprived of their constitutional rights."

In diametric opposition was the *Ottawa Citizen*. "With the same frankness that landed him in hot water last year...the commissioner analyzes the stakes and forces in play as Premier Robert Bourassa's Bill 178 tries to square the circle of individual and collective language rights."

Taking a similar position was the *Montreal Gazette*. "Although the commissioner was momentarily flustered" by last year's events, "he did not lose his head to the point of repudiating those words, which remain as pertinent today as they were last year."

When it came to the more general questions raised in the Report concerning minority rights across the country, there was also a sometimes sharp divergence of views, particularly in the West.

Minority Francophones

On one side was the *Victoria Times-Colonist*, which said flatly that the Commissioner was "guilty of soft-peddalling Quebec's repression of Anglophone rights and...unfairly harsh in his criticism of Saskatchewan and Alberta." To the editorialist, considering the small number of Francophones involved, for the two provinces to be doing more for French would be a "wasteful exercise". As for the future, "Full acceptance and use of the two languages will only come about as an evolutionary process, and only if Canadians are willing to embrace the idea; governments will never successfully impose bilingualism, no matter how hard they try or how much money they spend."

Opposing this view were the *Edmonton Journal* and the *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*. The *Journal* wrote: "Bilingualism is not being forced down the throats of Albertans. Instead, the small Francophone presence...is in a fragile and threatened state. Canadians who believe that the country owes its past

and its future to the shared enterprise of the two founding cultures will join with Fortier in looking for a national leadership that seems lacking at present." Both papers specifically endorsed the call for quick action. In an editorial entitled "Fortier's Comments Should Be Heeded", the *Star-Phoenix* said: "Fortier's call for a national examination of conscience and a constitutional conference aimed at expanding services to official language minorities is certainly timely. Otherwise, the inclination to point at repression in one area to justify backward measures in another will become a self-sustaining evil."

"Is anyone out there listening?"

And, from the *Ottawa Citizen*: "He offers a practical and thoughtful blueprint for revitalizing the entire official languages program."

Praise from a Quebec perspective came from Paul-André Comeau, Editor-in-Chief of Montreal's *Le Devoir*: "In recognizing the menace that hangs over the French language in Quebec, the Commissioner refuses to equate the situation of the Anglophone minority in Quebec with that of the Francophone diaspora in the rest of the country. He explicitly recognizes the asymmetrical character of the relations between these two language groups in Canada."

For Martine Corriveau of Quebec's *Le Soleil*, the main lesson of the Report is that to survive outside Quebec, Francophones depend on bilingualism. "Fortunately, Francophone Canadians learn and speak English. Because, if we had to count on the country's Anglophones, Canadian bilingualism would be a farce."

Help!

From Alberta came a cry of distress — from *Le Franco Albertain*, an Edmonton-based weekly, and its editor Guy Lacombe: "The annual report of Mr. Fortier seems to us to be a complete and honest analysis, but Franco Albertans cannot find in it the consolation they might have needed for the trials and repressions they have had to undergo during the last two years. This document does, however, offer them a new opportunity to cry 'Help'. But is there anyone out there listening?" ■

Defence of French in Aid of the Universal*

The issue of language goes to the heart of our identity and its fate is bound up with that of Quebec. This may be true of any people, but all the more clearly — and perhaps sadly — for us, because of our history and the context in which we must pursue our collective adventure. There are various indications that in the debate on the language of commercial signage, public opinion had a perhaps confused but deep sense that language policy formed a unity with its own dynamic, its own requirements, the various elements of which are equally necessary because they are interdependent. Such an awareness calls for a perseverance in action and a consistency in behaviour that we have not always shown. We are more given to demonstrations and petitions than to daily efforts at the grassroots level, more responsive to the fervour of large gatherings than inclined to the humble plodding of the everyday, as disposed to dejection as to enthusiasm, and constantly wavering between zeal and inertia.

Language policy is fundamentally a policy of identity and therefore embraces all aspects of community life in a demanding pattern that has cultural implications. These implications entail choices, the first of which, for us today, concerns our will to endure as a people, in other words, a rapid and significant increase in our birth rate. Otherwise we shall be fighting only rear-guard actions. To proclaim one's desire for a French Quebec without being distressed by the falling birth rate, without calling for a vigorous policy to increase it and making this a priority, is to show a formidable degree of inconsistency. Where will we find tomorrow's speakers of this language that we claim to defend, and, through it, the culture for which it serves as a vehicle, the identity it expresses? While immigration (if it is selective and controlled) can serve as a useful adjunct, it can in no sense constitute the response to the demographic crisis (and to the other crises, one of which is translation). A people endures

and persists by itself. It has already given up if it entrusts the responsibility for its perpetuation to someone else.

Consistency in behaviour in language matters also embraces concern for the quality of the language and the respect that one has for it. In this regard, it is cause for regret that, 10 or 12 years ago, Bill 101 was not complemented by another law concerned with the quality of French and dealing primarily with education, but also with the administration and public services in general. In this connection, we salute the initiatives taken last year by the Minister of Education and hope that they mark the start of a long-term reform. There is also cause for rejoicing in the new awareness, albeit tardy, of the universities and colleges, and in the initial measures designed, at least, to halt the process of degradation.

In addition to acknowledging, by making fundamental choices and in daily action, that the future of the people of Quebec is dependent on the health of the language, it is necessary to place this continuing struggle in a universal context, as part of a struggle in which most languages and cultures are now involved. For the major issue, the vital concern on a worldwide scale in the years to come, will be the preservation of cultural identities in the face of the accelerating trend toward uniformity. Europe itself, Western Europe, is witnessing the rising peril and finds itself on the front line. We shall discover once again, too late perhaps, that true internationalism lies in the selfless complicity of passionate homelands and unique cultures. The preservation of cultural diversity is the first condition for the freedom of peoples, as well as of individuals. It is the only way of checking a novel form of vassalization and preventing a kind of spiritual desert. The future will see a confrontation between uniformity and universality. ■

**Excerpt from a text by Jean-Marc Léger, a political scientist, journalist and senior official of the Quebec Department of Education.*

A Wealth of Information



The Commissioner has taken several initiatives recently to keep you up to date on official languages matters. Print, advertising and audio-visual materials have been used to meet the information needs of Canadians.

A variety of products is available to make it easier to understand the 1988 Official Languages Act. Included are two brochures, a synopsis of the Act and copies of the Act itself.

One brochure, "The New Official Languages Act", is aimed at the general public while the other, "The New Official Languages Act and the Minority Communities", explains how the Commissioner, acting as a linguistic ombudsman, protects the language rights of our official language groups.

The Annual Report is an invaluable source of information on yearly news, needs and progress in official language matters. Three extracts from the Report for 1988 — "Second-Language Instruction: Building Bridges", "Language Rights: The Living Tree" and "The Minorities: Letter and Spirit" — are handy reference documents.

25,000 complaints!

That's how many the Office of the Commissioner has received since 1970. An extract from *Language and Society* No. 26 carries the Commissioner's editorial, in which he discusses his role as a linguistic ombudsman, gives examples of types of complaints received by his Office, and lists addresses and telephone numbers of the Commissioner's offices and liaison officers.

Ads and supplements

The Commissioner has set in motion a campaign to inform Canadians about the new Official Languages Act. Three ads were placed in the English-language and French-language press and supplements on the Act — developed in co-operation with the Association of Quebec English Media and the Association de la presse francophone hors Québec — were distributed through minority official language newspapers across Canada.

Seeing is believing

A new video, "Two Languages, One Country", also explains the Act. This useful tool for information sessions, classrooms and training and other workshop settings combines live footage, animation and lively graphics. A humorous animated map of Canada leads viewers through history, explains rights and obligations and introduces the Commissioner. The video is available in English and French and is accompanied by a user's guide.



Agendas and murals

Young Canadians merit special attention. The award-winning Agenda has been re-designed for distribution through the school system to 16-year-olds this fall.

Another video, "The Magic Mural", will delight pre-eights with the adventures of Julie and Daniel, animated characters who learn to communicate and become friends though neither speaks the other's language. The 10-minute video, brainchild of Hinton Animation Studios, creators of the "Racoons" television series, also comes with a user's guide.

Need more information?

Call the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, Ottawa, at (613) 992-LANG, or use these toll-free numbers:

Atlantic Office:

1-800-561-7109

Quebec Office:

1-800-363-0628

Ontario Office:

1-800-387-0635

Manitoba and Saskatchewan Office:

1-800-665-8731

Alberta, British Columbia,
Northwest Territories and Yukon Office:
1-800-661-3642.

**For a complete list of our materials,
see the insert included in this issue.**

The Fragile Balance of Franco-Ontarian Culture

Five provinces have arts councils that grant funds to artists and art institutions, but the Ontario Arts Council is the only one with a section designed particularly to support French culture. The Franco-Ontarian Office was formed in 1970 in response to the St. Denis Report of the previous year, a study prompted by the fact that only six Francophone groups had applied for funding since the founding of the Council in 1963.

Language and Society's Sarah Hood spoke with Jeanne Sabourin, the Franco-Ontarian Officer, about the Council and its role in promoting Franco-Ontarian culture. Sabourin is herself an actress who has played starring roles in works by Federico García Lorca, Michel Tremblay and Tennessee Williams. Her professional background has contributed to her strong views about the role of the artist in the life of the Francophone community.

Language and Society: How does the Franco-Ontarian Office of the Ontario Arts Council work?

Jeanne Sabourin: The first thing I should say about the Council is that it's autonomous. We now receive our budget through the Ministry of Culture and Communications, but the Council existed before the Ministry. It's probably the most autonomous, the most independent agency.

There are six offices in the Council that deal with disciplines like literature and music. The other four are multidisciplinary, and include Art and Education, Community Arts Development and Touring as well as Francophone Affairs. You could say that the Franco-Ontarian Office is like a mini-arts council in that we deal with many disciplines.

There are two basic principles upon which we operate. We have many programs, but they are above all disciplines in which language plays an important part, or else those in which the link between the artist and the institution is vital. For instance, there may be visual artists who have no galleries; there may be playwrights writing scripts, but if there are no theatres...?

With the provincial French Language Services Act, which calls for equal services for Francophones, the whole existence of the Office was brought into question. Now the community itself is saying, No, if there is a specialized program designed particularly for this artistic community, it must continue. But we're looking very closely at the programs. We don't necessarily want to create carbon copies of all the programs offered outside the Office, but we also don't want anyone to be discriminated against. One of the difficulties we run into is that the two populations are very different from the point of view of numbers. The budgets certainly can't be the same. To continue to serve the community well we will be co-operating more internally. There are already models; for example the Touring Office works very closely with us. It could be very interesting.

— *What is the relationship between support for the arts and support for the*

minority official language community?

— What distinguishes Francophones from other Ontarians if it is not language and culture? What remains to us of the 17th century besides Molière, besides the books, the songs? I see all these artistic aspects of life as the fireworks that make things happen. They can be a mirror for us, they can show us the conditions in which we live, but I also believe that for young people it is absolutely necessary that they recognize themselves and that they are able to feel pride in what they are doing here.

Franco-Ontarian culture is just beginning. It's inventing itself, it's recent. Theatre is probably the discipline that is the most developed so far, a discipline in which language plays such an important role. When Franco-Ontarian playwrights are performed in Montreal, the critics tend to analyze the language, which is different from Quebec French, perhaps more American. People often say that the language is more staccato, that the phrases are shorter; rhythmic, but with a very modern rhythm.

What fascinates me in all this is the creator, the creator whose experience is Ontarian. Creation seems to me to be very important for identity. The subject may not always be French-speaking Ontario, although there are some like that, but there are also plays like *Le Chien*, which deals with something above and beyond language. These artists cross over the borders of Ontario. They are being performed in Montreal right now; they reach a much wider audience.

— *What are some of the obstacles that you foresee to the development of French language and culture in Ontario? How will your Office solve them?*

— The creators are mostly urban, and it becomes difficult sometimes to reach Francophones, who are spread out all over the place. It will take sustained efforts and sustained development policies to reach all these people. We must create habits in the potential audience. There is also the possibility of reaching a larger audience, with the students who are in immersion and who eventually may know the language well enough and be interested enough to be able to participate. Nonetheless, our culture is fragile. Our cultural institutions are fragile, and there are not very many of them. I believe it is the artists who are breathing life into our culture. ■

In Cape Breton: A Partial Victory

A group of Francophone parents in Sydney, Nova Scotia, won a partial victory on March 29 in the province's Court of Appeal. A decision overturned, in part, one of last August in which the trial judge ruled that the Court should not intervene unless bad faith, bias or injustice could be demonstrated in the refusal of the minister to allow French-language classes, or a French-language school or facility for approximately 50 children. In the judge's view, this number did not justify the provision of the services requested. The Court of Appeal, however, upheld the initial decision that this number does not justify the setting up of a separate facility.

The Court of Appeal issued an order under Section 24 of the Charter, ruling that the applicants have the right to have their children receive primary and secondary instruction in the language of the Francophone minority of Nova Scotia at public expense. Although the Court does not believe that the number of children justifies the establishment of a French-language facility at present, or its management by the minority or its representatives, it did not rule out the possibility that, should changing circumstances lead to an increase in the number of children, their rights might later extend to having a separate facility.

Although the amendments made to the School Act in 1981 providing for the setting up of Acadian schools establish a distinction and in some respects treat Acadian children differently from those of the Anglophone majority, this distinction does not constitute an inequality or unlawful discrimination against them. The Court agreed, however, with the applicants that the quality of instruction in these schools must be equal to that provided to English-speaking students.

The Court invited the applicants to come before it at a later time for a ruling on any action taken by the province in implementing this decision that might not comply with the Court's stand. This should give them some reassurance. *J.R.*

Education: A Uniform Curriculum in Quebec

The Supreme Court has ruled that school curriculum is a matter of exclusive provincial jurisdiction.

On March 17 in a majority decision, the Supreme Court of Canada dismissed an appeal by four organizations representing the Quebec Protestant school boards that questioned the constitutionality of two Department of Education regulations establishing a uniform curriculum for all non-denominational subjects taught in all schools in Quebec.

The Court ruled that under Section 93(1) of the 1867 Constitution Act the province has exclusive jurisdiction to legislate with respect to education, but that it may not prejudicially affect a right or privilege affecting denominational schools enjoyed by a particular class of persons by law in effect in Lower Canada at the time of the Union. Section 93(1) protects not only the denominational aspects of denominational schools but also the non-denominational aspects which are necessary to give effect to denominational guarantees.

Constitutional right

The regulations in question are within the jurisdiction of the province and respect the constitutional guarantees set out in the section. The Minister has a broad power to establish a pedagogical regime for the pre-schools and elementary and secondary schools in the province. The impugned regulations do not purport to set the content of moral and religious instruction in Protestant schools. They go no further than to include such instruction among the courses deemed compulsory in all schools. By carving out the denominational content of curriculum and leaving it in the hands of the Protestant Committee of the Council, the province has conformed to the law in effect in 1867.

The appellants had also claimed that this constitutional protection extends beyond what is necessary to give effect to denominational guarantees. To this end, they cited as a subsidiary argument

Section 93(2) of the 1867 Constitution Act, which extended to the dissentient schools of Quebec all the powers, privileges and duties conferred or imposed at that time on the separate schools of Upper Canada. But the majority on the Court ruled that Section 93(2) does not itself entrench rights or privileges which existed in either province by law in 1867. Accepting in this case that in 1867 in Upper Canada the exact content of a school's curriculum was by law to be left to the discretion of the separate school trustees, this extended power or privilege did not result in a wider constitutional protection for the appellants.

The substance of the case

Two Justices who dissented on this point nonetheless reached the same conclusion as the other four on the substance of the case. Deciding that the Court is required under Section 93(2) of the Constitution Act to measure the protection afforded by law to separate schools in Ontario in 1867 against the protection afforded by law to dissentient schools in Quebec in 1867, they ruled that if these powers were found to be greater in Ontario they would also enjoy constitutional protection in Quebec. The two Justices concluded in the present case, however, that the powers of the separate school boards in Ontario over the curriculum in their schools were subject in 1867 to the overriding regulatory authority of the Council of Public Instruction, representing the province. In their view also, it is within the power of the Quebec legislature to regulate the powers of dissentient school boards over curriculum, provided that such regulation does not prejudice the denominational character of the denominational schools.

Bill 107

This decision comes at an opportune time, just as Quebec is preparing to ask, in a reference to its Court of Appeal,

for a ruling on the constitutionality of Bill 107, which was passed December 23 but has not yet been proclaimed. This law is intended to replace the denominational structure of the system of education with a system of linguistic school boards, while respecting constitutional denominational rights. A different decision would have had the effect of creating a parallel Department of Education for Protestants (mainly Anglophones) and for the other protected school boards (Montreal Catholic School Board, Quebec Catholic School Board, etc.) and of excluding from the pedagogical program of the Department of Education approximately 20% of the students in the province. J.R.

Ontario Honours Laure Rièse

On April 18 Laure Rièse was invested with the Order of Ontario for her outstanding efforts in promoting bilingualism and her distinguished teaching career at Victoria University, which is federated with the University of Toronto. Receiving the award with her were 18 other notable residents of Ontario, including Morley Callaghan and Norman Jewison. Mme. Rièse, who, among other honours, has already received the Order of Canada, was the subject of an article in *Language and Society* last year ("A Fairy Tale in Toronto", No. 23, Summer 1988).

"When I came from Switzerland, which was in 1928, there was very little French in Toronto," says Mme. Rièse. "French was taught at the University of Toronto, certainly, but in English. I taught all my courses in French." She was also the first woman professor at the University to teach modern French literature — including Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Claudel, Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir.

Upon her retirement from teaching, friends asked Mme. Rièse whether she had thoughts of returning to Switzerland, but her answer was no. "Switzerland doesn't need my English, but I can still do things here," she says. "I think I have been able to do things for this country, which has also brought me — I never thought — rewards." S.H.

The Institut Pasteur: Not Immune

In March it was learned that France's prestigious Institut Pasteur had decided to publish its Annales in English only.

On May 21, 1987, in a speech to the 55th Congress of the Association canadienne-française pour l'avancement des sciences (ACFAS), the Commissioner of Official Languages, D'Iberville Fortier, said:

"Can we forget that Pascal, Lavoisier, Claude Bernard, Pasteur, Curie and countless others worked in French when they changed the history of the human race by their methods and discoveries?"

On March 6 we learned that the hundred-year-old Institut Pasteur had decided to change course linguistically. This institute, the most renowned centre of medical research in France, has published *Les annales de l'Institut Pasteur* since 1887. Its management, we were told, had just taken the decision to publish the *Annales* in English only henceforth.

Curiously, reaction in France was long in coming. The first daily newspaper to take note of the decision was *Le Figaro*, which devoted an article to it on March 27. According to Canadian Press, the paper "seemed less disturbed by the event itself than by the sharp reaction to it in Quebec."

Indeed, in Quebec reports emphasized the problems that researchers there have in publishing their research in French. ACFAS, the Conseil de la langue française, the Ligue internationale des scientifiques pour l'usage de la langue française and the Conseil de la science et de la technologie, to mention only a few organizations, could not conceal their surprise and indignation.

"Upon receiving the new French Ambassador to Canada, Mr. Robert Bourassa, expressed his deep concern," *Le Figaro* reported. On March 16 *Le Journal de Montréal* reported the comment of Dr. Arnold Drapeau of the École polytechnique de Montréal: "With the stroke of a pen, this decision

wipes out all the efforts made by the Commission permanente franco-québécoise, which has invested hundreds of thousands of dollars over nearly five years in the creation of international French-language revues such as *Médecine-Science* and *Sciences de l'Eau*."

In an interview published in *La Presse* on March 29, Alain Decaux, the French minister responsible for la Francophonie, acknowledged that the Pasteur affair "would add to the already long record of the insidious but incontestable advance of the English language in France."

Jean-Pierre Rogel wrote in *La Presse* on March 26 that "the sciences may be the Trojan horse of Anglicization." He noted that in the *Science Citation Index*, the bible of advanced research, only 4.5% of the articles were published in French in 1973 and this figure had fallen to 2.3% by 1982, whereas the percentage of those published in English had risen to 88.8%, an increase of eight percentage points.

Still more disturbing, he foresaw a continued increase. According to Mr. Rogel, "the traditional printed medium of scientific revues will one day give way to a computerized medium. Nearly all the data banks are in English...The wheel of Anglicization will therefore turn another notch."

It was learned on April 3 that the Institut Pasteur had decided to continue to accept articles in French, but would uphold its decision to give its publication an English title. Agence France-Presse reported on April 14 the protest by 2,500 members, in 67 countries on five continents, of the Association des écrivains de langue française against the initial decision, which they termed "injurious".

At a press conference in Paris in mid-April the Director of the Institut, Maxime Schwartz, noted that the revue had accepted its first articles in English



in 1973 and that in 1988 only 16 out of 249 manuscripts submitted were in French, even though 125 of them came from French-speaking countries. He also announced that the Institut had decided to advance the date of publication of a new revue entirely in French. The *Annales de l'Institut Pasteur: notes, débats et résumés* will publish abstracts of articles that have already appeared in existing revues, "debates" and "original notes of authors anxious to publish in a French-language revue."

The Canadian government should create workplaces conducive to the use of French.

The editor-in-chief of *Médecine-Sciences*, Dr. Michel Bergeron, spoke of the success of the publication: "Since its foundation in 1985 the number of paid subscribers has increased from 200 to 4,200...a higher figure than for the *Annales*, whose total worldwide circulation is less than a thousand. This shows that the use of English is no guarantee of success." (Of the 1,000 subscribers to the Institut Pasteur's revue, now known as *Research in Microbiology*, there are only about 30 in Canada and eight in Quebec.)

The language or languages of international publication poses serious problems, but there are other problems as well. The use of French in scientific research laboratories and centres of technological innovation is equally important. To give French its rightful place in these settings, "concerted action by the governments of the French-speaking countries is required," Mr. Fortier said in addressing ACFAS. He proposed that the Canadian government, the principal employer in the country in this area, develop a plan to ensure the full participation of French-speaking scientists and that it create workplaces conducive to the use of French in all federal institutions of a scientific and technological character. The report of a federal task force formed after this recommendation was made is to be published shortly. J.C.

The Maurice Lamontagne Institute

Viviane Haerberlé*

Is it possible for a Francophone organization to become a centre of scientific excellence while retaining French as its working language?

The Maurice Lamontagne Institute, located in Mont-Joli near Rimouski, Quebec, brings together three major marine science disciplines: hydrography, biological sciences and physical and chemical sciences. Its objective is to develop a scientific basis for the protection and conservation of Canada's marine resources. The geographical area covered by the Institute's research is immense — it includes the Gulf and estuary of the St. Lawrence River and northern Quebec (James Bay, Hudson Bay, Ungava Bay and the Foxe Basin).

Jean Boulva, Director of the Institute, says, "The rules of the game are simple. The MLI is a French-language research centre. Therefore, all internal communications, whether memorandums, reports or meetings, are in French. It must be clearly understood that supervisors, both Francophones and Anglophones, must speak French with their employees and with Francophones, just as they speak English at the Bedford Oceanographic Institute in Halifax. When the decision to establish the MLI was taken, it was agreed that the language of work would be French in order to give French Canadians the opportunity to find a job in scientific research within their own cultural community. This is not to say that the jobs are reserved for people whose mother tongue is French. On the contrary, the MLI is open to anyone who is prepared to work in French."

Claude Desmeules, the Personnel Adviser, confirms the Institute's openness to non-Francophones. "It has to be that way," he says. "As we speak, we

have a number of research positions to fill by March 31, 1989. These positions are so specialized that we are obliged to recruit on the international level in order to obtain enough candidates. Obviously, a number of them will not know French. As for us, we choose the best. If they agree to come to work at Mont-Joli and to learn French, we will provide them with courses and as much help as they need to enable them to adjust as quickly as possible. In general, a non-Francophone can be expected to get along reasonably well in French at the end of two years."

The language of work

What language is actually used for work at the MLI? I questioned a number of people to find out what place English and French hold in their work.

David Booth, an Anglophone researcher in physical oceanography, studies currents in the coastal zone. He works in French. "It's not too difficult for me," he says, "since I speak French at home." However, most of his own work, such as reading and preparing publications, is done in English. "Ninety per cent of my outside colleagues are English-speaking. I have a colleague in France, but he writes to me in English!"

For Denis Lefaivre, a researcher in physical oceanography, the fact that the Institut is officially a French-language research centre helps to offset the omnipresence of English in international scientific circles. "I find that it makes for a good balance to live in French on a daily basis, in internal communications, and to communicate with most outside colleagues in English. Clearly, the ideal would be always to work to French, but the problem lies not with the MLI but with the world community, where English is becoming increasingly dominant as the preferred language of science."

*Viviane Haerberlé is the publicity officer at the Maurice Lamontagne Institute.

In the Fisheries Research Division, most researchers in other provinces as well as some of the clients of the fisheries sector are Anglophones. Scientists must determine annually, for each commercially exploited species, where, when, how and how much it can be fished without compromising the balance and stability of the resource. This involves missions at sea, surveys of fishermen, consultative meetings and the writing of scientific opinions to serve as the basis for setting fishing quotas for Canadian areas of the Atlantic.

Most of the teams of biologists carry out their missions aboard Fisheries and Oceans research vessels based in Halifax that have English-speaking crews. Réjean Dufour is categorical. "As mission leader, I have no choice. I must be able to communicate with the captain or deck officer, who are unilingual Anglophones."

When Marcel Fréchette, who does research on mollusks, studies the growth and feeding of clams and of cultivated mussels, works at the Institute, whether in the field or in a laboratory, he does so in French. Elsewhere he speaks English, except with his colleagues at Laval University and in Quebec government departments.

Benoit Roberge, an environmental quality technician, appreciates the fact that French is the language of work at the Institute. "I find it interesting to have a French-language working environment in research. There is already the scientific terminology to learn; the fact that things are done in French means that it is not necessary at the same time to learn the scientific terminology of English. Besides, I find that French is very appropriate for science because it is very rich. Its more highly developed vocabulary makes it possible to be more precise, to emphasize information that would be more difficult to express in English."

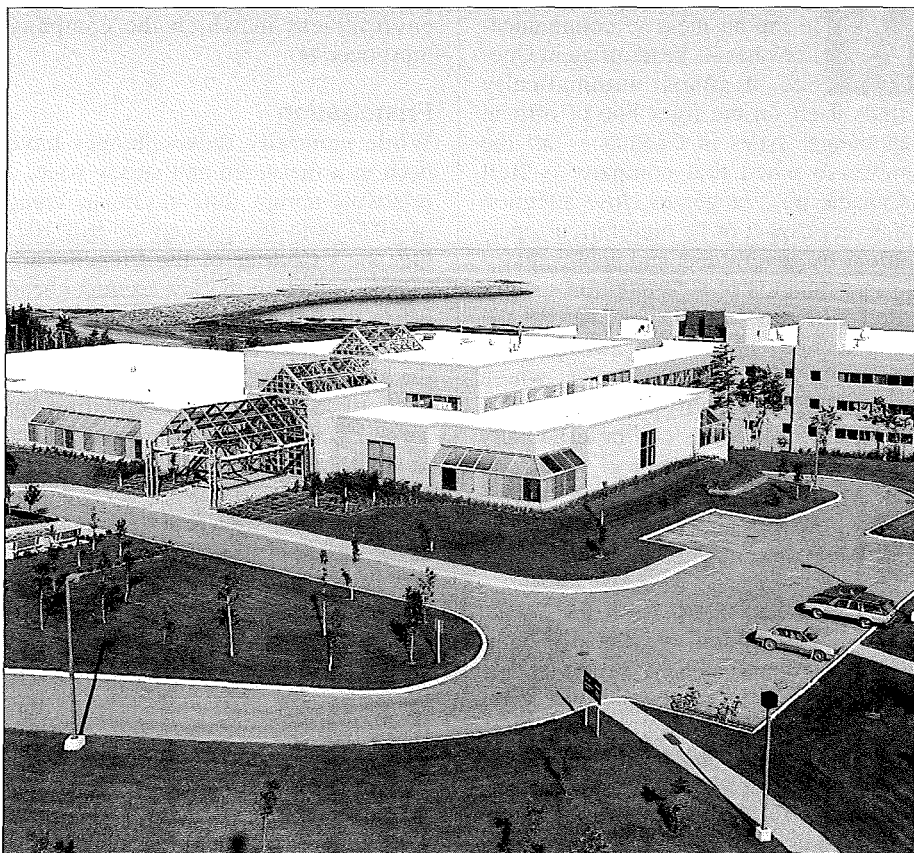
Pierre Joly, a biological oceanography technician, studies the productivity of marine species at the bottom of the food chain — phytoplankton, zooplankton, fish larvae. He too appreciates the French atmosphere of the Institute. "The fact that business is conducted in French allows me to be in command of my work environment because my knowledge of English is more limited. Even my boss, who is an Anglophone, speaks French."

The Canadian Hydrographic Service, with its 32 employees, produces and updates navigation charts, tables of tides and currents and notices to

mariners. Everything the CHS produces is bilingual, which means that, although 72% of its hydrographers fill unilingual French positions, they are constantly in contact with English. According to Marc Journault, Chief of Cartographic Production, "the management, supervision and planning of chart production is all done internally, in French. However, outside contacts and links with the universities more often than not are in English. We have come a long way in 10 years. In the late 1970s, most training courses for unilingual French employees of the CHS were given only in English. Since 1986 the basic courses have been available in French and,

made in English, scientific terms are English, and scientific texts are in English. For example, 95% of technical instruments have manuals in English only. So, in order to be able to use them, you must know English. In this sense the problem is not only with the researchers who publish, but also with the technicians who must be able to use the instruments."

Réjean Dufour agrees. "In the scientific field, it is clear that a Francophone has to know both languages in order to function," he says. "Since we are a young centre, the number of our scientific publications should increase considerably in time. This means that people



The Maurice Lamontagne Institute

starting in the fall of 1989, it will be possible to attend all the courses in French."

The future

What will the language situation at the Maurice Lamontagne Institute be a few years hence? Everyone hesitates to answer that question; there are so many unknowns in the equation.

David Booth thinks it will be increasingly difficult to prevent English from playing a major role at the MLI, because "the language of science is English. Scientific presentations are

are going to have to familiarize themselves more and more with English."

A snapshot of the situation: scientists at the Maurice Lamontagne Institute must come to terms with an outside environment that is mainly Anglophone and make a name for themselves while continuing to work in French within. Many specialized positions are being staffed with non-Francophones who will have to be integrated by establishing a judicious balance between scientific effectiveness and respect for the French-language character of the MLI. It's quite a challenge! ■

Well on the Way: English and French at Bell Canada

Tom Sloan

The challenges to be met in formulating language policies can be especially acute. Symbolism and reality constantly intersect.

When a large Canadian company in the business of communications has its head office in Quebec, it almost automatically finds itself on the front line of official language issues in Canada — all the more so when that company is Bell Canada, no stranger to close attention to every aspect of its multifarious operations by government and public alike.

The situation of a corporation such as Bell is, by definition, delicate and the challenges facing it are awesome. In the field of language policies, where symbolism and reality constantly intersect, the challenges can be especially acute, as is the perception of public and private observers constantly and critically observing the ways in which they are being met.

Dangers and opportunities

Robert Plamondon, the fluently bilingual Montrealer who is director of public relations and of linguistic services for Bell Canada, is well aware of both the dangers and the opportunities that accompany Bell's high profile. He is permanently concerned about both the image and the reality of the company's operations, but he is proud of what has been accomplished in what can be a thorny area of activities for Canadian business. "I think we have so far responded pretty well to the challenges. We've done what we had to do and more, and we'll continue to do so."

In the history of the language of business in Canada, Bell occupies a unique position. From its very inception, over a century ago, the company has had to serve its customers in Ontario and Quebec in both English and French. In a real sense, everything since then has been a refinement of this basic, original bilingualism.

This does not, of course, mean there have been no changes in policies and

practices to conform with the external environment in which the company must operate.

Francization

While generally those changes have been at a measured and steady pace, a relatively abrupt shift in climate came in 1977 with the passage of Bill 101, Quebec's Charter of the French Language. Although the law exempts head office operations from many of its provisions, it does apply with full force to the specifically Quebec Region operations of the company, accounting for some 17,000 employees in cities, towns and villages across Canada's largest province.

In response, Bell acted promptly to assert its status as a good corporate citizen. It set up a nine-member francization committee shortly after passage of the law to work out a program to accede to the law's demands. The fact that, after the provincial government itself, Bell is the largest single employer in Quebec made its prompt action all the more important in both real and symbolic terms.

Of course, as Plamondon points out, Bell had started its own francization program in the 1960s, well before the passage of the Charter. The formal agreement reached in 1980 with the Office de la langue française, Quebec's language watchdog, was really the consecration of what had already been under way for 20 years.

This is not to say that the sailing has been entirely smooth. While the Quebec Region did receive its preliminary francization certificate on May 4, 1981, indicating the presence of an approved program, it has yet to receive the ultimate approbation from the Office de la langue française in the form of a final certificate testifying to the successful achievement of all the objectives

agreed to by itself and the government.

Bell is not alone among large Quebec companies in this regard. It is apparently the practice of the government to delay final approval to such companies — an indication of the enormous difficulties firms have in demonstrating they have solved each and every one of the language problems with which they are faced in their own complex operations. As for Bell, "We'll never be any more French than we are now," Plamondon says.

Problems with change

For its part, while it has never contested the legitimacy of the language charter, Bell has expressed some reservations on some aspects of the legislation. In a submission to the government in 1983, the company questioned "the rigid character of the law and its regulations." It noted that an ultra-strict interpretation given to some of its provisions by the enforcing agencies "has engendered pretty annoyances and, occasionally, ridiculous situations that fly in the face of common sense, or more gravely, harm individuals."

Among other things, the company pointed out problems in recruiting scarce technical and scientific personnel to work in Quebec as a result of restrictions regarding entry into English-language schools. It also noted that internally the difficulties stemming from the insistence on the exclusive use of French in the sign language regulations made it much more difficult, if not impossible, to serve its English-speaking clientele adequately in its sales and service offices across the province. Bell called for some flexibility in the regulations both to help it attract expert personnel and better serve its Anglophone customers. It also requested a more realistic assessment of the time necessary to translate highly technical documentation to accompany the introduction of new products and new technologies. "A little more flexibility, please," was, in effect, its appeal to government.

While the Quebec Region operates essentially in French, the situation within corporate headquarters is necessarily more complex. Because it operates in a Canadian and North American context, Bell's headquarters continues to use English as its principal corporate language. This does not mean unilingualism — far from it. In its dealings with the Quebec Region, head office communicates mostly in French, says Plamondon. All official communica-

tions within and from headquarters are prepared in both languages.

All this means that official language activities are a large part of Bell's operations. The nerve centre is the 25th floor of the Bell Tower. Here are training facilities, an extensive library, a team of 16 full-time translators and 10 specialists in terminology. While French terminology was extremely limited 25 years ago, it is now readily available, with new glossaries being added regularly as technology continues to surge ahead.

While most translation work is from English to French, there has been, Plamondon notes, a steady rise in work in the other direction, as more and more documents are now conceived and written in French first. At present, some eight million words annually are translated from English to French and about two million in the other direction. At last count, a total of 52 persons were employed in Bell's linguistic services.

And, while Montreal is at the centre, it is not the only place of language activity. Company language courses operate year-round in many other centres, including Toronto and Quebec City, offering courses in both languages for an estimated 3,000 employees each year.

The corporate program

The results of the corporate language program have been considerable. More than three-quarters of the headquarters group operating in Quebec is considered by the company to be functionally bilingual. Although no firm policy has been set, whenever possible meetings are bilingual, with participants speaking in their preferred language.

As for the proportion of English- and French-speaking employees, Bell estimates that about one-quarter of those at the executive level have French as their maternal language. Essentially, however, according to Plamondon, the company is more interested in tracking the competence of its employees in both languages, regardless of mother tongue.

To what extent has Bell succeeded? Certainly it requires constant vigilance to do such things as keep accurate records of the preferred language of each customer and each employee. "We try to keep a step ahead, and we've been pretty successful," Plamondon notes. In the technological field, despite the predominance of English, French is now essentially available in computer and word-processing equipment. "Our goal is to be an accurate reflection of our community," Plamondon says. Bell, it would appear, is well on the way. ■

The Need for Excellence in French Language Teaching

In October 1988 Kathryn Manzer became National President of Canadian Parents for French (CPF). Language and Society No. 26 contained a profile of the group, which lobbies for excellence in French language teaching across Canada, especially through the promotion of French immersion. In this issue we present excerpts from a conversation Sarah Hood had with Kathryn Manzer at her Don Mills, Ontario, home.

Language and Society: *How did you become involved in CPF?*

Kathryn Manzer: I'm pre-CPF. We had a sort of "kitchen table alliance" in Metro Toronto in about 1972. My daughter had studied French in a co-operative nursery school, but was going to have to wait until grade 6 to take it up again. That was what got me going. I succeeded in getting French: a fairly typical CPF pattern — it was the second child who benefited from my frustration for the first.

— *Have the priorities of CPF changed since then?*

— The big need at the beginning was to demonstrate to school boards the need for children to learn French in the best possible way — in many cases this was immersion. This has not changed. On the other hand, immersion was so amazingly successful that we began to feel at first as though we had to defend its perfections. We've grown up. Everybody knows there are ways that immersion can be improved.

— *French immersion is viewed as an effective but costly program, especially when it begins in kindergarten or grade 1. Does CPF believe that early immersion is the answer in all instances?*

— No. That is one thing the organization has come to recognize more strongly. For example, in some rural areas there is more benefit for the child and the school system in concentrating on a very good early core French program [traditional French teaching] or late immersion [beginning in grade 6 or 7]. On the other hand, I've never had much patience with really big boards that can't offer a good choice of programs.

We have tried for years to get school boards to cost immersion. The estimates have been wildly different. An attempt has been made to play up the cost of early immersion to justify middle immersion [which begins in grade 4]. I like middle immersion as an alternative rather than a substitute. I don't have any doubt that early immersion is the best for the largest number of kids.

We knew immersion was not a flash in the pan, and we can feel some resentment that educators didn't. They didn't plan ahead for French teachers — particularly at the secondary level. I resent the decision to cut a program because it is so successful.

— *How does the demand for good teaching of French as a second language fit in with the needs of Francophones outside Quebec for education in their mother tongue?*



— CPF recognizes that Francophones have very specific needs and that in most provinces they have been short-changed. But there are still many areas in which it's in the best interests of CPFers and Francophones to work together. What they get together won't be perfect for either, but it will be better than what they can get separately.



Katheryn Manzer

— *What do you see as the most important preoccupations of CPF during your term as National President?*

— We must concentrate on teacher supply, although there are limits to what CPF can do. Internally, we need to solidify and stabilize the organization. It's important to me that we should do all the things that we do well. It's hard to restrain such a creative organization, but we will suffer if we let our mainstream activities become tatty.

It's increasingly important to do things for kids. Our Festival national d'art oratoire now involves 55,000 children. There are also camps, summer programs and Rendez-Vous [a conference in French for young people]. I run a French camp. It's amazing how many who are involved in CPF administratively also do something "hands-on". We've been called the most successful educational lobby in history, but I want to stress what we do that benefits kids. ■

A Turning Point for Francophone Parents and Their Children

Jean-Claude Le Blanc

For the first time in 10 years, a Congress of the Commission nationale des parents francophones struck an optimistic note.

The Commission nationale des parents francophones hors Québec (CNPF) held its third Congress in Montreal in February 1989. For the first time in 10 years, it was marked by optimism.

Two years earlier CNPF, statistics in hand following completion of a study, had termed it a "national scandal...even where numbers warrant" that, aside from Ontario, New Brunswick and Manitoba, only 8.4% of the group covered by Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, or 3,300 students, was being educated in French-language schools in the other six provinces and the two territories. Section 23, which guarantees the right, as recognized by the 10 provincial premiers meeting in Montreal in 1978, "of every child belonging to an official language minority to receive his primary and secondary school instruction in his own language, where numbers warrant", was growing old without being implemented.

This is what prompted Raymond Poirier, president of CNPF, at the 1988 CNPF congress in Montreal, which had as its theme "Implementing Our Policies", to say: "At the rate things are going, the Francophone clientele will already be anglicized, and the fundamental characteristic of Canada recognized in the 1987 constitutional accord will be no more than a mirage, for want of having adequately protected it in time."

Parents, who hold the constitutional rights whose actualization is vital to the future of their communities, and indeed

of Canada itself, are asking the federal government for the financial support needed to carry out their mission: the recovery, by the year 2000, in each province, of the vast majority of the young people covered by Section 23 so that they may have access to high-quality instruction in French in their educational institutions.

Francophone parents at this most recent congress believed that they finally had the wind in their sails. The federal government has recognized the legitimacy of the network of Francophone parents and has granted the Commission and its components in each province and territory the financial resources to enable it to tackle an enormous task with greater vigour. CNPF can now hire some full-time employees. It would be possible to supervise and support the volunteer work of some 450 network parents' committees. The fog had lifted. It was even possible to glimpse on the horizon, beyond the enormous efforts still to be made, the point of arrival.

Two friends honoured

If this goal is achieved, it will be thanks to the perseverance, imagination and labour of thousands of parents and the leaders of their associations. The Congress thanked them all and, in addition, bestowed a token of its gratitude on two friends, Senator Jean-Maurice Simard and the Commissioner of Official Languages, D'Iberville Fortier, for the special support that CNPF had received from them — a first in its 10-year history that deserves mention. ■