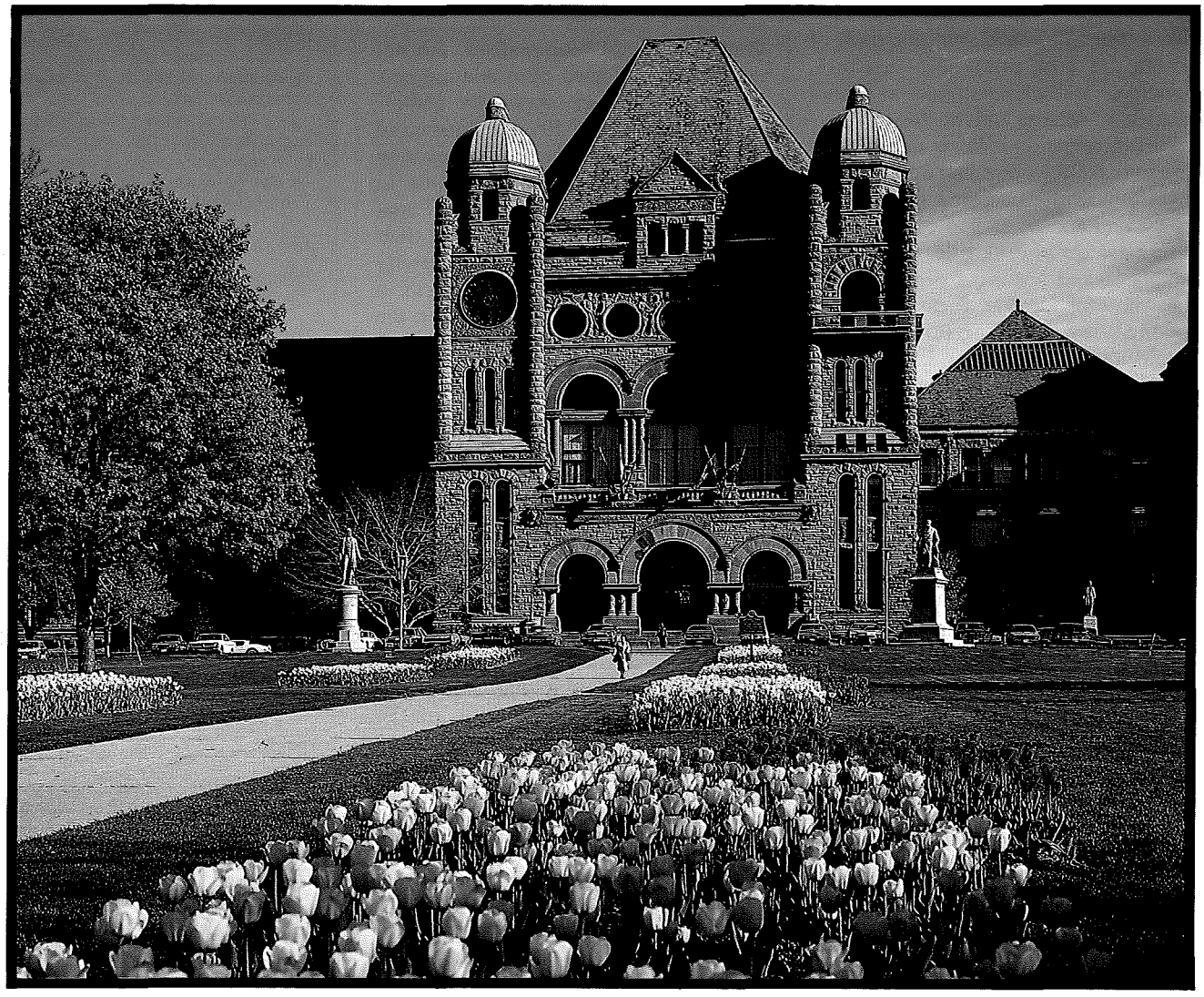
LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY



Number **28**, Fall 1989

Gerry Weiner:
TO BE A CANADIAN

Federal Bilingualism in the Fisheries:
NATURE OF THE OFFICE CLARIFIED

The Fédération des francophones hors Québec:
OFFICIAL BILINGUALISM IS NOT ENOUGH

Letters

B and B Special Report

...for the past 15 years I have given a course, for senior undergraduate teachers of minority languages, on the topic of bilingualism and education to some two to three thousand students, most of whom are now practising teachers, principals and administrators in school districts in Alberta and the West.

This information is being shared with you to make the point that up until now I've found little occasion to use *Language and Society* as part of my course offerings. Despite its title, the journal simply lacked historical perspective of the whole of Canada, focusing instead on the view from official Ottawa. While doing little to correct that view the Number 27, Special Report edition has at least given me a document which I can add to the compulsory reading list.

The Special Report *per se* will provide my students with the opportunity to see something of the evolution of the B and B Commission. And this is important for Western students who, like most Canadian students, are woefully ignorant of their own social history.

Bruce Bain, Ph.D.
McCalla Professor
Department of Educational Psychology
University of Alberta
Edmonton

I am writing on the subject of *Language and Society*, the quarterly publication of your Office and, in particular, regarding the issue for Summer 1989 which includes what purports to be a special report on the 25th Anniversary of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. I fully appreciate that you have been given the responsibility of promoting the idea of official bilingualism and that, accordingly, you are quite disposed to seek statements and opinions that are in support of this policy and all that is implied.

I am deeply concerned, however, that a serious misconception has been produced in your report. Virtually all the English-speaking persons who have contributed their views are those who, for one reason or another, are deeply committed to uncritical support for the government's policy. In consequence, an entirely erroneous impression has been produced, namely that English-speaking Canadians welcome the program of official bilingualism, are not derogatorily affected by it and are personally prepared to support the continued extension of French-language services. No more than a few passing words are directed to the situation in Quebec where English-speaking Canadians are faced with eradication of their history of 200 years and the necessity to leave the province of their birth in order to regain proper freedom in the use of their language.

It is bad enough for an official publication of a Canadian government agency to print and circulate such entirely misleading information, comprising opinions from persons who are widely and properly regarded in English-speaking Canada as quislings, but what is far worse is the possibility that your French-speaking audience should take these opinions are representative of English-speaking Canadians, on general. Your own good judgement should advise you that they are not....

Surely the proper function of the news media and, equally and even more specifically, the function of such publications as those produced by your Office, is to present a completely truthful and unbiased account of developments in Canada and in the world....

In summary, your special report has produced an utterly false impression of Canada. It is bad enough that this is believed by French-speaking Quebecers and other Canadians who are not personally involved. It would be utterly disastrous, however, if this absolute nonsense is, in fact, believed by the Commissioner of Official Languages himself.

Geoffrey Wasteneys
Ottawa

Letters continued on page 40

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.

Editorial Staff

Editor-in-Chief
Claude Savoie

Associate Editor-in-Chief
John Newlove

Revision/Correction
Lyne Ducharme, Patricia Morissette

News Editor
Tom Sloan

Regional Correspondents
Sarah Hood, Hal Winter

OCOL Staff Contributors
Charles Barker, Jan Carbon, André Creusot, Jean-Claude Le Blanc, Lynn O'Keefe, Michael O'Keefe, Jacques Robichaud

Translators
Frank Bayerl, Tessier Translations Corp.

Editorial Co-ordinator
Monique Joly

Production
Patricia Goodman

Photo Composition and Graphic Design
Thérèse Boyer, Danielle Claude

Computers
Craig Mackay

Cover
Acart Graphics

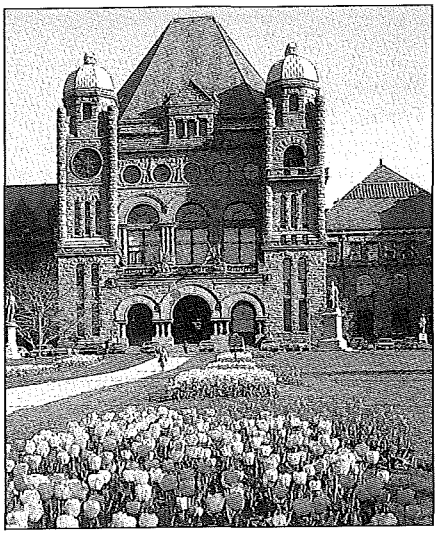
Administration

Subscriptions
Hélène Léon

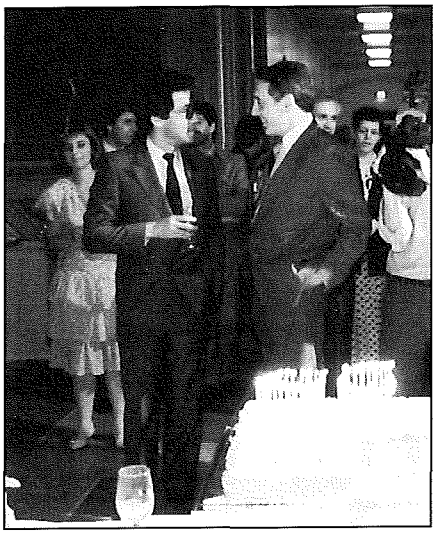
Language and Society is a publication of the Communications Branch.

Articles may be reprinted as a whole or in part on request to the Editor-in-chief or his associate, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, Ottawa, Canada K1A 0T8. Tel.: (613) 995-7717.

Printed in Canada
ISSN 0709-7751



Cover:
The Ontario Legislative Assembly



Twenty Years After (p. 10)

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

English and French Celebrate a 20th Anniversary

D'Iberville Fortier

For the editorial in our special report marking the 20th anniversary of the Official Languages Act (*Language and Society* No. 27), I took the liberty of borrowing the most memorable quotations from the report of the B and B Commission. *Bis repetita placent.*

This time I present some quotations from the speeches made on June 13, 1989, to mark the celebration on Parliament Hill of this anniversary. According to the participants, the celebration, which was attended by a large number of Members of Parliament, figures associated with official languages, senior public servants and representatives of the media, was a success. The Prime Minister and the representatives of the two Opposition parties, as well as your humble servant, attempted to describe the successes achieved and the challenges that lie ahead, as well as the principles that must underlie the longed-for renewal of reform and of the partnership between our two great linguistic communities.

To enhance the occasion, the Office of the Commissioner presented some of its new information products. A six-minute videotape produced for the Office captures some of the images and the most noteworthy remarks made at the celebration. It is available to any interested groups who wish to contact our Communications Branch or our regional offices.

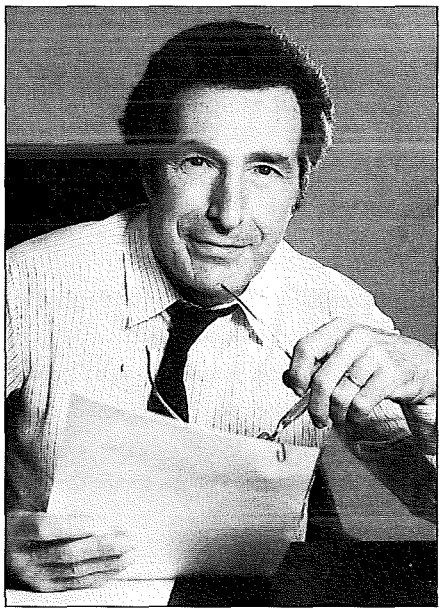
I now turn the stage over to the speakers.

The Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada

"The first Official Languages Act, adopted by Parliament on July 9, 1969, was a lucid answer to the linguistic tensions that challenged Canadian society....

"That law did not create unanimity and its application was not always easy. But it remains an important act of unity and equity between the two major Canadian linguistic communities.

"Yet linguistic equality will never be absolutely achieved in Canada. A greater degree of vigilance, patience and determination is needed before our children can enjoy the full linguistic freedom that our parents wanted us to have. For the world and the conditions we live in are changing. That is why my government decided to update and strengthen the 1969 Official Languages Act through the adoption last year of Bill C-72....



"Linguistic equality is the mortar that binds the country together.

"The true reward for the patriotism and the generosity of those who have dedicated themselves to linguistic equality will come from the next generation of Canadians. From young men and women who are, today, the first generation to have grown up with a vision of bilingualism as an opportunity in a Canada that is proud of its past and confident in its future. We will make significant progress but theirs will be the generation of durable unity and equality. And Canada will emerge the stronger because of it.

"I believe...that the larger vision, the one inspired by generosity and tolerance, will always triumph over parochialism and shortsightedness."

Jean-Robert Gauthier, Liberal Party

"I venture to say that the events we are celebrating this evening will mark the beginning of a more open and more tolerant renewal of the two great linguistic communities that contribute to the richness of our country. The economic, geographic and historical differences that go to make it up have produced a richly endowed nation that is envied for its diversity of temperaments, opinions and cultures. Let us celebrate a little this evening, but let us not forget that there is still a long way to go....

"Outside of Quebec, New Brunswick and some parts of Ontario, the minorities find themselves in a situation where their political power is almost non-existent. In many of these regions, socio-economic realities necessitate financial support from the federal government to assist these groups in asserting their constitutional rights.

"In spite of the fact that we have adapted the Official Languages Act to the rhythm of our changing society, in spite of the fact that we have come a long way, the road is still very long. Alberta, British Columbia and Newfoundland still do not recognize the right to a trial in the language of the accused. Eight years after the adoption of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, there are only three provinces where minority groups have access to educational facilities in their own language and where they can manage them. Cases are presently pending in six provinces to have such rights recognized."

Svend Robinson, New Democratic Party

"Let me say today, speaking for myself and on behalf of all my colleagues in the New Democrat caucus and especially my leader, Ed Broadbent, that we have always supported the basic principles of the Official Languages Act ever since the passage of this historic measure....

"I had the honour of speaking with a truly great Canadian, a member of the B and B Commission...Frank Scott, who made an enormous contribution to this country...he indicated that certainly as he looked ahead in our

Commissioner's Editorial continued on page 40

Are We in Accord?

Tom Sloan

Canada's daily newspapers worry about Meech Lake; how distinct is distinctiveness?

A country, by one definition, is a people with a shared sense of having done great things in the past and an eagerness to do more in the future. By this standard, Canada is dying.

Jeffrey Simpson's bleak vision was echoed in other editorials.

This bleak vision, from the pen of the *Globe and Mail*'s Ottawa columnist Jeffrey Simpson, found echoes in other editorial offices as the country's politicians continued to wrestle with matters constitutional, specifically the still uncertain fate of the Meech Lake Accord.

Meech Lake

Although columnist Simpson was writing from a broader perspective, he was clearly implying that there is now at least a question as to whether the will to proceed with the Accord was still there.

Noting that "...something has now snapped in the English Canadian psyche," Simpson flatly denied that bigotry was responsible. "Rather, the problem lies in hearts without malice which hunger for repose from the demands for accommodation...Increasingly, English Canadian hearts are hardening because there is a growing perception that in Quebec federalism is purely a matter for calculation, for the toting up of sums and losses, for a distinctively relativist approach, without any deep-seated attachment to the common cause."

In a second column, Simpson saw Meech Lake as "a dagger pointed at the nation's heart...because it has the unique capacity...to remind English and French Canadians of their growing lack of interest in, and mutual irritation with, each other." If, to Quebecers, Meech Lake is a test of English Canadian willingness to accept their province, in all its uniqueness, to many English-speaking Canadians, it is simply the latest in a series of apparently never-ending demands. "Meech Lake might yet be saved...if English Canadians believed its acceptance would truly mean that Quebec would be psychologically a more committed part of Canada, instead of believing that the Accord will consecrate constitutionally the already widespread indifference in Quebec to the rest of Canada."

Despite Simpson's scepticism, his own paper, the *Globe and Mail*, remained one of the staunchest defenders of the Accord. Affirming that failure of the pact to be ratified would seriously weaken the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, a *Globe* editorial concluded: "Meech Lake is intended almost solely to bring Quebec willingly under the authority of the 1982 Constitution Act. Meech Lake should be immune to criticism for failing to achieve other ends. It was not intended to do so."

For its part, the French-language press was unanimous in its support for the Accord, and in warning of the dangers of its rejection.

A distinct society

Writing in *Le Devoir*, Editor-in-Chief Paul-André Comeau took to task those who question the notion of Quebec as a distinct society. "That is as brilliant as saying at the end of the 20th century that man has not yet walked on the moon. The reality of a different Quebec will not fade with the years, not before the refusal of those who oppose the project to accept it." Should the Accord be rejected, Quebec will simply pursue its own agenda. "Without breaking windows, it is possible to live outside the bosom of the Constitution, and let the rest of the country pursue its metaphysical musings on the advisability of writing a social fact into the Constitution."

The importance of ratification of the Accord was also the theme of Sylvio Saint-Amant in *Le Nouvelliste* of Trois Rivières. "More than ever, Quebec is insisting on its status as a distinct society. For the Bourassa government, it is *a sine qua non* for rejoining the pact of Confederation."

For Alain Dubuc, writing in *La Presse*, if Canada is once more living through a crisis, it is a crisis with a difference. "For the first time, the seeds of discord and the threats of a breakup come from English Canada, and not Quebec. It is in English Canada that resentment towards Quebec is being expressed and aggressive statements are being made....The real debate is not about Meech Lake, but about Quebec, and it reflects a new feeling, that of some Canadians who are discovering that they would prefer a Canada without Quebec." In Quebec, Dubuc suggested, there is also a growing indifference to the rest of the country.

"For the first time, the seeds of discord come from English Canada."

Le Droit columnist Michel Roy also had a clear warning. "If it refuses to readmit Quebec into the constitutional circle under the minimum conditions that Quebec has put forward, Canada will have to assume full responsibility."

Similar warnings of the dire consequences of a rejection of the Accord from Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and Premier Robert Bourassa were too much for the Montreal *Gazette*. "Such talk is dangerous and counter-productive....Predicting a national crisis is a good way of making one happen." Asserting that "many thoughtful Canadians across the land are gravely concerned about Meech Lake, the *Gazette* had a warning of its own. "The only reason why Meech Lake cannot be

⇨

amended is that Mr. Mulroney and Mr. Bourassa say it cannot be amended. They should at least be prepared to discuss changes; if they do not and the Accord fails for that reason, they will bear a heavy measure of the blame."

Parallels?

A western call for compromise came from the Calgary Herald. Failing a degree of flexibility, "...it is increasingly apparent that Meech Lake simply will not survive past its June 1990 deadline." To meet the danger, the editorialist suggested a close look be given to a suggestion by Nova Scotia Premier John Buchanan for a parallel accord to supplement the current one and make it less rigid. "The beauty of a parallel accord is that it allows Meech Lake, with its controversial provisions on Quebec being a distinct society, to pass into law. In the process, Quebec can save face — a gesture whose impact should not be under-estimated."

The *Toronto Star*, however, saw no reason for compromise. Attacking Prime Minister Mulroney for suggesting that this might be the last chance for English-speaking Canada to say "yes" to Quebec, the *Star* continued: "With all the subtlety of a constitutional terrorist, Mulroney thereby suggests that to quarrel or quibble over the Accord is to be mean spirited to Quebec....The drive for Meech Lake has degenerated into a campaign of constitutional coercion that holds all of Canada hostage. That, surely, is no formula for national reconciliation."

Also on the "no" side was the Fredericton *Daily Gleaner*. "Meech Lake effectively gives Quebec all the powers of a sovereign nation....It will lead to the Balkanizing of Canada by giving too much power to the provinces and weakening the authority of the central government....The Meech Lake deal is an instrument of national disunity and it must not be allowed to be passed."

Another New Brunswick daily took a more nuanced view. To the Saint John *Telegraph-Journal*, "Meech Lake is desirable insofar as it provides accommodation for Quebec in the constitutional family. It has faults in weakening the central government and not providing sufficient protection in certain areas. The goal should be an improved version. Now is the time to start negotiating that improvement."

The Moncton *Times-Transcript* agreed that time is of the essence. "Unless something is done, and soon, the break may come not in passion and bitterness, but simply in drift and indifference. A nation of bright promise lost with a shrug."

Alberta and Quebec

If Canada as a whole was a subject of indifference to at least some Quebecers, the government of that province was also showing its own brand of indifference to at least one French-speaking minority group. This was the Francophone community of Alberta and its attempt to gain full authority over its own school system. When Francophone Albertans went before the Supreme Court in June to argue their case under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, they had the support of the governments of New Brunswick and Ontario. To their shock and dismay, however, they found the government of Quebec there to argue the case of the Alberta administration. As has happened in other instances, Quebec had decided that, when it came to a choice between minority rights and provincial jurisdiction, the latter had priority. Not surprisingly, the decision gave rise to some scathing editorial comment.

Paul-André Comeau

For Marcel Adam in *La Presse*, there was no excuse. "Quebec, faithful to its character as a distinct society, pursued this distinctiveness to the point of aberration...it asked the Supreme Court to find in favour of a repressive government against an oppressed minority of which it claims to be mother-protector....The Francophone minorities outside Quebec have just been given a bitter political lesson. They must never assume that friendship will prevail over self-interest should the two be in conflict. We already know that, for the government of Quebec, the interest of Quebec consists in doing nothing for the Francophone minorities...that might eventually cause it problems in its treatment of the Anglophone minority. That is why it abandoned the Franco-Albertans."

Writing in *Le Devoir* before the event, Paul-André Comeau pleaded with the provincial government to support the Franco-Albertan cause. Afterwards, he too expressed disappointment and chagrin at "the slap in the face" from the government. One result, he suggested would be that the minority groups would re-examine their own relations with Quebec. But "Quebec too must begin an interrogation in depth on its responsibilities and its interests with reference to Francophones in Canada." What is now essential is the development of a consistent, long-term policy. "Francophone homeland, distinct society, all this makes sense only if Quebec includes in its priorities adult and generous relations with the other Francophones of the country."

In *Le Droit* of Ottawa, editorialist Adrien Cantin also had some bitter reflections, all the more so, he noted, because Francophone groups had, despite some concerns, backed Meech Lake following promises by Premier Bourassa to work for minority rights. "Everything now indicates that, quite the contrary, he is prepared to conclude sordid alliances with the governments of the Anglophone provinces on the backs of the French-speaking minorities in exchange for their support of Meech Lake."

The Montreal *Gazette* agreed. "Alberta's 60,000 Francophones have good reason to be shocked and angry at the government of Quebec." The least Quebec could have done was to abstain on the case, rather than actively side with the Alberta government, the *Gazette* concluded.

Writing in the *Globe and Mail*, columnist Lise Bisonnette noted that the Quebec brief to the court was concerned exclusively with provincial rights. "The logic of this rigid position leads to absurd rhetoric, when Quebec goes so far as to quote expert views known to be the most notorious anti-Francophone interpretations of the Constitution. Francophone leaders throughout English Canada are now on solid ground in concluding that Quebec has forsaken its leadership role among Canadian Francophones."

Signs

The publication of the regulations governing the language of commercial

signs to accompany the new Quebec sign law restricting the use of English called forth at least one defender and several critics of the minister responsible, Claude Ryan.

The defender was a *Le Devoir* editorialist, Gilles Lesage, who argued that, in calling for French interior signs to be at least twice as prominent as those in English, the regulations followed at least the spirit of the Supreme Court ruling that French should be clearly predominant in commercial establishments. "The compromise worked out by the government is awkward, as are political solutions generally, but it is legal and legitimate, since the parliamentary majority adopted it. The rules of the game demand that it be given a reasonable trial."

For Pierre Vennat, in *La Presse*, the sole achievement of the government's efforts was to ensure that opposition to them was unanimous. In any case, he suggested, the signs issue is irrelevant. "It does no good to post signs only in French if customers are not served in that language. Neither does it do any good to post signs in French if one cannot work in the language....Finally, it does no good to post signs in French if in practice the number of authentic Francophones is constantly diminishing, and if the majority of new arrivals adopt English...".

In an editorial entitled "Mr. Ryan Has Certainly Changed", *Le Soleil* editorialist J. Jacques Samson speculates what former *Le Devoir* director Ryan would have said about today's politician. "What would editorialist Ryan have written about the improvisation of a minister who at the moment of publishing his regulations receives an unexpected question and has no clear response concerning the norms to be respected on signs in several languages?" The basic problem, however, is not the regulations, Samson argued. "Law 178 was a bad law. It has engendered bad, inapplicable regulations. And, if Claude Ryan stubbornly defends them, it is because the editorialist he once was has now successfully become part of the Bourrassaist political mould."

"Beyond the technicalities," the Montreal *Gazette* wrote, "...the message is as clear and familiar as ever. The public display of languages other than French is still not acceptable. It is to be hedged about, circumscribed, kept behind closed doors. Quebec has more restrictions on the use of the English language than it has on pornography." ■

The Court Challenge Program: Will It End in 1990?

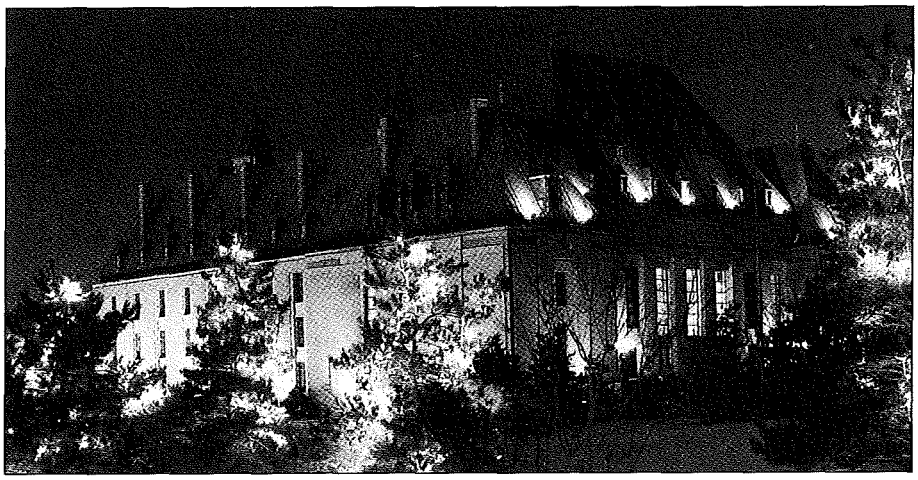
Jacques Robichaud

The Court Challenge Program was established in 1978. Initially it responded to the federal government's concern that certain language rights guaranteed to official language minorities by the Constitution might be eroded. The government therefore decided to come to the assistance of those who sought clarification by the courts of the meaning of certain language rights based on Sections 93 and 133 of the 1867 Constitution Act.

After the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms came into effect in 1982, the program was updated and expanded in December of that year to include among the cases eligible for financial assistance those based on Section 23 of the Manitoba Act, 1870, and on Sections 16 to 23 of the Charter. The program therefore retained its essentially linguistic orientation.

When Section 15 of the Charter, concerning equality rights, took effect in April 1985, the government broadened the program's scope beyond the linguistic provisions of the Constitution to include provisions of a similar nature, thereby extending it to all the equality rights in Section 15 of the Charter, including equality of the sexes and multiculturalism. At that time, the government concluded an agreement with the Canadian Council on Social Development whereby it agreed to administer the entire program, which would continue to be funded from the budget of the Secretary of State's Department.

A number of important cases that set precedents with regard to language rights have benefited from the program, the most noteworthy being the Forest, Bilodeau and Robin cases (Manitoba); that of the Société des Acadiens du Nouveau-Brunswick; the Blaikie, Quebec Association of Protestant School Boards *et al.*, Singer and MacDonald cases (Quebec); the Association canadienne française de l'Ontario and Jacques Marchand cases (Ontario); the Mercure and Tremblay cases (Saskatchewan); the Lefebvre, Mahé and Paquette cases (Alberta) and the Daniel St-Jean case (Yukon).



The program is currently being assessed for possible renewal after March 1990. A colloquium held in Moncton last March in this connection reached a broad consensus in favour of its renewal and extension to other legal services in order to reflect the facts of Canadian life at the end of this century, which are such that legal action is essential to the affirmation of both language rights and basic individual rights. As Molière says, "Right alone does not suffice." The program must continue: it is quintessentially Canadian. ■

Federal Bilingualism in the Fisheries

The concept of the "nature of the office" in terms of the obligation of federal institutions to provide service in both official languages has been somewhat vague, but it has now received a legal interpretation of crucial importance that could have far-reaching implications.

On March 14, Mr. Justice Gerald B. Freeman of the County Court of Shelburne, Nova Scotia, granted an appeal by Daniel S. Saulnier and acquitted the fisherman, who was accused of having exceeded his quota of pollack, in violation of the conditions of his fishing licence.

The decision was based on the fact that the notice of changes to the conditions stipulated on the permit had not been broadcast in French on Yarmouth marine radio.

The judge noted that Section 20 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms states that the public has the right to use either official language to communicate with the head or central offices of federal institutions and to receive services from them and that this right extends to any other office of these institutions where there is a significant demand for the use of English and French, or, due to the nature of the office, it is reasonable that communications with and services from that office be available in both English and French.

Although it was not established during the trial that there was a significant demand for service in French at Yarmouth, the judge nevertheless ruled that the nature of the office of the Director General of Fisheries warranted the use of both official languages there. *J.R.*

Linguistic Aspects of the Public Service Commission's 1988 Annual Report

André Creusot

Under the Public Service Employment Act, the Public Service Commission is responsible for providing the federal administration with qualified staff. The two elements of this responsibility are recruiting and training, and both play a major role in the implementation of official languages programs. The Commission must ensure, through recruiting, that the federal administration reflects the linguistic composition of Canadian society as closely as possible and that employees who need it receive language training and that professional training and development are available in both official languages.

It is in this context that the Commission's 1988 Annual Report must be viewed. The Report begins by setting out the precepts of the new Official Languages Act with regard to participation by the two official language communities. The Act states that, in setting objectives for participation, the characteristics of the institution, its mandate, the public it serves and the location of its offices must be taken into account. The Report concentrates on the last criterion, drawing attention to the disparities that exist in certain regions (e.g., the low participation rate of Anglophones in Quebec) and in certain professional categories (e.g., the overrepresentation of Francophones in the Administrative Support category). However, the most striking disparities are to be found in the National Capital Region. Unfortunately, for some years, instead of lessening these disparities, recruitment has tended to aggravate them.

The Report's many statistical tables provide a detailed picture of Public Service staffing activities. The importance of these activities can be gauged from the fact that they involved nearly half of all public servants in 1988. The tables provide information on all the linguistic aspects of the federal administration. They show that in 1988 a quarter of the employees recruited from outside the Public Service were Francophones, that appointments to bilingual positions accounted for 25% of all appointments, that 95% of candidates for these positions were already bilingual, that one-sixth of positions required a knowledge of both official languages at the time of appointment and that Anglophones represented onethird of appointments to bilingual positions.

> *"The Government of Canada is committed to ensuring that the composition of the work-force of federal institutions tends to reflect the presence of both official language communities of Canada...."*
>
> *The Official Languages Act, 39 (1) (b)*

There can be no question, naturally, of reducing the world of official languages — or that of staffing — to a few figures. Faced with the challenges of an ageing work force and the plateauing of careers, the Commission wishes to base the federal administration on the four pillars of leadership, renewal, the merit principle and professional development. The important place of official languages in the Commission's Annual Report is a clear indication that they are an integral part of that foundation. ■

An Interview with Gerry Weiner

To Be a Canadian

***The Secretary of State, who is the minister responsible for co-ordinating the activities of all federal departments in promoting the development of the linguistic minorities and fostering the recognition and use of English and French in Canadian society. Peter Cowan interviewed him for* Language and Society.**

Language and Society: *Are provincial governments responding well?*

Gerry Weiner: We have certainly had an indication of willingness on the part of most of the provinces. We now have agreements with six for provincial services. That would indicate that there has been a lot of realism and good will on the language issue. We have tried very carefully, in areas of provincial jurisdiction, to work in concert with the provinces to make sure we are harmonizing our activity. The most recent example that we are very proud of is the Canada-Quebec Agreement, which is the first agreement outside the area of education in the promotion of official languages. So we have an agreement which I have described as historic. Some might have thought that was an overstatement. But we have waited 20 years and now have a process in place that guarantees the vitality of the English-speaking community. To me there is nothing more vital than the social and health services that we possess and which we want to make sure are guaranteed and furthered and accentuated. This was done in consultation with the community — the Anglophone community — people like Alliance Quebec and the other regional associations.

— If I can raise Bill 178. You are an English-speaking Quebecer. Do you think Mr. Bourassa could have made it more flexible?

— Well, Mr. Bourassa had many years to receive all the advice and guidance that people were prepared to give him. The decision of the Supreme Court was very clear. The Prime Minister spoke for the government of Canada very vigorously before Mr. Bourassa brought Bill 178 forward and indicated his feelings to Mr. Bourassa. Within my own jurisdiction, I'm committed to give support and sustenance to the English-speaking community. Now, I know that some may want to focus on a sign. That is not my focus. I think there is enough to do to give the community's members a feeling that they are an integral part of the distinct society, which I very much feel I am. Mr. Bourassa feels that they are and that the non-Francophone community is, so rather than try to focus on what his resolution of the sign law may or may not have been, I'm encouraged by some of the recent statements of the premier. When he received his nomination in St. Laurent, he spoke of the vitality of the English community. He spoke of being a vigorous defender of that vitality and a promoter of its rights.

— Do you see a tendency for hardliners outside Quebec use Bill 178 as an argument of convenience to deny services to official language minorities?

— Well, if they want to focus on what the English community have in Quebec, Quebec society is certainly one of the most generous in the country. I already have and have had access to schools and social and health services. Now, that isn't to say that I haven't understood the frustration and the isolation of a lot of the English-speaking communities. It's a sensitive issue. It's going to take dialogue and bringing people together to try to rebuild harmony. I sense that every time we talk about the language issue. It is very difficult for us. Perhaps we don't have enough understanding of the historical precedents. What is it that makes us different as Canadians? Well, I take it as a given that it is a fact that there are two founding peoples. My people — Jewish people — preceded a lot of other peoples in this country and, as a matter of fact, they were there in the first French colonies. So, I can understand what's going on from coast to coast. It is a sensitive issue.

I think that the federal government has shown leadership with an Official Languages Act that promotes our official languages and allows me to work with the provinces so that official language communities can receive services. Our recent initiative in British Columbia is an outstanding example. What a symbol — La Maison de la francophonie in Vancouver — built with the full participation of the province, the city, the province of Quebec. The entire community got involved. Now this will not only be an institution for the Francophones of British Columbia, it will be an institution for all of British Columbia to help it in its understanding of our duality. We have a linguistic duality in this country, one that we are very proud of.

— Do you feel better about things now than you did 10 years ago?

— Well, we've certainly made a lot of progress in terms of attitudes. There has been an increase in the number of Canadians that speak both languages and are more comfortable in both milieux. In Alberta and British Columbia the immersion classes are all packed. This is a complicated nation. It takes a lot of understanding. I'm privileged to have funding, significant funding, that allows me to go out and support communities; the Francophones outside Quebec, the Anglophones inside Quebec.

We are in discussion with almost all the provinces. We are working with individual minority communities.

— What are the big challenges for, say, the next 10 years?

— Well, frankly, I'm concerned about some of our attitudes in terms of our understanding of what this nation has become. This is a nation that has been built by immigrants and refugees and yet somehow we are less than hospitable today. We have difficulty on the Pacific Coast with some immigrants and refugees that come from Asia. We see similar attitudes from coast to coast. I think we have an obligation to help Canadians in their understanding of what we have become in terms of the nature of the country, the fact that the face of Canada has changed, help them

⇨

in their understanding of what it is to be a Canadian. The prime minister was very clear in his vision of the country, of the path along which he wants to take us into the 21st century, both in terms of the speech from Baie Comeau on election night and the Speech from the Throne. He is putting together a new committee on cultural affairs and national identity — a committee that will attempt to speak to our very being, what it is to be a Canadian.

I think many of us in the free trade debate, in the latter half of 1988, had some difficulty in our understanding, what was it to be a Canadian. When we saw one of the leaders go to the map on the wall and erase the line that was Canada, it bothered some of us. We are becoming more and more aware of our cultural and racial diversity. We have to give proper definition to our identity, and I think, central to it, are these two founding peoples, the fact that we can share the culture and the heritage of both Molière and Shakespeare. How do you get Canadians to have that broader understanding? Well, I guess it's going to take building a new coalition, people from coast to coast, business, labour, voluntary organizations, all levels of government, who have understood the kind of country we have become — a vigorous, dynamic nation, a proud nation — to try to attack some of the myths, some of the difficult attitudes. It is not easy. There is an opportunity here through legislation and funding. There is a lot of good will from coast to coast. The world is a smaller place today. Consider the number of doors that English and French will open. Just look at the size of La Francophonie and the Commonwealth with two groupings of nations, and Canada happens to be able to be in both by virtue of our background.

Now, will it be easy? Well, let me tell you, it hasn't been easy since Giovanni Cabot came here in 1497 or since the British landed at Louisbourg when the French were already here and it hasn't been easy when Wolfe got here. Was it easy in 1970 when the War Measures Act was being imposed? Was it easy in the referendum of 1980? Let me tell you, those were tough days. I worked in the referendum campaign. Will it be easy next year or the year after? I guess that's what Canada is — a meeting place of peoples, a country of communities, a garden. We all come from different backgrounds. It's certainly a great place to live. As the minister responsible for developing opportunities for greater national understanding, I feel very proud. ■

The Official Languages: A Celebration

Representatives of all three federal parties, including Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, joined with Commissioner D'Iberville Fortier and more than 300 invited guests last June 13 on Parliament Hill in an evening of solidarity marking two decades of official language legislation in Canada.

J.B. Rudnyckyj, D'Iberville Fortier, Jean-Louis Gagnon

The occasion was the 20th anniversary of the 1969 Official Languages Act and, coincidentally, the 26th anniversary of the creation of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism and the first anniversary of the new, strengthened Act of 1988.

Speaking at a reception hosted by the Commissioner, Prime Minister Mulroney hailed the language law as having been a fundamental fact of Canadian life for 20 years and paid tribute to former prime ministers Lester B. Pearson and Pierre Elliott Trudeau for their persistence in the quest for justice.

Turning to current controversies, Mr. Mulroney pleaded again for ratification of the Meech Lake Accord, which he described as an implementation of the concepts of duality and distinctiveness in the work of the Royal Commission a quarter century ago.

Speaking for the Liberals and the NDP, respectively, Jean-Robert Gauthier, MP for Ottawa-Vanier, and Sven Robinson, MP for Burnaby-Kingsway, expressed full support for present federal language policies.

For Mr. Gauthier, those policies are essentially a continuation of past Liberal government programs. He noted recent provincial backsliding.

Mr. Robinson, who spoke mainly in French, recalled his own struggle to become bilingual and stressed the continuing national challenges. "I hope that we shall never forget the importance of continuing the struggle for justice and linguistic equality, not only in the federal domain, but also, of course, at the provincial level."

Present at the reception were Members of Parliament, senior government officials, representatives of official language minority associations, the two former commissioners, Keith Spicer and Maxwell Yalden, as well as two members of the Royal Commission, Jean-Louis Gagnon and J.B. Rudnyckyj, and Commission co-secretary Neil Morrison. *T.S.*

Bilingual Municipal Services: A New Initiative

*Charles Strong**

Have you ever visited your local public park or swimming pool? Or suffered the pain of paying a parking ticket or realty taxes? Or called the local police or fire department? Or the public works gang to clear the what-the-devil-do-I-pay-taxes-for-anyway snow from in front of your house?

If so, you, like millions of your fellow citizens, have had contact with your municipal government.

The average citizen is probably more often in touch with municipal authorities than with provincial or federal agencies. All the more reason, then, that municipal services should be available to taxpayers in both official languages.

The FCM

That, at least, is the view held by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the national voice of municipal government in Canada. With financial assistance from the Department of the Secretary of State, the FCM has just published a practical "how-to" guide for Canadian municipalities interested in offering their services in English and French.

The bilingual booklet — "At Your Service...In Both Official Languages" — is the culmination of a year-long national study of bilingual services at the municipal level. The study included a review of provincial language legislation, detailed case studies of municipalities in four provinces (New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba), and a survey of 116 municipalities in all 10 provinces and two territories.

Language legislation

Under our Constitution, municipalities are creatures of the provinces. However, few are bound by law to offer their services in both languages.

New Brunswick's Official Languages Act and Ontario's French Language Services Act specifically exclude municipalities from any such requirement. Quebec's Charter of the French Language requires municipalities to provide their services in French, and permits them to offer most in other languages.

The study found that the only provincial law placing a specific requirement of this sort on a municipality is the City of Winnipeg Act. That Act calls for Winnipeg to make services available in French as well as English to residents of St. Boniface.

Thus, with the exception of Winnipeg and a relatively small number of municipalities in Quebec, the delivery of bilingual services by this order of government is a decision left entirely to the discretion of each municipality.

Present situation

What is the present state of bilingualism in municipal government? The short answer is that no particular pattern emerges from the FCM's case studies and survey.

As might be expected, municipalities in Quebec are, generally speaking, better equipped to provide service in both languages than are those in most other parts of the country.

However, the FCM study found in parts of New Brunswick and Ontario, as well as in some smaller communities in other provinces with concentrations of minority language citizens, considerable effort is being made to serve the public in two or more languages. Indeed, some municipalities have adopted resolutions or by-laws committing themselves to such a goal.

What tends to be lacking — especially in municipalities with small minority language populations — is either the political will or the financial means to provide a broad range of services in a systematic way. The approach often tends to be pretty hit or miss.

How-to booklet

In recognition of the fact that more can and should be done in this area, the FCM's how-to guide suggests a number of ways in which municipalities can go about setting up a two-language administration in an orderly and cost-effective way.

In straightforward language, the booklet explores, among other things:

- what "bilingualism" really means and what it involves;
- the need to have a policy and/or program setting clear goals and providing protection for the careers of unilingual staff;
- the priorities to be given to emergency services and those designed for the very young and the elderly;
- translation, and tips on ways to minimize costs;
- sources of funding, both provincial and federal.

The booklet is far more concerned with addressing concrete needs than with expressing abstract ideas. For smaller municipalities with limited budgets, it points out, for instance:

- that it is sometimes possible to find retired bilingual persons who, for a modest fee, will be pleased to act as part-time translators or interpreters;
- that municipalities wishing to operate bilingually can often adapt the forms and other procedures already used by others in the same province;
- that the translation and printing of forms and many other standard documents is essentially a one-time, low-cost expenditure;
- that "institutional bilingualism" — the capacity of an organization to function in two languages — can often be achieved by having relatively few bilingual staff in key public contact positions.

All three orders of government in Canada provide service to essentially the same taxpayers. The FCM therefore encourages municipalities with a significant number of minority language citizens to make effort to extend them the courtesy of access to services in their language.

It is hoped that the new how-to guide, like several the FCM has issued on race relations and other sensitive topics, will help eliminate some myths and improve communications between citizens and their municipal government. ■

***Charles Strong labours in the vineyards of bilingual Ottawa as a consultant and editor.**

Francophone Africa and the Dakar Summit: Coexistence of French and National Languages

Jan Carbon

After extensive discussion, the Francophone African countries submitted a document to the Francophone Summit. It was prepared by a Senegalese, Christian Valentin, chairman of the preparatory committee of this third Summit. Here are some excerpts.

The 12 challenges, 1990-2000

Multilingualism
Only a sustained and assertive policy will enable the French language and the other languages on Francophone territory to organize their relations in accordance with three principles: absolute equality, functional complementarity and friendly development. It is therefore desirable that a linguistic development plan be drawn up that fully respects national sovereignty and dignity and the goals of the Conference and that leaves the door open to multilateral co-operation.

French in today's world
The French-speaking community must successfully meet the threats that face the French language. French is threatened in Africa, where it has not yet achieved a position of security and where it is essential to insist on improving its teaching, along with that of the national languages. It is threatened in America, where it must continually make a stand for itself and be on guard to ensure its promotion. Finally, it is threatened, though not in France, in the Europe of tomorrow, unless it is recognized on an equal footing with the continent's other languages.

Scientific French
Will French-speaking researchers and scholars finally realize that French will very soon cease to be a great language if they abandon it for another? Effective measures must be taken immediately to encourage and support research and publication in both [sic] languages.

Scientific and technical information
French-language documentation will become a reality only if information from the Southern Hemisphere is used, processed, disseminated and circulated. To this end, a true scientific and technical information (STI) policy must be developed and implemented in the Southern Hemisphere. Following evaluation of existing policy, this will require that nations become truly aware of the importance of STI as a factor of development and that they adopt a common attitude and work together on a continuing basis.

Research
Research is an extension of STI. Moreover, it is impossible to have a French-language scientific community without research, particularly in the Southern Hemisphere. The priorities must include restoring to Africa its native capacity to create and innovate, stopping the brain drain, inspiring confidence in researchers, giving renewed impetus to African studies and consolidating and developing scientific relations between French-speaking countries in Europe, America, Africa and Asia.

Excellence
Excellence is achieved through the creation of multilateral research and training centres, the mobility of students, the strengthening of specialized graduate-level training and regional co-operation.

Modern education
The threat to education is undoubtedly more serious than that resulting from the crisis in the economic system. It is also the challenge of development itself, for educated and trained men and women who produce new resources and are concerned with the general welfare are both means and end, what is at stake and the end product of development.

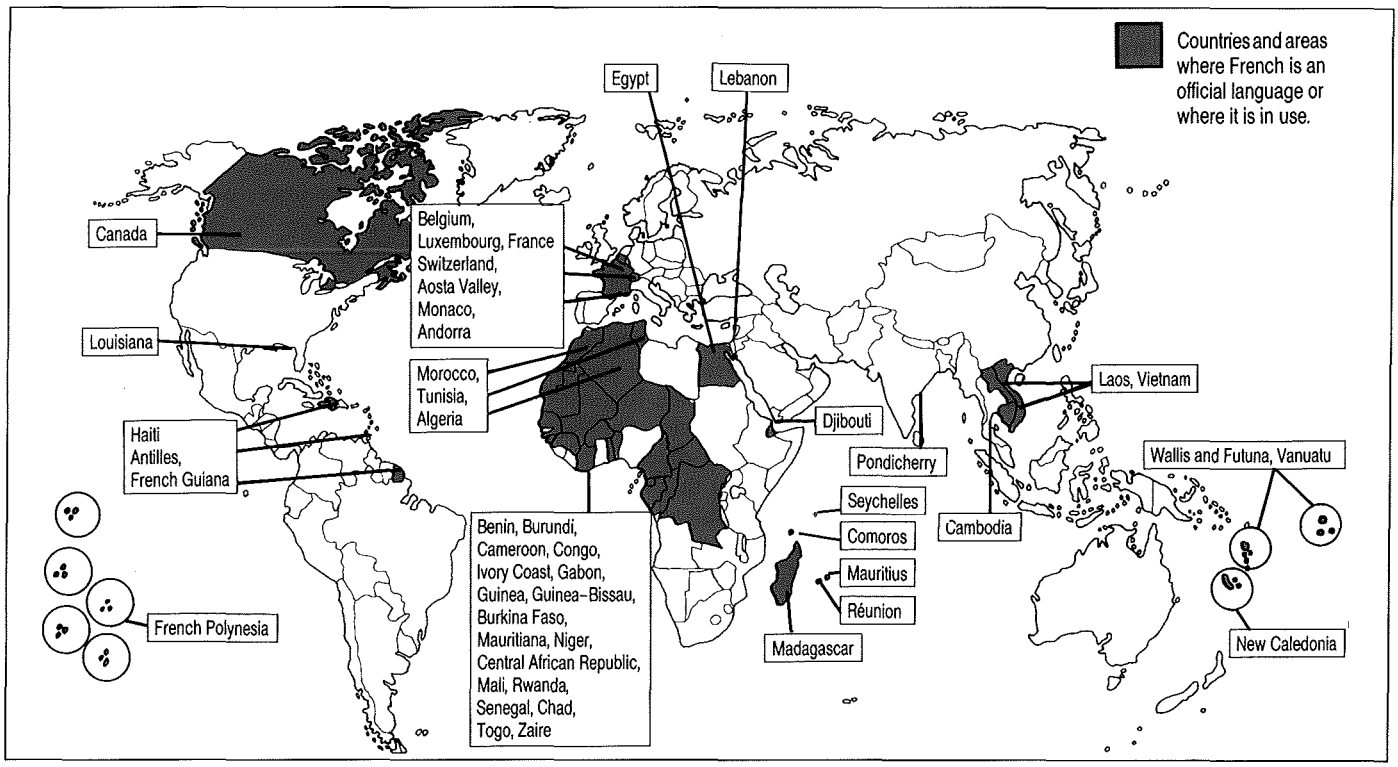
French-language education
Improvements in educational systems, access to and the assimilation of knowledge are dependent on the linguistic skills of the individual. Quality instruction in French as a second language therefore requires the prior mastery of methods of acquiring and using the mother tongue, the taking into account of socio-linguistic factors and a detailed knowledge of the educational policies of each nation. What is at stake is the health of French in Africa, and hence of the French-speaking community.

Publishing in the Southern Hemisphere
Is is really impossible to publish scholarly books and educational material at competitive costs in the Southern Hemisphere? Electronic publishing might be one answer, as might a policy in each nation of encouraging publishing (production, dissemination and distribution).

Audio-visual production
The French-speaking community in the North is increasingly dependent on America for its subject matter and on Japan for hardware. As for the South, it is in danger of being swallowed up — and the French-speaking community with it — if Francophone solidarity does not support its audio-visual production in a major way.

Computerization
Computerization is certainly not a panacea. It must be admitted, however, that it has transformed the life of the societies that have been able to avail themselves of its many advantages. The French-speaking community cannot ignore its contribution or, more over, its multifunctional dimension in the service of development.

Communications
It is through communications that the Francophone community will be built. Modern satellite communications may offer an opportunity for the diverse Francophone community by manifesting its presence and its vitality on the global stage. And the French language will unite the French families of the diaspora.



Multilingualism: a vigorous and competitive reality

French will therefore have to deal increasingly with partner languages. It is necessary to organize this partnership, for, while it is a reality, multilingualism in itself is not a virtue. It may be alienating or enriching, conflict-ridden or friendly, frustrating or self-actualizing. In weighing these various tendencies, it will be seen that it is not yet possible to set down a positive balance for it. To do so will require a linguistic regime that can arise only from a clear political will that takes each situation carefully into account.

Competing claims

The relationships between French and the major languages of the Francophone community must therefore be organized. Out of a rich but uncontrolled linguistic abundance there must arise a more balanced plurilingualism based on two fundamental options, identity and development, neither henceforth being mutually exclusive but rather complementary. We must go beyond the French/national languages alternative and overcome the prejudices, imaginary threats and false contradictions that cause still further misunderstanding and discord.

Complementarity between languages must be systematically striven for. In many cases, all the conditions for such an arrangement already exist.

In Senegal, for example, Wolof, the language of the largest ethnic minority, is spoken by two-thirds of the population and thus also serves the cause of national unity. However, the fact that it coexists with five other national languages which are also recognized constitutionally has given French an official status. This arrangement should be consolidated, improved and extended, particularly in the all-important field of education.

As another example, the transnational communication afforded by various sub-Saharan African languages does not stand in the way of the intra-African role of French or of English. Zaïreans and Senegalese, Senegalese and Moroccans, Moroccans and Gabonese, Gabonese and Djiboutians, Djiboutians and Vietnamese, will continue to communicate in French.

Friendly coexistence

The facts we have just pointed out show that plurilingualism is not a natural advantage but can become an asset in the future if the dialectic of French and other languages is seen in terms of functional complementarity, particularly in the fields of education, communications, culture and economics, and if the right to French and to the principal languages of national identity is regarded as one of the fundamental rights of the French-speaking peoples.

Co-operative arrangements

The handling of plurilingualism in the French-speaking community assumes that the conditions governing linguistic co-operation will be spelled out. Since nothing must interfere with the promotion of their languages, nations are completely sovereign in this respect. The first condition, therefore, is to respect this sovereignty.

The second condition arises from the first: the French-speaking community cannot usurp the place of the various nations in defining their linguistic policies. It can only support and uphold these policies at the express request of their governments.

This, however, does not rule out — and this is the final condition — discussing them together and together implementing an action plan as soon as common objectives are clear, to make such arrangements for the languages of the French-speaking community as will increase mutual acquaintance and foster and promote development.

From 1990 to 2000

This action plan should have a twofold objective in the coming decade: to increase the knowledge of languages and to effect an alliance among the languages of la Francophonie for development. It can be concerned with interlinguistic phenomena, with the transcription and codification of national languages when governments wish and request it, with terminological and neological activities (French-Vietnamese dictionary, terminological dictionary of the Senegalese languages and French-Comoroese dictionary, for example), and with the enhancement of the cultural heritage (restoration of

⇨

ancient monuments, collection and dissemination of the oral tradition).

To complement this research, the following might be considered: the establishment of an observation centre on the languages of the French-speaking community and of a data base; the creation of an international university centre for the training of translators of Arabic and of national languages; the provision of basic training in general linguistics to researchers and specialists and a practical introduction to the languages spoken in the regions studied; participation in activities to promote education and literacy and to popularize scientific and technological knowledge; and programs to inform and sensitize the public and to promote the use of the languages of the French-speaking community in the international media. ■

The Threat from Arabic

In Africa the "threat" to French comes not from English, but from Arabic, which is not only the language of the Maghreb but, increasingly, of the Islamized black African countries as well.

Indeed, it is through Islam that Arabic is penetrating sub-Saharan Africa, More than 100 million black Africans are Muslims. In some cases, there is a reaction against Christianity, seen as the religion of the former colonizer — as, incidentally, is French, the language of the elites in Francophone Africa and, like Christianity, a vestige of colonialism. In addition, it is said that Islam can adapt better than Christianity to native traditions...

If Arabic continues to make inroads in the black continent, this will have a direct impact on La Francophonie, for, aside from France and parts of Belgium, Switzerland and Canada, only in Africa is French truly widespread. In fact, the majority of Francophones today are to be found in black Africa.

Lysiane Gagnon in La Presse, *June 8, 1989.*

Africa: Linguistic Bedfellows

Since the former colonies in Africa became independent, it has become customary to split Africa into linguistic zones, thereby distinguishing between French-speaking, English-speaking and Portuguese-speaking Africa. This classification has only one advantage — that of preserving the memory of the geographical divisions of the colonial era and indicating the linguistic vestiges of colonization. On the other hand, it has many disadvantages, the primary one being that it introduces an artificial geographical division. Thus, the Gambia, Sierra Leone and Liberia, which are English-speaking, or Guinea-Bissau, which is Portuguese-speaking, are regarded as distinct from their French-speaking neighbours, Senegal, Guinea or the Ivory Coast, even though there are more similarities between Francophone Senegal and Anglophone Gambia than between Senegal and the Republic of the Congo.

Second, the division of Africa into linguistic zones is misleading in that it labels countries somewhat optimistically. Who can say how many Africans in "English-speaking" Africa actually speak English? How many so-called French-speaking Africans speak French? Estimates of approximately 10% have been made but, in fact, no one knows. No census in Africa has ever asked linguistic questions and, while some sociolinguists have studied the issue, we have virtually no methods of assessment.

The third defect is obvious. Such a classification based on European languages (French, English, Portuguese) arrogantly ignores the African languages that would produce a different classification and different groupings. Portuguese-speaking Guinea-Bissau and the Casamanca region in southern Senegal, for instance, have a common language — Crioulo — just as Hausa is common to French-speaking Niger and English-speaking Nigeria, and Swahili is common to countries of all three linguistic groups (Mozambique, Tanzania and Zaïre).

Reprinted from Diagonales, No. 10, April 1989.

The Commissioner and the Standing Joint Committee

The 1988 Annual Report of the Commissioner of Official Languages was the centrepiece of a meeting of the newly reconstituted Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages last June 21. It was an occasion for a discussion of language policy in general and the Report in particular.

It was also D'Iberville Fortier's first opportunity to exchange views with the revamped 24-member group since the November 1988 federal elections.

Following presentation of the Annual Report, Mr. Fortier faced a barrage of questions and comments on language issues, ranging in subject from the impact of free trade on national bilingualism to the exact meaning of the term "significant demand" with reference to the provision of services to the public in the Official Languages Act.

On free trade, Fortier noted that, while he had taken no stand on the agreement as such, he had asked for assurances that questions of language and culture, themselves excluded from the accord, would not be accidentally affected by any decisions that might be made at the technical level. He repeated an earlier suggestion that a surveillance mechanism be set up to that end.

On the question of significant demand for services, which is to be defined precisely in the regulations to the 1988 Act, the Commissioner expressed the hope that the language of those regulations would be "generous and liberal". While it is not easy to deal in exact numbers, "...the heart of the matter...is to try to help a group that wants to be helped and needs it and is prepared to struggle to maintain itself and to progress."

The sole dissonant note in the meeting came from Louis Plamondon, MP, not himself a Committee member, but replacing another Progressive Conservative who was unable to attend the session. Mr. Plamondon, the Member for the Quebec riding of Richelieu, suggested to the Commissioner that he consider resigning. "It seems to me that you do not really understand Canadian reality".

Following the June meeting, the Committee, which was created in 1980 to oversee federal official languages policies, suspended its activities for the summer. It is scheduled to meet again this fall. *T.S.*

Resistance to Official Bilingualism: CoR and APEC

Canadians who fear that the Official Languages Act is a threat must be reassured and convinced that the legislation does honour to our country.

While there is every indication from public opinion polls and successive election results that the vast majority of English-speaking Canadians accept, with varying degrees of enthusiasm, the official language policies of all federal governments over the past 20 years, there is also evidence that pockets of resistance to institutional bilingualism remain.

It is, perhaps, worth while to take a brief look at some of the ways in which these continuing negative attitudes have recently been manifesting themselves and most specifically the groupings, whether political parties or pressure groups, that have sprung up to channel and, to the extent possible, to magnify them in the various regions of the country

Ironically, it is New Brunswick, the only officially bilingual province in Canada, and home to some 230,000 Acadians — one-third of the population — that has seen the largest backlash to minority language rights in Atlantic Canada. Some observers would say, perhaps, that it is precisely in circumstances where a large and increasingly assertive minority group lives cheek by jowl with a majority which, until recently, did not even realize a problem existed, that a certain climate of mutual irritation can easily develop.

CoR

Whatever the reason, the focal point of resistance towards official bilingualism, both at the federal and provincial levels, has been a political party called the Confederation of Regions (CoR). Created in Alberta in 1984, the party received 66,000 votes in that year's federal election, almost all of them in Alberta and Manitoba. In the latter province, it received more than 34,000 votes — 6.69% of those cast.

In the November 1988 elections CoR virtually disappeared in the West, receiving a total of 41,000 votes, this time mainly in Ontario and New Brunswick. It achieved the closest thing to a breakthrough in New Brunswick, where its seven candidates garnered almost 17,000 votes in the province's 10 federal ridings. This represented, it is true, just 4% of the total vote. But it also represented by far the party's best showing proportionately in any province, and therefore was the subject of considerable attention in New Brunswick itself.

The Reform Party has had the most success.

In theory, CoR is not a one-issue party. Its program calls for financial and fiscal reforms and for constitutional changes, involving the recognition of four semi-autonomous regions in Canada with equal representation in Parliament.

From the start, however, its major thrust and major appeal have been directed at language issues. Among other things, its spokesmen have called for the rejection of "artificial bilingualism" and accused both the federal and some provincial governments of discriminating against Anglophones in their hiring policies. Outside Quebec, and perhaps northern New Brunswick, where bilingual services have a legitimate place, Canada's sole official language should be English, CoR leaders say. According to Arch Pafford, president of the New Brunswick wing of the party, "Bilingualism is tearing the country apart. If bilingualism is so popular, why, after 30 years, is New Brunswick the only bilingual province? The fact is nobody wants bilingualism; Quebec doesn't want it and the rest of the country doesn't want it."

For his part, national leader Elmer Knutson, an Albertan, was quoted last April in the press as making a rather startling claim: "We're not anti-French, but we're pro what we have developed out West, a western language which is neither English nor French."

Reactions to the party's campaign, and especially its relatively strong showing in New Brunswick, were as varied as might be expected. Dozens of letters appeared in newspapers supporting CoR and its policies, to the point where some Acadian spokespersons suggested that the English-language press was encouraging the expression of such points of view. Almost as if in reply, one of the papers, the Saint John *Telegraph-Journal* launched its own attack on the party. Describing CoR as "fundamentally a negative, one-issue party", the paper argues that, despite the passions it might arouse, bilingualism is not an important issue to most New Brunswickers. "A provincial CoR party won't achieve any significant electoral success. It will be fundamentally divisive, taking its members outside the mainstream and effectively cutting them off from the political process."

In general, the response of leaders of the Acadian community was that while the CoR phenomenon should not be ignored, neither should it be taken as representing the attitudes of most English-speaking New Bunswickers. A statement by Michel Doucet, president of the Société des Acadiens et Acadiennes de Nouveau-Brunswick, was fairly typical. "There are always people who promote intolerance and a certain form of bigotry....They're in a minority but one that makes a lot of noise." The Acadians also questioned a response to the election results by Premier Frank McKenna, who warned that to avoid a continuing backlash the province should, perhaps, proceed more cautiously on the road towards full, practical bilingualism.

Pressures on the provincial Progressive Conservative party to modify its pro-bilingual stance were strongly resisted by party president Richard Johnson, who said the party had no intention of changing its position to attempt to bring disaffected Tory voters back into the fold. "They're 25 years

⇨

late on this issue," Johnson commented. He predicted that CoR would face the same fate as the Parti Acadien, a strongly nationalistic Acadian political formation which knew a brief moment of glory in the mid-1970s but faded into oblivion in 1982, a decade after its founding.

Meanwhile, plans for an April convention to form an official provincial party foundered early in the year, as polls estimated support at 1%. In February Mr. Pafford, who had announced plans to run for the party leadership, said the founding meeting would take place sometime this fall.

APEC

In Ontario, while CoR was also active in the federal campaign, getting almost 19,000 votes — less than half of 1% — the main player in the anti-bilingual fight was not a political party, but a pressure group, the Association for the Preservation of English in Canada (APEC). Founded in Halifax in 1977, the group now claims 25,000 members in 40 chapters across the country, with Ontario as the focal point of its activities. Like CoR, APEC denies that it is anti-Francophone; but it, too, is vehemently opposed to official bilingualism across the country. Such bilingualism, its spokespersons say, makes English-speaking Canadians into second-class citizens. According to Ron Leitch, the Toronto lawyer who founded APEC and is still its president, official language policies came about because of "propaganda" that created a guilt complex among Anglophones about their past treatment of French-speaking minorities. Now Francophones "are laughing at us....Eventually every job in the civil service will become a bilingual job, whether it is designated or not." Inevitably, in Leitch's eyes, these jobs will be taken by people whose first language is French.

The main targets of recent APEC campaigns have been the 1988 federal Official Languages Act, the Ontario French Languages Services Act, passed in 1986, and Quebec's Bill 178, which restricts the use of English on commercial signage to the interior of some businesses.

Although the Ontario law designates only 22 municipal districts where provincial services are to be guaranteed in French, and where municipalities may, if they so desire, also provide their own services in French, APEC has insisted that the government's real intention is to force bilingualism on every municipality in the province.

In mid-1988 the group launched a campaign to convince some 800 municipalities to hold referendums to declare themselves unilingual. Although at one time in late summer and fall about 40 townships and villages had agreed to do so, eventually only seven small municipalities, all overwhelmingly English-speaking, actually acted.

Although its successes have been, to put it mildly, limited, APEC remains active. Its leaders have called for boycotts of Quebec-manufactured products as well as of companies and charities that put too much emphasis on bilingual communications. Some APEC members have also publicly proclaimed their readiness to take up arms, if necessary, to protect English.

A breakaway group from APEC, the National Association for English Rights, has sponsored lectures by Jock Andrew, a retired military officer and author of books such as *Bilingualism Today, French Tomorrow*, on the subject of a Francophone takeover of the country. "French-speaking Canadians are determined and want to make Canada into a French nation and no politician has the guts to stop them," he told a Kingston, Ontario, audience, according to local newspaper reports.

Editorial response to the organization's activities, even in the heart of APEC country in east-central Ontario, has been unenthusiastic. Following the failure of the referendum campaign, the Peterborough *Examiner* called it a victory of bilingualism as "a fact of Canadian life." It continued: "Despite what must be discouraging results, APEC has performed a valuable public service. It got people thinking about the language issue and it made their local elected officials take action. Their message was loud and clear."

To the *Toronto Star*, APEC was involved in a "misguided and meanspirited campaign....The Alliance campaign represents voices from the past. The message deserves to be recognized as such, then ignored."

Reform Party

In Western Canada, while both are present, neither CoR nor APEC have made waves. There, the cudgel has been taken up by the Reform Party, led by Preston Manning, son of the former Social Credit premier of Alberta, Ernest Manning.

More than its eastern cousins, the Reform Party has interests beyond the language issue. Founded in 1987 in Winnipeg, the party supports free trade with the United States, opposes the Meech Lake Accord, and advocates the so-called "Triple E" Senate (elective, effective and equal), tax reform, lower interest rates for farmers and, in general, a greater governmental concern for western interests.

Concerning language, it has called for a return to the situation as envisaged in the 1867 British North America Act (now the Constitution Act, 1867), limiting official bilingualism to the federal and provincial court and legislatures. English should be recognized as the major language of work and society outside Quebec.

Of the three major English-language groups, the Reform Party has certainly had the most success. Not only did it garner 275,000 votes in the 1988 election — two-thirds of them in Alberta — it won a federal by-election in a traditionally Tory rural seat in that province last March.

Is there a lesson to be learned in this story of the continued reluctance of some English-speaking Canadians to accept more than limited Francophone minority rights? Is, for example, bilingualism in a sense indivisible?

Certainly, across the country, anti-bilingualism activists pounced with glee on last December's Quebec government decision to override the Supreme Court decision upholding the right to post bilingual commercial signs. The tit-for-tat reaction of many may have been simplistic but, in some quarters, it had an effect. The tiny township of Zorra, near London, Ontario, passed a by-law making the municipality unilingual until Quebec allows outside bilingual signs in that province. The fact that the move was, in practice, meaningless, since Zorra is almost entirely English-speaking and is unaffected by the Ontario language law, was beside the point. Its action, widely reported in the Ontario media, provided a field day for English-language activists.

In the foreseeable future, there would appear to be no real threat to official language policies at the federal level throughout Canada. But as long as some Canadians see these as a threat, however vague, to their own rights, their effectiveness and their acceptance will, to that extent, be compromised. To convince these Canadians that they have nothing to fear and that, on the contrary, official languages legislation does honour to our country, is one of the challenges still facing government and Canadians of good will who believe in linguistic justice. *T.S.*

Watch Canada Talking!

The Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages is pleased to offer its latest video, "Two Languages, One Country".

In an entertaining 18 minutes, an animated, humorous map of Canada shows the special place of English and French in our country, from the time of the first European explorers to the present day. The background to modern legislation, including the 1988 Official Languages Act, is surveyed. The video also focuses on language rights and introduces the Commissioner of Official Languages.

"Two Languages, One Country" is useful for classrooms, workshops, seminars, information and training sessions. It is accompanied by a kit containing a Study Guide and other information materials which may be kept for future reference. It is available in English or French on a no-charge loan basis and copying the video for repeat use is encouraged.

Order Form

Beta ☐ VHS ☐

English ☐ French ☐

Name

Title

Organization/School

Address

City Province

Postal Code Telephone Number

Please return this order form to:
LM Media Marketing Services Ltd.

Ontario
Manitoba
115 Torbay Road
Unit 9
Markham, Ontario
L3R 2M9

Quebec
Atlantic Provinces
9575 Côte de Liesse Road
Dorval, Quebec
H9P 1A3

B. C., Alta., Sask., N.W.T., Y.T.
15161 Fraser Road
Surrey British Columbia
V3R 3P2

Note: All materials produced by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages are distributed free of charge upon request. They are not available for general distribution outside Canada. We reserve the right to limit quantities.

Language and Society: Expanding the Network

We get letters, we get letters. From all across Canada, requests to reprint articles from *Language and Society* have been flowing in, particularly since the re-designed — both from the point of view of editorial policy and of appearance — series which began with Number 20 in the fall of 1987. And it's not only in Canada that interest in *Language and Society* has quickened. From the University of East Anglia in Norwich, England, to the Association nationale des scientifiques pour l'usage de la langue française in Paris, the pertinence of the magazine as a source of information, interpretation and opinion on official languages has been recognized.

In Canada, the only pattern is that there is no pattern. From Vancouver to Charlottetown, requests for permission to republish articles have come from federal government institutions as diverse as the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Public Service Commission of Canada and the RCMP. From outside federal government circles, the range of readership is as wide as it is interested and concerned. A quick sampling of permissions letters shows requests from the Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia, the Alberta Department of Education, the University of Manitoba's Department of Sociology, the *Townships Sun* in Lennoxville, Quebec, and the Commission Scolaire Laurentian in Lachute. And the list goes on, with both official language groups well represented.

It's gratifying to know that there is an audience and that the audience is expanding, cares, and wants to spread the word even more widely.

It's a simple process. Permission to reprint any article from any issue of *Language and Society* in whole or in part and free of charge may be obtained by writing the Editor-in-Chief, *Language and Society*, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, Ottawa K1A 0T8. And if deadlines have you down, telephone (613) 995-7717, and we'll speed up the procedure for you. ■

The Commissioner's Office in the Region: The Bilingual, Multicultural SkyTeam

Sarah Hood

The Commissioner's regional offices supply information, deal with complaints and help federal institutions uphold the Official Languages Act and much more.

Teamwork and experience: these two qualities typify the staff of the Commissioner of Official Language's Ontario regional office in Toronto. Monique Cousineau, Representative for Ontario, co-ordinates a multi-faceted team that pursues the Commissioner's work in that province. The staggering workload means the small group must act together, sharing information and responsibilities. But Monique Cousineau insists that a family atmosphere is also necessary to keep the work of the office flowing as it should. "Quality of life in the workplace has to be very important," she says. "Otherwise you're building an obscure thing called 'national unity'." With all the fuss in Toronto about the SkyDome, says Cousineau, "SkyThis and SkyThat... you could call us the SkyTeam."

The Team: Antonella Bove-Graziani, Ray Edwards, Sylvie Sanfaçon-Edmond, Monique Cousineau, Jean-Guy Arsenault, Janette Hamilton

The Toronto office

The Toronto office is a young one. At one time citizens of Ontario were served by an office in Sudbury, and northwestern Ontarians used to turn to Winnipeg. Now all Ontario residents may use the services of the central office in Toronto. "Here you're about an hour from everywhere," says Cousineau. "It can be faster to fly to Timmins than to go to Mississauga." To help make access easier, there are part-time liaison officers in Sudbury and Timmins, and callers from anywhere in the province can reach the Toronto office free of charge by dialing 1-800-387-0635.

As in the Commissioner's other regional offices, the duties of the Ontario office include dealing with requests for information, handling complaints from those who feel their language rights have been abrogated, helping federal institutions to uphold the Official Languages Act and generally keeping residents of the province informed about the Act and its implications. However, being in the biggest city in Canada's most populous province makes the job slightly different. "We're working with the largest Francophone community outside Quebec," says Cousineau. "Also, the province has its own agenda," she says, referring to Ontario's legislation on French-language provincial government services. "You have to find your own place."

Monique Cousineau comes naturally to this kind of work. "I was born in a city where you had to know what national unity was all about: Sturgeon Falls," she laughs. "My parents were in love with Canada. They gave us the love of our country and the love of our French-Canadian culture." Cousineau studied at St. Michael's College in Toronto, then worked for 13 years in the French cultural centre in Sudbury, where she also served on the boards of governors of Laurentian University and Laurentian Hospital. She came to the Commissioner's office after five years with the Secretary of State in Ottawa and Toronto. "One experience that played a very important role, although I didn't realize it at the time, was being a member of the advisory council on multiculturalism created by Trudeau in the mid-70s," she says. "Also, in Ottawa I had the opportunity to visit Francophone communities in all the provinces. This has changed my outlook totally. People say 'Are you a Franco-Ontarian?' and I say I like to identify myself as a French Canadian."

A normal week

In a normal week the Toronto staff is in and out of the office frequently, keeping up contacts with federal institutions and the Franco-Ontarian community. Cousineau or one of her officers might participate in an audit of a federal institution or a cultural event, or perhaps visit Yves Tassé, liaison officer in Sudbury. Phone calls and visits from the public keep everyone on the premises busy as well. College and university students drop in to do research on bilingualism or national unity. Business people call to ask whether they must prepare packaging or advertising in both official languages. Others want to know where they can find a French doctor, a French school. Once Cousineau called the federal government information line for the answer to

a question. The operator, not knowing to whom she was speaking, referred Cousineau to her own office. "Why don't you call them," she suggested, "They're so helpful."

Special events

When the Commissioner travels in Ontario the office serves as his adviser. Recently Cousineau accompanied D'Iberville Fortier on a trip to Windsor. The Commissioner also met with the editorial board of the *Toronto Star,* the Cercle canadien and a special gathering of about 30 federal department representatives at the Royal York Hotel — organized, naturally, by the Ontario

"With all this fuss in Toronto about the SkyDome, call us the SkyTeam."

office. The launching of the Commissioner's Annual Report is accompanied by another set of responsibilities — getting the Report distributed to the right people as soon as possible after it is tabled in Parliament. This year for the first time a part-time liaison officer, Pierrette Morin, helped set up an official launching in Timmins. Over 50 people came, including federal, provincial and municipal elected officials, representatives of the school boards, federal departments, the Chamber of Commerce and local media. The Report was also featured on an open-line radio show, "Info-langue", on CFCL in Timmins.

Six people

Besides Cousineau, the Toronto staff consists of three officers and a two-person support staff: in all six people, no more! The assortment of their backgrounds and talent is quite remarkable. Janette Hamilton is the only one who has been with Cousineau since the office opened; she came directly from the Commissioner's staff in Ottawa. Despite the evidence of her first name, Hamilton's mother tongue is English. Like all her colleagues, however, she is fluently bilingual. Born in Stratford, Ontario, a stronghold of English Canada, Hamilton's early interest in French language and culture took her to Sudbury's Laurentian University and then to the federal government. Her work in Ottawa was mainly in the important area of complaints and audits, the day-to-day work of helping federal departments and agencies fulfil their obligations under the Official Languages Act. When she arrived in Toronto she found her duties expanding to cover many more areas since at that time she, Cousineau and a clerk made up the entire Toronto staff. "The experience for me was moving out of Ottawa's ivory towers and into the reality of life in Ontario's biggest city," says Hamilton. "How do we make an impact?"

Jean-Guy Arsenault and Ray Edwards arrived at about the same time, at the beginning of 1989. Arsenault's background is in journalism and public affairs. He was *Le Droit*'s political correspondent at Queen's Park for three years. "What I bring to the job is a fairly good understanding of the community and the provincial government," he says modestly. Arsenault did not speak English until he moved to Ottawa at the age of seven. "I like to think that within six months I was fluently bilingual," says Arsenault. He and his Anglophone wife are happy in Toronto, where, he says, "there are more and more activities for the children in French."

Ray Edwards worked in multiculturalism at the Department of the Secretary of State before he joined the team. An Anglophone whose wife is Francophone, he became bilingual relatively late in life, after graduating from university. One of his special interests is the growing issue of "ethnic" Francophones. "The government has perceived the Francophone community as monolithic," he observes, pointing out that recent immigration patterns have produced significant groups of Francophones who are not of European origin. And there are the English-speakers who can speak French. All in all a quarter of a million French speakers in Toronto alone, it is estimated. "Is it ethnicity or language? This is the debate that's going on within the community and within government," Edwards explains.

Sylvie Sanfaçon-Emond has been with the office for a year and a half. A French Quebecer, she left her home province five years ago to learn English. She enjoys the team atmosphere. "We're not divided into support staff and others. We're taken into consideration like the officers. Also, there's a cheerful atmosphere. Monique knows how to put a smile on everyone's face." Until recently, Sanfaçon's partner in the support area was Antonella Bove-Graziani. A native of Rome, Bove-Graziani's childhood in Montreal made her trilingual, an advantage that she hopes to pass on to her two daughters.

The Team is conscious of the size and variety of Ontario.

"Not only the Francophones but the Anglophones are beginning to find out how much of an asset it is to be bilingual," she says. "I handle all the telephone calls, so I know. There are more than I thought."

When the Ontario office opened in January 1987, it was located on Bloor Street West, in the heart of fashionable and expensive Yorkville. Although it was certainly central, Cousineau was glad when the office was moved to 1 Dundas Street West, right over the Eaton Centre. "At the centre of it all, as they say," Cousineau points out. "Bloor Street was not the real world."

When the Dundas office opened officially, the Ontario staff invited an assortment of regular contacts to see the new location. Federal and provincial government departments, the Anglophone majority and representatives of Toronto's Franco-Ontarian community were struck by the view — the office occupies a 24th-storey suite. From the window one feels able to see beyond Toronto's limits; one can't help being conscious of the immense size and variety of the province itself. "Although we're here in Toronto, most of our contacts are across Ontario," Arsenault points out. "We're dealing with Prescott-Russell, Windsor, Thunder Bay. That's why in our planning for this year we'll be travelling extensively throughout the province. With the new law [the 1988 Official Languages Act], there's a tremendous amount of work." The challenge is not in terms of kilometres, but in terms of the public, Cousineau points out — a suitable challenge for Monique Cousineau and her SkyTeam. ■

French Education in Saskatchewan: A Breakthrough for the Fransaskois

*Edgar Gallant**

The abolition of historical rights of Francophones in Saskatchewan only a year and a half ago was interpreted by many as a fatal blow to the aspirations of French Canadians in the province, the Fransaskois. It was also seen as a serious setback to the dream of having Canada's linguistic duality recognized and accepted from coast to coast. But it now appears that this hasty conclusion may have misunderstood the forces at play and underestimated the capacity of Saskatchewan to rise to the occasion.

The first event in this recent history was a ruling by the Saskatchewan Court of Queen's Bench to the effect that certain aspects of the province's Education Act are inconsistent with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and that the language guarantees under Section 23 of the Charter include the right of the Fransaskois to manage and control their schools.

This was followed by an agreement between the government of Saskatchewan and the Secretary of State to strengthen the use of French in the province and to enhance French minority language education and French second-language instruction in Saskatchewan.

It was only a few months later, in early 1989, that the Minister of Education appointed a committee to advise him and the government on an appropriate system of governance for Fransaskois schools. The Co-ordinating Committee for the Governance of Francophone Schools by Francophones was composed of five members nominated by the Fransaskois community associations, five by the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association, five by the associations of educational professionals (i.e., the Saskatchewan Teachers Federation and the League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents), and five by the provincial government (the Department of Education and the Executive Council). It was my good fortune to be given the task of presiding over the Committee and managing its process and program of work.

In less than four months (from its first meeting on March 2-3, 1989, to the end of its fourth meeting on June 22-23), the Committee and its working groups developed a set of proposals in line with the mandate we were given by the minister and consistent with basic principles we had agreed should underlie our recommendations.

Since these principles were fundamental to our work, it may be of interest to quote them verbatim:

- The proposed system must ensure for Saskatchewan's eligible Francophone students access to educational services of a quality equal to that available in English language schools.
- The management facilities involved must be equivalent to those of the majority school system, and the system must be under the effective control and management of the Fransaskois.
- The facilities concerned and their operation must be provided at public expense.
- The Fransaskois school system must be operated and managed within the framework of the provincial schools system and be part of it.
- The system to be put in place must be well adapted to the characteristics and unique needs of the Fransaskois community.
- The implementation of the system must be based on local Fransaskois community decisions and provide sufficient flexibility to allow for gradual adaptation over a reasonable transitional period.

The committee recommended a system of governance for Fransaskois schools involving, first and foremost, local "conseils scolaires" elected by parents with rights under Section 23. In addition, a province-wide organization was called for — a "Conseil général des écoles fransaskoises". This body would be composed of representatives of the local boards presiding over a permanent staff of professionals and would provide different services to the schools in the system as well as ensure the integrity of the system itself.

We recommended a financial formula which, in the view of the committee, should meet the needs of the Fransaskois schools without affecting taxing powers and with neutral effect on local rate-payers. Our recommendations also included an implementation timetable which would enable a network of Fransaskois schools to be operational by September 1990.

This article is being written shortly after the presentation of the report to the Minister of Saskatchewan Education on June 26. It is too early to know whether or not the government will accept the recommendations of the Co-ordinating Committee.

However, there are good reasons to be optimistic. I found a consistently positive attitude on the part of all the partners in this exercise and a willingness to work diligently to find acceptable solutions to the issues involved. That so many people representing such important and diverse interests could agree upon a unanimous report in such a short time must augur well for the future.

I was encouraged, also, by the positive response of the minister when the report was presented to him.

I believe it is consistent with the traditional characteristics of Saskatchewan that the participants in this exercise were concerned not only with meeting the needs of their own population, but that they were interested, also, in making a potential contribution towards strengthening the fabric of the country as a whole. Indeed, the minister seemed to reflect this when he suggested, on receiving the report, that what might result in Saskatchewan could have national significance, and that we might well be witnessing an important event of Canadian history in the making. ■

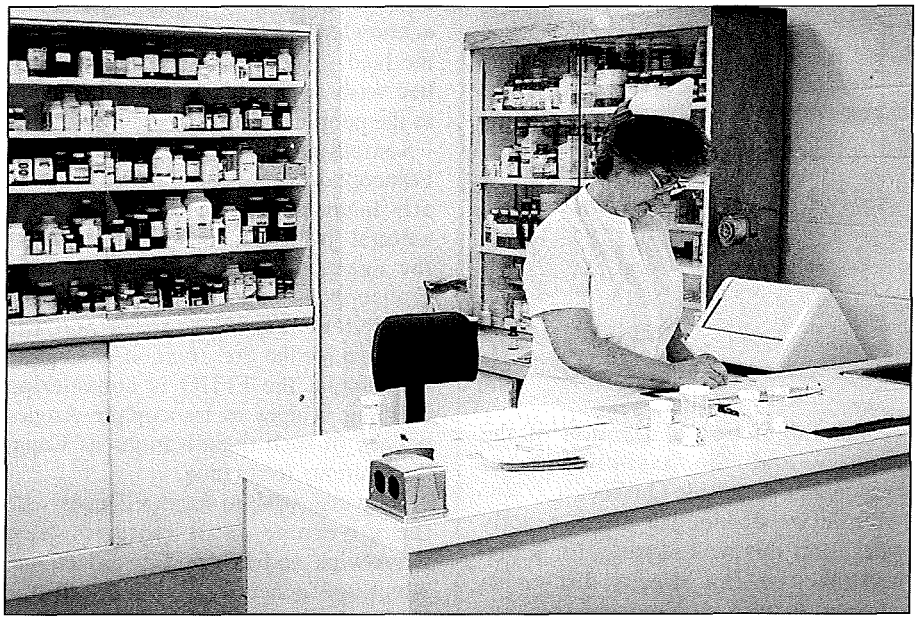
***Edgar Gallant presided over Saskatchewan's Co-ordinating Committee for the Governance of Francophone Schools by Francophones. He was Chairman of the Public Service Commission of Canada from 1976-85.**

Canada-Quebec Agreement on English-Language Health and Social Services

Michael O'Keefe

The five-year pact is the first language agreement outside the field of education to be concluded between the federal government and Quebec.

On May 24, 1989, the Secretary of State of Canada, Gerry Weiner, and the Junior Minister for Health and Social Services of Quebec, Louise Robic, signed a five-year $1.1 million agreement aimed at improving access to health and social services in English. This agreement, the first language agreement outside the field of education to be concluded between the federal and Quebec governments, is intended to foster greater community participation in the implementation of the province's Bill 142, which guarantees access to health and social services in English.



Mr. Weiner noted that "This agreement is a concrete example of the collaboration that we are seeking to develop in all the provinces to encourage linguistic minorities." The Secretary of State went on to highlight the importance of the newly signed agreement, stating that it would assist in the delivery of "services in the English language in a vital area of daily life of the English-speaking community and confirms the place this community has in Quebec." The federal government will provide half of the funds required in the $1.1 million agreement. In her comments, Mrs. Robic emphasized that Bill 142, which she described as a humanitarian law, was a Quebec initiative and that federal participation respects Quebec's jurisdiction over health and social services. She added, "Quebec serves as an example to the rest of the country in recognizing the specific needs of the English-speaking community and its right to receive health and social services in its language."

Speaking on behalf of Alliance Quebec, the English-speaking community's largest public advocacy group, Kathleen Weil welcomed the agreement, calling it "a positive step" and noted "what we really wanted from the outset was money to allow community participation."

In the opinion of many observers, including Montreal *Gazette* and the Sherbrooke *Record*, Bill 142, adopted in December 1986, was until recently thought to be stalled. Mrs. Robic, who was appointed Junior Minister in March, devoted much of her speech to Alliance Quebec's annual convention in May to highlighting recent progress. In an editorial in *Le Devoir*, Gilles Lesage strongly endorsed Bill 142 and praised the federal-provincial agreement, concluding, "The implementation of Bill 142 does not take anything away from Francophones. It will reassure — belatedly and partially — the English-speaking community." ■

Vancouver's Maison de la Francophonie

With the help of four different governments, Vancouver's 25,000 Francophones have purchased a building to house its new community centre, the Maison de la Francophonie. The centre, which was two and a half years in the planning, will serve as the focal point for numerous social and cultural activities within the French-speaking community of Vancouver. The project is the result of intensive community involvement by the many Francophone volunteers who form the Société Maison de la Francophonie.

The creation of the new community centre was made possible by financial assistance from the federal government, $970,000 this year and $630,000 next year, $303,000 from the British Columbia government, $100,000 from the Quebec government and $50,000 from the City of Vancouver. The Maison de la Francophonie, which is expected to be in full operation by the end of the year, will unite many of the organizations and resources of Vancouver's Francophone community.

M.O'K.

After Official Bilingualism

*Yves Lusignan**

Francophones outside Quebec seek complete equality in public and para-public services.

Twenty years after passage of the Official Languages Act, official and institutional bilingualism is no longer enough for Francophones outside Quebec. They are now calling for complete equality of rights and equivalent services for the two language communities everywhere in Canada.

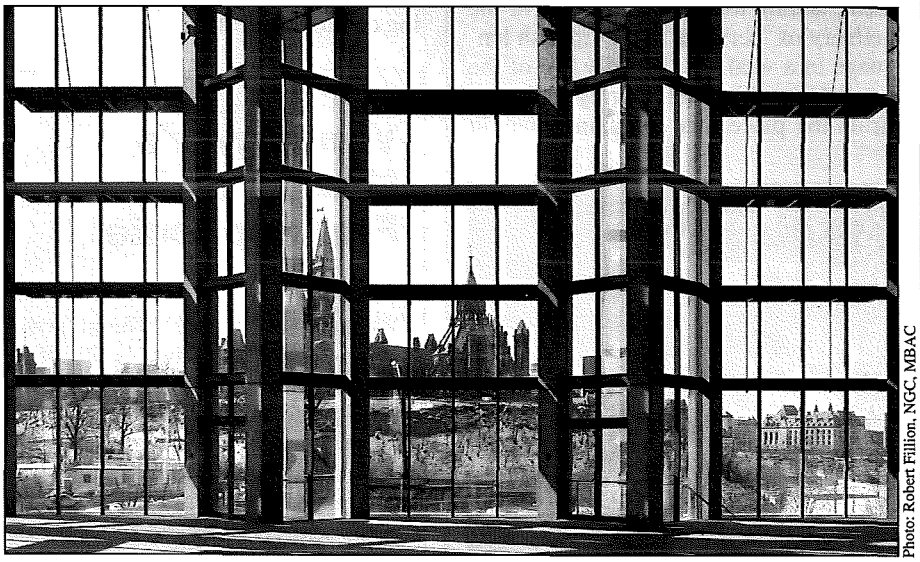


Photo: Robert Fillion, NGC, MBAC

The 14th annual general meeting of the Fédération des francophones hors Quebec (FFHQ), which was held in Ottawa this year over the St-Jean Baptiste Day weekend, provided an opportunity to reflect on the prospects for French outside Quebec.

Reviewing official bilingualism

It soon became apparent to the 125 delegates from all areas of the country that the strategy of the FFHQ, which has until now been based on the concept of official bilingualism, needed to be reviewed. The document submitted to the delegates for consideration set the tone for the discussions. "Official bilingualism as a philosophical framework has not had exactly the intended effect," André Nadeau, a consultant, stated. "It has probably helped to save the country," he added, "but it has not succeeded in avoiding the other danger — the linguistic polarization of the country and the assimilation of Francophones outside Quebec."

While we do not yet know exactly what form this new strategy for action will take, we can already discern its outlines. First of all, Francophones outside Quebec will in the future seek official acknowledgement of linguistic duality by all the provincial governments. In concrete terms, this means that they will no longer be content with small tactical victories here and there. Since bilingualism has not checked assimilation, what is wanted now is nothing less than services of equal quality in the areas of education and of community and social services. In short, Francophones wish to be able to live in French on a daily basis wherever they are, and not only "where numbers warrant".

This means receiving public and para-public services in French, the creation in all the provinces of a unified and comprehensive school system for Francophones that is managed by Francophones, control over their economic development and control over communications media to reflect the reality of Canada's French-speaking communities. There is even talk of creating a national French-language communications network to reflect regional realities. So much for Radio-Canada Montréal!

New alliances

It can also be assumed that this new social strategy that Francophones outside Quebec wish to adopt will entail the forging of new alliances. Stinging from Quebec's refusal before the Supreme Court to openly support the right of Franco-Albertans to manage their own schools and still frustrated by the conciliatory attitude adopted by the Quebec government towards Saskatchewan and Alberta when those provinces passed legislation abolishing the ancestral rights of Francophones — rights, moreover, that had been acknowledged by the highest court in the land — Francophones outside Quebec wish to appeal henceforth directly to the people of Quebec.

Something else that is new is that Francophones outside Quebec want to ally themselves with Canada's multicultural groups. In order to counteract the negative influence of such anti-Francophone opposition groups as the Confederation of Regions and the Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada, the FFHQ is considering building bridges to francophile Anglophones in such organizations as Canadian Parents for French.

They also wish to form alliances with the governments of Ontario, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, which are generally favourable to the French fact and to the demands of their official language minority.

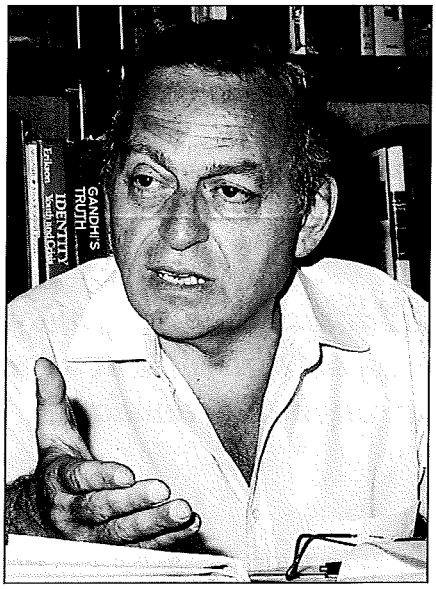
Despite the impasse in which Canada's Francophone minorities find themselves, the delegates to this 14th annual meeting of the FFHQ firmly rejected the idea of an independent Quebec as a vision of the future for the North American French-speaking community.

The FFHQ's new action plan is subject to final adoption during the meeting of the Conseil national des présidents et présidentes in October. We will then know how far Francophones outside Quebec are prepared to go in their demands. ■

***Yves Lusignan is a journalist with the Association de la presse francophone hors Québec and is responsible for the Agence de presse francophone. He has worked for the daily *L'Acadie Nouvelle* (Caraquet, New Brunswick) and for the weekly *L'Eau Vive* (Regina, Saskatchewan).**

Alliance Quebec Ponders Tough Choices

AQ's May convention found itself faced with tough questions. No easy answers surfaced.



John Ciaccia

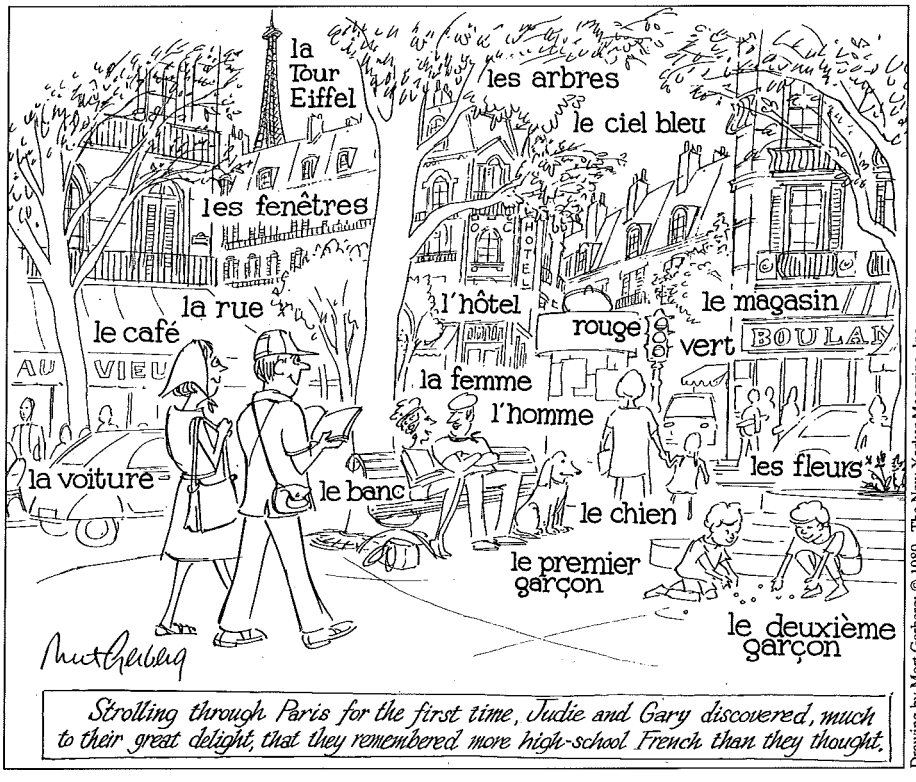
Leadership often means asking tough questions even when easy answers are nowhere in sight. And there was no lack of tough questions at Alliance Quebec's star-studded convention in Montreal May 26-28. Delegates did not wait for Premier Bourassa to call an election to begin pondering their community's political options. Alternatives, not easy answers, were the order of the day.

The convention provided a forum to evaluate each choice, including spoilt ballots, independent candidates and third parties. Provincial Energy Minister John Ciaccia fielded questions which revealed all the anger and resentment felt towards the provincial government in the wake of Bill 178. Party Québécois leader Jacquexs Parizeau, who apparently came neither to bury nor to praise, was greeted politely by delegates. The irony of his visit was underscored by Alliance Chairman Peter Blaikie, who said that if Mr. Parizeau had not won many votes by his presence, he had probably not lost any either. The fledgling Equality Party was also present.

The convention was reminded of recent progress in the implementation of health and social services guarantees. Speeches by federal Secretary of State Gerry Weiner and Quebec Health Minister Louise Robic highlighted the signing of a federal-provincial agreement which will help improve delivery of health and social services in English under Bill 142. Mr. Weiner also used his keynote address to call for a renewed commitment to dialogue, stating: "I deeply believe that the course our community has set for itself for the past 20 years has been the right one. Indeed, it is the only one. The English-speaking community has not erred in seeking to become more bilingual, in reaching out to its French-speaking citizens, in adjusting and integrating more fully into Quebec society."

The French-speaking community was represented by a panel of distinguished Francophones which included Jean Paré, editor of *L'Actualité*, Francine Pelletier of *La Presse* and Claude Béland, president of the Mouvement Desjardins. Their remarks were sincere, uncompromising and always challenging. If the give-and-take revealed differences between the communities, much of it had the well-worn feeling of a quarrel "en famille".

The closing address to the convention was given by D'Iberville Fortier, who emphasized the importance of minority communities and discussed the challenge of getting beyond our differences. Mr. Fortier also welcomed Alliance Quebec's continued support of Francophone minority rights, most recently in the Mahé case, stating that these activities "will go a long way to ensure the events in Quebec cannot be invoked, as seems to be the case in some quarters, as an alibi for a considerably less than perfect treatment of some minority communities elsewhere." *M.O'K.*



Alliance Quebec and Francophones outside Quebec

Hal Winter

Alliance Quebec's policy has always been to support official language minority rights throughout Canada.

When Alliance Quebec makes the news, it's almost exclusively as a vocal champion of the Anglophone language cause.

The media report the sensational side of an exchange between the rights movement and government or some opposing organization, emphasizing its confrontational nature, perpetuating the notion of the drawing up of traditional English-French battlelines.

As a result, an important aspect of Alliance's activity in the broader area of collective and individual rights all across Canada remains largely unknown to a majority in both the nation's two official language groups.

Since its foundation by Montreal lawyer Eric Maldoff in 1982, Alliance Quebec has been an articulate and often effective voice calling for Francophone language rights from coast to coast.

In this role, it has become involved in language litigation on behalf of minority communities or individuals, arguing cases before provincial jurisdictions and the Supreme Court. It also offers financial aid and the benefits of other expertise.

Extensive experience

Why this interest in language issues outside Quebec?

Arguments in Alliance's application last year to be heard by the Alberta Appeals Court on the question of Francophones' right to control their own schools, sum it up succinctly:

"The Applicant in fact includes amongst its officers and permanent staff — and especially within its Legal Committee — several members of the Bar with extensive experience in these matters. The Applicant is thus well suited to assist the Court in ensuring that both the relevant authorities and the available arguments are fully-canvassed.

"Any interpretation given by this Court to s.23 of the Constitution Act 1982 as it applies to the Province of Alberta and to the legislation of that Province will at least directly affect, and will most probably conclusively determine, the interpretation to be given s.23 as it applies to Quebec."

The constitutional Section 23 referred to deals with the right to a publicly-funded minority official language education across Canada wherever warranted by student population. Alliance Quebec, therefore, was really on very familiar terrain.

Through this sort of militant language rights advocacy — reminiscent of the American Civil Liberties Union in the United States — Alliance has over the years been building up solidarity ties with bodies like La fédération des Francophones hors Québec, which represents Francophone organizations.

"Co-operation and solidarity with minorities all across the country has been fundamental to our concepts from the outset," explains AQ Chief of Staff and Legal Affairs Director Kathleen Weil. "We have common ground, shared desires and concerns. But minorities acting alone often don't stand a chance. So wherever there is a crisis, Alliance Quebec will jump in and offer help."

Consultation

Pointing to AQ's most comprehensive effort at the national level — representation to the federal government in hearings on Bill C-72 (the 1988 Official Languages Act) — Weil talks of the continuing consultations with minority groups across the nation. And advice from the Quebec-based organization about implementation of the Official Languages Act is still available to minorities in the other provinces.

"We, in a sense, have to carry the flame. And solidarity is crucial, if we hope to work together to build the kind of nation we all envisage from coast to coast."

In addition to legal intervention on behalf of Francophones in Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario and elsewhere, the Quebec-based rights body provides moral and material support for individuals struggling against prejudice and entrenched ideas.

In April 1987, for example, Léo Piquette, then MLA for the northern Alberta riding of Athabasca-Lac La Biche, dared to ask a question in French in the legislature. Piquette says he was immediately stopped by the Speaker.

Stick together

Invited to speak at a subsequent Alliance Quebec convention, Piquette received a standing ovation from an Anglophone audience. He stressed the need for Canada's minorities to stick together to "keep the powers-that-be from dividing to conquer."

When Francophones elsewhere are crushed by blind authority, Piquette points out, it creates a dangerous precedent for Quebec Anglophones. Hence, Alliance Quebec intervention in rights issues across the country is both welcome and wise. It further ensures that French-speaking minorities become much more sensitive to the position of their Anglophone counterparts within Quebec.

"Francophones outside Quebec ardently hope such involvement will continue and even increase as the Western struggle continues over the years ahead," Piquette says.

Attention in Quebec in recent months has tended to focus on Alliance Quebec's opposition to Premier Robert Bourassa's inside-outside law (Bill 178) on the language of commerical signs. But, behind the scenes, concern with the plight of Francophones in the other provinces is as acute as ever.

At a recent Canadian Parents for French convention in Winnipeg, outgoing Alliance Quebec President Royal Orr declared: "Our community's vision of Canada is clear. It is a vision which we, as Alliance Quebec, have supported across this country. We believe in bilingualism. We believe in a Canada where the English and French languages are equal throughout the country and where all governments work to promote this equality." ■

Will Francophone Parents Shape the Future of Canada?

Jean-Claude Le Blanc

The Commission nationale des parents francophones works to gain education rights.

Uncertainty has recently enveloped the Meech Lake Accord. People are wondering about the future of Canada. Just when the spectre of a relentless erosion of the official language minorities is arising, threatening to undermine the entire country, the emergence of the Commission nationale des parents francophones (CNPF), which already numbers more than 475 parents' committees outside Quebec, gives new hope.

Is this an indication of the resilience, dynamism and vitality of a country still in the making? "It is the French dimension of our national personality that constitutes the essence of Canada and of its influence on the national and international level." So said Prime Minister Mulroney in an exclusive interview in *Le Figaro* during the Paris Economic Summit in July. The rallying of the energies of the Francophone community outside Quebec might then well represent, by itself, one of the most important contributions that will be made in the next decade to the consolidation of Canada's linguistic duality, the foundation of our national identity.

A clearly-defined role

The Commission nationale des parents francophones was founded when the 10 provincial premiers, meeting in Montreal in 1978, acknowledged "the right of any child belonging to an official language minority to receive primary and secondary instruction in his own language wherever numbers warrant." For nearly a decade, the volunteer work of its members would be its sole source of energy. On April 17, 1982, Francophones outside Quebec greeted with great relief the adoption of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Section 23 of which granted Canadians belonging to provincial official language minorities fundamental rights with respect to the education of their children in their own language at the primary and secondary levels.

In a decision handed down in 1984, in the *Quebec Association of Protestant School Boards* v. *A.G. of Quebec*, the Supreme Court stated that "...the framers of the Constitution manifestly regarded as inadequate some — and perhaps all — of the regimes in force at the time the Charter was enacted, and their intention was to remedy the perceived defects of these regimes by uniform corrective measures, namely those contained in s. 23 of the Charter, which were at the same time given the status of a constitutional guarantee."

But the euphoria of the spring of 1982 did not last. It gradually gave way to a deep disenchantment with the slowness of most of the provincial governments in fully and resolutely implementing these new guarantees. Francophone parents, in whom these new educational rights were vested, had to accept the fact that the development of satisfactory minority language educational systems was essentially their responsibility. By the same token, CNPF noted in 1986 that in the six provinces where Francophones were less well served and in the two territories not much more than one-twentieth of the school population eligible under Section 23 was enrolled in a French-language school.

Annoyed by the slowness with which these constitutional provisions were being implemented, Raymond Poirier, the president of the Commission, wrote to the Secretary of State on February 4, 1988: "By the time French-language instruction is offered to us in facilities of the minority community, the target clientele will already be anglicized, the linguistic polarization of the country will have reached the point of no return and the fundamental characteristic of Canada recognized in the Meech Lake Accord will be no more than an illusion for want of having been adequately protected in time." The Commission called for support from the federal government for the achievement of its mission — that of providing the great majority of young people covered by Section 23 in each province and territory, by the year 2000, with access to quality instruction in French in their own educational facilities. As the first permanent employee of the Commission, Paul Charbonneau, told the national congress of Francophone parents in February 1989, just over a month after taking up his duties as Director General, "The countdown has begun!"

Principal areas of intervention

How do CNPF and its provincial and territorial components intend to carry out this mission? Its directors believe that if the educational rights of minorities are to become a reality, a comprehensive implementation plan must be drawn up for each jurisdiction. Planning must take as its point of departure the current state of development of French-language education and take into account the particular features of the educational system of each province and territory. Each has its unique system, shaped by history, geography, demographics and the legislative and regulatory provisions of successive governments. Within this framework, CNPF proposes to trace the outlines of a minority education subsystem that would meet the needs of Francophone parents and fully respect their constitutional rights.

At first the parents expected their respective governments, in consultation with the principal interested parties, to develop the plan to implement the educational rights granted in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. After waiting several years, given the essentially passive attitude of the provincial governments and the need to apply repeatedly to the courts to obtain the educational services to which they were entitled, the parents realized that they themselves had to design the appropriate educational system and call vociferously for its implementation as soon as possible. "No one can define our needs for us," the president of CNPF recently declared. "No one but us can voice the demand for educational services that our provincial governments are waiting to hear in order to act. Do the experiences of our members across the country not remind them daily that a strong, well-organized and adequately supported

⇨

parents' movement is an essential condition for obtaining our constitutional rights in education?" These remarks establish the framework for the principal areas of intervention that CNPF has defined for itself.

On the national level planning and research are required to develop action plans and support the development of the strategies and modes of intervention most likely to ensure their realization, to produce documentation to inform the public and make it aware of the shortcomings of the present educational system, to provide parents with the tools they need at all levels to take effective action and to train administrators and the thousands of parent-volunteers who work at the local level or in the provincial federations of parents' committees.

At the provincial and territorial level each member organization of CNPF establishes, concerning the parents' movement, a program to ensure the continuance of existing parents' committees and a program of development where no French-language pre-school services or French primary or secondary schools exist. The Commission estimates that it will be necessary to establish approximately 400 new parents' committees in Canada to ensure a complete system of minority institutions from pre-school to the secondary level throughout the country. The former program ensures the continuous training of volunteers and liaison between the various parties involved and provides professional and technical support for parents' committees. The purpose of the development program is to bring together parents who wish to obtain French-language educational services and provide them with the support they need to be successful: documentation, materials to increase awareness, effective strategies and preparation, if necessary, for legal action.

Pre-school

The lack of an adequate system of French-language kindergartens and day-care centres often results in the anglicization of Francophone children even before they have reached the age required to enrol in grade 1. The Francophone parents' movements therefore decided that the pre-school level would be one of its main areas of activity. It is at this level that the process of transmitting the French-Canadian language and culture must begin. It is equally a question of adequately preparing Francophone children for their first year at a French school and of asserting responsibility for the other children eligible for instruction in the language of the Francophone minority. In both instances, this is the best way to ensure sufficient numbers of pupils for the French-language elementary school system.

CNPF has therefore developed a research and action plan designed to establish a pan-Canadian system of French-language day care centres in minority areas. Other purposes of the system would be to keep track of children of pre-school age at least one of whose parents has French as a mother tongue because they constitute the clientele to be consolidated and served, to prepare appropriate educational materials and to train volunteers and support staff. Ambitious in its scope and innovative in its approach, this plan should be regarded as the first organized attempt to check assimilation, which often later becomes irreversible, at the pre-school age — the time when it begins.

Francophone parents are at work from coast to coast.

Results

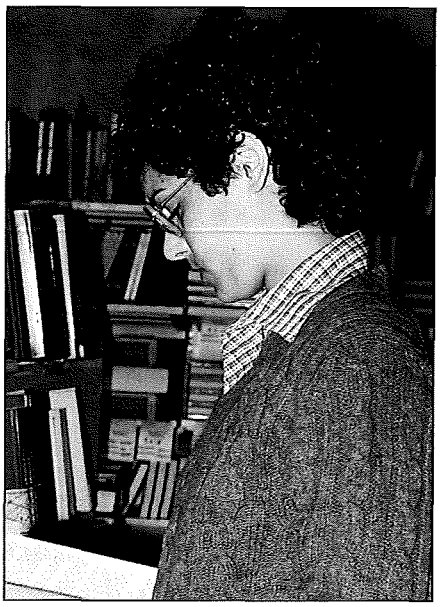
Francophone parents have set to work. From coast to coast, their achievements are proliferating. The results in the first months of 1989 are already impressive.

The Société des parents francophones du Yukon plans to open a day-care centre at Émilie Tremblay School in September, while in the Northwest Territories the first French classes, from kindergarten to grade 2, will be held at Sissons School in Yellowknife. The Fédération des parents francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador was formed on June 11. New parents' committees have already been formed at Anse-a-Canards and Stephenville. The first kindergarten/day-care centre in Prince Edward Island will open this month. For its part, the Rustico parents' committee has succeeded in convincing the Department of Education and School Board No. 3 to develop a reception and integration program for Acadian children covered by the provisions of Section 23 of the Charter who have not yet had the opportunity to learn French. In Saskatchewan parents and the Fransaskois community have been quick to take advantage of all the positive effects arising from implementation of the recommendations of the Gallant Report (see p. 20), which will allow the building of a true minority education subsystem. In Nova Scotia the efforts of the Sydney parents' committee in the past five years have finally begun to bear fruit, thanks to the support of the Fédération des parents acadiens de la Nouvelle Écosse. Recruitment for French-language classes from kindergarten to grade 9 has been successful and a program has been offered since the start of the school year. In British Columbia the Association des parents du programme-cadre de français celebrated the 10th anniversary of the program in June after making a tour of the province to raise awareness and instituting legal action at a time when the province is preparing to revise its School Act. The Fédération des parents francophones de l'Alberta is also a beehive of activity. September 1989 marks the opening of a new junior kindergarten at St. Paul and at the new Notre-Dame French school located in West Edmonton, of a drop-in child-care centre in Fort McMurray and of a mobile junior-kindergarten to serve the Peace River region. Blessed with a relatively complete system of French-language elementary and secondary schools, the Comités de parents du Nouveau-Brunswick Inc., which is little more than a year old, given the lack of public kindergartens in that province, immediately tackled the pre-school issue, including the lack of day-care centres. In Manitoba activity on the pre-school level is in ferment. The provincial federation of parents' committees already has nearly 40 parents' committees at the pre-school level. It is hardly surprising the the Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface will begin offering a two-year course in day-care techniques this month. For its part, the Fédération des associations de parents et d'instituteurs de langue française de l'Ontario is pleased to have been invited by the Ministry of Education to participate in a wide range of advisory committees on various aspects of education and its administration.

In short, the Commission nationale des parents francophones is a movement in full flower that has not lost sight of its basic mission and is pursuing it with determination and considerable self-assurance and energy. This is a good omen for the strengthening of linguistic duality and of our Canadian identity. ■

Second-Language Retention: Learning and Loss

A study commissioned by this Office delineates various views of a vexed subject.



How a second language is learned has, until recently, been concerned with acquisition, not loss. Now, however, learning and loss are beginning to be seen as part of the same question — how do we acquire information and, once information has been acquired, how do we retain it?

In 1988 the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages commissioned the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education to do a comprehensive review of the literature on second-language retention. The study includes an annotated bibliography of Canadian, European and American research as well as a report summarizing the issues. The report (20 pages in English, 24 pages in French) provides a introduction to the issues and a selection of the most relevant research studies. It also includes a useful list of the principle factors affecting second-language retention. They are:

- initial level of acquisition: the higher the level, the less the loss;
- features of acquisition context: supportive environment, positive motivation, intense and rich language practice;
- training in other foreign languages;
- maturity;
- literacy in acquisition period;
- reason to use language in real-life situations during training period and intent to use language at some point after training period;
- attainment of "critical level" before completion of initial training;
- language support and practice in follow-up period.

All this may seem to be rather theoretical, but the right answers cannot be found until we learn what the right questions are. Put simply, the immediate question is: If people do not use their second language, will they lose it? The survey, in its questions and answers section — carefully, "answers" is surrounded by quotation marks — says that the general rule is that the higher the proficiency attained in the training period, the better the language is retained. Defining rates of attrition is difficult because of individual differences in style and level of acquisition, personal factors such as motivation and intent to use the second language in the future, quirks of memory, and the social and cultural milieu in which the second language is learned and used. Different skills decline at different rates, but the specifics remain hypothetical.

To a layman the question seems easy of solution. An intensive degree of training, motivation, a favourable environment and continuing use ensure second-language retention. "It would appear that the better one knows a second language, the more practice time one has, and the richer one's personal and social experience in the language, the less severe the loss over time and the more easily recoverable the skills."

Theories abound and all the facts are not yet in.

The subject is not as simple as that — what is? — and if theories abound, all the facts are not yet in. "Second-Language Retention" (which is available from Communications Branch, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, Ottawa, Canada K1A 0T8, (613) 995-0826) is a useful compendium of research and ideas on the subject. For those who wish to delve even more deeply into the subject, the Commissioner's Office also has the annotated bibliography available in either English or French. ■

French-Language Education in Ontario: Towards Integration from Day Care to University

*Alfred Abouchar**

A master plan developed by the Conseil de l'éducation franco-ontarienne outlines the urgency of the situation and suggests a new collective effort.

The French-language education system in Ontario has existed and has been evolving for some 150 years. Since the Act of Union, the Francophones of Upper Canada have continually sought access to education in French. Examples of this unrelenting struggle are not hard to find in the history of this community. In order to understand the battle over schools, it is necessary to fully appreciate the importance of education to the social life of the minority community, for without it the survival and health of that community are in peril.

Despite Regulation 17 (instituted in 1912), after the Marchand Report of 1927 the number of French schools grew steadily. It was only in 1968, however, that Ontario Francophones succeeded in obtaining French-language public secondary schools. In January 1989 Ontario finally established the first two independent French-language school boards, one in the Ottawa-Carleton area and the other in the metropolitan Toronto area.

Social imbalance

The context of the Ontario Francophone community is, however, undergoing rapid change and increasingly reflects novel needs. Various factors must be weighed in the balance:

- the recent acquisition of control over French schools;
- the introduction of French-language services at all levels of the Ontario public service;
- the collective realization by the Franco-Ontarian community of its size and diversity;
- the increasing urbanization of Ontario society;
- the growth of fields related to technology, economics and politics.

In addition, the new problems associated with literacy and professional training, the teacher shortage and the high and increasing rate of assimilation (although its rate of increase has been slowing since 1981) of Francophones in Ontario serve to aggravate the social imbalance that is gradually becoming apparent in French-speaking Ontario on the threshold of the 1990s. Some serious social introspection is therefore necessary. It should be centred mainly on an objective analysis of what has been achieved and on medium- and long-term strategic planning of the French-language school system in Ontario.

The master plan

Against this background, the Conseil de l'éducation franco-ontarienne has challenged the entire system of French-language education in Ontario. It has channelled its energies and resources in the past two years towards the development of a "master plan" that would offer the educational authorities a futuristic vision of a comprehensive system of French-language education at all levels: preschool, elementary, secondary, community college and university. In sum, it proposes a logical path for French-language education within an independent and homogeneous system. The plan's approach embraces administration as well as programs, human, pedagogical and financial resources, cultural activities and special education.

This new strategic plan for the expansion and reorientation of French-language educational services, presented in a proactive rather than a reactive manner, is principally designed to respond to the backwardness that characterizes Franco-Ontarians at all levels of the school system, and particularly with regard to their active participation and their rate of success in post-secondary education.

A real challenge

French-language instruction at the community college level is currently undergoing a fundamental rethinking. Ontario's bilingual community colleges, created to meet the needs of young adults for technical and professional instruction and oriented to the requirements of the job market, increasingly found it necessary to adjust their aim to meet the underlying needs and aspirations of the Francophone community. The development of a full range of French-language programs was slow, complex and costly and the guarantee of services in French presented a real challenge. It was against this background and in response to the recommendations of the Conseil de l'éducation franco-ontarienne that the government of Ontario, in co-operation with the Department of the Secretary of State, laid the foundation for a new system of French-language community colleges. The first of these will open its doors in 1991 in eastern Ontario.

The creation of this new community college system will require the establishment of new consultative infrastructures within the Ministry of Colleges and Universities. This system will have to rationalize an unprecedented burgeoning of French-language programs in accordance with needs and priorities, especially in the fields of technology, continuing education, professional training and distance education. Centres for literacy, apprenticeship training, French-language recovery, electronic media and research will subsequently have to be established. Finally, the need for greater educational resources and the urgent requirement for financial resources to facilitate access by

***Alfred Abouchar is Secretary-General of the Conseil de l'éducation franco-ontarienne.**

Francophone students to French-language community colleges and their continued enrolment in them must be mentioned.

The universities

As for French-language instruction at the university level in Ontario, this area is undergoing a transformation somewhat analagous to that of community college instruction. However, the autonomous nature of the universities and their specific role gives them considerable versatility and, hence, greater responsibility for the development of a plan to expand French-language university programs and services. The disparity between the specialized courses and programs at the six bilingual Ontario universities, the lack of provincial planning and co-ordination, the shortage of Francophone university professors in high-technology fields and the slow rate of growth of the French-speaking student population over the years all suggest that a far more rational approach is needed.

The renewal of the Ontario university system ought first of all to increase the availability and quality of a broad range of basic programs in the province's three main regions. This will be supplemented by a wide variety of unique, specialized programs. From the continuation of existing courses and programs to the completion of basic programs, the Ontario university system will then have to go beyond the current phase of consolidating staff to finally begin the introduction of new programs and services designed to increase the active participation of Francophones in university studies. Grants to universities, however, ought to increase in proportion to the growing need for French-language instruction and research.

The "master plan" prepared by the Conseil de l'éducation franco-ontarienne outlines the urgency of the situation and looks towards a modernization, indeed an integration, of the entire Ontario French-language education system. From the incorporation of the small child into the education system to the renewal of the system at the elementary and secondary levels, and from the creation of a community college system to the expansion of the French-language university system in all scientific fields, the parameters have been defined and the process is underway. The success of this new collective effort now depends only on a new sense of solidarity and responsibility, on the striving for relevance and on the maintenance of excellence in education. ■

Alberta's Mahé Case

Do official language minorities have the right to manage their own schools? The Supreme Court ponders conflicting provincial positions.

While Francophones in Alberta are seeking to obtain confirmation from the Supreme Court of Canada of their constitutional right to manage their own schools, if need be through a single school board for the entire province, Quebec contended in its brief to the Court that the laws of each province and the way its own school system is organized must determine the means chosen to give effect to the right to instruction in the language of the minority.

Quebec argues for a different definition of a key word.

While the courts in Ontario and Alberta had already accepted the definition of the French term "établissement" given in *Le Grand Robert*, i.e., "an administrative body corporate responsible for managing a public service," Quebec, citing *Le Grand Larousse Universel*, contended that, in the Canadian context, "établissement scolaire" refers rather to a school that a school board is responsible for managing.

Quebec recognizes that the right to minority language educational facilities includes the right to participate in their management, but not to control them. In its view, while the Constitution grants the minority the right to have facilities that reflect its particular linguistic environment and over which it can exercise an effective supervisory right, it nevertheless leaves it up to each province to determine the conditions for the exercise of this right in the context of the structure of its own school system. This is tantamount to supporting Alberta's position in the Mahé case. At the hearing, however, the Attorney General of Quebec stated that the Constitution grants minorities the right to effective participation in the management of their schools, the provinces in this regard having an obligation with regard to results and not simply to means.

The governments of Canada and New Brunswick generally support the interpretation of the Francophones of Alberta, as do the Association canadienne française de l'Ontario, Alliance Quebec and the Association des Commissions scolaires protestantes du Québec. Saskatchewan and Manitoba joined Alberta in opposing this interpretation, while Ontario adopted a position somewhere in between.

The Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages for its part, intervened before the Supreme Court to argue that the province must adopt legislation (and, as applicable, regulations) that complies in all respects with the provisions of Section 23 of the constitutional Charter and that any legislative provision prior or subsequent to the Charter should be declared inoperative if it is incompatible with the letter or the spirit of Section 23. The nature of constitutional rights, in its view, is such that any legislative incompatibility, no matter how slight, is unacceptable. *J.R.*

The Office of the Commissioner is an intervenor in the case.

Consumers Ignore Quebec Phobias

For the most part, English-speakers outside Quebec are comfortable doing business with Quebec companies.

Political frictions between French and English Canada don't spill over to the consumer marketplace — even though perceptions persist that they do, say executives who have market research to back up their opinions.

"Torontonians have a phobia about everything that comes from Quebec," says a marketing vice-president with a financial institution based in Montreal.

"I would say it's prejudice," he said, speaking on the condition that he was not identified.

"I've heard about products that have been given to a [consumer] focus group and the people like it, but when they put a well-known French brand name on it, it's rejected before they even try it," he said.

However, his company hasn't encountered any consumer resistance as it establishes branches across the country, he says.

Market research shows anti-Quebec bias is not a factor.

Managers at branch offices of the leading Quebec securities firm, Lévesque Beaubien Geoffrion, say concern that Anglophone clients are unwilling to do business with a Francophone company is one reason the company's commission payout system to brokers is higher than that of other major investment dealers.

But, aside from the occasional complaint if a statement is printed in French rather than English, clients don't seem averse to doing business with a Quebec company.

"I thought it was going to be a bigger problem than it's been," said Tom Thomsen, who opened the Regina office two years ago.

"One of the first [Lévesque Beaubien] offices in the West was Edmonton. Now I figured that would be one of the more redneck places to open an office. But when I talked to the manager who was there from the beginning, he said it hadn't hurt his business at all. In fact, if anything he says it distinguished him from everyone else."

Quebec business executives say those anti-French, anti-Quebec perceptions are wrong, and they have the market research and the sales to prove it.

Culinar, a Montreal-based food products company with half of its $500 million in sales annually coming from outside the province, has not found signs of bias in the marketplace, said president Jean-René Halde.

Culinar sells products such as Double Fruit jam, Vachon snack cakes, Unico brand pasta, tomato and oil products, and Ingersoll cheese.

"We've done an awful lot of research on consumer behaviour and I would doubt anything shows a negative reaction because it's out of Quebec; in the same way I don't think we have a lot of Quebec reaction because a product is from Ontario," Halde said. "I don't think it has anything to do with the way consumers behave."

Even with the controversy surrounding the Meech Lake agreement and Quebec's language issue this year, Culinar's sales are showing a healthy increase, he added.

There are differences in the markets, however.

For example, Agropur, a dairy cooperative based in Granby, Quebec, that sells dry milk, cheese and yogurt products, finds its liquid Yoplait yogurt product is more popular in Quebec than the solid Yoplait preferred in the rest of Canada, said public relations director Ken McKay.

And it chooses names for its new products carefully.

"It has to be bilingual — so that people, whether they are Anglophone or Francophone, won't have any trouble pronouncing it," McKay said.

"It's not a political decision *per se*, but we don't want to take any chances in the future of a group boycotting it." ■

Reprinted from The Ottawa Citizen.

Business and Language

Readers may recall from *Language and Society* 25 that in October of 1988 a two-day colloquium on the subject of business and language was held in Hull. Sponsored jointly by the Canadian Society of Association Executives (CSAE), the Secretary of State and the Commissioner of Official Languages, the colloquium brought together some 60 representatives of business, private associations, unions and all levels of government. The delegates studied a detailed report on bilingualism in the private and voluntary sectors presented by the CSAE and produced a large number of recommendations and suggestions for consideration by the Secretary of State.

The Department of the Secretary of State has now prepared a full report of the proceedings of the colloquium, including texts of speeches and the reports and recommendations of the several workshops. A condensed version of the CSAE study on bilingualism in the private and voluntary sectors is also included, as is the concluding summary by the moderator of the colloquium. The report should be included on the reading list for all those involved in implementing official languages programs in the private and voluntary sectors.

Copies of this report can be obtained from Anita Paillard, Program Officer of the Promotion of Official Languages Branch, Department of the Secretary of State, 15 Eddy Street, Hull, Quebec, K1A 0M5 (819-994-4003). *C.B.*

Regional Press Review: Combatting Assimilation

Across Canada, the minority official language press reacted to education, radio, signs and letters.

The continuing struggle for minority educational rights, the importance of French-language radio as a cultural tool for minority communities and the ongoing story of Anglophone alienation in Quebec were among the subjects treated in Canada's minority official language community newspapers over the past few months.

In the field of education, there were cheers, questions and some soul-searching, depending on the province or territory.

Alberta

The cheers came for the success of French-speaking parents in Fort McMurray, in northern Alberta, in gaining a separate French-language elementary school, opening this fall. It will be the fourth such facility in the province.

Writing in *Le Franco Albertain* of Edmonton, editor Guy Lacombe noted that the school was not handed over on a silver platter. "It was won by dint of discussions, meetings, negotiations and tenacity." The school itself, Lacombe predicted, will be "a symbol of tolerance and openness." However, he warned, "the school struggles are far from ended in Alberta, unfortunately. The best advice one can give to Francophone communities still lacking this essential service is to follow the example of the parents of Fort McMurray...to be well informed, to know the facts and to negotiate with openness."

Northwest Territories

An example of such struggles in other areas of the West was to be had in the Northwest Territories, where Francophone parents are still looking for their first small victories. Bearing witness was editorialist Denise Canuel of L'Aquilon, published in Yellowknife. "Nothing can replace learning in one's own language, not even immersion classes...Facing this reality, Francophone parents of the Territories are now demanding the setting up of classes in French and, one day, an education system, including schools." However, she continued, "The linguistic battles in many Canadian provinces prove that we must fight to obtain teaching in French. Francophone parents, and all Francophones in the Territories interested in the growth of their culture, must therefore prepare for the possible difficulties that await them."

Saskatchewan

While things have progressed further in Saskatchewan, an editorial in L'Eau Vive, published in Regina, detected reluctance on the part of some parents to become involved in the developing French-language school system. "We must understand that Francophones have the right to place their children in a school created for Francophones, and that to do so is not to ask for the moon....What remains to be done is for each one of us to exercise this right and to create for ourselves institutions of good quality. If there are any who are not yet convinced, they must recognize that it doesn't cost them anything to give the opportunity to those who want to take advantage of their rights."

Radio

The prospect of substantial cuts in Radio-Canada's French-language services as a result of the federal budget was the subject of an angry editorial by Gérard Étienne in Le Voilier of Caraquet, New Brunswick. Praising the contribution of Radio-Canada Atlantique for having helped strengthen Acadian culture and awareness, Étienne insisted that any serious budgetary constrictions would be disastrous, particularly "for a society such as ours that must wage a daily battle in order not to be swallowed up by assimilation." As for Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and Finance Minister Michael Wilson, they are "completely indifferent to the fate of Francophones. They couldn't care less about matters of culture." Too much money has been spent on "a false policy of public relations," Étienne contended. "If millions of dollars can be devoted to multiculturalism, some can be found for combatting the assimilation of our people."

At a more local level, *Le Journal de Cornwall* editorialist Huguette Burroughs issued an urgent call for a new French-language community radio station to replace a commercial facility that disappeared a few years ago. "It is time for action, if we want to preserve what remains of our life in French, and to enrich it if possible. For a community without a voice is certain to disappear."

Signs of discontent

In Quebec the ever-present issue of the language of commercial signage continued to make ink and bile flow in the community press. Commenting on the regulations to Bill 178, the law allowing limited use of English inside commercial establishment, Peter Scowen of the Stanstead Journal poked fun at the requirement that for every English-language sign there must be at least two in French. "As a follow-up to Bill 178, it is comic relief. Now, French-speaking Quebecers who feel their language is threatened when they see an English sign in a store can calm themselves knowing there are two French signs nearby. Of course, the regulation is going to make French-Canadians seem a little slow witted. Everything said once to an Anglophone will have be said twice to a Francophone."

In education: Cheers, tears, and soul-searching.

On the same issue, but in another tone, editor Ross Dickson of the Shawville *Equity* called on English-speaking voters to reject Premier Bourassa personally and, if necessary, his whole government in the coming provincial elections. "In the process of

⇨

its continued sacrifice to the collectivity of the individual rights of all citizens, Quebec has gone a long way towards destroying some of the most important aspects of Canadian and Quebec culture, namely the protection of individual freedoms and the tolerance and support of minorities....The longer Premier Bourassa is left tinkering with Quebec culture, the more our fundamental rights, our democracy and our self-esteem are in jeopardy."

Signage: Ink and bile continued to flow.

An opposing view on the issue came from a Francophone paper outside Quebec. In *Le Courrier* of Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, editorialist Richard Landry had nothing but praise for Bourassa and his policies. "Hats off to Quebec, which, in protecting its own language, protects us Francophones outside Quebec. Perhaps one day the Anglophones will understand that, outside Quebec, Francophones are accustomed to going to stores and seeing all signs in English only. We accept it because we are a minority. Why can't Anglophones do the same?"

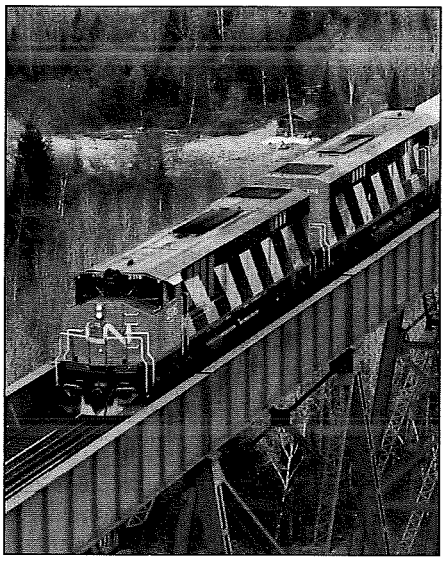
A novel overall solution to the whole problem of language in central Canada was offered by John O'Meara in the *Monitor* of Montreal. He called for a territorial swap involving an exchange of land and people between Ontario and Quebec. Under the scheme, Ontario would give up several eastern and northern counties, while Quebec would cede to Ontario the southwestern part of the province. "An exchange of this kind would relieve both provinces of any obligation to official bilingualism," O'Meara wrote.

Letters to the editor filled with hatred towards Francophones appearing in local English newspapers were the target of an editorial by Henri-Eugène Duguay in *Le Moniteur* of Shediak, New Brunswick. Noting that a common theme of the letters was that the Francophone minority wants to rule the majority, Duguay commented: "It is false. It is the minority and the majority that want equality, that want justice, that want the right to live. Why is it so difficult to understand that we want, as persons and as a people to be equals?" *T.S.*

The Association of Quebec Regional English Media

AQREM, founded in 1979, has grown to include 17 member newspapers and six associate members.

At first glance, an observer of the official languages scene in Canada might be tempted to wonder why the 700,000-odd members of the English-speaking minority in Quebec need a network of flourishing community newspapers in their language. After all, they already have one major national daily, the Montreal *Gazette*, as well as several Montreal-based radio stations and two major television outlets, run by the CBC and the CTV, also in Montreal, as well as another private station in Quebec City.



Like a railroad... the media connects communities.

Certainly, compared to many French-speaking Canadians living outside Quebec, Anglo-Quebecers are relatively well served by their national information media. The situation is, however, more complex than it might at first seem. There are at least two reasons for this.

First, while most English-speaking Quebecers live on or around the Island of Montreal, there are still more than 100,000 of them who live in enclaves, some quite large, others tiny, in areas far away from the metropolis. They may live in the area of Sherbrooke or Quebec City, or in remote rural areas such as northwest Quebec, the Gaspé or the lower north shore of the St. Lawrence River, where electronic media in English are non-existent and the presence of the national press is at best sporadic.

Secondly, in Montreal, as in other large cities, the national press is strictly limited in its capacity, or desire, to cover local neighbourhood issues and events.

As a result, despite the presence of national media, many English-speaking Quebecers, both rural and urban, continue to support their own community newspapers, reflecting their own needs and interests on a small and more human scale.

Community newspapers

Filling this need are, currently, 20 community papers, that reach thousands of English-speaking Quebecers on and off Montreal Island. They form a disparate group. Most are weeklies, but one, the Sherbrooke *Record*, is a daily. Most depend on paid circulation, but some of the largest ones on the Island have free distribution. Most are strictly English, but some are bilingual. The shortest name belongs to *Spec*, published in the Gaspé, the longest to the *Low Down to Hull and Back News*.

Their common feature is membership in the Association of Quebec Regional English Media, founded in 1979 following the demise, some years earlier, of a provincial community newspaper group.

Founded at a time when the English-speaking community and its newspapers were feeling particularly

vulnerable under a recently elected Parti Québécois government, the association took as its first task to help convince English-language papers to continue publishing. Today, AQREM has 17 corporate members — those with a paid circulation — and six associates — those with free distribution. Total distribution, without overlap, is estimated at 140,000, including about 70,000 paid circulation, of which almost 40,000 is off the Island of Montreal.

Over the last decade, AQREM has gradually extended its activities and services to its members. Since 1983 it has had a permanent headquarters on the campus of Macdonald College in Ste. Anne de Bellevue, at the western tip of Montreal Island. Today there is a staff of three, headed by executive director Allan Davis, a former French teacher and journalist who has been with the association since it opened its office six years ago.

Branching out

It is just in the past year that AQREM has seen the biggest single change in its structures since its founding. This was the decision, in 1988, to open the association up to Montreal community papers. At its inception, AQREM saw itself as essentially serving that part of Quebec away from metropolitan Montreal. The Montreal papers, and the Montreal Anglophones, were perceived as being able to take care of themselves. "There was even some suspicion of Montreal," Davis suggests.

At first, AQREM saw itself as essentially serving Quebec outside Montreal.

In the past few years, however, there has been a growing awareness that the communities and their papers have more in common than that which separates them. There is, too, a new confidence among the old membership. "We're no longer afraid of being overwhelmed by Montreal; and, after all, we're all in the same boat," Davis says. At present, six metropolitan area papers are involved with the association.

Services

From the start, a major role of the organization has been to serve as an advertising clearing house for members in their relations with national advertisers, especially the federal government. That role has continued, and expanded. But along with it has come an expansion of editorial services, essentially in the form of a province-wide news service, known as Mainland Press. It has been operated out of Ormestown, northwest of Montreal, since 1984 by editor Judy Taylor, herself a former teacher and weekly journalist. Operating under a story-sharing agreement among members, Mainland Press tries to guarantee at least one story a week of more than purely local interest coming from a member paper. To the greatest extent possible, the service is now using computerized transmission, sending print-ready copy to all papers equipped with the necessary receiving facilities.

The service is aimed exclusively at off-Island communities. "It's really culturally important," Taylor emphasizes. "It's a vital way of filling the information gap that has existed among the scattered Anglophone communities across the province."

Delighted with recent developments is Ross Dickson, editor of the Shawville *Equity* in western Quebec, a founding member of AQREM and its president for the last two years. The expansion of the group into Montreal is a most appropriate development, Dickson says, "a dream come true."

The federal government

A continuing challenge, however, is to maintain relations with the federal government on an even keel. The question of postal rates is a constant problem, especially as a result of recent budget cuts to long-standing reader subsidy programs, which could particularly affect small rural newspapers. "If rates rise significantly, there's no doubt that at least some rural papers will be closing," Dickson warns.

Another problem arises from the federal government's interpretation of those sections of the 1988 Official Languages Act that call on government departments to direct at least some advertising to minority official language newspapers. According to Allan Davis, there has been some tendency for responsible officials to assume that, in Quebec, an advertisement in the one national paper, the *Gazette*, is sufficient to reach all English-speaking Quebecers. However, Davis points out, in rural Quebec local papers reach three times as many people as does the *Gazette*. "The local papers may suffer from comparison with glitzy metro journalism. But the big city media have no news of local communities except when it's weird and wonderful." Ironically, it is the Quebec government that seems to have best realized that it is the local papers that blanket their communities. One tangible recognition came last March, when the province placed an English-language advertising insert on AIDS in all AQREM papers.

Advertising and editorial services have expanded.

Greater mutual knowledge

Since last May's annual meeting the new AQREM president has been Sharon McCully, a former editor in the Gaspé region and a regional reporter for the Sherbrooke *Record*, working out of the town of Knowlton in the Eastern Townships. She hopes for continuing expansion of editorial services to make Anglophones around the province ever more aware of their neighbours in other communities. Specifically, she is aiming at supplying more direct coverage to the community press from the Quebec National Assembly on issues important to Anglophone readers. "Bill 178 is an example of what I mean. It would have been good to have had more statements of the views of some of our back-bench members," she says.

In keeping with the search for greater mutual knowledge among the different communities, McCully also plans to encourage the holding of annual meetings in different parts of the province. Enthusiasm for the idea is apparently considerable. "We're almost going to have to call for tenders."

In the long term, the fate of AQREM will depend on what some consider to be the uncertain future of the Anglophone communities throughout Quebec. However, the association and its member papers appear determined to continue to mirror the realities of those communities as they exist and to express as best they can the needs and aspirations of those communities in an ever-changing Quebec. *T.S.*

The Association de la presse francophone

The APF, founded in 1976, consists of 24 member newspapers in almost every corner of Canada.

While in a substantial sense it is possible to make a viable comparison between the situation of the English and French language minority press in Canada from the simple, basic fact that both serve minority communities surrounded by majorities speaking the other official language, the comparison cannot be taken too far. There is, of course, one enormous difference. This is the fact that the Francophone minority population of Canada, while it is roughly equal in numbers to the Anglophone population of Quebec, is scattered through thousands of square miles in nine provinces and two territories with all the problems of inter-communications and sheer survival that such distances imply.

Under the circumstances it might seem miraculous — if at the same time vitally necessary — that an active network of French-language weekly, bimonthly and monthly newspapers continues to flourish across the land. But this is, in fact, the case.

Geography

The umbrella organization into which they are grouped is the Association de la presse francophone, which has a total of 24 member newspapers in almost every corner of Canada. Not surprisingly, however, given the scattered nature of the Francophone population, the geographical distribution of the papers is far from even. No fewer than 15 of the publications have their homes in Ontario (8) and New Brunswick (7). It is perhaps not coincidental that these are the only two provinces outside Quebec to boast a French-language daily newspaper. As for the other seven provinces and two territories, they have one paper each to serve their Francophone populations, with names such as *Le Franco-Albertain* (Edmonton), *L'Eau vive* (Regina) and *La Liberté* (St. Boniface). Their common goal, along with their counterparts in all the other provinces, is to mirror and represent the interests of their own particular communities, as well as to forward the interests of the French-speaking community, in the larger sense, that stretches through Canada from sea to sea and beyond. Their combined circulation is about 150,000, according to APF sources.

Until July the official name of the Association was the Association de la presse francophone hors Québec. Although the references to "outside Quebec" was dropped, Association membership remains confined to papers published outside that province.

President of the Association is a western journalist and businessman, Roland Pinsonneault, who is publisher of the lively weekly *L'Eau Vive*, which services the French-speaking population of Saskatchewan.

A national organization

From its offices in downtown Ottawa, a staff of nine, headed by Association Director-General Wilfred Roussel handles the operations of what is, in the final analysis, a complex na onal organization. Roussel, a former editor of one of the member papers, *Le Voilier* of Caraquet, New Brunswick, has held the post since 1983; the Association itself saw the light of day in 1976. Like its English-language equivalent in Quebec (see p. 32), APF has from the start depended to a large extent on subsidies from the Secretary of State's department, which has the responsibility of facilitating the continuing survival efforts of the minority language communities in Canada.

As Roussel sees it, the problems of the Francophone regional press outside Quebec are unique. Unlike Anglophone Quebecers, members of Francophone minority groups have little or no access to large daily newspapers providing national and provincial news from a Francophone perspective. In theory, this is one of the roles of Radio-Canada, which is available in every large city of Canada. In fact, as Roussel notes, its coverage is overwhelmingly confined to happenings in Quebec. "Although French minority groups outside Quebec account for 17% of all Francophones in Canada, we get very little of our own news from Radio-Canada or the national press. As a result, our papers have to cover an aspect of the news that just isn't covered anywhere else," Roussel explains.

Services

To help its members meet the challenge insofar as it transcends their own local communities, the APF started its own press service in September 1988, boasting one hard-working journalist and acting news editor, Yves Lusignan, who also works out of the Ottawa office. Lusignan, who has worked for Francophone papers in both east and west, churns out between five and 10 stories a week for the Agence de presse francophone. He also commissions and edits stories from different regions considered to be of more than strictly local interest. The basic goal, Lusignan explains, is to give a Francophone perspective to regional, national and even international events.

In May and June of this year, for example, APF offered stories on a wide range of subjects, including the problems of Franco-Albertans, the continuing assimilation of young Francophones, the impact of the federal budget on minorities, Francophone participation in the federal Public Service and the situation of French-language scientific journals. There was also a series of articles on the Francophone summit held in Dakar, Senegal, where Lusignan travelled on behalf of the papers he serves. Since late last spring APF has been accredited to the Parliamentary Press Gallery.

A more traditional service offered by the Association is that of clearing house for national and regional advertising. For this, it has its own agency, OPSCO (Opérations publicitaires et services de communications), whose staff of three also work out of Ottawa headquarters.

While in the past most national advertising has been from federal sources, Roussel says there has been a recent effort to diversity, to the point that now about one-third of ad revenue comes from private industry. Whatever its source, revenue has been steadily increasing from $300,000 annually in the early 1980s to $1.4 million in 1988-89.

In additional to regular advertisements, the agency also handles special

editorial inserts, sponsored by outside bodies, including governments. In recent years, these have included sections on International Youth Year, the history of Quebec, Francophone America, French services in Ontario, women's issues and, most recently, a section sponsored by the Commissioner of Official Languages on the 1988 Official Languages Act — which also appeared in another version of Quebec English-language weeklies.

A third aspect of APF activity, also of growing importance, is the Donatien Frémont Foundation, named after a pioneer journalist who was active in Manitoba and Saskatchewan early in the century. Sponsored by Association members, with donations by public and private corporations, the Foundation now controls a trust fund of $250,000, which it hopes to raise to $1 million. Between 1981 and 1988 it gave out 476 post-secondary scholarships to French-speaking minorities in the communications field for a total of $104,047.

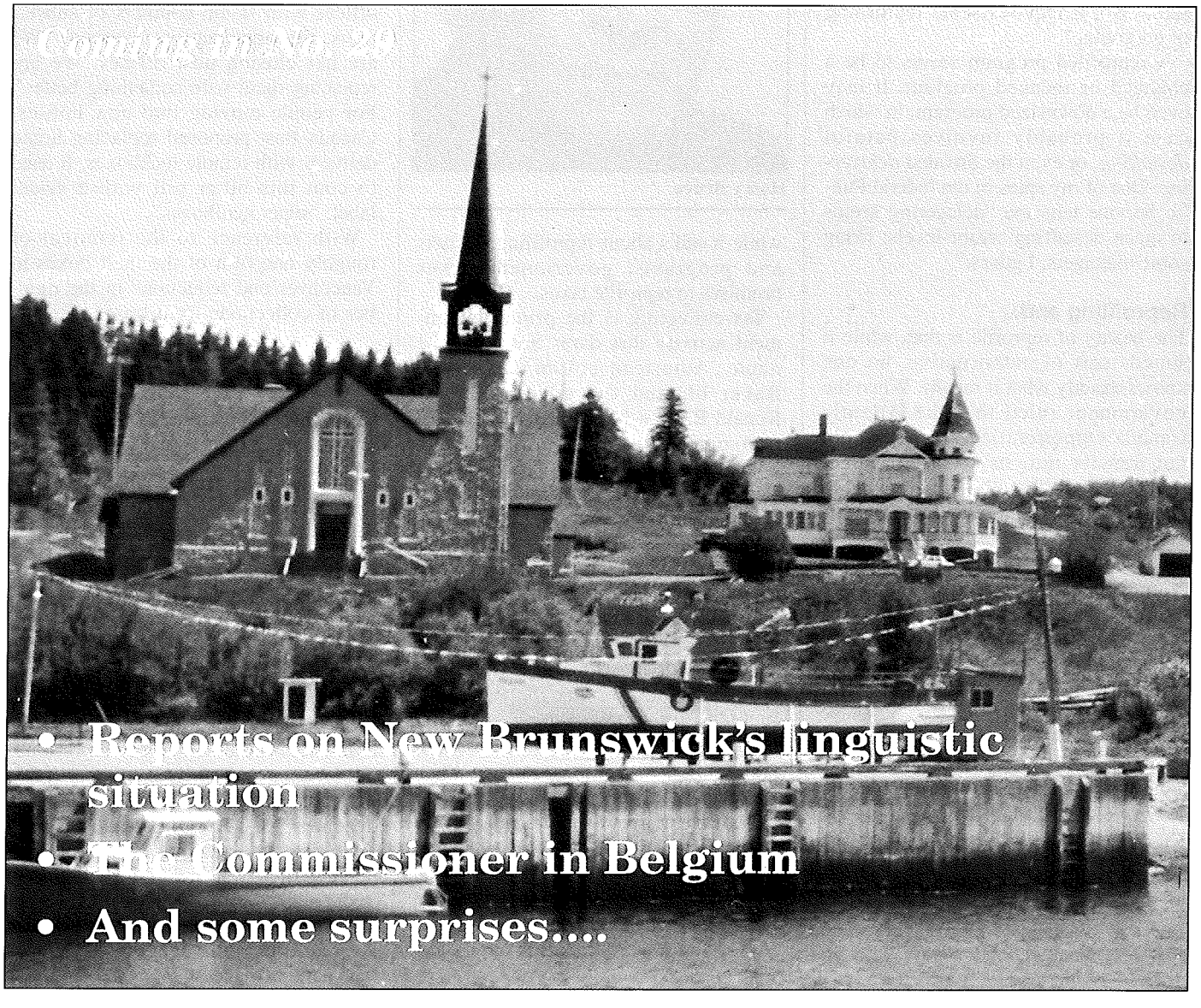
Challenges

Much remains to be done, Roussel says. A project now under way is to connect all member papers electronically with the Ottawa office, for both editorial and advertising services. "Our papers are no longer in any sense marginal affairs," Roussel notes. "They need the same services as the major newspapers." Cost of the exercise is estimated at $1.4 million, and Roussel hopes, with some help from government and others, to have it completed within two years.

Another challenge is simply to reach more people. While the situation has improved noticeably since 1976, with 24 members now compared to 16, there are still serious gaps. Roussel specifically identifies Saint John, New Brunswick, and Welland and Sturgeon Falls, Ontario, where sizeable communities still lack a paper. There is, of course, only so much the Association can do. "We're here to provide services, not to start up newspapers," Roussel says. "However, we can offer our expertise to anyone who wants it."

Perhaps the most difficult part of the country to cover adequately is that occupied by the four western provinces, where areas are vast and the Francophone population is scattered and vulnerable. "The further west you go, the more difficult it is to maintain communications with Francophones," Roussel sighs.

Nevertheless, almost as far west as you can go, the weekly *Le Soleil de Colombie*, published in Vancouver by the Fédération des Franco-Colombiens, continues to serve more than 3,000 subscribers. It is a symbol, as are the other western papers, not to mention *L'Aurore boréale* in the Yukon and *L'Aquilon* in the Northwest Territories, of the stubborn determination of many French-speaking Canadians to maintain their own language and culture, even in the most difficult circumstances. That, after all, is what Canada's official minority language newspapers, whether English or French, are all about. *T.S.*



Verbal Camouflage in Government

*Harry Bruce**

Asking government to use clear language is as futile as trying to tattoo soap bubbles.

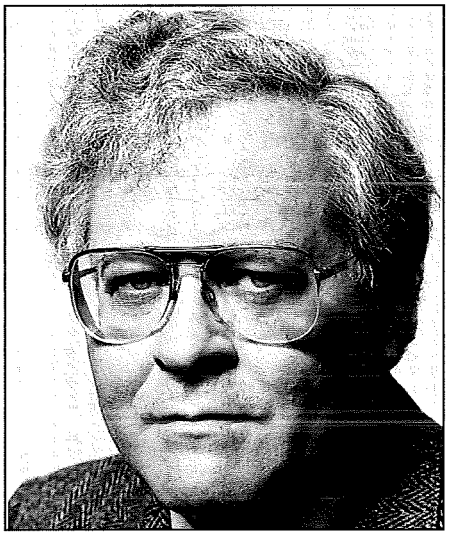
Since no less a figure than Finance Minister Michael Wilson has used *reprofile* right out in the open, the word has joined the ranks of *downsizing, revenue enhancement* and *viable option* as an officially sanctioned chunk of government mumbo jumbo. Asked by the *Financial Times of Canada* whether his budget required the government to recant the defence white paper, Wilson said, "No, it requires some reprofiling of programs."

A reprofiled program seems to be a changed or reduced program. It may even be a downsized program, in which case it probably involves painful *destaffing*, or even the dreaded *delayering*. One of my spies in the federal Public Service tells me "delayering seems to mean destaffing senior levels: firing some managers, I guess."

Reprofiling and...

The beauty of reprofile is that, while it sounds sort of authoritative, no one knows exactly what it means. When the government ruled that the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency could not transfer into its 1989-90 budget roughly $80 million that it had failed to spend during the previous fiscal year, some saw the decision as a cut in ACOA funding. Not so, said Hermel Vienneau, press secretary to Public Works Minister Elmer MacKay. "It was money we were hoping to have," Vienneau explained. "It was not a cut. It was reprofiled."

One definition of *profile* is "to shape the outline of by passing a cutter around." Suppose you profile a cookie. You can't reprofile it without reducing it can you? That may be why it is that,



Harry Bruce

while it talks about reprofiling budgets and programs, government never promises to reprofile taxes.

Tax-collecting is the prime government activity that dares not speak its name. American columnist Russel Baker blamed the government of Ronald Reagan for having coined "the transparently fraudulent 'revenue enhancement' to mean 'tax boosts'. That one having been laughed away, it is now trying 'tax simplification' on us. Is there anyone who doesn't think 'simplification' is a five-syllable word meaning 'Ladies and gentlemen, you will know pain'?"

Tax base erosion control and...

U.S. disguises for *tax increase* also include *state-collected revenue, tax base erosion control, tax base broadening* and *deficit insurance policy*. When Reagan, who had promised never to raise taxes, proposed taxing Social Security benefits of the wealthy, White House spokesman Larry Speakes called the plan *replacement of revenues*, while Senator Robert Dole called it a *recapture of revenues*. Canadians would call it a *clawback*.

Up here in the true North strong and verbally evasive, the folks who make us feel pain through taxation prefer *tax reform*. Another one of my language moles in the Public Service says *contingency surcharges, services maintenance, user fees* and *indexing repeal* are all "expressions used for tax increases, to bamboozle boobs." A few years ago, he says, the feds published a 50-page booklet entitled "Tax Reform". It was about tax increases, entirely.

Changes in service

For deceitful language, however, few government departments can compete with Canada Post. Asked whether local outrage might yet save rural post offices that Canada Post planned to close, cabinet minister Michel Côté said in January 1987 that he preferred to talk not about closures but about, ahem, "change in service".

This delicacy must have inspired rank-and-file mouthpieces for Canada Post. Responding to subsequent objections to the planned replacement of post offices with stamp counters or substations, the organization declared, "We are not closing post offices. We are replacing them with something better." For people moving into new houses, Canada Post proposed replacing home delivery with remote lockboxes. It tried to coat this bitter pill with a sweet label: "super mailboxes".

With reference to the removal of roughly one-fifth of the mail boxes in Vancouver and reductions in the number of collections from boxes, Canada

Canada Post won the first Public Doublespeak Award.

Post talked not only about plans "to streamline and enhance" mail collection, but also about "more places to post your mail."

For this performance, the Canadian Council of Teachers of English named Canada Post the winner of its first Public Doublespeak Award, a booby prize for the abuse of language. "As English teachers," CCTE spokesman Richard Coe said, "we have no official opinion about whether Canada Post ought to reduce costs by closing post offices or restricting or privatizing services, but we want them to announce their plans and actions in clear language." ■

Harry Bruce lives in the house where his late father was born, on the north shore of Chedabucto Bay, Nova Scotia. His latest book is *Down Home: Notes of a Maritime Son.

Between the Two Cultures: Writing *Écrire dans la maison du Père*

*Patricia Smart**

"I must be the typical Canadian, caught between two cultures and two languages and wanting to exist fully in both."

Reflecting on the experience of writing (and now translating) *Écrire dans la maison du Père*, I am reminded of a sentence by novelist Hubert Aquin that has often come to mind during the five years I've been involved with the writing of this book. It is a simple sentence — "Je suis le Canadian français typique" — and yet it was that sentence that unlocked for me the complexities, the passion and the anguish of Aquin's novels and their ambivalent relationship to both Quebec and Canada. Presumptuous as it may sound, working on *Écrire* has often made me feel that if Aquin was the typical French-Canadian, I must be the typical *Canadian*, caught between two cultures and two languages and wanting to exist fully in both — and discovering as I write that the voice I adopt in one language is not automatically translatable into the other. It is not of course a question of saying one thing for the Québécois audience and another for the English-Canadian one, for I hope that what I have to say in this book about Quebec literature and its relation to the feminine would be meaningful in whatever language the book might be translated into. But the experience of writing the book has made me aware of the fact that every book is an exchange between its author and a certain imagined reading public, and that the tone and the nuances of what one says depend very much on that imaginary reader one always consciously or unconsciously writes for.

Maybe a literary critic takes longer to discover these things than a novelist or poet would, for the critic's job is to allow the *authors* she is explicating to speak, and to some extent it's natural for her to "hide behind them" and not reveal her own presence. For example, looking back at the years when I was writing *Hubert Aquin agent double*, it seems to me I was blissfully unaware of any problem connected with language. I was a literary critic and I wanted to explain Aquin's work to other readers, and there was absolutely no question as to the fact that the book would be written in French. But every piece of literary criticism expresses a point of view, no matter how anonymous it seems; and even then I knew that it was Aquin's brilliant depiction of the ambivalent relationship between the "enemy brothers" of English Canada and Quebec that had drawn me to his work, as well as the mirror reflection I found in his passionate Quebec nationalism of my own love for English Canada, a culture which seemed to me as threatened as that of Quebec, and even harder to hold together because of its geographical sprawl and cultural diversity.

Ten years later, during a period of feeling blocked in my writing, I began to sense in a confused way that "putting on the mask of a Québécois", as I seemed to be doing when I wrote in French, was no longer satisfying or even possible. In the late 70s feminism had burst onto the Québécois (and English Canadian) literary landscape, and its insights about how women have been excluded from culture began to make me shift my perspective on the Quebec literary works I had been teaching and writing about for years. But the book I wanted to write about the women writers of Quebec didn't seem to want to come together: writing in French no longer felt spontaneous, and I wasn't sure why. In June 1985, at the end of a sabbatical year that seemed to have been spent waiting in vain for the book to take shape, I decided that I had time before going back to my teaching to write an article on Laure Conan, the only woman writer of any significance in 19th-century Quebec literature. I had been doing a fair bit of reading about Conan's life and had become convinced that her isolation as a woman in the male-defined cultural milieu of her time was what explained the discontinuous and enigmatic character of her writing. And yet what I was writing about her felt dry and uninspired — in spite of myself, I saw, all of a sudden, I was addressing the five or six other "experts" who had written about her, all of whom were male French-Canadian university professors! In other words, writing in French for me had become synonymous with being trapped in an academic discourse that seemed to shut out not only the reality of women's and men's lives, but my own reality as an English-Canadian woman. And that, I finally realized, was what had been making me feel blocked. It was then that the book I had been searching for became clear in my mind: it would be called *Writing in the Father's House*, it would be about male writers as well as female ones, and it would be written in English — for the imaginary readers I had in mind at that point had to be people who knew nothing about Laure Conan and who could be made to share my enthusiasm for her. From then on the words poured out, and by the end of the summer when it was time to start teaching again I had produced 80 pages in English on Laure Conan's life and work.

The funny thing was, though, that having put the manuscript on hold for the duration of the academic year, I began to suspect that in order to go as deeply as I wanted into the literary works I was analysing, I was going to need an audience familiar with those works and their cultural context. A wise and well-known Toronto publisher (who shall remain unnamed) to whom I had sent off the partial manuscript wrote me back saying that he liked what I was doing, but added in a postscript that he thought I should write

⇨

***Patricia Smith's *Écrire dans la maison du Père* won the Governor General's Award for non-fiction in French in 1989.**

the book in French! By the end of the academic year it was clear that I no longer felt blocked in French, and that my book needed to be written for the Québécois audience. The two years I subsequently spent working on it were the most pleasurable writing experience I've had; often the words seemed to take off almost on their own, making me say more than I'd realized I knew about the literary works and the culture I was exploring.

Translating the book into English, which I'm now doing, is a pleasure of a different sort, which isn't to say it's easy. After my first attempt at it, I was horrified at how awkward my English prose seemed, compared with the style of the French original. Somehow the flow of the original seemed to be based on the relationship with the Québécois audience that I could feel in every sentence: they were the readers I was dialoguing with, and in English the text seemed cut off from its original energy, oversimplified and boring. My first temptation was to abandon the idea of translating it and be content with letting it exist only in French; maybe it wasn't as good as I'd thought after all, and that way my English-Canadian compatriots would never find out! But as I began to reread and revise my attempt at translation I discovered that translating is above all a matter of distancing oneself from the original — and that it takes time, and at least three revisions, before the text begins to flow in the other language. There are of course small changes — facts or dates about the literary works and their historical context that need to be explained by the addition of a word or a phrase for the English-Canadian reader. But mostly, I'm discovering that translating is an activity that involves playing with the *surface* level of meanings: kind of like standing in front of a mirror trying on different outfits until one finds the one that fits a particular mood and translates to the world the being within. Often I find that asking a friend or colleague to read and comment on my English version helps me to achieve that last step of distancing from the original that makes the writing really flow.

To translate someone else's work is an activity that seems to me to have strong parallels with literary criticism (one has to "disappear" into another person's consciousness). That part of the translator's art, I'm glad to say, is not required of me. But what I'm discovering about translation is that it's also a fascinating lesson in what constitutes good writing within a specific language. ■

Briefly Noted

Bilingual complexities

The Consumers' Association of Canada could not present its testimony before a Commons Committee in Ottawa because four pages of speaking notes for the association's president were not tabled in both official languages, decided both English- and French-speaking members of all three political parties. The brief presented by the CAC was in both languages.

In an editorial published on June 16, the *Globe and Mail* called the MPs' reaction "bereft of proportion" and their bilingualism zeal lacking "the essential ingredient of common sense." The matter is under review on the basis of a complaint to the Commissioner of Official Languages.

The Appeal Court of Manitoba ruled that Orders-in-Council affecting the public should be issued in both official languages in Manitoba. A native justice inquiry set up under an Order-in-Council which was written only in English was challenged by the Winnipeg Police Association, and the Société franco-manitobaine joined the challenge to establish the language requirement.

The inquiry has heard testimony from over 800 groups and individuals since it was set up eight months ago. The ruling by Justice Alfred Monnin for a three-judge panel of the Appeal Court was "hailed as a 'victory' for French" read a headline in the *Winnipeg Free Press* on June 10. Premier Gary Filmon said he doubted the ruling affected past Orders-in-Council, while Denis Clement of the Société franco-manitobaine said "the government should use the court decision as a guideline on when to translate future orders."

∴

Blind actuarial students

Quebecers who are blind and who wish to learn to use the data processing equipment now available to them must decipher instruction manuals written in English. The American suppliers are reluctant to have them translated, according to Conrad Bernier in the June 13 issue of *La Presse*.

Similarly, 12 of the 37 examinations that must be taken by the some 500 Quebecers who aspire to the title of actuary each year have not yet been translated into French. These examinations are prepared by American actuarial firms. According to a report in *Le Devoir* on June 3, the examinations contain multiple choice questions which students may answer in French. The president of the Canadian Institute of Actuaries, Jacques Cloutier, stated that the translation of the examinations into French is a priority.

∴

The brain and dominant hemispheres

"It is possible that the greater co-operation of the two hemispheres of the brain observed in persons who are bilingual is related to the fact that they have a different type of intelligence — more flexible, with a greater capacity for the broad picture. Their perception is organized differently, since bilingual people have adapted to two systems of thought....Early bilingualism increases an individual's capacities." The statement is from Professor Wallace Lambert, of the Department of Psychology at McGill University, as quoted by Carole Thibaudeau in *La Presse* on May 21.

His colleague, Professor Donald Taylor, as quoted by the same reporter, added: "If you are an Anglophone in North America, learning French is a bonus that has only beneficial effects (more flexible intelligence, etc.) and does not cause the loss of your mother tongue. But the situation is different for a Francophone who becomes bilingual in North America. In the latter case, the second language can threaten one's culture."

∴

"Translate thine enemy"

The *Economist* (May 20, 1989) suggested some recipes for the United

States to counter the Japanese technological "threat": translate all Japanese technical journals at a cost of $80 million a year (however, this would take 1,000 translators and the United States does not have that many) or set up 10 automatic translation research programs: $10 million. "There are probably fewer than 1,000 American scientists who speak Japanese," writes the *Economist*. "Americans know little about research in Japanese laboratories. That is only partly because of secretiveness. It is also because Americans fail to make use of available information."

The laws of Saskatchewan that the province agreed to publish in both official languages following the Supreme Court decision in the Mercure case will be translated in New Brunswick. The legal translation service affiliated with the Université de Moncton will take over from the firm GigaText, which had agreed to develop a computerized translation system to meet Saskatchewan's requirements. The province, which had invested $4 million in the company, assumed control of it after allegations that its owner had misused government funds, according to Canadian Press. According to the *Gazette*, the federal government's Canadian Workplace Automation Research Centre (CWARC) had evaluated GigaText's translation software and concluded that it did not work.

∴

The language of money

In an interview in the magazine *Avenir* (May 1989), Lorraine Paré, president of the Quebec Teaching Congress, said, "You know, French is a language that will be spoken well when it provides the wherewithal to earn a living. People always choose to learn a language that enables them to develop on a personal level, to obtain a job that pays well and to get ahead in life. You don't learn a language only for its cultural value; you learn it because it enables you to achieve status."

Pierre Péladeau, the brash Chief Executive Officer of Quebecor, wrote in *Business People*: "Quebec universities will continue to graduate students in administration and management at above the average Canadian rate. Young French Canadian graduates will become more and more mobile, and being bilingual, will be ready to work anywhere in the world — Toronto, New York, Paris, London."

∴

In tune

The *Economist* (May 27, 1989), in a profile on "Business in Quebec" wrote: "The French language gives Quebec a shield against being overwhelmed by American multinationals which English Canada lacks. In doing business with Quebec, and making direct investments there, American companies treat it more like a continental European country than just another part of North America, and are sensitive to its different language and culture."

The Newport Area Chamber of Commerce in Vermont has started a French lessons project, reported The *Gazette* on June 6, quoting from *Vermont Business* magazine. A Vermont businessman predicted, "When free trade matures, distribution centres will open in Quebec and they will be under French management." A United States parcel service opening up branches in Quebec has sent all its employees to be posted in Quebec on French-language training.

∴

History revisited

Peter Brimelow, writing in the *Financial Post* (June 6), has this startling view of Canada: "Canada is not remotely a bilingual, bicultural nation. It is an English-speaking society linked by historical accident to a province that is now clearly emerging as a European-style French-speaking nation-state."

A businessman in Rouyn-Noranda who sent his bilingual prospectuses to the Timiskaming district of Ontario was surprised to receive them back with anonymous notes saying such things as "Keep your French in Quebec" (*Le Journal de Montréal*, May 31).

∴

Dialogue please

The editor of the Saint John *Telegraph-Journal* called for more understanding and more dialogue in a recent editorial (June 2). The New Brunswick paper has published many letters from readers expressing concern and fear about the effects of bilingualism in the province. Fred Hazel wrote: "I have an increasing concern that many of the letters we have been seeing do not represent either the real situation or the real feeling in New Brunswick."

He called for letters from more Francophones and "letters that explore avenues to broader understanding."

Quoting Jean-Marie Nadeau (the secretary-general of the Société nationale des Acadiens), who said "the current tension between the two language group exists because they don't know one another," Mr. Hazel concluded: "I am calling on people of goodwill and understanding to come forward with constructive views. I'd like to see in our letters a reflection of what I believe is the true New Brunswick spirit."

The call was answered by several correspondents as well as by the province's sole French paper, *L'Acadie nouvelle*, which reproduced Fred Hazel's editorial at length a few days later.

∴

Cross-linguistic rapture and grief

Did Keith Spicer, the editor of the *Citizen*, indulge in poetic flight when he claimed (June 26): "Put together any top three English-Canadian singers you can think of: they couldn't rapture a crowd half as large and enthusiastic as Vigneault's, and could never do it with his warmth, intimacy and originality"? Think of Leonard Cohen, Corey Hart, Anne Murray, Gordon Lightfoot....

In an editorial entitled "Drifting out of touch", Jeffrey Simpson wrote in the June 21st edition of the *Globe and Mail* that "French-language newspapers... still lack a single correspondent in all of English Canada (Ottawa excepted). Presumably, that persistent state of affairs reflects the editors' and publishers' sense of where their readers' interests lie...". ■

Building Bridges: The Passion of Narcisse Mondoux

The husband-and-wife team of Gratien Gélinas and Huguette Oligny were warmly received in New York last June where they opened "The Passion of Narcisse Mondoux".

Performing at the Apple Corps Theatre, an off-Broadway Theatre in Greenwich Village, the play ran for four weeks with six weekly presentations in English and one in French.

Gélinas, one of Canada's most accomplished actors and playwrights, wrote the original French script and later translated it with the help of Linda Garbor.

"The Passion of Narcisse Mondoux" was a hit in New York City. The New York *Daily News* referred to it as "as much an exercise in cultural bridge building as it is in theatre...and a delightful attempt to bring us together." And *The New York Law Journal* claimed that "In French or in English 'The Passion of Narcisse Mondoux' has all the elements of the best sort of love affair: tenderness, passion and fun."

L.O'K

Letters continued

The Survival of French in the West

Why does your magazine (Alberta Report) take such a negative slant on the use of the French language in the West? Your recent article, "The Lost Cause of Bilingualism" in your issue of May 15 serves as a case in point.

For nearly a century French-Language speakers in Alberta were deprived of French-language schools. The first publicity supported Francophone school in southern Alberta, Ecole St. Antoine in Calgary, was established in 1984. Naturally the rate of assimilation has been incredibly high. What is extraordinary is that any French-language speakers survived at all after French was eliminated in the schools and the courts in the early 1890s.

Second, if bilingualism is really a "lost cause", could you please explain why Calgary by 1980 could claim to have proportionately more students in French immersion classes than any other Canadian city?... You might have pointed out as well that this province has produced the first Anglophone prime minister, Joe Clark, who could respond to questions in the House of Commons in adequate French.

I encourage you to write a sequel to this one-sided story, "The Lost Cause of Bilingualism", and use this space to tell the amazing story of the survival of the French language in the West.

Donald B. Smith
Professor of History
The University of Calgary

Reprinted from *Alberta Report*, June 5, 1989, with the writer's permission.

Not All Complaints Are Valid Ones

In the Spring 89 issue of *Language and Society*, the Commissioner's editorial was dedicated to the importance of complaints as the "essential tool of any Ombudsmen". Mr. Fortier refers to a 1987 survey of clients' satisfaction and makes the following statement:

> "... as far as our clients' satisfaction with our services is concerned, a survey taken in 1978 showed that the investigation of a complaint leads to correction of the contravention in nearly 50% of cases (our goal is to exceed a 75% success rate in the near future)..."

The wording of this statement suggests that all complaints are valid, are in fact contraventions of the Official Languages Act, and require correction.

I am sure this bias does not accurately reflect the thinking of the Commissioner nor his staff. I am equally confident that Mr. Fortier would not want this misrepresentation to go uncorrected.

Joanne Hughes
Director, Atlantic Region
Statistics Canada
Halifax

Commissioner's Editorial continued

country, that he believed that there would be many struggles, but that we must remain true to those fundamental principles that guided the spirit of the Commission....

"Once again, may we never forget the importance of continuing the struggle for justice and linguistic equality, both in the federal and, most assuredly, in the provincial sphere."

The Commissioner of Official Languages

"Twenty or 25 years seems a short span in the life of a country. But who could have predicted that one of the fundamental tenets of the B and B Commission, linguistic duality, would have progressed to the point where, in 1982, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms could solemnly declare that English and French are the official languages of Canada? Who could have foreseen that the same Charter would provide guarantees for minority language instruction, a key element in the development and growth of our official language communities, or, indeed, the passage in 1988 of a new and greatly strengthened Official Languages Act?...

"These developments and achievements, no matter how imperfect, justify hope, in my opinion. Canada — and this must be proclaimed from the rooftops, for good news rarely makes headlines — is not a federation coming apart, but a nation still in the process of making itself.

"I am happy to see that, in spite of certain difficulties, most of our provinces are moving towards recognition of the rights of minority communities. New Brunswick, which is officially bilingual, has been at it for 20 years. Ontario, with its French Language Services Act, has moved closer to the threshold of the official bilingualism the B and B Commission proposed for it. Quebec offers an increasingly wide range of services to its minority. Manitoba and Nova Scotia have made new commitments. Saskatchewan, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, among others, have signed framework agreements on official languages. I hope that we will be able to go forward together to strengthen our partnership and provide all our minorities at least with the essential services." ■