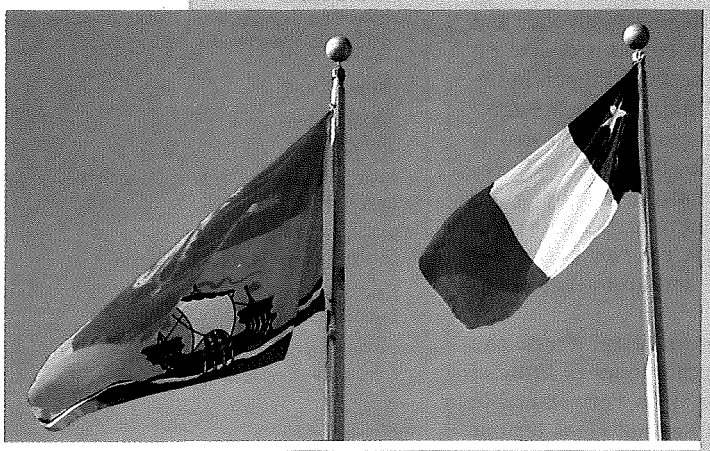
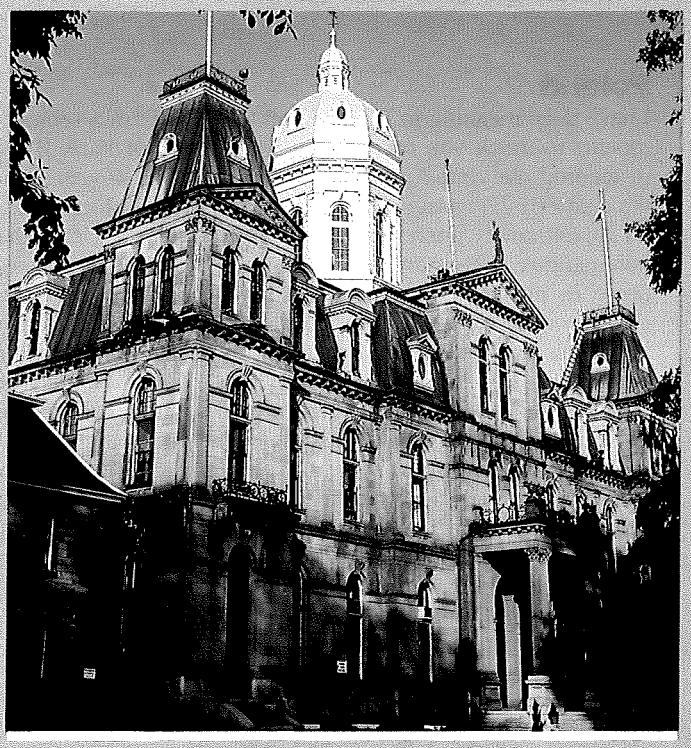
# LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY





Number **29**, Winter 1989

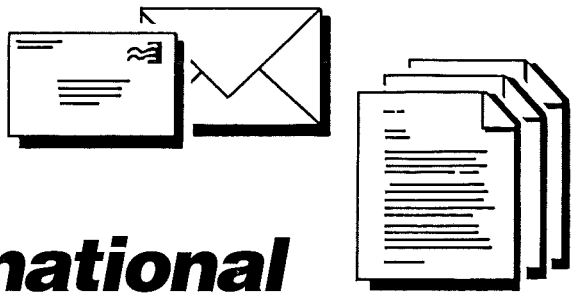
*DROWNING IN MEECH LAKE?*

*A FRANCO-ONTARIAN UNIVERSITY*

*A YEAR OF THE 1988 OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT*

*Special Report:*
*NEW BRUNSWICK: 20 YEARS LATER*

*Letters*



# An International Audience

## Poland

I have been meaning to write to you for months to thank you for your kindness in sending me your Annual Report and the quarterly *Language and Society*.

I am extremely interested in these two publications, which are of great assistance in my socio-linguistic and linguistic research on the Romance languages and on French and Italian in particular.

I have been keenly interested in linguistic problems in Canada, and indeed in French in Canada, for some 10 years. I have prepared a university manual on French in Canada for our students in French philology (French studies) which is now being published. (It contains a lengthy introduction on the subject, the first French Canadian texts and documents concerning the struggle for French in Canada — essentially in Quebec.) Your publications have been of great assistance to me in my work and are cited in the bibliography.

I am writing all this to assure you that your publications on the French language, on French literature and culture in Canada and on the socio-linguistic situation and bilingualism in your country (of which I am very fond) are eagerly awaited here in Krakow by me and my students and that they are read and studied with genuine interest.

*Stanislaw Widlak*
Krakow

## France

I recently discovered *Language and Society* and I would very much like to have a subscription. My request is motivated by the personal and professional interest I take in the situation of French in the world and especially in the socio-linguistic aspects of its contact with other languages.

I am a senior lecturer at the University of Paris III Sorbonne Nouvelle, and for 10 years I have taught a course on socio-linguistic aspects of French in the world. Under that title, three years ago I established it as a credit course that is now mandatory for all our second-year students. The relationship between English and French in Canada is a major topic in this course, hence my interest in reliable and up-to-date documentation.

Naturally, any material from the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages would be a very valuable source of information and ideas for our students.

*Alain Tashdjian*
Paris

## Clarification

J.B. Rudnyckyj, one of the members of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, has pointed out an omission on our part in the account of the ceremony marking the 20th anniversary of official languages legislation which we published in Number 28. In addition to Mr. Rudnyckyj and Jean-Louis Gagnon, two other members of the Commission attended the ceremony; Senator Royce Frith and Dr. Paul Wyczynski. Our sincere apologies — the omission was unintentional.

As well, Mr. Rudnyckyj informs us that the article from *Language and Society* will be reprinted in the Ukrainian press of Canada.


# LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY

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

Opinions expressed by contributors from outside the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages do not necessarily reflect the views of the Commissioner. Unsigned articles, as well as titles and sub-titles, are by editorial staff.

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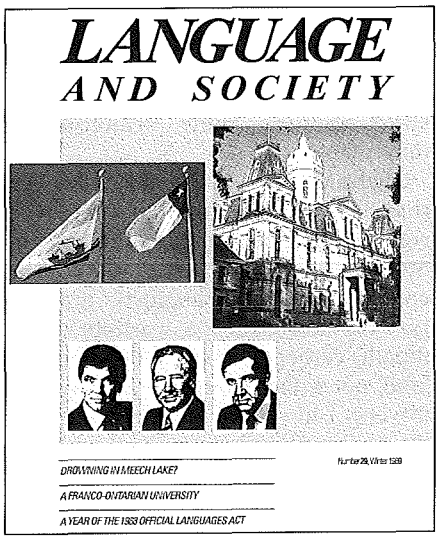



**Our cover includes the New Brunswick and the Acadian flags flying side by side — symbolic of the province's duality. To the right is the Legislative Assembly.**

**As well, we salute the steadfast and continuing efforts of three successive premiers, Louis Robichaud, Richard Hatfield and Frank McKenna, in making New Brunswick a bilingual province.**

**Our extensive coverage of the linguistic scene in New Brunswick begins on page 24.**

### 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

## NATIONAL SCENE



## COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE



## REGIONS



## EDUCATION



## SPECIAL REPORT

*Commissioner's Editorial*

# At the Crossroads?

*D'Iberville Fortier*

During a recent visit to Minto, a small mining town in New Brunswick, I was insistently asked: "Why do you want to force French upon us when Quebec has declared itself unilingual? We see the rights of the Francophone minority here expanding while Quebec does not respect its Anglophone minority." In Quebec it was: "Why should we agree to put the French language in jeopardy for the sake of an unrealistic dream of pan-Canadian bilingualism?" I have heard similar questions concerning various national or regional situations frequently in the course of my long diplomatic career. Depending on the country and the attitudes, the choice was one of mutual understanding or endless and painful dissension. Which path will we choose? I believe, as I write these words in late October, that a massive effort of communication and clarification is urgently required.

For more than a century, the federal government, certain provincial governments and many local administrations have, to varying degrees, had to come to terms with the presence of English and of French. Accordingly, the progression toward equality of national status for our languages has been one of the important themes in the discussions on our national identity. Should we be surprised if, due to the conjunction of the stars or the acceleration of history, 1988 and 1989 have been particularly marked by linguistic tensions whose outcome is uncertain? Should we despair that all will end well? I do not believe so.

While it may be presumptuous to attempt, like Renan, to "sort out the confusions in which minds become entangled," we can at least try to sort out the questions. The great debate that is underway is, to my mind, in no sense evidence of a kind of surrender by Canadians to the intransigence of some or the narrow-mindedness of others. I remain confident — and public opinion surveys have shown — that the majority of our fellow citizens see a harmonious system of linguistic duality as an ideal to be achieved. They understand that language debates, no matter how difficult they may be at certain times, are essentially concerned with means and not ends. They have added to the required institutional bilingualism a creditable measure of personal bilingualism which no one imposed upon them.

Let us see, then.

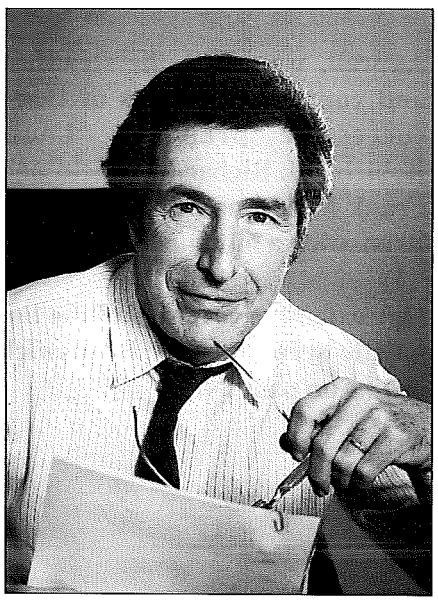
## At the federal level, a question of more rigorous enforcement

At the federal level, first of all, the adoption by Parliament in 1988 of a new Official Languages Act was necessary in order to make good on the constitutional guarantees contained in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms of 1982 and to rationalize and consolidate a policy and programs developed over the years. Far from constituting a threat to the provinces or to anyone's livelihood, this Act added to the remedies available to citizens and federal employees who believed their rights had been infringed. Nevertheless, some people, in part because they were misinformed, viewed its provisions for providing better protection to the minority communities of both language groups as a concession to Francophones. In this regard, the challenge that faces us now, I believe, is the quick and effective translation into reality of the intention of the legislator.

## At the provincial level, problems but also impressive progress

On the provincial level, the various laws that have either restricted or broadened the language rights of official language minorities are at the centre of the controversy. In Alberta and Saskatchewan the after-effects of the Supreme Court decision in the Mercure case have underlined, to varying degrees, the precariousness of certain historically recognized language rights. Some of our fellow citizens in the West, who are less aware of the importance of linguistic duality because of the relatively small number of Francophones in this part of Canada, still do not understand all the consequences of shortchanging their Francophone minorities.

Quebec, for its part, invoked the override clause of the Charter in respect of a right defined as fundamental by the Supreme Court and passed Bill 178 for complex reasons of linguistic insecurity. (We had issued a warning a few months earlier against a situation of this kind, not without sparking a lively controversy.) In setting out the doctrine of the legitimacy of the marked predominance of French in commercial signage, the Supreme Court had, in our view, adequately acknowledged the need to protect that language. Quebec nevertheless continues to offer its Anglophone minority — and to guarantee by law — an impressive, and in some cases growing, array of social, educational, legal



and other services in its own language. As the Chairman of the Board of Alliance Quebec, Peter Blaikie, who has been highly critical of certain Quebec decisions, frankly acknowledged at the organization's annual meeting in May 1989: "Let us be frank and honest. Few English-speaking Quebecers, even today, would trade their lot for that of Francophones in any other province.... Let us always remember that our battle is to improve what is already good." This puts many things in perspective. But who really wants to remember it?

In Ontario and New Brunswick, two provinces that are home to more than three-quarters of the Francophones outside Quebec, the outcry — noisy but limited in scope thus far and rarely

raised by younger people — takes the form of a negative reaction to the serious efforts which are finally being made by the governments of these provinces to establish fairer linguistic arrangements. We must therefore guard against confusing certain hostile reactions with a setback to tolerance. The situation in these two provinces, like federal legislation, is clearly moving in the opposite direction.

### "If Meech Lake did not exist, it would be necessary to invent it"

We come now to the Meech Lake Accord, which everyone talks about but whose provisions are largely unknown. Approved by all three parties in Parliament, ratified by eight of the 10 provinces, this Accord, in our opinion, recognizes an inescapable linguistic fact that has characterized Canada for two centuries. To acknowledge that Quebec is a distinct society is to admit the obvious. As one of our renowned specialists in constitutional law, Senator and professor Gérald-A. Beaudoin, explained in an article in *La Presse* on July 9, 1989, which was reprinted in the *Globe and Mail*:

> "Is Quebec a distinct society? Of course it is. To deny this is to ignore both history and the facts. It is the only province with a Civil Code based on Napoleonic law, that is predominantly French-speaking and where the French culture is predominant. Quebec was the cradle of New France in North America, and the British Parliament clearly recognized this by: restoring French civil law in the Quebec Act of 1774, passing the Constitutional Act of 1791, re-establishing the French language in 1848 and passing the British North America Act in 1867."

It might be added that even the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms recognizes this distinctive character when, in Section 59, it makes the application to Quebec of part of Section 23 concerning minority education rights subject to a decision of the government of Quebec or its National Assembly.

It was these facts that led us to support the Accord, with regard to its language provisions and the distinct nature of Quebec society, before the House of Commons committee in the summer of 1987 and later in our 1987 and 1988 Annual Reports. Is its recognition of our linguistic duality as a fundamental characteristic of Canada not also at the heart of the Accord? We did, however, express certain reservations that, in our opinion, could be dealt with separately. In April 1989, for example, we proposed that the "protection" of official language minorities in the Constitution be strengthened by provisions ensuring them at least the services essential to them.

Is not the central question, however, whether the distinct society clause would give the government of Quebec the power to abrogate at will the basic rights recognized by the Constitution? Such sweeping power would rightly be cause for concern. But what gives this power in law and in fact to all the provinces is clearly the override clause of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which was adopted without Quebec, and not the concept of a distinct society. Few legal experts have contradicted the following statement by Beaudoin: "The distinct society clause does not contradict the Charter; it should be read in conjunction with it." Going further, Professor Peter Hogg of the Osgoode Hall Faculty of Law states unambiguously that "the new s. 2 [containing the clause concerning the distinct character of Quebec society] does not override the Charter of Rights. On the contrary, s. 2, as a merely interpretive provision, is subordinate to the Charter of Rights."

It is still too early to predict the fate of the Meech Lake Accord, but Canadians should understand that if Meech Lake did not exist, it would be necessary to invent it. What would we say if Ontario, the Western provinces or the Atlantic provinces had been left out at the time when the Charter and the new 1982 Constitution were adopted?

Thus, by taking a closer look, we see that the supposed "dense forest" of official languages is in fact made up of a variety of species that must be looked at individually, in accordance with their respective merits. What such an examination reveals above all is that the much decried linguistic tensions result in large part from promising initiatives and that opposition often surfaces as a reaction to the profound desire of a majority of Canadians to find solutions based on justice and tolerance. They wish to build a country based on respect for a linguistic duality that, naturally, takes diverse forms depending on the region and the government, but that constitutes one of our essential values. It is not this duality that creates the problems. Historically, it is rather the refusal to deal with it. ■

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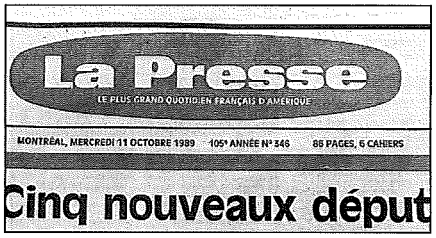
# Canada Continues Its Constitutional Journey

*Tom Sloan*

***Editorial interest in the Meech Lake Accord rises and falls with the occurrence of other events, more or less distantly related.***

During the summer and fall there were two occasions that spurred commentary on the Meech Lake Accord. One was the appearance of two public opinion polls in late July, the other was the Quebec provincial election on September 25.

The polls indicated a divergence between English- and French-speaking Canadians in assessing how well minority language rights were being protected across the country, while showing unprecedented although still minority support among both groups for the separation of Quebec from Canada.


La Presse
LE PLUS GRAND QUOTIDIEN EN FRANÇAIS D'AMÉRIQUE
MONTRÉAL, MERCREDI 11 OCTOBRE 1989 105e ANNÉE N° 246 88 PAGES, 6 CAHIERS
Cinq nouveaux députés

## Parallel paths?...

Writing in *La Presse* on the poll results, editor Paul Masson posed a basic question: "Will Quebec independence come about some day through the back door? To put it another way, will it be as a result of their rejection by the other Canadians rather than by the will of Quebecers that sovereignty will be achieved?" Quebecers, Masson wrote, have no hostility towards the rest of Canada. But English-speaking Canadians must realize that "This necessity to protect and give top priority to French...is absolute to the point that it must take precedence over everything else, even at the price of the rejection... of the famous Meech Lake agreement....Most Quebecers want to remain in the Canadian confederation. But not at any price. The people of Quebec also have their honour and their pride."

To Roch Bilodeau, writing in *La Tribune de Sherbrooke*, the two solitudes in Canada have never been further apart. Clearly, he argued, English-speaking Canada still doesn't understand Quebec's need for constitutional guarantees to protect its language and traditions. Quebec has nothing to apologize for in either its language policy or its constitutional approach. "The demands that the government of Quebec put forward at Meech Lake represented a minimum, and it is up to the rest of the country to understand, finally, that Canadian unity will never be achieved as long as they are not met."


LE DEVOIR
Vol. LXXX — No 235 Montréal, mercredi 11 octobre 1989
Ottawa avalise une pratique illégale pour calcu

Editor-in-Chief Paul-André Comeau of *Le Devoir* concluded from the polls that English-speaking Canadians have still not understood that Quebec is "the hearth and heart of Canadian Francophonie....As far as Meech Lake is concerned, a few months remain for Canada to plug in. Quebec must not again take the risk of a sterile rebuff. Quebec must not await the deadline of June 23 to draw the necessary conclusions from the scenario that is now unfolding. Masochism is no longer in fashion."

Another scenario came from *Le Nouvelliste* of Trois Rivières. The poll results, noted the editorialist, gave "a portrait of a Canada extremely unsure of itself", one divided by both language and perception of reality. "Perhaps Quebec will detach itself from Canada as an ice floe detaches itself from the land, when everything that has held it has melted away."

As though in response, the *Winnipeg Free Press* denied the very possibility of such an occurrence. "Like it or not, Quebec cannot separate from Canada. It is firmly attached, with bits of other provinces stuck into its north, south, east and west boundaries. It cannot move and neither can they....Independence would not put an end to disagreements between Quebec and the rest of Canada. It would almost certainly create more. Quebec and the rest of Canada...are locked together by history, by geography and by economics. Canadians within and without Quebec might as well get used to the fact that, whatever political or constitutional changes may come in the future, they are condemned to get along with each other for a long time yet." Whether or not they agreed with the *Free Press* analysis, other Anglophone papers were trying to find ways of salvaging some sort of an agreement, if not Meech Lake itself.

To the *Toronto Star* the polls showed clearly that "Frustration has led to hostility, and ultimately a kind of indifference." Meech Lake had become "a lightning rod for Canada's accumulated grievances....Ironically, the Accord that was intended as an act of nation-building has instead done more than anything else to undermine our national structures and poison the political process....Quebec *is* a distinct society. But it is not Canada's only distinct society; certainly no more so than New Brunswick's Acadians or the Arctic's Inuit."

## Or parallel agreements?

The *Vancouver Sun* said that improvements can and should be made, "something to sweeten the recipe, whether it is an appendix, a parallel agreement or a covering letter." As for public opinion: "It is not that there is Francophobia abroad in English Canada. Far from it. The French language is immensely popular in western education systems where many people can't get enough of it. It is not that there is an unwillingness to accept that the country is based on two founding cultures which deserve to maintain their particular identities. The problem is, however, a perception that the maintenance is being administered unfairly. Even

Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa admitted that his language law, which defies the national constitution, is a curtailment of civil rights."

To the Peterborough, Ontario, *Examiner*, "The Meech Lake Accord...was savagely wounded when the Quebec premier decreed that the need to protect the French language overrode consideration of the Anglophone minority in that province." The paper called for a parallel agreement to address concerns ignored by the original and denounced "the prime minister's slavish adherence to the principle that it — and it alone is the answer to Canada's problems."

### Quebec's election

Although apparently clear on the surface, the Quebec election results were read quite differently in different editorial boardrooms. There was a clear division between those who believed they strengthened the need for a rapid acceptance of Meech Lake and those who thought no such thing.


CANADA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER

The Globe and Mail

ukes Tories over GST a

ker demands respect for traditions

The *Globe and Mail* was firmly in the first camp. "If Meech Lake is not adopted, it is a safe bet that Mr. Bourassa will not participate in future constitutional conferences...and that the federal government will not engage in constitutional talks...in Quebec's absence. This frosting of relations would, to put it mildly, be unfortunate for the country."

A similar note was struck by Paul-André Comeau despite — or perhaps even because of — the "multiple, often contradictory messages sent out by the electors". The very complexity of the results was a warning. "Elsewhere in Canada, it will be essential to appreciate the importance of the multiple choice that were made on Monday. Henceforth there can be no subterfuges to avoid ratification of the Lake Meech agreements. In this respect, the results of the election have swept away the illusions of those who, even yesterday, believed Quebec was still sleeping off the effects of the May 1980 referendum. Quebec has not finished its self-interrogation about its place in this federation. The ball is now in the court of those who, in 1980, exhorted Quebecers to take one more chance on the federal gamble we made 125 years ago."

Other French-language papers agreed the situation is urgent. While not accepting Parti Québécois leader Jacques Parizeau's claim that the party's vote was firmly separatist, *La Tribune's* Roch Bilodeau continued on a cautionary note: "It is also quite mistaken to assert, as has Prime Minister Mulroney, that last week's vote reflects almost unconditional support by Quebecers for Canadian federalism. All the more so in the present circumstances, when the Meech Lake Accord is still awash in uncertainty and Quebecers are waiting to see if their province will finally obtain from the rest of Canada the minimum constitutional guarantees she is claiming. There is no doubt that Quebec nationalism is far from dead, and could rapidly become more radical."


MARDI

LeDroit

e chasse à l'homme fait deux morts à Rockland

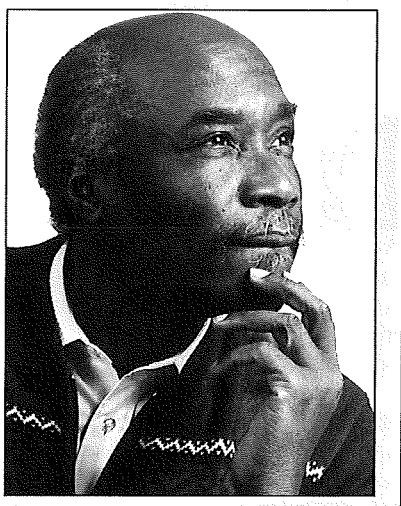
e maire Lalonde

A similar warning came from Murray Maltais, writing in *Le Droit* of Ottawa-Hull. The results were "a warning to those who persist in ignoring and refusing to understand Quebec, a Quebec that will probably become more radical if the Meech Accord, itself a work instrument rather than the final outcome, should be aborted....The rest of Canada could very well decide the future of Quebec." ■

### The Forgotten

The Montreal *Gazette* ran a series of features on French communities outside Quebec, written by William Johnson. Overlooked were Newfoundland Francophones, as their spokesperson Francine Labrie pointed out in a letter to the paper. She admitted the group is small but mused "it is not the quantity that counts, it is the quality."

## Gérard Étienne



The Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages wishes to congratulate Gérard Étienne, winner of the prize as best editorialist of the Francophone press outside Quebec for his editorial "Les P'tits pouvoirs en Acadie", published in *Le Voilier* of Caraquet, New Brunswick, on December 7, 1988. The award confirms the talent of one who is dedicated to the struggle for the advancement of the Acadian people. The Association de la presse francophone hors Quebec presented this prize and several others at its annual meeting last July.

Gérard Étienne, a native of Haiti who has lived in Canada for several decades, is well known as a writer, poet, journalist and teacher. In addition to several teaching manuals, he has published some 15 books available in Canada, Haiti, Europe and Brazil.

# If Meech Lake Should Fail....

*Michel Roy**

The ballots had scarcely been counted in Quebec on the night of September 25 when the final countdown for the Meech Lake Accord began. In all, three days less than nine months remaining. Will it or won't it pass? The deadline — by some irony of history — is June 23, the eve of Saint-Jean Baptiste Day.

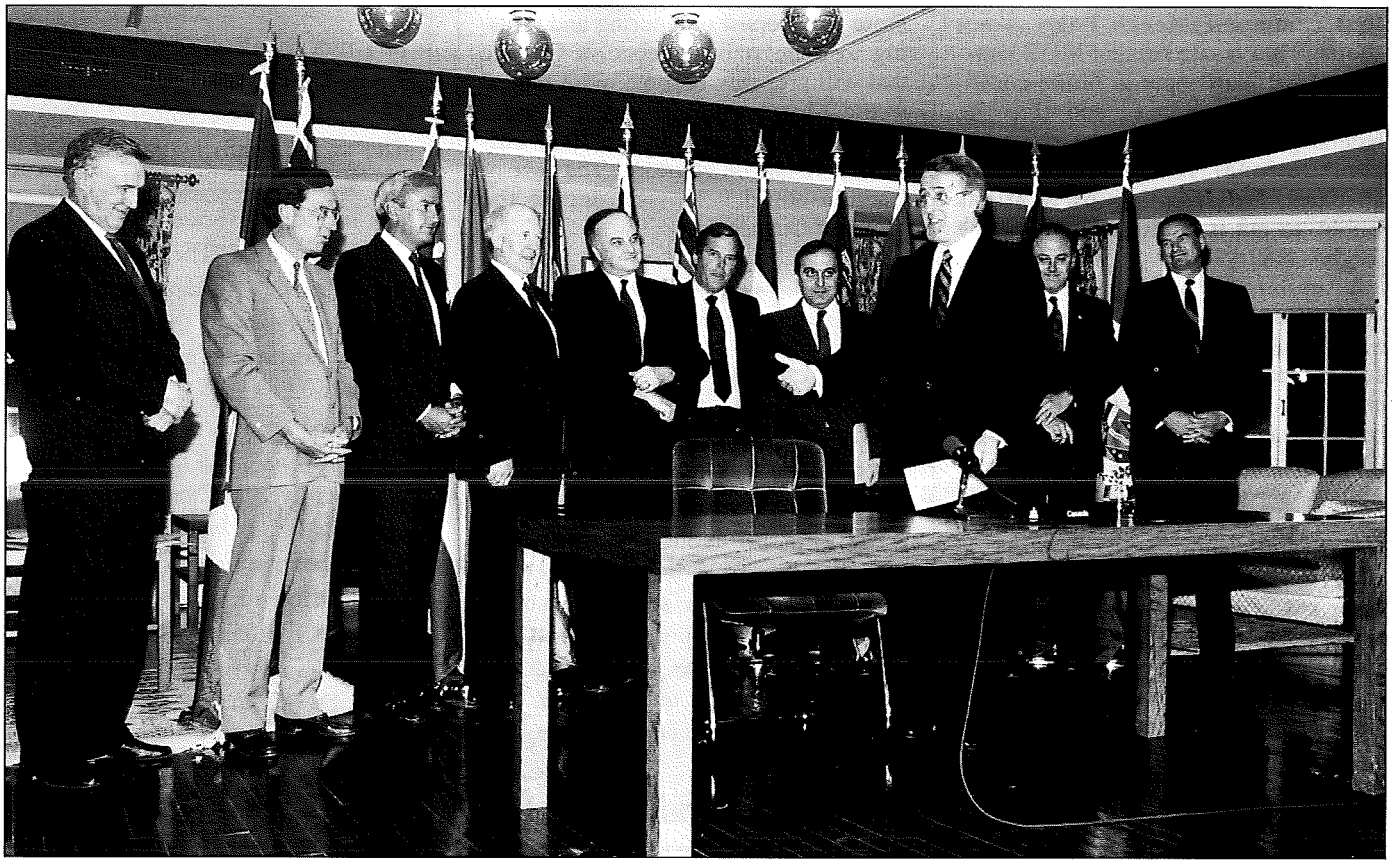
To dramatize the suspense, on the day after their victory the premier and his minister of intergovernmental affairs repeated, this time in very clear terms, the peremptory arguments that prominent politicians in Ottawa and Quebec have been using for months: if the Accord is not ratified, if Quebec suffers a second setback in less than 10 years, Quebecers might consider other constitutional possibilities, since their confidence in federalism is not unbounded.

Benoît Bouchard and Lucien Bouchard have been repeating this message constantly for a year. It was now the turn of Mr. Bourassa and Mr. Rémillard to issue the warning with some degree of gravity. They based their warning on objective and irrefutable grounds: the Parti Québécois, having clarified its sovereigntist option, attracted a little over 40% of the votes, a sign of its renewed hold over the electorate. To be sure, not all of these people voted for independence, but those who supported the PQ knew that the party is in favour of that option.

This "independentist blackmail", Jacques Parizeau was quick to say, will not impress English Canada. The PQ leader, like Pierre Trudeau, whose firmness on this point he admires, likes options to be clearly defined and people who express them unambiguously. He is therefore delighted with the election of four members of the Equality Party from western Montreal who will be the spokespersons in the National Assembly for Anglophones angry about Bill 178 (the prohibition on outside signs in English), about the use of the notwithstanding clause and about the government's constitutional position. They are true federalists, the Opposition leader said, who call themselves Canadians first. Quebec Francophones who subscribe to their conception of federalism should belong to their party, Mr. Parizeau believes, and he sees in them "objective allies", to use a term of the Marxist dialecticians of the 1960s.

Above all, he sees a more clearly defined political landscape: on one side the sovereigntists with the Parti Québécois; on the other, the convinced federalists who put themselves in the camp of Jean Chrétien or Peter Blaikie; between the two are Robert Bourassa's Liberals, who are neither true Canadians nor genuine Québécois. They are "mutants" who should be allowed to move with the times.

Naturally, these gloating remarks by the PQ leader contain an element of caricature, a soupçon of cynicism and a large measure of truth. It is undeniable that Mr. Bourassa's Liberal government, assailed since the early 1970s by both the federalists in Ottawa (of



Mr. Trudeau's persuasion) and the independence supporters in Quebec, ended up by fashioning an empirical political philosophy that owes something to economic liberalism, something to Quebec nationalism and something to traditional Canadian federalism, all at the same time. The trials over which the government has prevailed over the years have sometimes revealed its weaknesses and contradictions. Since the late 1970s, and in the post-referendum period, under the leadership of Claude Ryan, the Quebec Liberal Party opted for a more nationalistic vision than Robert Bourassa (tempering it with his pragmatism) willingly adopted when he once again took over as party leader and head of government.

Even after the referendum, Canada doubted the federalist convictions of the Quebec government which, in these matters, has always stressed economic benefits more than Canadian solidarity and building the country together. To the doubts about Quebec that prevailed in the rest of the country were added, late in 1988, the condemnations and anathemas resulting from the passage of the signage law.

It is important to keep these facts in mind in sketching the outlines of the match that will be played before and after the June deadline and in gauging the effects on the two main language communities of failure to ratify the Accord. If the feared impasse does develop, if Fredericton and Winnipeg refuse to ratify the Accord — and this unfortunately appears plausible at this time in early fall — the two solitudes will close in upon themselves. Quebec will rigorously refrain from participating in conferences and constitutional discussions of all types. It will thereby make good on its threat to block the revision process. The West will not obtain the Senate reform it desires.

Moreover, the participants will be intractable. On the essentials, i.e., the contents of Meech Lake, Quebec and the federal government will make no concessions. On secondary or peripheral matters they may agree to the signing of a parallel accord, provided that it does not alter in any way the contents of the document signed in June 1987. Signs of a softening are appearing in New Brunswick that could lead Premier McKenna, under the influence of the Acadian community, to sign the Accord if it is accompanied by conditions that would not reopen it. In Manitoba the political situation tends to strengthen the hard line taken by the Liberal Opposition and the NDP. With its stubborn opposition, Winnipeg stands as representative for the West, and indeed for all Canadians for whom this country has already done too much for Quebec. "If Quebec wishes to separate from Canada, then let it separate, and good luck!" Many Liberals in Ottawa and in the provinces share this feeling of irritation, if not of hostility, toward Quebec, and it is a feeling that the leadership campaign can only strengthen. As for the NDP, it has stated its position that the Meech Lake Accord must be reopened, a position deemed unacceptable in Quebec and in Ottawa. Both in the West and in Ontario, its supporters have shown their opposition to the Accord and to Quebec's language policies.

This is why what Mr. Parizeau calls "independentist blackmail" no longer has the same effect as in the 1970s and 80s. There is overwhelming evidence that weariness and even exasperation prevail in English Canada on the subject of Quebec. One is confronted with a problem of perceptions, prejudices and fears, most often based on insufficient or erroneous information. But such are the realities.

If the Meech Lake Accord should fail, Quebec would feel the impact grievously. Without going so far as to sever its federal ties (a possibility that cannot, however, be ruled out), Quebec would exist on the margins of the federation and its constitution. We would no doubt see the defection of some Francophone ministers from the federal government and of a number of Quebec Members of Parliament, just as Anglophone ministers resigned from the government of Premier Bourassa. The premier, depending on the situation, or if he were forced to do so by the PQ and a significant segment of public opinion, might organize a referendum on the future of relations with Canada.

The linguistic and educational status of the minorities, as well as the federal Official Languages Act, would probably be severely tested. In short, the failure of the Meech Lake Accord would result in a crisis from which it is impossible to imagine how the country would emerge. ■

*** Michel Roy is a columnist for *Le Soleil* in Quebec City, *Le Droit* in Ottawa and *Le Quotidien* in Chicoutimi.**

### Bushspeak

Joe O'Donnell reported from Washington (*Ottawa Sun*, June 29) that foreign correspondents have some problems with President Bush's folksy expressions, such as "the environment thing", "read my lips", and so on. His sports references are even harder to cope with, he writes. "The correspondent for *Agence France Presse* complained that when Bush declared his administration would "stay at the plate" until Panamian dictator Manuel Noriega gets the boot, it was virtually impossible to explain what he meant to the folks back home."

# Manitoba and Meech Lake

*Frances Russell**

***The multifacted concerns Manitobans have about the Meech Lake Accord surfaced during a dozen hearings held in the province last spring.***

Canada's two solitudes have dogged its existence since before Confederation.

Never has the tragedy of English- and French-speaking inability to understand one another loomed larger than in the Meech Lake debate.

The Meech Lake Accord is in trouble in Manitoba. But, despite the province's baleful record on language issues, only a portion of the antagonism is directed towards Quebec and can be described as bigoted.

Manitoba's concerns about Meech Lake are multifaceted. The 289 Manitobans who appeared at 12 hearings conducted by the all-party task force this spring reflect what has been described as a new, post-free trade consensus here and elsewhere in English Canada.

## Centrifugal forces

Liberals and New Democrats, traditionally the staunchest defenders of French Canada and Quebec, are fearful of the centrifugal forces unleashed by the Free Trade Agreement. They see the Accord and its decentralization as an agent of national disintegration. NDP leader Gary Doer, explaining his party's decision to revoke its support of the Accord, said Canada may not be able to withstand either free trade or Meech Lake, but it certainly cannot survive both.

Those sentiments dominated Manitoba's hearings. They were expressed by native people in Thompson, The Pas and Garden Hill, farmers in Brandon and Winkler, professors and businessmen in Winnipeg, Anglophones, Francophones and Allophones alike.

Most of the presentations were moving testaments to Canada.

Manitoba, as a have-not province, has always supported a strong central government. The fear of weakened federal powers ran through the majority of presentations. It took several forms: the Accord's undermining of the Charter of Rights' protections for minorities and women; its failure to recognize aboriginal entitlement; its threat to Canada's social safety net as a result of compensation to provinces opting out of new national shared-cost programs; and, finally, its straitjacketing of Senate reform and the creation of new provinces through the unanimity (all-province consent) rule.

Quebec's "distinct society" clause was raised frequently. The desire to see Quebec become a willing signatory of the Constitution was virtually unanimous. Most witnesses agreed that Quebec's distinctiveness should be recognized, but only along with that of other provinces and cultures.

## Anger at the process

Perhaps the single biggest source of anger was the Meech Lake process itself. Witnesses were infuriated that what they thought was their Constitution had been changed behind closed doors by 11 first ministers and presented to the country as unalterable.

Sheila Doig, a Brandon housewife, summed up that predominant sentiment when she said: "As a Canadian, I have always believed in the strengths of Canada as a democratic nation. Now we have 11 first ministers, in seclusion, finalize amendments to our Constitution, then tell us it does not matter what we say or think....This is not democracy; this is oligarchy."

Jeri Bjornson, a member of Winnipeg's Ad Hoc Committee on Meech Lake, took the argument a further step: "I am a knitter and when I unravel knitting, it is to correct an error....I would never go on, having discovered flaws, for they are impossible to repair after the garment is completed. Unravelling is not bad....One unravels to get rid of mistakes, resulting in a better piece of work. We believe that the Meech Lake Accord needs some healthy unravelling to make it a better Accord and I might add that if you do not fix a dropped stitch the entire garment comes apart."

*"I am a Canadian and I want to keep this country as a whole, as it is."*

Ellen Gould, a mother and grandmother, saw the need for a strong central government to ensure social justice. "I am concerned that too much power is given to the provinces to the detriment of national strength and unity....Programs such as medicare must be universal to be effective. If we lost medicare, the handicapped, the aged and the poor would suffer most. We do not want our country to be divided into separate, isolated communities. If provinces were allowed to opt out of national shared-cost programs, the results would be very devastating."

It fell to a young Métis welder, Victor Payou, to express the non-bigoted fear about Quebec "distinct society" clause: "Don't separate one group of people from another. It is not what Canada is all about....I am a Canadian and I want to keep this country as a whole, as it is."

The temperate nature of Manitoba's hearings is a credit to all three of the province's political parties, which have consciously avoided inflaming linguistic antagonisms.

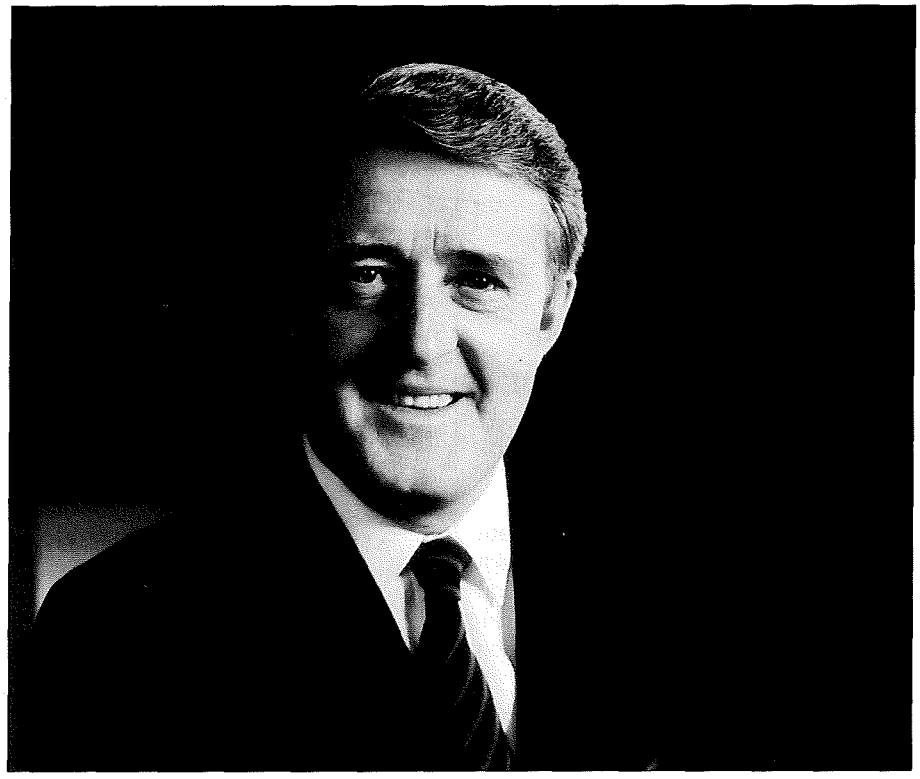
Because of geography, Canadians, more than most nationalities, rely on the mass media to relay their messages and feelings to one other. The mass media is an imperfect vehicle at best, even in the same language.

In two languages, the opportunities for misunderstanding and sensationalism take a quantum leap. As the Meech Lake deadline approaches, it is crucial that each side in the debate at least knows what the other is saying. ■

***Frances Russell writes for the *Winnipeg Free Press*.**

# The Prime Minister: Why "Meech Lake Has to Pass As It Is"

***On September 21, Peter Gzowski interviewed Prime Minister Brian Mulroney for an edition of the popular "Morningside" show broadcast the next day. From the transcript of that important and misquoted interview,* Language and Society *presents excerpts relevant to the state of the official languages in Canada.***



***The Prime Minister:*** ...one of the great challenges of a national prime minister is to try and construct a more tolerant country and to try and harmonize interests and bring people together. It's the easiest thing in the world to bring people apart or tear institutions down. The toughest thing is to, patiently and firmly, bring them together.

...I wanted the Supreme Court decision [on the language of signage in Quebec] respected; I thought that that was the way that this should and could best go.... The fear is rooted in a cultural insecurity that comes from the fact that in the province of Quebec there are, say, 6 million French Canadians in a — really not a country of 26 million — there are 6 million French Canadians in a continent of some 275 million English-speaking people. The protection of that small minority, its language and culture, is, as you know, a very difficult and challenging matter. I happen to believe that language and culture flourishes best in the kind of country we are trying to build — others hold a more restrictive view of that — and it's my hope that by ending, for example, the isolation of Quebec which took place in 1981 from the constitutional process, and by making Quebec a full member of the Canadian Constitution, that that will contribute to ending this isolation in some degree and also changing attitudes so that what I believe is a more confident view of Canada, a more confident view of French-speaking language and culture and its ability to survive and prosper in Canada, will prevail.

***Peter Gzowski:*** *At the expense of the rights of some minorities?*

***Prime Minister:*** No, I don't believe that at all. I believe that minorities, minority rights are there to be protected at all times. One of the reasons why I'm so, frankly, amazed that people look askance at Meech

Lake but support the 1981 constitutional document is that the 1981 constitutional document contains a notwithstanding clause that allows provincial governments to override minority rights as they so choose....

***Peter Gzowski:*** *Oh, we ain't got the best record.*

***Prime Minister:*** Not the best record — an awful record. Where the rights of French-speaking Canadians in Manitoba were (historically) thrown out the window holus-bolus completely, where the rights of French-speaking....

***Peter Gzowski:*** *But, Prime Minister....*

***Prime Minister:*** Just a second now, Peter. Where the rights of French-speaking Canadians in Ontario were severely restricted, much more severely restricted, particularly in regard to instruction and education of their children....

But, with [the 1981 Constitution's] flaws, I am trying to improve it and the only way it can be approved is to make Canada whole and so we brought Quebec together....

Now, forget Quebec. Let's say that Quebec was not excluded. Ask yourself as a Canadian who really knows this country, what would you be saying about that kind of a situation if rather than Quebec being excluded it had been Ontario? Do you think for a second this country would function without the willing adhesion of the people and the government of Ontario?....

Well, we have already agreed upon an agenda for further constitutional reform. Immediately after the passage of Meech Lake there's an agenda laid out and that agenda can be improved upon and added to but clearly, Peter, Meech Lake has to pass as it is or there's no possibility — if you re-open Meech Lake to accommodate A, B or C.... ■

# The Official Languages Act: One Year Old

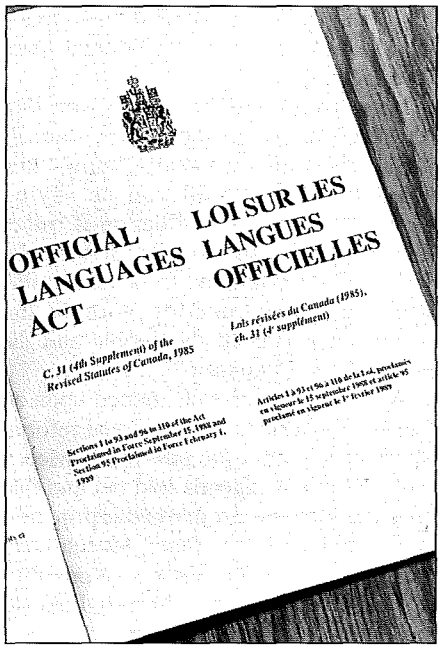
On September 15 the Commissioner of Official Languages took stock, in a news release, of federal performance one year after the 1988 Official Languages Act was proclaimed and came into force. One of the purposes of the new Act (the first was passed in 1969) was to breathe new life into the federal official languages program.

*There has not been a great deal of progress.*

The Commissioner stated that "the tangible results are clearly insufficient...and a wait-and-see attitude or even an inexcusable lethargy prevails in far too many federal institutions." He noted that most regional managers had only a vague conception of the Act and that, in general, the departmental officials in charge were waiting for the regulations before taking further action. The Commissioner understands that it takes a certain amount of time to draft the regulations. Nevertheless, he pointed out that "although regulations were urgently required, it was hardly necessary to wait for them to correct the many shortcomings that have been noted over the years....The Act took effect upon its proclamation. In particular, there is an urgent need to more effectively provide and monitor the active offer of bilingual services in person in offices where significant demand has already been recognized."

This is clear from the nearly 30% increase in the number of complaints received by the Commissioner since the new Act took effect. These complaints show that in many cases, despite the presence of symbols indicating that bilingual service is available, services to minorities remain insufficient, even in a city like Winnipeg, where the existence of significant demand has been recognized since 1982.

*The Act took effect upon its proclamation.*




In Mr. Fortier's view, there has not been a great deal of progress in the area of language of work within the federal administration either, and imbalances persist with regard to the participation of the two language groups in it.

Finally, the Commissioner noted some praiseworthy initiatives such as the increased emphasis on the active offer of service, the promulgation of a policy on the use of the two official languages at popular events of national or international significance and the preparations, which are well advanced, to implement at least one of the regulations. He also pointed to the achievements of the Department of the Secretary of State designed to enhance the vitality of minority communities and asked it to find more made-to-measure solutions (such as educational centres and community radio stations) in order to support these communities. ■

### Every Bit as Equal

Claiming to be neither a bigot nor a racist, a correspondent signing the letter "Canadian" wrote to Fredericton *Daily Gleaner*: "it would not be practical to use every language in the work place so in an effort to be practical and not to favour one minority over any other I feel English should be the common language. This does not take any rights away from French-Canadians; if anything it secures their rights are every bit as equal to the rights of any other Canadian minority."

### Moi, mes souliers....

A reader wrote to the *Sudbury Star* (September 25): "The English language in this country has never been threatened and likely never will be. English is prevalent, if not dominant, in every region, including Quebec. English Ontarians who fear for their language have no concept of what that fear is really like.

"To understand that, they would have to walk a mile in the shoes of the French-Canadian."

## Let's Talk

Dear readers:
For years, you have been receiving *Language and Society*. We attempt to fill each issue with interesting and informative articles that will stimulate thought about Canada's linguistic duality.

We devote considerable energy and attention to this task. However, perfection is not to be found in this world and there is always room for improvement.

Since we publish this magazine for you, we are interested in knowing your opinions and reactions and in receiving your suggestions, comments and criticisms.

Do not hesitate to write to us.

*Claude Savoie*
*Editor-in-Chief*

# Getting on Track: Canada at National and International Events

***The 1989 Jeux Canada Games in Saskatoon — with strong support from the Commissioner's Regional Office in St. Boniface — provided information and services in both of Canada's official languages.***

The bilingual services available at the Jeux Canada Games held in Saskatoon last summer augur well for future events of this type.

Much of the credit goes to Judge Albert Lavoie, vice-president for language services, who, with a budget of $150,000, worked for four years as a volunteer with the Organizing Committee. From the preparation of Saskatoon's bilingual bid for the games to the closing ceremonies, Mr. Lavoie worked with some 350 bilingual volunteers, translators and other professionals to ensure that virtually every aspect of the Games was conducted in both languages.

"We set out to provide for the best bilingual services ever for the Games. I am satisfied that we accomplished that," said Lavoie, who is one of three bilingual judges in Saskatchewan.

Two key features of this success story are that a committed individual was given a mandate to do the job and that language was central to every step of the planning process.

"I can tell you that we have had the best translation services ever here in Saskatoon," said Claude Hardy, Quebec's chef de mission.

In the past, the federal government took far too long to make its language requirements known to organizers and participants. The good news is that the government has reminded departments and agencies concerned in such events of their responsibilities, and the Treasury Board Secretariat has published a clear and handsome booklet as a guide to the entire subject.

## Special study

The importance of Canada's official languages at these events — both national and international — cannot be overemphasized, given the significance they have for so many Canadians and their impact on Canadian unity. That is why the Commissioner of Official Languages tabled a special report on the matter with the Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages on October 24.

The study found evidence of many anomalies. Expo '86 in Vancouver, for instance, had unilingual English signage, public advertising and subcontractor services, and inadequately bilingual RCMP services. The 1988 Calgary Olympics saw inadequate French-language television coverage, unilingual pins and other items, as well as advertising and Olympic torch relay procedures that used French only in most of Quebec and English only in most other parts of Canada.

## Solutions

What can be done to correct the situation? The Commissioner's study makes a number of recommendations directed at the Treasury Board Secretariat, Fitness and Amateur Sport and the Department of the Secretary of State.

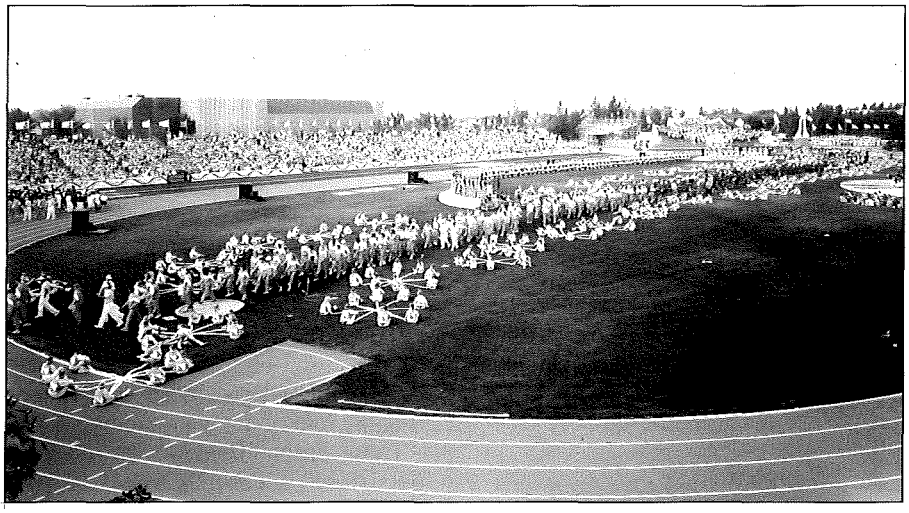
The Treasury Board Secretariat should take a more dynamic approach to its role of government manager and central policy maker for official language matters. It should ensure that, in the early planning stages of such events, all parties are made aware of their linguistic obligations and that language considerations are made part and parcel of every aspect of the event.

Fitness and Amateur Sport, which plays a central role in the organization of the Canada Games, should require that at least one member of the Organizing Committee be made responsible for managing all linguistic aspects of the Games, including tasks assumed by third parties such as sub-contractors and volunteers.

The Department of the Secretary of State should revise its official languages policy to cover its role as the federal co-ordinator of national exhibitions and provider of simultaneous interpretation services.

For 20 years or more two of the fundamental tenets of Canada's federal language regime have been that Canadians should be able to feel at home in the official language of their choice from coast to coast and that Canada should at all times display the image of a bilingual country on the world stage.

Let us hope that all federal institutions responsible for national and international events will learn a lesson from the Saskatoon Games and guarantee that future events are successful from the linguistic standpoint. ■



# The Commissioner in Europe: Brussels and Budapest

***The Commissioner of Official Languages accepted invitations during the summer from the Institut Royal des Relations Internationales in Brussels and the Hungarian Ministry of Justice in Budapest. In Brussels he gave a lecture on the linguistic situation in Canada and in Budapest he met with members of the National Assembly and senior Hungarian officials concerned with human rights, multiculturalism and, of course, official languages.***

## In Brussels

*Michel Colot**

At the invitation of the Institut Royal des Relations Internationales, headed by Professor Coppieters, a lecture by D'Iberville Fortier, Canada's Commissioner of Official Languages, was arranged. It was preceded by a working session with Belgian government officials responsible for official languages, at which an exchange of views on linguistic developments in the two countries took place.

Two days before the Belgian national holiday on July 21, under a broiling sun, Mr. Fortier renewed his acquaintance with Brussels, the capital of Europe. The Canadian Embassy, located in the shadow of the monumental building that commemorates the 50th anniversary of Belgian independence, offered its hospitality to its former ambassador and hosted a group of personalities as diverse as they were distinguished. Brussels, a city of paradoxes — at once irresistibly drawn toward its European destiny and prey to Belgium's linguistic conflicts (which are known locally as "community conflicts") — was the apt setting for this talk, which had the provocative and imaginative title, "Twenty Years Later, the Commissioner Is Not Letting Down His Guard".

***Michel Colot is an editor with *HDM Dechy*.**

Mr. Fortier sought first of all to define the ideological underpinnings of linguistic equilibrium in Canada. Unlike Belgium, has opted for a system based on territoriality, Canada relies on the principle of personal rights tempered by a degree of territoriality in spheres of provincial jurisdiction. In accordance with the division of powers, jurisdiction over language is considered to be ancillary to other jurisdictions. The federal Parliament legislates concerning the use of language in the diplomatic corps, the Armed Forces and federal institutions, while the provincial legislatures pass language laws in the areas of education and social services within their own territory. Certain very important areas, such as public education, the courts and health and social services, come under provincial jurisdiction. This division of responsibility between the federal and provincial governments is at the root of many problems.

These problems, both "solvable and persistent" according to Mr. Fortier, require constant attention. Against this background, the former ambassador declared that not only is the Commissioner not letting down his guard, but indeed is in the process of adding to his arsenal — at least morally and legally.

### A tradition of mutual respect

Referring to Bill 101 and recent decisions by the Supreme Court of Canada, the Language Commissioner, exercising his right to comment, even on matters outside federal jurisdiction, supported the principle of respect for fundamental minority rights and expressed the hope that "greater cultural security would allow Quebec to eliminate its restrictive measures." Reflecting the concerns expressed about the recent Meech Lake Accord, Mr. Fortier said he was convinced that it "represents a historic opportunity to set down in law a fundamental linguistic reality that has characterized Canada since its inception." The Commissioner's optimism is based on Canada's historic tradition of respect for the human rights of those who make up its communities, whether large or small.

*Belgian Senator Jeanine Delruelle*

Like Prime Minister Mulroney, who has stated that "language equality is the mortar that binds our country together", Mr. Fortier pleaded for tolerance and mutual respect that would also extend to the Francophone minorities outside Quebec who believe that instruction should be far more readily available in their language and feel the need for a minimum number of institutions of their own. According to the

Commissioner, the Constitution must recognize, throughout Canada, the legitimacy of a broader definition of the language rights essential to the life of a community. After making this plea for justice and fraternity, Mr. Fortier very politely turned to the questions of the attentive audience. Among the questioners was the former Belgian ambassador to The Hague, Mr. van der Straaten Waillet, who asked about the capacity of the current Commissioner, as a Francophone, to intervene on behalf of the English language. Mr. Fortier reassured his listener. There is no question but that such action is quite in order, as witness the Commissioner's intervention concerning the underrepresentation of Anglophones in the federal Public Service in Quebec.

Mr. Hatry, a former Liberal minister of finance, asked about the principle of territoriality. In the Canadian context, is it conceivable that there might be changes to the territorial boundaries of the provinces or even the creation of new provincial entities? For instance, a new province bringing together the Francophones of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland? The Commissioner pointed out that the Supreme Court has jurisdiction over territorial matters and that there are territories that aspire to provincial status.

Mr. Deschamps, the honorary Belgian ambassador, asked a question that is highly relevant in Belgium, where the central government is formed of equal numbers of members from the two language communities, Walloons and Flemings, except for the position of Prime Minister. This latter office, which has long been held by a Fleming, is considered linguistically neutral. Is there a similar principle in Canada of linguistic alternation in the position of Commissioner of Official Languages?

Mr. Fortier replied that there was no such principle at present, that his two predecessors were Anglophones and that nothing of this kind was anticipated. While acknowledging that such alternation was not out of the question, he expressed the hope that the Commissioner, whoever is in the post, would be judged by actions rather than by linguistic affiliation.

*The Commissioner in Budapest*

The major Flemish-language Belgian daily, *De Standaard*, devoted an editorial to the Commissioner's talk and concluded, in part, "From this comparison, it seems that Canada and Belgium, like many other countries, face comparable problems."

## In Budapest

The ideological turnaround that Hungary has accomplished has seen its ratification, in the past 12 months, of the international convention on human rights and its offer of hospitality to thousands of political refugees. It is also preparing new legislation on minority rights, including, of course, language rights. This is no doubt the reason why the Hungarian Ministry of Justice invited Mr. Fortier to two days of consultations with members of the National Assembly and senior government officials. Mrs. Róbertné Jakab, Deputy President of the National Assembly, welcomed him on behalf of the premiers and the Deputy Minister of Justice, Dr. Géza Kilényi, who chaired the meetings in the Ministry of Justice, along with his colleagues, Jozsef Zarnoczi, head of the refugee office in the Ministry of the Interior, and Mr. Ferenc Stark, head of the office of nationalities in the Ministry of Culture. The Commissioner's discussions closely followed a visit by Mr. Charbonneau, the Speaker of the Senate, and other Canadian-Hungarian exchanges are anticipated.

A press conference held at the end of the visit was covered by the country's principal media. An unexpected result of this visit will be the publication by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences of a work devoted to Canadian legislation and practices with regard to human rights, official languages and related topics.

In Budapest, as in Brussels, to complete the program, the respective ambassadors of Canada arranged for working dinners attended by the principal figures involved.

In the first five years of his mandate, despite the interest of many countries in the Canadian experience with linguistic arrangements, Mr. Fortier has had very little time for visits abroad. In the next two years, however, he hopes to be able to accept invitations to visit the United States and France. ■

## The Commissioner Interviewed

D'Iberville Fortier's views on Canada's linguistic situation — the present, the past and the possibilities for the future — are featured in the July/August issue of the British magazine *Language International*, a new journal describing itself as "for language professionals" and appearing six times a year.

Readers of *Language and Society* interested in the text of this interview with the Commissioner may obtain a copy of it by writing the Communications Branch, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 110 O'Connor Street, Ottawa, Canada K1A 0T8.

# French-Language Education in St. John's

*Marc Angers**

***Francophone parents in Newfoundland are going to court, but it's a lengthy process.***

The court proceedings initiated by a group of parents in St. John's, Newfoundland, concerning the right to French-language instruction in the provincial capital could force the province to reveal its position with regard to Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and to clarify its interpretation of it.

Everything hinges on the interpretation of this section: the right to French-language instruction, the constitutionality of the province's Schools Act under Section 23 and the right of Francophones to manage and control their institutions. Naturally, the two parties have diametrically opposed positions. On the one hand, the Francophone parents of St. John's demand recognition of their children's right to instruction in French in the best possible school environment, as well as participation in management. On the other, the provincial government and the Roman Catholic School Board of St. John's maintain in their defence that the number of children does not justify it.

As early as March 1987, well before initiating this legal proceeding, the parents attempted to negotiate the creation of French-language classes in the provincial capital with the St. John's Catholic School Board. The board did not accede to the parents' request on the grounds that it was awaiting the recommendations of a white paper on minority-language education in Newfoundland.

Subsequently, encouraged by the then Minister of Education, Loyola Hearns, the school board and the parents' committee engaged in serious negotiations. The parents clarified their demand. They wanted the creation of two and a half classes between kindergarten and grade four and the holding of a registration period. The registration period lasted for only six days and no information on the program of studies was distributed. Finally, in February 1988, the school board refused the parents' demand on the grounds that the 17 children registered did not justify the setting up of French-language classes.

The parents then turned to the minister of education, who was their only hope in having the school board's decision reversed. In March 1988, the minister formed a committee to submit a report to him on the question. The final recommendations of the committee's report supported, for the same reasons, the decision taken by the school board. After these setbacks, the Francophone parents decided to apply to the courts to obtain recognition for their education rights.

The legal case should force the Newfoundland government to take a clear position on this vital and pressing issue in Canada. "At present," according to John Dawson, the lawyer for the parents, "there are neither provincial laws nor policies on the right of Francophones to French-language instruction in Newfoundland and Labrador." He goes further in saying that if the case should go to the Supreme Court of Newfoundland the judge will have to rule on the three issues that involve the application of Section 23. The provincial government may then have to amend its Schools Act accordingly.

In 1988-89 approximately 250 students at the primary and secondary levels were receiving instruction in French in the province.

**Out-of-court settlement**

Although they are firmly committed to winning respect for their rights, the parents do not rule out the possibility of negotiating an out-of-court settlement. Negotiation may be possible, especially in view of the recent coming to power of a new provincial government. The Minister of Education, Philip J. Warren, in a letter to the Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador, supported the concept of the minority's right to instruction in its own language, without, however, making a firm commitment in the St. John's case. ■

***Marc Angers is Editor-in-Chief of the bimonthly *Le Gaboteur*.**

## Robert Keaton Chosen as Alliance Quebec President

On October 21 the Board of Directors of Alliance Quebec confirmed Robert Keaton as the new president of the organization. He occupies the post left vacant by the resignation of Royal Orr March 26.

Mr. Keaton is a political science professor at Dawson College and Concordia University and a summer lecturer at Bishop's University.

Robert Keaton is active in political, social service and education organizations. Within Alliance Quebec, he was a founding member of the Board of Directors from 1982-83, rejoining the Board in May 1989. Prior to the formation of Alliance Quebec, he was actively involved in the Positive Action Committee and the Council for Quebec Minorities.

Commenting on his new challenge, Mr. Keaton said, "I believe an opportunity now exists for thoughtful members in both communities to sit down and discuss the kind of Quebec we all want to build together. We want to be able to establish conditions which are acceptable to all Quebecers."

# French-Language Schools in Saskatchewan

*Dale Eisler**

***Saskatchewan will establish councils for the management of French-language schools by Francophones, but progress in other areas has at times been painfully slow.***

The process might not be moving as fast as some members of the Saskatchewan Francophone community would like it to, but progress is being made on a provincial commitment to French language education made more than a year ago.

## School councils

The latest development is the Saskatchewan government's decision to establish school councils — Conseils scolaires fransaskois — that will allow Francophone parents to manage their children's schools. Each school council will manage the local affairs of a Francophone school, including facilities, staff, instructional resources and local budgets.

As well, each of the individual local councils will nominate representatives to sit on a central council which will provide advice and oversee the operation of all the Francophone schools.

The new autonomous model for the 23,000-member Fransaskois community is based on a French-language education study carried out by a committee headed by Ottawa-based consultant Edgar Gallant and completed last June. (**Editor's note:** See *Language and Society* No. 28, page 20.)

The committee was established as part of a June 1988 agreement between Saskatchewan and the federal government. At the time, the federal government agreed to turn over $56 million to the province as part of the Grant Devine government's commitment to enhance French-language education and services in the province.

Part of the agreement provides $27 million in federal government money over 10 years for Saskatchewan to work with the Francophone community to implement an improved system for the management of Francophone schools.

The agreement came in the wake of the provincial government's decision to declare the province officially unilingual. That controversial move followed a Supreme Court of Canada decision that ruled a section of the North-West Territories Act requiring laws to be published in English and French still applied to Saskatchewan.

In his report Gallant says a school system controlled and administered by Francophones will help the French-speaking community achieve its cultural and educational goals at no added cost to the taxpayers.

"We believe that the recommended system, once it is properly understood, should encounter wide-spread acceptance and we hope relatively little resistance," Gallant says.

"The Fransaskois will be able to achieve their educational aspirations through their own school system and thereby reverse the current trends towards assimilation. The new system will resolve a problem area that has troubled certain communities in the province, and at no additional cost to the taxpayers."

Aside from the local control and a general council, a central staff will be established to provide services such as special education and administrative support to the schools.

Although the schools will be controlled by the Fransaskois community, they remain fully a part of the provincial school system and will follow the provincial curriculum. They will be financed on a fixed formula that will not affect the local tax base.

## Slow progress

While the move to Francophone controlled school boards is seen as a step forward by the Fransaskois, progress has been at times painfully slow.

Rupert Baudais, president of Saskatchewan's Association culturelle franco-canadienne (ACFC), maintains that there has not been nearly enough consultation between the provincial government and the French community. In particular, Baudais is annoyed that the government has yet to establish a provincial French-language co-ordination office. The federal-provincial agreement provides $300,000 annually to run such a facility.

*A school system controlled and administered by Francophones will help achieve cultural and educational goals.*

Another point of conflict has been a planned French-language institute at the University of Regina.

The federal government has committed $17 million over five years for the institute, which includes $10 million for capital costs to construct a facility, but progress on the institute has been slowed by a dispute over who should sit on the committee that will plan and administer the institute. The ACFC has argued that the provincial government is not allowing enough input from either itself or others in the Saskatchewan French community.

As well, Baudais is concerned that the government has yet to live up to its pledge from a year ago that it would translate key laws into French. The government's translation plans have been bogged down in controversy over an attempt to develop sophisticated computer technology that is capable of translating laws from English to French. ■

***Dale Eisler is a columnist for the Regina *Leader-Post* and Saskatchewan correspondent for *Maclean's*.**

# English-Speaking Quebecers: "Split Down the Middle"?

*Gretta Chambers**

***The leader of the Equality Party, for the time being, represents the voice of English Quebec.***

The election on September 25 of a new government of Quebec which greatly resembles the last was a shocker. Not since before the Act of Union when Quebec was still Lower Canada had anything like it happened. The Equality Party, a grass-roots movement forged by Anglophone anger with the ruling Liberals, went out and beat those Liberals in four of the hitherto safest Liberal seats in the province. As a political force this small band of rebels may not have the power and prestige of the British Party of yore. It managed, however, to capture the votes of 125,000 English-speaking Montrealers and to arrest the attention of a lot more Francophones.

*Robert Bourassa*

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

## Feelings of frustration and betrayal

The Equality Party and its country cousin, the Unity Party, were born out of the frustration felt by the whole of English Quebec when the Bourassa government passed the by now infamous Bill 178, which continues the ban on the use of languages other than French on outdoor signs. Francophones do not like the law either, but for very different reasons.

The use of the notwithstanding clause to circumvent the Supreme Court ruling that the banning of other languages was contrary to the Quebec and Canadian charters of rights was one reason English-speaking Quebecers were upset. But they were also wounded and enraged at the fact their community could so easily be wiped off the streets of the province as though it had no intrinsic place in Quebec. It was not the language of signs so much as the deliberate insult many Anglophones could not forgive of a party they had always faithfully supported and which had promised them a return of their visibility on signs.

This perceived injury was not the first of its kind. The tide of accommodation had begun to turn in Anglophonia when the National Assembly unanimously passed a motion condemning the Commissioner of Official Languages for having suggested that English-speaking Quebecers had felt humiliated by some of the province's language policies. The Anglophone MNAs voted in solidarity with their government colleagues. This was universally seen in English Quebec as betrayal.

It is now interesting to note that at the time these movements were taking shape, members of English Quebec's establishments were keeping their distance. The new community crusaders were looked on by the so-called leadership as mavericks. And indeed some of the rhetoric they indulged in was just that. But they hung in there. Their continued existence was eloquent evidence of the political vacuum in which English-speaking Quebec now found itself. Equality ran 19 candidates on the Island of Montreal, Unity 16 off-Island. When it came time to vote, a lot of Anglophone leaders as well as followers cast ballots in their favour.

The West Island constituencies of Westmount, Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, D'Arcy McGee and Jacques-Cartier are now represented, not by the potential cabinet ministers they used to elect, but by neophytes who have nothing in common but a commitment to show Bourassa he cannot take Anglophones for granted. It is a slim reed on which to base effective political action. Through the pleasure felt at having somehow stood up for itself a certain nervousness has begun to permeate English Quebec. A message has been sent. Only now are people beginning to consider the messengers. And it is not yet at all clear, even to those entrusted with the job, exactly how it will be delivered.

The revolt of the English, the distillation of discontent with the ruling Liberals among Anglophone Quebecers, surprised many Francophones by its depth and persistence. And it had a marked effect on the election coverage in the French-language media.

## The "phenomene anglophone"

In a campaign most notable for its PCB beginnings and strike-dominated last

days, "safe" Anglophone ridings became hot spots. Liberal candidates, traditionally shoo-ins, were now fighting, not the real province-wide Parti Québécois opposition, but opponents from their own communities who were out to defeat them. The talk in public meetings and on the street was about language rights, betrayal of trust, respect for minorities and charters of rights. It was also about the dangers of voting outside the political mainstream and the negative effects of isolation for a community which chose to do so. The debate was impassioned, the electioneering fierce. It was as though the rest of the province did not exist.

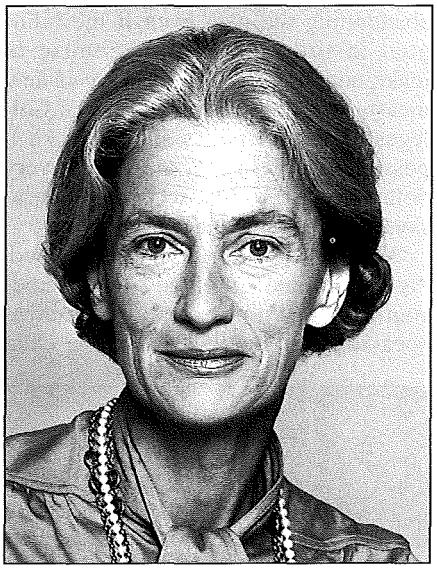
So interesting did this "phenomene anglophone" become that every Francophone television and radio station had at least one English-speaking colour commentator on its election night coverage. And all during the campaign, Anglophone journalists found themselves greatly in demand by the Francophone media. Well before election day it was clear that the Liberals were in serious trouble in their own traditional feifdoms. No one, however, dared believe that power, habit and the threat of marginalization would not in the end prevail.

## Recalcitrants?

Had the results not been so spectacular, many French-speaking Quebecers would have been able to persuade themselves that the revolt of the English represented a spasm of rage "reasonable" Anglophones would recognize as political immaturity. During the campaign, Lise Bacon, the vice-premier and minister of both the environment and cultural affairs, tried to reinforce this interpretation by describing Anglophone defectors from the Liberal party as simply "recalcitrants". This recalcitrance covered almost half of Quebec's English-speaking voters. And today, the meaning and effects of their massive disaffection are being taken very seriously by the spokespersons and opinion makers of French Quebec.

Even if the movement itself comes to nothing in the long run, the very fact that so many Anglophones took their chances with the democratic system rather than relying on the good will of others to do their pleading for them has changed the dynamics of Quebec politics. The grievances that have pushed Anglophones to this radical separation are no longer being brushed aside as a passing aberration. The efforts that have not been made to rebuild bridges with an English-speaking community, now recognized as having been left out to dry by Premier Bourassa, are coming more and more to light outside English Quebec.

The manifestation of Anglophone resentment by the election of Equality Party protesters is also being measured in terms of the damage it may cause to Quebec's social fabric. There is anxiety that language lines may be hardened as the new MNAs elected to defend English rights belabour the language question and open old wounds for which Francophones see no cure. There is however a tacit recognition that this overt expression of Anglophone alienation has introduced a note of realism into inter-ethnic relations, uncomfortable as that realization may be.



*Gretta Chambers*

## Allophones

It has not gone unnoticed that the vast majority of "Allophones", those Quebecers whose mother tongue is neither English nor French, stuck with the Liberals, contributing to the winning of the premier's own seat and to his party's good showing in pluralist Montreal. With the loss of so much Anglophone support, the Liberal Party should be encouraged to give more room and recognition to the representatives of the other ethnic groups whose influence to date has not reflected the social, economic and political importance of their ever-increasing numbers. There is now a growing awareness of the importance of their electoral and demographic strength. Some 45 ridings in and around Montreal can now no longer be won without a significant proportion of the non-Francophone vote.

## A community divided

The Anglophone community has been split right down the middle. Its members were faced with the choice of staying in the mainstream, even if they no longer believed they were being allowed a place in it, or marginalizing their vote to show they could no longer be taken for granted. The very fact they did have a choice, unattractive as both alternatives might have been, has given them back a kind of collective self respect they seemed to have lost with the adoption of Bill 178. That confidence does not yet stretch to knowing how to deal with the Equality wild cards that have now been introduced in the political deck.

All Anglophones did not vote Equality. But all of English Quebec will have to take the consequences of having the Equality MNAs as their elected spokespersons. English-speaking Liberals have not disappeared. They have simply become discredited. Until they succeed in rebuilding the bridges they were not able to defend in the past, Anglophones will be represented by members about whom they know very little.

English Quebecers have their support to project on a matter of principle, not to party or program. The strength of the Equality Party did not reside in its candidates but in the opportunity it afforded to stick it to Premier Bourassa. Having proved that could be done, now comes the time for finding out if anything good can come of its. The leader of the Equality Party, Robert Libman, a 29 year-old architect with no previous political experience, has already shown that he knows the road from the West Island to the National Assembly is full of pitfalls and that he carries with him on that journey more than his three cohorts. He represents, for the time being, the voice of English Quebec. ■

## French as a Language of Business

English, the official language of the Europe of the future? Or the only language, at any rate, of business? Nonsense, according to Armand Mattelart. "Outside of Great Britain, French is still the language most often used by businessmen in Europe."
(*L'Internationale publicitaire*, La Découverte)

# A French-Language University in Ontario

*Gisèle Goudreault**

***The creation of a French-language university in Ontario will not be a painless process.***

The plan to create a French-language university in Ontario by using funds from bilingual institutions is far from being a *fait accompli*.

The idea, approved unanimously by the 280 delegates of the Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario (ACFO) at its last annual meeting in Midland, Ontario, on June 17-18, has to date been unanimously rejected in the newspapers by officials of the University of Ottawa, the largest bilingual university in Ontario.

This rejection was done with great finesse, with much support from statistics on the student clientele and its geographical concentrations. But Antoine D'Iorio, Rector of the University of Ottawa, has nonetheless promised a war, and a major one, on those who would take away the funds he receives for offering courses in French in his 23,000-student institution.

To Rolande Soucie, president of ACFO, D'Iorio's attitude is understandable. "I can understand his reaction; I myself am president of an organization and I can see that a person may wish to defend his cause, to defend what he believes in."

Far from being disarmed by the objections arising from the most eminent figures of the academic world, and in some cases from the Franco-Ontarian community (as in the case of Father Roger Guindon, former rector of the University of Ottawa), Soucie says that the ACFO resolution at least has the merit of bringing the differences of opinion out into the open.

## No question of yielding

While she stresses that the creation of a French-language university in Ontario must take place in partnership with the universities, the government and the community, Rolande Soucie says that what ACFO wants is indeed a French-language university.

There is no question, for example, of abandoning the plan even if the bilingual institutions should promise to make additional efforts or even if new measures taken by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities should make it possible to account for the use of every dollar devoted to post-secondary education in French in Ontario.

"What we want," Soucie explained, "is not additional programs but an environment, a setting where the French-speaking community will be the chief concern. This does not mean that there will be no English books at this university, or that the Francophones who attend it will not occasionally speak English among themselves, or even that there will not be Anglophones who wish to attend it, but it does mean that it will be a French-language university, identified as such and recognized as such."

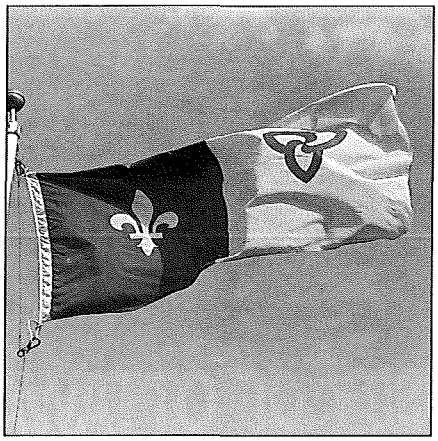
Speaking of the beneficial effect a French-language university could have on the Franco-Ontarian community, she quoted Fernand Arsenault, Dean of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Moncton, who stated in a document given to the last general meeting of the ACFO, that "the Université de Moncton, along with its branches in Edmunston and Shippegan, is the Acadian institution that has probably contributed most to the cultural, social, political and economic development of the Maritime provinces and has given Acadians pride, a sense of identity and confidence in the future."

## Branches or campuses

In Soucie's view, however, it already seems clear that the Ontario French-language university cannot be located in one particular place. "This is an option that we have already ruled out in establishing the French-language community college, so as not to drain the regions of their teachers and students. We do not want to cause an exodus of human resources from the regions and that is why we want both the community college and the university to take the form of a network whose branches will offer options that suit the physical, economic and social realities of their regions."


Speaking of the student clientele, she says she has no fear of not being able to fill classes. It is true, she noted, that, in Ontario, half as many Francophones as Anglophones, proportionately, pursue post-secondary education. "But it is also true that Quebec Francophones have only been attending university in large numbers since there have been branches of the University of Quebec. Twenty

***Gisèle Goudreault writes for *Le Droit*.**



years ago, when the University of Quebec was created, there were — again, proportionately — only half as many Francophones as Anglophones enrolled in universities. Quite a record for a majority! But now there is no difference in the percentage of Francophones and Anglophones who are enrolled in university courses in Quebec."

At present, she says, the University of Ottawa is becoming increasingly Anglophone, due not so much to the disaffection of Franco-Ontarians as that of Quebecers, who tend more and more to attend schools in their own province, where academic fees are a third what they are in Ontario.

Fifteen years ago, Soucie says, Francophones accounted for 60% of the student body at the University of Ottawa. Today, they constitute only 38%. "And we know what happens when institutions have to be bilingual and also pay their own way. There is a strong temptation to eliminate courses for the minority."

"Our objective," she hastened to add, "is not to criticize existing institutions or to work against them. Nevertheless, it is legitimate to want to do what can be done with the $60 million a year devoted to post-secondary education in French, especially, when you realize that the budget of a university the size of Laurentian is $20 million."

ACFO is aware, she indicated, that the creation of a French-language university in Ontario will not take place painlessly. "Such things are never accomplished without difficulty. And people who have devoted their lives to the creation of French-language programs in bilingual institutions will not readily tell us, 'Take our funds, take them, they are yours.'"

"Our intention," she concluded, "is to respect what they have done, while carrying out the mandate we have been given by the 40th annual general meeting of ACFO." ■

# The Franco-Ontarian University: It Exists Now

*Roger Guindon**

***The University of Ottawa is not less French because it also teaches in English.***

The "French university" is not only a noble and generous idea; it is a multi-faceted reality in various countries of the world. There is even an Association des universités partiellement et entièrement de langue française, established more than 20 years ago, to which the bilingual Ontario universities belong, on the same footing as universities that are entirely French.

I have so often been accused of being against the idea of a French university in Ontario that I feel the need to say loud and clear that for more than 50 years I have had the conviction that I was trained in a French university and have worked to develop this same university, which I regard as *genuinely* French, even though it is also *genuinely* English. It is not less French because it also teaches in English. There is no incompatibility, as some think, between these two realities. The University of Ottawa is the living proof of that.

To contribute to the discussion launched by the Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario (ACFO), I would cite first the cases of the University of Moncton and of the University of Quebec, to which some Franco-Ontarian militants look longingly. These universities were founded to accommodate the "baby boom" generation of those born after the Second World War. This is important because the number of new students today is far from increasing at the same rate.

## University of Moncton

The case of Moncton is very interesting. A report by John Deutsch recommended that the New Brunswick government amalgamate the resources of the three Francophone colleges of Saint-Joseph (Moncton), Sacré-Coeur (Bathurst-Shippegan) and Saint-Louis (Edmundston). The Acadian associations and the people of these regions soon made common cause to support and develop the University of Moncton, which the Robichaud government gave them as an essential tool for the promotion of their language and culture. The University of Moncton has since developed and is preparing to launch its first doctoral program, in French literature, with the co-operation of the University of Ottawa, which has extensive experience in this area. The Acadians are very proud, and rightly so, of their university, which they have supported from the beginning.

## University of Quebec

The case of the University of Quebec in many respects resembles that of Moncton. Because of the vary rapid increase in the number of university students, the government of Quebec had either to expand the existing universities or create new ones. It did both. Without amending the charters of the universities and relying on the tradition of the French-language classical colleges in the province, the government created the University of Quebec with campuses in Montreal, Trois-Rivières, Rimouski, Chicoutimi, Rouyn and, later, Hull. The people of these areas worked together to support and develop their regional university. Meanwhile, Laval, Montreal and Sherbrooke underwent considerable expansion.

In neither instance was it a matter of creation from nothing. An existing tradition was built on, and the people put their shoulder to the wheel. The same scenario (though this is not my subject) was repeated in the case of the Cité Collégiale. The French-speaking professors and students wanted a Francophone college, as did the people and the government.

⇨

***Roger Guindon was Rector of the University of Ottawa from 1962 to 1984.**

## Ontario

Let us now turn our attention to the situation of French-language higher education in Ontario.

Of the seven institutions concerned, there is only one Francophone university, the Dominican College of Philosophy and Theology in Ottawa. There are five bilingual universities and one bilingual college: in the North, the University of Sudbury, Laurentian University and Hearst University College, affiliated with the latter; in Ottawa, Saint Paul University and the University of Ottawa. Finally in Toronto, there is Glendon College of York University.

## Glendon College

Let us briefly look at the tradition of education and public support in the cases of Glendon College, Laurentian University and the University of Ottawa.

Glendon College provides mainly undergraduate instruction. It relies a great deal on the support of Francophiles and multicultural Francophones, who are numerous in the Toronto area, and still more on that of the established Franco-Ontarian community, at least judging by the number of them who attend the College.

## Laurentian University

Laurentian University concentrates mainly on undergraduate programs, at least as far as instruction in French is concerned. While the number of Francophone students and the number of courses and programs offered in French is increasing, certain members of the Francophone "intelligentsia" in northern Ontario have thus far shown little support, pride or even confidence in the university, whose mission it is to serve them. Their moaning and groaning is not limited to Laurentian; it extends to all French-language university instruction in the province. Jean-Pierre Pichette states that it is in a "completely disastrous" situation, and Gaétan Gervais adds, in a "deplorable state."

The symbiosis between the people and the institution, which characterized Moncton and the University of Quebec therefore does not seem to have developed in these two areas of Ontario. As a result of my experience in Ottawa, I would not paint the situation in black and white, as if all the blame were on one side.

## University of Ottawa

Speaking of the University of Ottawa, I will confine myself to my own experiences. Until the Second World War, growth was unspectacular, as at other Canadian universities. In the years that followed, and especially since the early 1960s, the faculties, programs and courses in both English and French grew rapidly. The criticism most often heard is that, at Ottawa, medicine is not taught in French. This is true. It is also said that the sciences are taught only in English. This is much less true, for, at the rate things are going, in two years *all* undergraduate courses in science, and probably in computer science, will be taught in French. This is very encouraging. But a university is more than medicine and sciences. The University of Ottawa is particularly proud of its long and distinguished tradition of teaching and research in the French language in a large number of disciplines that are particularly influenced by French culture. The following are some of them:


- For more than 60 years, the training of Francophone teachers and research in education.
- French literature and French-Canadian literature.
- Theatre
- Debating in French
- Law, including the common law program in French
- Physical Education
- Psychology
- Political Science
- Music
- History
- Visual Arts and Communications
- Linguistics and Translation
- Canadian Studies and Women's Studies
- International Development and Co-operation
- Criminology
- Philosophy (the Institute of Philosophy) and Religious Studies
- Distance Education, a field in which the University's reputation is well known. Its network extends beyond Ontario to the other provinces, and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities has recognized it in its FORMA-DISTANCE program.

And the list goes on! Today the University offers 82 undergraduate, 35 master's and 14 doctoral programs entirely in French. It is not a large college, but a real university. Many well-established universities in Canada and abroad do not offer as many master's and doctoral programs. And these do not include a large number of courses in French in other programs. In 1989 there are more programs in French than when I was rector!

To explain this proliferation of French-language programs from the undergraduate to the doctoral level, we must look at the charter that the university asked for and obtained from the government of Ontario when it was reorganized in 1965. With full knowledge of what they were doing, and weighing every word, those who would form the new Board of Governors wanted to include among the objectives of the university bilingualism and biculturalism and the preservation and development of French culture in Ontario. These objectives did not appear in the university's previous Charter, which was kept by Saint Paul University. The list of disciplines in which the University of Ottawa excels in French shows that since 1965 it has been faithful to its mission and is, I repeat, as *genuinely French* as it is English.

From the tradition of teaching and research in French, let us now consider the response of Franco-Ontarians. As for the students, the answer is easy: Franco-Ontarians continue to enrol in the University of Ottawa mainly because of its reputation. And several thousand Quebec Francophones do the same. The attitude of ACFO, judging by the resolutions passed at its general meetings from 1969 to 1988 (which were submitted to its members last June) is persistent and apparently unyielding.

A few years after the new charter of 1965, ACFO called for "the complete francization of the University of Ottawa." At the time I found the idea so far-fetched that it did not cost me a moment's sleep. This "all or nothing" attitude resurfaced in 1980 when ACFO "endorsed the creation of Franco-Ontarian universities" (in the plural). In 1982 it gave itself the mandate "of taking whatever steps are necessary to induce post-secondary institutions...to co-operate in developing a comprehensive strategy for expanding programs offered in French." I never heard what "necessary steps" were taken. However, the idea was not foreign to us because Professor Denis Carrier and his task force were then preparing the development plan for French-language courses at the University of Ottawa. There were plans not only to offer in French all the courses already offered in English, but also for the development of new programs of particular importance to Franco-Ontarians.


*"There is no incompatibility between the two realities."*

Some of these new programs exist today in health sciences (physiotherapy and ergotheraphy). Despite the efforts made by Professor Carrier to interest Franco-Ontarian leaders in his work, the 1983 ACFO general meeting declared itself in favour of "the creation of a Francophone university based on a network of French faculties (along the lines of the University of Quebec)." In 1989, once again it was a French university or, perhaps more exactly, the idea of a French university, that ACFO adopted as its mandate.

Decidedly, the University of Ottawa has not, thus far, enjoyed the support of ACFO. If we are to believe certain public statements, ACFO would support the university only if it made itself completely French or, at the very least, if it showed that the Francophone professors and students of the University of Ottawa are under the exclusive control of Francophones, preferably Franco-Ontarians.

Since we live in a free country, ACFO is entitled to its opinion, and I do not criticize it for having one. I would suggest, however, that it is not the only organization concerned about the betterment of Franco-Ontarians. The University of Ottawa did not wait for support from ACFO to ask for and obtain grants from the government for the additional costs of bilingualism, i.e., mainly for instruction in French. The university is as aware as ACFO that what it has already done in French is not enough and it is striving to improve the situation year by year. While ACFO was passing its resolutions, the University of Ottawa was doing its job as a university and building a solid foundation for the present and the future.

Since ACFO has decided not to support the University of Ottawa unless it renounces half its soul (either the English half or the French half), I do not expect that it will change its mind. Its mandates are set by a general meeting, held only once a year. I ask only one thing of ACFO — that it not even think of depriving the University of Ottawa of its inalienable right to serve the Franco-Ontarian community as it has done, more and more effectively, despite all sorts of problems, since 1848. ■

## The University of Ottawa Should Remain Bilingual

"The University of Ottawa should remain bilingual, but give priority to the Francophone community." So concluded France Pilon in a long series of reports published from October 10 to 14 in Ottawa's *Le Droit*. For her reports, she used some 50 interviews conducted with key figures at the university and with supporters of a French-language university in Ontario. These discussions did not extend much beyond the Franco-Ontarian community.

"While the idea of creating a French-language university is attractive, the main figures involved prefer to give the University of Ottawa a second chance before condemning it," Pilon writes, "because teachers and students...restated their commitment to bilingualism — the very basis of the institution. Although the senior administrators are reluctant to give special status to Francophones, it will be difficult for them to oppose the general sentiment that Francophones should be given first place in the institution."

# New Brunswick
## 20 Years Later: A Panorama

*Tom Sloan*

***Twenty years is the time it takes to grow from infancy to maturity.In 1969 Canada assisted in the arrival of a new progeny: bilingual New Brunswick, whose parents have given it care and love and education.***

***Twenty years later bilingual New Brunswick has taken its place in the adult world.It has faced exciting challenges without compromising itself. It has made its mark and asserted its personality.***

***To encapsule fairly this Odyssey — and to pay homage — in this issue we dedicate a special report to New Brunswick. Exactly 20 yeaars ago* Language and Society*'s Tom Sloan reported extensively on the subject.This fall he returned to the province. He witnessed the energy, the youthfulness, the liveliness, the flowering that is going on there — and the inevitable problems that are the other side of the coin. He shows us a vibrant society, open to new ideas, in the process of attuning two heritages to each other. Our other authors, we believe, round out the portrait.***

***We present this special report with gratitude and hope.***
**D'Iberville Fortier**

The University of New Brunswick's Aiken Hall, high on a hill above Fredericton, was awash with unfamiliar political colours one late summer afternoon in September. Green and yellow bunting, green and yellow balloons and green, yellow and white straw boater hats, abounded, as more than 3,000 men and women gathered in the hope of shaking up the politics of New Brunswick.

Welcome to Canada's Picture Province and to the founding convention of its newest political party — the Confederation of Regions (CoR).

It was a warm, sunny Sunday afternoon, but the enthusiastic crowd had given up personal weekend plans to come and cheer their new leader, a soft-spoken artist and sculptor named Archie Pafford, as he called on New Brunswickers to reverse two decades of official bilingualism. If his party is elected to power in the next provincial election, he has promised to do precisely that.

Welcome to New Brunswick which, in 1989, took its place as one of the most paradoxical elements in Canadian political life.

New Brunswick has about 710,000 people living in an area of 73,436 square kilometres. In population, the province ranks eighth out of 10 and accounts for under 3% of the national total. In terms of area, it accounts for less than 1%.

### Microcosm, macrocosm

Why, then, is New Brunswick of such overwhelming interest to the large number of Canadians who are concerned with the future of the country in general and the question of national unity in particular?

The answer is twofold. First, in its population mix New Brunswick is the only province that comes close to reflecting the national balance between English- and French-speaking Canadians. Secondly, for the past 20 years, alone among the provinces New Brunswick has been closely in step with the national official languages policies of successive federal governments. As in Ottawa, both Liberal and Progressive Conservative administrations have taken the responsibility for recognizing the rights of the French-speaking minority in the area it administers. Occasionally, in both cases, there have been political costs involved.

In its population balance, New Brunswick is divided in a ratio of two-thirds to one-third between English- and French-speakers, compared to about three-quarters to one-quarter in Canada as a whole. It is not, therefore, an exact microcosm of the national situation. But it is certainly close enough to provide a reasonably accurate small-scale reflection of that reality.

In a very real sense, it can be said that the past four centuries of history of New Brunswick and its people have been a preparation for the crucial place the province holds in the Canada of today.

### Acadian history

In 1604 the first white colonists arrived from France to settle in a land which then bore the name of Arcadie, bestowed on it almost a century earlier by an Italian explorer in the service of the king of France. In truth, the explorer, Giovanni da Verrazzano, had given the name to an area further south, near what is now Delaware; but 16th-century cartographers mistakenly transferred it to the region of what are now the three Maritime provinces, and it stuck. Eventually the "r" dropped out, and we had "Acadie", and its French-speaking inhabitants, the Acadians.

The next century and a half was a hectic time for the Acadian people, who wanted only to be left in peace to follow their occupations, which were mainly farming, hunting, and fishing in the coastal waters. Incessant wars between England and France meant that control of Acadia was constantly shifting between the two powers. The result was endless turmoil for the Acadian settlers.

It culminated in 1755 when, in the midst of war with France, England demanded an unconditional oath of allegiance to the Crown from the Acadian population of what are now Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and the parts of New Brunswick then under English control. When they encountered resistance, the authorities decided on drastic action. This was nothing less than the

deportation, to the American colonies, England and France, of the whole population, amounting to about 13,000 people.

The deportation was carried out from 1755 onwards, and the issue seemed settled when France ceded the whole region to England in the Treaty of Paris in 1763.

How is it that today there are some 240,000 French-speaking Acadians in New Brunswick alone, their future tied closely with that of Canada itself?

One reason is that, despite all efforts, the deportation was not entirely successful. It is estimated that more than 3,000 Acadians managed to go into hiding, often deep in the forests, and thus to remain in or near their old homes. When the war was over, they received grudging permission to resume their way of life. And, while a considerable number of deportees managed to find their way home, it was, according to historian Rev. Ansèlme Chiasson, the escapees who formed the nucleus of the Acadian resurgence, the evidence of which is especially to be seen in the north-eastern part of New Brunswick today.

Whether victory in the battle for survival was a foregone conclusion it is impossible to say. Perhaps the very isolation in the early days of most Acadian communities from what became the mainstream Anglophone life of the province was an important factor. The tenacity of the Acadian farmers and fishermen, often headed by their parish priests, was the most powerful factor of all. Along with a fierce loyalty to the land, the language and the Church, came, in the mid-19th century, a new Acadian nationalism, involving a defence of tradition, a quest for identity and an insistence on Acadian rights. Above all, in speeches, in literature and in the press, there was the emphasis on the depth of Acadian roots. This was Acadian land and would remain so.

In general, this Acadian nationalism was in no sense meant as a provocation to the English-speaking majority either in the Maritimes or in New Brunswick itself. It was and remains, Acadians insist, simply a statement. The home of the Acadians is neither France nor Quebec. It is Acadia — the Maritimes. And, in particular, for most today it is New Brunswick, which they share with their English-speaking fellow citizens.

## United Empire Loyalists

If the Acadians are one part of the historical equation, the most important single element of the other part was certainly the advent of the United Empire Loyalists, some 14,000 of them, as a result of the American Revolution, the main waves arriving in 1783-84. They helped set the tone of loyalty to Britain and the Crown, which, together with a general conservatism, has characterized the New Brunswick Anglophone establishment and much of the population over the past two centuries.

For most of that period there was little interaction and therefore little danger of a serious clash between Anglophones and Francophones in New Brunswick. The relative isolation from each other began to erode in the mid-20th century as Acadians began to demand what they considered their fair share in both economic and linguistic terms. Today, to the discomfort of some Anglophones, they have gone a long way towards achieving many of their goals.

It is ironic, but perhaps inevitable, that one of the results of that process has been that in 1989 New Brunswick is one of the focal points of language tension in Canada.

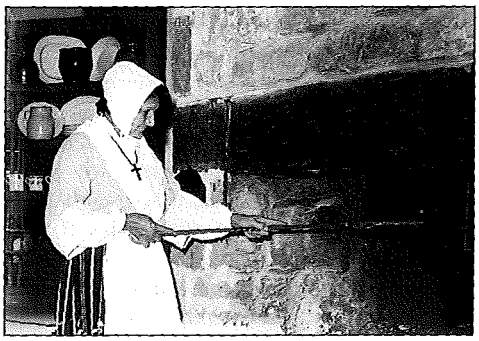
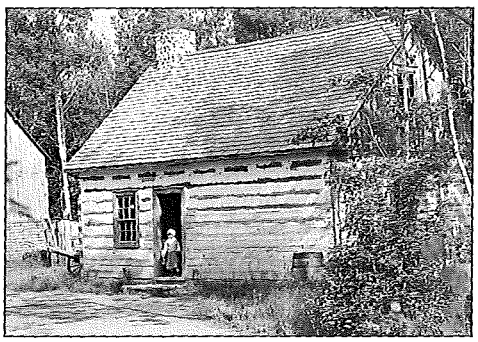
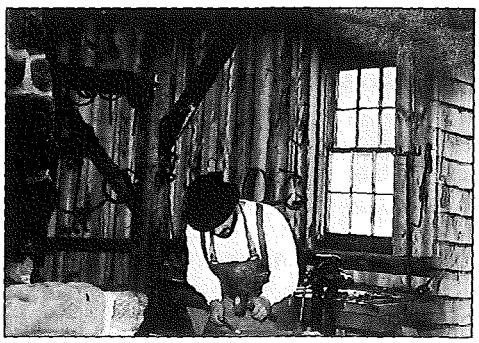
## Acts of equality

It is ironic because, with an Act recognizing the equality of both official language communities and as the only province to enshrine its institutional bilingualism in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, New Brunswick is considered a near model in the field of relations between Canada's two official language communities.

It was perhaps inevitable — or at least not too surprising — that the drive for language equality should stir fears among some members of the majority community that the process might be proceeding too rapidly and raise questions as to where it would stop. And now, many New Brunswickers from both linguistic communities are trying to put the events of the past few decades into a new perspective in an attempt to understand what has happened and why.

In a real sense the process started in 1960 with the arrival on the scene of Louis Robichaud. The election of the young lawyer was in itself an important symbolic event. Robichaud, however, proved during his 10-year reign that he was a reformer rather than merely a symbol. In 1965 he introduced a series of laws designed to dramatically improve the lot of the poorest areas of the province. They involved a profound restructuring of government financing through an even provincial property tax based on true market value, education, health and social services being managed provincially rather than at the local level. It was not coincidental that many of the poorest areas to be helped by better services and reduced taxes were inhabited mainly by Acadians. These were areas that had been the object of benign neglect on the part of a succession of provincial governments. Robichaud was determined to change that.

The Program for Equal Opportunity (PEO), as the laws were collectively known, quickly became the subject of bitter controversy, with part of the Anglophone business establishment and the K.C. Irving empire, backed by the Fredericton *Daily Gleaner*, denouncing it as a blatant and anti-democratic political measure to buy Acadian votes at the expense of the Anglophone majority. The PEO was, however, supported by many members of that same majority — in fact it had first been elaborated by a prominent Anglophone law professor, Edward Byrne of the University of New Brunswick — and the necessary legislation was passed by 1967. The stage was set for the next step in the recognition of Acadian rights. This was the passage of

*Photos: from VILLAGE HISTORIQUE ACADIEN, Caraquet*

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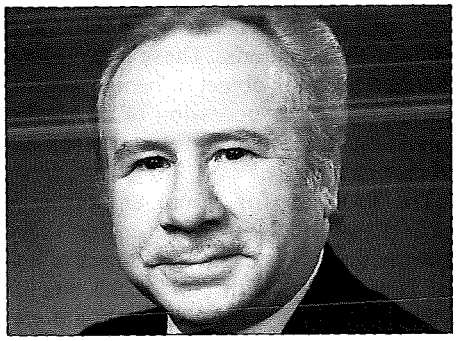
the province's own Official Languages Act in 1969, the same year as similar federal legislation, with the support of both the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives in the Legislative Assembly. The securing of that support was perhaps Louis Robichaud's crowning achievement. For the time being, official bilingualism was taken out of partisan debates and, for the major parties, has remained so until today.

Since then, first during the 17-year reign of the Progressive Conservatives under Richard Hatfield and most recently under Liberal Frank McKenna, the process of the implementation of the law to provide services in both languages has continued. A highlight in the legislative field was the inclusion of New Brunswickers' language rights in Canada's Constitution and the passage in 1981 of "an Act Recognizing the Equality of Two Official Linguistic Communities in New Brunswick." In two brief pages the law acknowledged "the unique character of New Brunswick" and affirmed not



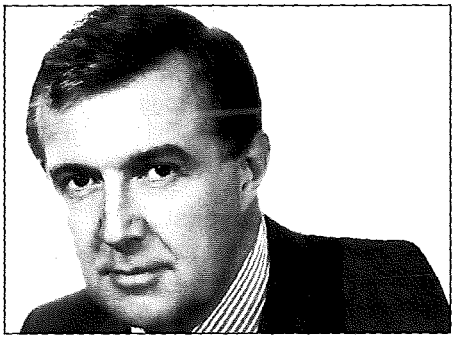
*Louis Robichaud*

only the equality of the two language groups but also "their right to distinct institutions within which cultural, educational and social activities may be carried on." Once again, the law had the backing of both major parties.

Lurking behind the appearance of unanimity, however, was a rising wave of discontent, especially among some rural Anglophones who thought the province was going too far in recognizing the rights of the minority community. There were, and remain, two major strands to the backlash.

One is practical: the fear of a takeover of the Public Service by bilingual Francophones — seen as the only ones able to dispense the bilingual services called for by law — and the consequent loss of job and promotion opportunities for unilingual Anglophones.

The other strand was and is a distrust of the intentions of the Francophone minority, perceived by some as nothing less than domination of the province — a fear leavened by an element of racism, by a



*Richard Hatfield*

dislike of anything "French" and an insistence that Canada is or should be an English-speaking country and that New Brunswick should lead the way to unilingualism.

Both these strands were represented at the founding convention of the Confederation of Regions Party.

## CoR

Concern over the right of English-speaking people to be hired to and promoted within the Public Service was a major theme; and, despite an assurance by newly-elected party leader Archie Pafford that CoR is in no sense anti-Francophone, the presence as a major speaker of Jock Andrew, a retired military man and author of a book called *Bilingual Today, French Tomorrow*, was hardly reassuring to the minority community.

CoR, which surprised observers by taking 17,000 votes — 4% of the total — in the 1988 federal election in the province, was, in late summer polls, hovering around 9% province-wide. Following the convention party spokespersons were freely predicting it would, at the least, form the official opposition following the next provincial election.

## Frank McKenna

The reaction of Premier McKenna to the attitudes expressed at the gathering was pithy. He called the CoR stance "totally irrational." To McKenna the province's language policies are "just and equitable" and New Brunswickers are "moderate and reasonable people." He also reiterated his already expressed willingness to go anywhere in Canada to speak on bilingualism and the New Brunswick experience.

McKenna himself was the target of some criticism for waiting too long to defend his policies and explain them in detail. "Before he goes to the rest of the country, he should talk to New Brunswickers," said Michel Doucet, former president of the Société des Acadiens et Acadiennes du Nouveau Brunswick. An Acadian journalist contrasted McKenna unfavourably to former Premier Hatfield. "At least Hatfield ha the guts to talk on the subject before hostile audience," something she sai McKenna has yet to do.

What the government had done was t issue a 10-page document on language policy in August 1988, followed by a longer paper on its implementation. In 1989 the premier issued his own 22-page outline of the initiatives he was planning "to help create greater understanding between the two linguistic communities." These included stronger emphasis on second-language instruction in the schools, a doubling of pupil exchanges, a summer job exchange program, a twinning program between English- and French-speaking municipalities to encourage joint activities, and the addition of three new ministers to the cabinet committee on official languages.

Responding to fears of discrimination against Anglophones within the Public Service, McKenna gave a new emphasis to a team-oriented approach to ensure the provision of government services. The

*Frank McKenna*

goal is also to make secure the right of unilingual Anglophones to continue to work and prosper in the government employ.

Interestingly, despite reports of poor morale among Anglophone public servants, the 1989 report of the provincial ombudsman, released last September, reported no complaints about language policy from provincial employees.

## Public service

The emphasis on service to the public is readily accepted by Bernard Poirier, a former journalist who directs a small staff responsible for putting language policies into operation in the Public Service.

"We don't know right now how many more bilingual staff will be needed," he says. "In six months I expect we will." He estimates, however, that it will be a few hundred at most out of the 10,000 employed directly by the province. At present, according to a language profile published last summer, the balance within the Public Service is 67.3% Anglophone

and 32.7% Francophone, an almost exact reflection of the population. The major disparity occurs in Fredericton, where Francophones hold only 18% of government positions.

## Political scene

The impact of CoR on the political scene is still unclear. Some Francophone observers have expressed the fear that the CoR phenomenon could frighten politicians into weakening their commitment to official language equality while others hope that the very existence of CoR may clear the air and remove any ambiguities that might have existed within the ranks of the older parties. There are some indications that the second judgement may be accurate. As of September all three parties had reaffirmed their earlier commitments.

Not surprisingly, the spotlight is on the Progressive Conservatives, who lost all their seats in the legislature in the last provincial election and who have also lost a considerable number of supporters, including a former cabinet minister, to the new party.

Nevertheless, except for some criticism of excessive rigidities in the implementation process, Conservative leaders apparently remain firm. Former party president Richard Johnson has made it clear the party is not going to open old wounds in an effort to lure back CoR supporters. "They're 25 years too late on this issue," he says.

Another prominent Tory has more recently been taking practical action of his own. J.W. Bud Bird, a former mayor of Fredericton, now a Member of Parliament, last summer formed a 21-member Citizens' Committee on Language and Culture, involving members of both linguistic communities, to discuss related issues, including charges of unfairness in the implementation of the laws.

According to Bird there are three major reasons for the rise of CoR. First, the vacuum left by the obliteration of the Conservatives in the provincial election; second, the passions ignited by Quebec's use of the notwithstanding clause to avoid the Supreme Court of Canada's decision on signage; third, a perception that New Brunswick is going too fast in its own bilingualization process. In this regard, he admits that perhaps those favouring the process have been "less than forthright with ourselves in not realizing what was involved. Generosity bears a burden."

## Who are the English?

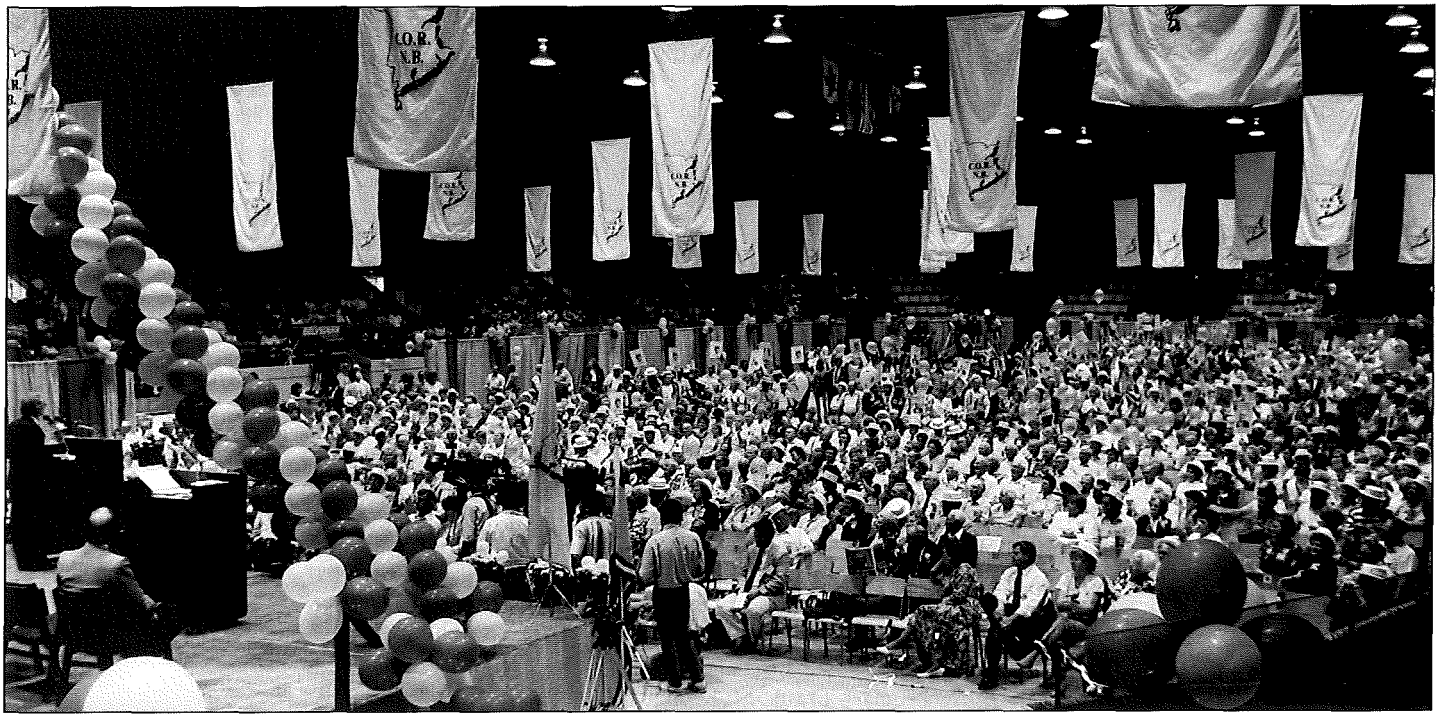
So just who and what are these New Brunswickers to whom Bud Bird is appealing? How, for example, can we define the typical English-speaking resident of the province? This is an easy question to pose, but an impossible one to answer, except to note that he or she probably lives to the south of a diagonal line stretching from Edmunston in the north-west to Moncton in the south-east. It is certainly more difficult to answer than the same question concerning the Francophone population. Although, as we shall see, it has its own internal differences, Francophones do tend to have a common religion as well as common collective aspirations.

While the arrival of the United Empire Loyalists was the biggest single event in the early history of Anglophone New Brunswick, they were preceded and followed by a steady stream of English, Scots and Irish settlers, supplemented by considerable numbers of Germans, Dutch and Scandinavians.

The various immigrant streams tended to meld with each other; nevertheless, a few distinct population patterns emerged. There are, for example, two distinct Irish groups, one in the southern port city of Saint John and the other around the Miramichi River in the central part of the province. Both are Roman Catholic, but each has its own local traditions and lifestyle, moulded by different surroundings and work patterns. Then, in the rural areas of southern New Brunswick, stretching in a crescent through several counties, is what is known as the Bible Belt. The inhabitants are largely fundamentalist Protestants with, according to some observers, strong affinities to the rural south in the United States, including a generally conservative political stance.

Most Anglophone New Brunswickers, however, live in the more liberal melting-pot atmosphere of the province's cities and towns where, other than French, there are no minority cultural or linguistic groups comparable to those in the cities of central and western Canada.

Neither is it totally homogenized. This applies to background, living styles and religion. It also applies to social and political attitudes. The response to official languages is a prime example.



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If the numerous letters published in New Brunswick's three English-language dailies are taken as an indication, it would seem that there exists a tide of Anglophone bitterness, resentment and even hatred towards Francophones.

There are, however, other indications that suggest other answers. One has been continued Anglophone support over two decades for political parties that support the languages policy. Another, more recent, was a public opinion poll earlier this year that indicated a clear majority of English-speaking New Brunswickers approve of what has been achieved in the area of language rights.

**New Brunswick's Official Languages Act**

The Act was passed in 1969 and its provisions were to be phased in over a period of eight years. A number of public services, including public utility companies, hospitals and municipalities, are exempt from it. The Act has no provision for court remedy. The province is beginning to develop an effective system for its implementation, and the Department of Justice was the first, in 1985, to adopt an effective official languages policy in its area of activity.

An Act respecting the equality of the two linguistic communities was passed in 1981.

The perceptions of Acadian observers, and their general optimism, would tend to confirm that conclusion. "I am sure that most Anglophones have come to accept the Acadians as a reality," says André Veniot, a reporter for CBC Radio. Michel Doucet expresses it in political terms: "I have confidence in English-speaking New Brunswickers. I'm sure they'll take care of CoR in the next elections."

University of Moncton historian Muriel K. Roy agrees, but with reservations: "in a sense there are still two solitudes. Many Anglophones have difficulty understanding why Francophones want their own place in the sun, their own institutions."

Claude Bourque, Atlantic regional director of Radio-Canada in Moncton, puts it into a historical perspective. "Since the Program for Equal Opportunity, both groups have had to digest some big changes. Those changes couldn't have come without the good will of the majority."

Another CBC executive, Louise Imbeault, director of television for the region, also believes in the basic tolerance of her fellow citizens, but she has a disturbing question: "I am sure that most Anglophones accept the present situation, but it's difficult really to feel it because they aren't the ones who are doing the talking."

There is, fortunately, one statistic that is eloquent in itself. In New Brunswick the proportion of English-speaking children attending French-immersion classes is 14% — not only by far the highest among the provinces, but also close to triple the national average. By deeds, and not merely words, there is a solid core of Anglophone support for the French language which is undeniable.

There is also, unfortunately, one subject about which many English-speakers, including politicians and journalists, are talking. That is the Quebec government's continuing refusal to allow any English on external commercial signs and its use of the notwithstanding clause in the Canadian Constitution to overrule the Supreme Court decision on the issue. "It doesn't make it any easier for us here," sighs an English-speaking supporter of French-language rights.

Many Acadians also have problems with the Quebec stand. One of them is the grand old man of the Acadian co-operative movement, Martin Légère. "You don't save a race by coercing others," he says flatly.

In the meantime, however, anti-Francophone rights activists, including the leaders of CoR, continue to use Quebec as a key argument in their crusade.

With the appearance of a party such as CoR on the scene, there is no doubt that some confusion has been sown among English-speaking New Brunswickers. But there is also no doubt that they have had unusually decisive political leadership over the past 20 years.

## Leaders

Richard Hatfield is an emotional man. Once he became convinced of the justice of the Acadian cause, he successfully translated his convictions into an emotional appeal to his fellow Anglophones to heed the pleas for justice and to recognize the legal equality of the two peoples. Although he had not succeeded in becoming fluently bilingual himself, his more than 17 years in as premier will long be remembered as a crucial period in New Brunswick's language history. And, although he and his party were soundly defeated in the last election, the former premier remains the object of affection on the part of Acadians. He continues today to speak out on behalf of linguistic justice.

Premier Frank McKenna has been in office only for two years, but he has already made it abundantly clear that he intends to maintain what long ago became a bipartisan language policy. He has gone ahead with the implementation of that policy. And, although he has occasionally stressed the need for caution, there is no indication of any willingness to retreat.

The fight now being waged is between the attitudes of these two men and those of the backlash represented by CoR. The political success of one or the other of these two tendencies in the next few years will be the best measure of the true attitudes of English-speaking New Brunswickers.

## Who are the Acadians?

If it is difficult to describe the "typical Anglophone" in New Brunswick, what about the typical Acadian? In general, there are some obvious elements that enter into the picture, including, with few exceptions, a common faith, a common heritage and history, and a common origin: from the area south of the Loire valley in France, particularly the region of Poitou. And there are the names: Arsenault, Chiasson, LeBlanc, Poirier, and many others with their own unmistakeably Acadian ring.

## Madawaska

The answer, however, is not quite so simple. Listen to the words of a Francophone journalist: "Here, we're neither Quebecers nor Acadians nor Americans. We are Republicans."

The words are those of Jean Pednault, editor of *Le Madawaska*, a venerable

**Provisions Affecting New Brunswick in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms**

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms contains five provisions respecting official languages: in Section 16(2) (official languages of New Brunswick), 17(2) (use of English and French in the proceedings of the legislature), 18(2) (bilingualism of legislative documents), 19(2) (use of English and French in proceedings in provincial courts) and 20(2) (communications by the public with New Brunswick institutions). With regard to language of service, this last section is even more generous toward the minority than the corresponding provision in the federal legislation since it has no qualifying provision such as "nature of the office" or " significant demand".

weekly newspaper published in the pulp and paper town of Edmundston, in the north-western corner of New Brunswick for the past three-quarters of a century. They are indication of the complex reality that sometimes lurks behind the appearance of homogeneity in a linguistic community, especially one as large as French-speaking New Brunswick.

The "Republicans" to whom Pednault refers have nothing to do either with anti-monarchist feelings in Canada or with the politics of Maine, just across the Saint John River. The reference is to the "Republic of Madawaska", the affectionate name given by its inhabitants to this isolated country, 95% French-speaking and populated by an eclectic mixture of former Quebecers, Franco-Americans and Acadians from other parts of the province, as well as by a small group of English-speakers. It is one of three largely Francophone areas in New Brunswick, widely separated from each other by geography, by economic activities and, to some extent, by psychology as well. The other two are the north-eastern part of the province and, to the south-east, the region around Moncton.

The people of Madawaska have a special name for themselves as well as their politics: "Les Brayons". The "Republic of Madawaska" has its own history, its own traditions, and even its own flag and its own capital, Edmundston.

This does not, however, involve any feeling of alienation from what is also their own province. "We're proud of being New Brunswickers," Pednault says. And, when it comes to language issues, they share common aspirations with other New Brunswick Francophones. Unlike some others, however, they also have a strong sense of security about their own language situation. In their overwhelming majority, the 50,000 Madawaskans live and work in French and they see no threat to their doing so in the future. As a result, this is one place in New Brunswick where there is little or no linguistic tension and where there is little or no hesitation in speaking to local visiting Anglophones in English. A headline in the Saint John *Telegraph-Journal* last spring captured the atmosphere: "Brayons Speak a Tolerant Tongue".

## Caraquet

Almost 400 kilometres to the east is another overwhelmingly Francophone — and unabashedly Acadian — town. This is Caraquet, 500 metres wide and 10 kilometres in length, stretching along Chaleur Bay, half-way down the coast of the Acadian Peninsula. This is, according to its 4,200 inhabitants, "the heart of Acadia." It is home to the new provincial daily newspaper, *L'Acadie Nouvelle*, as well as to the headquarters of the powerful Acadian Co-operative Movement. It is also a fishing village and, despite recent difficulties in the industry, it is fishing that still gives the town its essential flavour.

### Education

Since 1974 the administrative structures of the Department of Education have been characterized by almost complete duality. There are two deputy ministers, one Anglophone and one Francophone, and common services for the two structures. In 1981 the revised Schools Act established 15 French-language and 27 English-language school districts. As a result, New Brunswick's education system is definitely the most comprehensive in the country in terms of linguistic equality.

According to longtime Acadian and co-operative leader Martin Légère, it is also "the most French region of Canada outside Quebec." And, while the Brayons of Madawaska might quarrel with that assessment, there is no doubt this is Acadian country. One resident sums it up: "When we hear someone speaking English, we know they're not from here."

Like Madawaska, the Acadian Peninsula and its 60,000-odd people are relaxed about language issues. As in Madawaska, there is a large proportion of bilingual individuals, but life and work are generally conducted in French. "There is no hatred towards the English among the Acadians," proffers Martin Légère, "even though perhaps we have the right to some." This he contrasts to the Confederation of Regions Party, as he perceives it. "They are preaching hatred of everything that is French. It's sad that just at the moment we thought we were heading towards mutual understanding they should arrive on the scene." He is consoled by the fact there were few young people visible at the party's founding convention: "The younger generation of Anglophones is certainly more open."

## Moncton...

More than 250 kilometres to the south, in and around Moncton, is the third large Francophone concentration. Here, unlike the other two regions, Francophones are a minority — albeit a large one of 35%. This means that to a large extent they must work and even live in English while striving to maintain their own language and culture. Nevertheless, Moncton is the centre of much of Acadian institutional life, the jewel in the crown being the University of Moncton, which this year celebrated its 25th anniversary. Several economic, youth, cultural and other associations also have their headquarters in the city.

## ...and others

Beyond the three well defined, and well separated regions of concentration, there are also many other relatively large pockets of Acadian population. On the north shore, between Madawaska and the Peninsula, cities such as Campbellton and Bathurst are split, sometimes half-and-half, between the two official language groups. Where this occurs, English tends to be the lingua franca and, Acadian observers say, it shows in the rate of assimilation.

Though often in small numbers, there are Francophones living in urban areas throughout New Brunswick. Even in Saint John, a bastion of English, there is now a French-speaking population estimated at 6,000. In Fredericton, the capital, they number about 5,000 and growing. Their presence there is also symbolic. For the past several years, the Acadian tricolour with a golden star has flown in front of the Legislative Assembly, along with the flags of New Brunswick and Canada.

## An Acadian future

To Léon Thériault, a professor of history at the University of Moncton, the challenge is to gain a fair and proper degree of influence in New Brunswick society. "We have school boards and Francophone municipalities. It's simply a question of using the levers at our disposal. Certainly, it's no longer necessary to demonstrate in the streets."

For Muriel R. Roy, it is essential to inspire a sense of pride among young Francophones. Sometimes, she admits, it's an uphill battle, due partially to the still existing remnants of an old inferiority complex. "Acadians sometimes can't conceive they have something valuable to offer." There are also language difficulties — a certain impoverishment of Acadian French. "Some Acadians aren't proud of the language because they speak it badly." Nevertheless, she sees hope in the youth. "In high schools today, the students are more and more likely to speak French as they become more conscious of their identity."

Ghyslain Michaud, director of the Federation of Young Francophones, does not disagree, but notes a growing trend towards the Americanization of Acadian

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youth, especially in the areas of music and fashion. They are also less interested in the folklore of the past and are, in fact, "less nationalistic in the traditional sense of the word." This doesn't mean they are satisfied with the present. "They are seeking an equality that is more than strictly linguistic." This is why, Michaud suggests, young Acadians believe that the constitutional entrenchment of Bill 88, the 1981 law recognizing the equality of the two communities as well as of the two languages, is of vital importance. A campaign for such entrenchment is currently being carried on by the Acadian leadership.

Economics is also an issue. As the French-language school system produces a new generation of leaders, the problem of employment is becoming ever more serious, Michaud says. "Too many must still leave the province to find jobs."

Claude Bourque agrees that the economic dimension is of growing importance. It could conceivably replace language as the top priority for many young Acadians, he says. As a result, further progress in language rights could become somewhat more difficult.

As to the future, he is optimistic, "especially if you look where we were and how far we have come."

Louise Imbeault emphasizes the unique value of Acadian reality — which should not be interpreted as an extension of French Quebec. Certainly, she says, Quebec is regarded as a leader and a cultural model. "But we don't understand when we see certain decisions" — such as the sign laws.

The major intellectual bastion of the Acadian spirit is certainly the University of Moncton and its two outside campuses — at Edmundston and Shippegan — which serve the needs of some 7,000 students in a wide variety of faculties, departments and courses, ranging from forestry to philosophy. During its 25 years of existence, the university has provided much of the intellectual leadership of the Acadian community. It is continuing to grow both physically and in reputation, with the latest project being the development of the first International Institute for Common Law Studies in French. Courses are due to start in 1990.

## Co-operating

Beyond the will to survive itself, the survival of the Acadian community in New Brunswick depends on the existence and the expansion of the social, economic, cultural and political infrastructures that bind that community together. From its start, apart from the Church, there has been no institution more vital to this task than the Acadian co-operative enterprise in all its several ramifications.

Appropriately enough, the headquarters of the Acadian Co-operative Movement is lodged in a massive new complex in Caraquet on the Acadian Peninsula. The second phase of La Place de L'Acadie was officially inaugurated in June 1989 and is now headquarters for all Acadian co-operative activities.

The site is appropriate because it was in this region that the movement effectively began in the early 1930s and it is here that Martin Légère, a founding father of the movement and for 50 years the leading light of its major single component, still makes his home. That component was and is the caisse populaire (credit union) movement, created as an alternative to commercial banks, which has flourished as it has met the needs of the Acadian community over more than half a century.

Martin Légère, retired and well into his 70s, is still vigorous and enthusiastic as he reminisces to a visitor to his comfortable old home on Caraquet's main street.

The first fishing co-operatives were established along the Acadian coast during the years of the Great Depression. For the first time the fishermen were not beholden to private firms, which had dictated the price both of their fish and of the things they purchased through vouchers in the firms' stores. "The fishermen were shamelessly exploited by the companies," Légère recalls, the memory still angering him.

In 1936 the first caisse populaire was founded, at the village of Petit-Rocher; in 1938 Légère participated in the founding of the one in Caraquet. It was the start of a half-century career, during which he became a symbol of the movement.

The immediate inspiration did not come from the already established movement in Quebec, but rather from St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, where a small group of enthusiasts, headed by Rev. Moses Coady, was encouraging the development of the co-operative movement throughout the Atlantic region, and where Légère went to learn about the principles and practices involved.

Since that time the Acadian movement has expanded to include agricultural, forestry and consumer's organizations, mainly in the northern part of New Brunswick. For many years the Acadian movement was part of a larger provincial movement. The Acadianization process started in 1945, when the caisses populaires left the New Brunswick Credit Union League to form their own Fédération des caisses populaires acadiennes. It was completed in 1955 when the co-operative societies in their turn left the New Brunswick Co-operation Union to form l'Union coopérative acadienne — now Le Conseil acadien de la coopération.

Today the Acadian Co-operative Movement groups 87 affiliated caisses populaires and 28 other co-operative societies of various sorts. It has 200,000 members and more than 2,000 employees who work for one or the other of the eight institutions that make it up. In addition to the caisses populaires and the co-operative societies,

these include an insurance company, an auditing service, a scholarship fund for post-secondary students and an institute for co-operative studies. Martin Légère estimates that the assets of the co-operative movement as a whole now exceed one billion dollars. The local consumers co-op alone, "the most modern in the eastern part of the province", does more than $1 million worth of business a month.

Beyond financial viability, the first priority, the Acadian movement has always taken pride in its awareness of broader responsibilities. The Fédération des caisses populaires has been especially active, its leaders say, in the general battle for bilingualism, as well as in protection of rights of groups such as teachers and fishermen.

Last spring's annual meeting of the Movement approved almost $5 million in projects to help small business and Francophone communities in difficulty through, respectively, a venture capital fund and a co-operative community development fund.

It's a long way from the first beginnings more than 50 years ago, reflects Martin Légère. "Then we had only misery. We had to fight fear and ignorance."

For decades in terms of economic achievement, the co-operative movement stood alone. Private enterprise, much of it controlled by the business empire of K.C. Irving, remained essentially an Anglophone fiefdom, especially in manufacturing. Only in fishing were there any real Acadian success stories and only recently has the situation changed, as Acadians entrepreneurs have started to come on the scene with their own ideas and their own ambitions.

## A lot of hard work

"If my name had been Murray, I'd be working at the mill today." But his name isn't Murray and he isn't working at the pulp and paper mill down the road. His name is Roma Pelletier and he has his own factory in the industrial park in Atholville, just outside Campbellton in northern New Brunswick, a town that used to be predominantly English-speaking, but which is now roughly half Francophone. It is a place with some lingering resentments on both sides, but where people are now learning to cope.

One of those resentments, on the part of Francophones, is their conviction that in the past even when jobs were available in industry they tended to go to English- rather than French-speaking applicants.

Whatever the reason, when young Roma Pelletier, fresh out of high school and technical training, was looking for a job as a welder or machinist in the early 1970s, nothing was available. That was when he borrowed some money and set himself up in his own welder's business. He is still in the same business today, but with a few differences.

In 1975 Pelletier Welding had two employees. Today its successor, Allmark Ltd., employs about 90 people. Business amounted to a little more than $20,000 annually. In 1989 it was an estimated $6 million. It has been doubling steadily over the past few years and Pelletier confidently expects the process to continue.

Allmark is still basically a welding and machine shop operation in a 23,000-square-foot plant, with plans for further expansion under way. Its specialty is the design, prefabrication and erection of steel building frames. Pelletier says proudly that his pre-engineered steel building division is the only one in the Atlantic provinces. While they are presently his essential market area, he has done work as far away as Bermuda and is now planning to expand operations to eastern Quebec and the New England states.

Proudly showing an unexpected visitor around his factory, Pelletier exuberantly introduces him to what seems to be the whole staff. He is in his late 30s, short, wiry, and apparently on excellent terms with everybody.

Later, reflecting on his success, Pelletier says that he had some doubts in the earlier years, but no longer. "There's no secret. It's a lot of hard work and a good team of workers." That team now consists of about 60 in the factory working in shifts 24 hours a day, and 30 outside doing on-site construction. While much of the training is on-the-job, for some skills he is now having to look outside the immediate area around Campbellton.

In 1988 Pelletier's achievements were recognized by the federal government with the awarding of a Certificate of Merit in the entrepreneurship category of the Canada Awards for Business Excellence. It was one of eight such certificates presented across the country.

Neither has Pelletier's success gone unnoticed in his own Acadian community. Info Affaires, the publication of the Conseil économique du Nouveau Brunswick (CENB), a Francophone economic and business association, featured the firm in a cover story last spring. "He is the kind of person we need more of," says Jean Nadeau, secretary-general of the Moncton-based council.

It is precisely the development of other Allmarks that is one of the concerns of the CENB and its 1,200 members — business people, public servants, educators and others — throughout the province.

There are other success stories to be told, Nadeau says, but the large majority of such enterprises are still in the first generation. "The challenge is to make sure they are handed over to the next generation when it is ready to take over." There are still some wealthy Acadians, especially fishermen, who have to be convinced of the importance of a good education for their children, he complains.

As for the bilingualism process in general, Nadeau is optimistic, especially about English-speaking business people who, he says, increasingly see its importance in their own businesses. In the government, however, there is still a gap. "There are virtually no Francophones in senior economic positions." As he says this he turns the pages listing such positions in the current provincial government telephone book. The point is proven.

### Municipal Services

Certain services are available in French in three large cities: Edmundston, Bathurst and Campbellton.

Approximately 10 out of 21 towns and 40 out of 88 villages, i.e., those where Francophones account for more than 50% of the population, offer bilingual services. Towns where more than 70% of the population has French as its mother tongue are considered French-speaking. Finally, the language of deliberation of municipal councils is English except, for all practical purposes, where all the council members are Francophones.

## Media

The importance of the information media in a delicate and developing situation such as that in New Brunswick is crucial for both communities involved. To the Acadians their own media are an essential part of their collective life, providing them with a mirror and a means of expressing their concerns to themselves and to the other community with which they share the province.

In terms of electronic media, while English private radio and television is pervasive, French programming is much more restricted, with private radio concentrated in the north. There are two commercial stations, one in Edmundston and the other in Caraquet. There is one community station in operation, also in Caraquet, a student station at the University of Moncton and a second community station due to start operations

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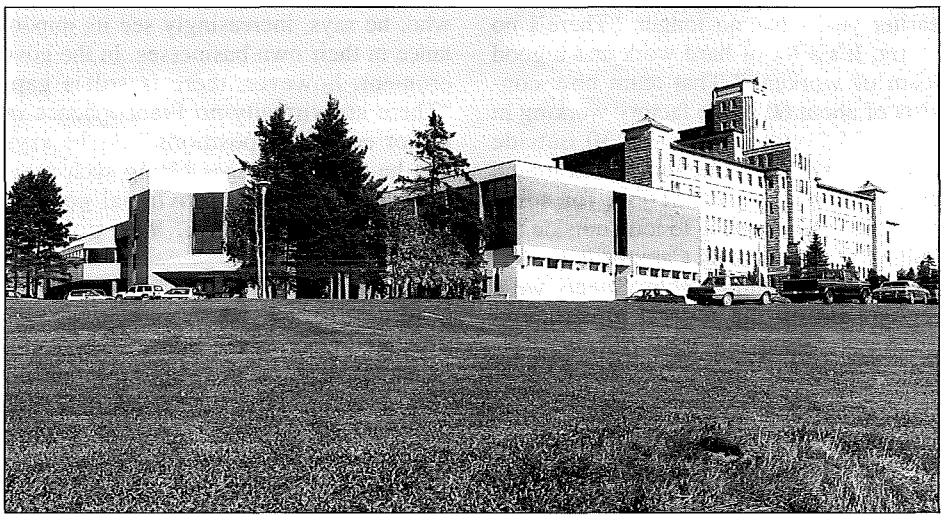
in Edmundston in May 1990. Three additional community station projects are under way, with federal funding aid, in Bathurst, Campbellton and Moncton.

In all parts of New Brunswick, especially in the south, Francophones are heavily dependent on public radio and television. These operations are based at the French-language CBC Atlantic regional headquarters in Moncton, where more than 200 Radio-Canada employees send out programming to all four Atlantic provinces.

Moncton is also the home of a small but active French-language unit of the National Film Board. Its most significant recent production has probably been the film *Robichaud* by Herménégilde Chiasson which, in a little under an hour, recreates in documentary form the turbulent history of the 1960s.

In the field of print, Francophone New Brunswickers have been served for years by half-a-dozen lively weekly newspapers as well as a bi-monthly general interest magazine, *Ven'd'est*, published in the north-eastern village of Petit Rocher.

No matter how important the other media are to the community, Acadians have long agreed that the most important single element in the communications field is the existence of a daily newspaper covering the whole province. It was a



*The University of Moncton in Edmundston*

red-letter day when *L'Acadie Nouvelle*, which had grown from a weekly to a regional daily serving the Acadian Peninsula and other parts of north-eastern New Brunswick, went provincial on September 5, 1989. This is the third such attempt the Acadian community has known. *L'Évangéline*, published out of Moncton, succumbed after many years of struggles seven years ago. It was followed by the short-lived *Le Matin*, which closed its doors in 1988. For the first time Caraquet is the headquarters of the only French-language daily in the province, operating out of a sparkling new building near the edge of town.

*L'Acadie Nouvelle* is published five times a week and, when it went province-wide, had 12 full-time reporters, including representatives in several towns and cities throughout New Brunswick. Helping to pay for the distribution of the paper across the province was a $6 million federal-provincial trust fund set up in 1984 under the government of Richard Hatfield.

According to the paper's director, Gilles Haché, circulation was a satisfactory 15,600 shortly after September 5. "We were helped by the CoR convention," he notes wryly. Tabloid in form, *L'Acadie Nouvelle* is lively in style but, unlike many tabloids, has a serious editorial page and in-depth articles on political, social and economic issues.

"It's a real challenge," says Muriel K. Roy about the paper's new venture. "It will have to serve all the regions, and the needs are different. Here in Moncton, for example the *Times-Transcript* has the local news."

The *Times-Transcript* is one of three daily newspapers serving the English- and, to some extent, the French-speaking population. The others are the Fredericton *Daily Gleaner* and the Saint John *Telegraph-Journal*, the only one distributed throughout the province. All three are owned by the Irvings.

Despite their common ownership, the three papers are anything but peas in a pod in their editorial positions, especially on provincial politics and, currently, on language issues.

In the mid-1960s it was the *Daily Gleaner*, under its then publisher Michael Wardell, that epitomized the bitter fight waged by a portion of the Anglophone community against Louis Robichaud and his Program for Equal Opportunity. Today, under publisher Tom Crowther, attitudes have mellowed. Now, Crowther insists, there can be no argument over questions such as the right of the Francophone minority to receive government services in its own language. Nevertheless, he thinks the government may have gone a touch too far, and he decries the continuing shortcomings in second-language education. "If the government has a policy, it should equip people to fulfil it."

In its editorials the *Daily Gleaner* accepts that "Official bilingualism is here to stay", but warns of difficulties. "This is a noble concept, but one which has to be worked on and improved to the satisfaction of those who genuinely see bilingualism as a threat to their livelihood and tradition."

Also cautious in its approach is the Moncton *Times-Transcript* which, for some time, refused to comment editorially on the arrival on the provincial scene of CoR. When it did so in mid-September 1989 it denounced those party adherents who "seem consumed with hatred for all things of French complexion", but stopped short of an outright attack on the party itself. Instead, it raised questions: "New Brunswickers in general surely do not know what to make of CoR....CoR certainly owes to the people...a full explanation of its policies." It concluded that "Co-operation rather than confrontation is the only sensible path", and called on both English- and French-speaking New Brunswickers to turn away from extremists on both sides. Discussing the issue personally, editor John Caroll says it is important to avoid double standards. "There's bigotry on both sides."

Taking the strongest stand against CoR and for bilingualism has been the Saint John *Telegraph-Journal*, both through its editorial page and its Fredericton-based political columnist Don Hoyt. Following the CoR convention in Fredericton, Editor-in-Chief Fred Hazel summed it up in a personal column. "No matter how well intentioned or sincere some of CoR's members may be, what the party is proposing is wrong, divisive and unjust."

Regardless of the differences in editorial policies, all three papers have one thing in common: a steady stream of letters to the editor on the subject of language, the great majority of which are devoted to attacking French-language rights, with many also attacking the French-speaking community as such.

The Francophone response came in an editorial in *L'Acadie Nouvelle*. "Those racist Anglophones and the papers that agree to publish such opinions lack

respect towards a whole people. A newspaper that becomes an accomplice of such a hate campaign is just as guilty as those who write."

On the other hand, some opponents of Francophone rights also feel hard done by. At its convention CoR speakers expressed nothing but contempt for coverage of the party in the media and party leader Archie Pafford threatened to order members not to talk to the press.

### A tale of two cities

The importance of Fredericton is that it is the capital of Canada's most officially bilingual province. The importance of Moncton is that its population distribution — 65% English and 35% French — closely approximates that of the province as a whole. It is a microcosm of New Brunswick, just as New Brunswick is, roughly, a microcosm of Canada.

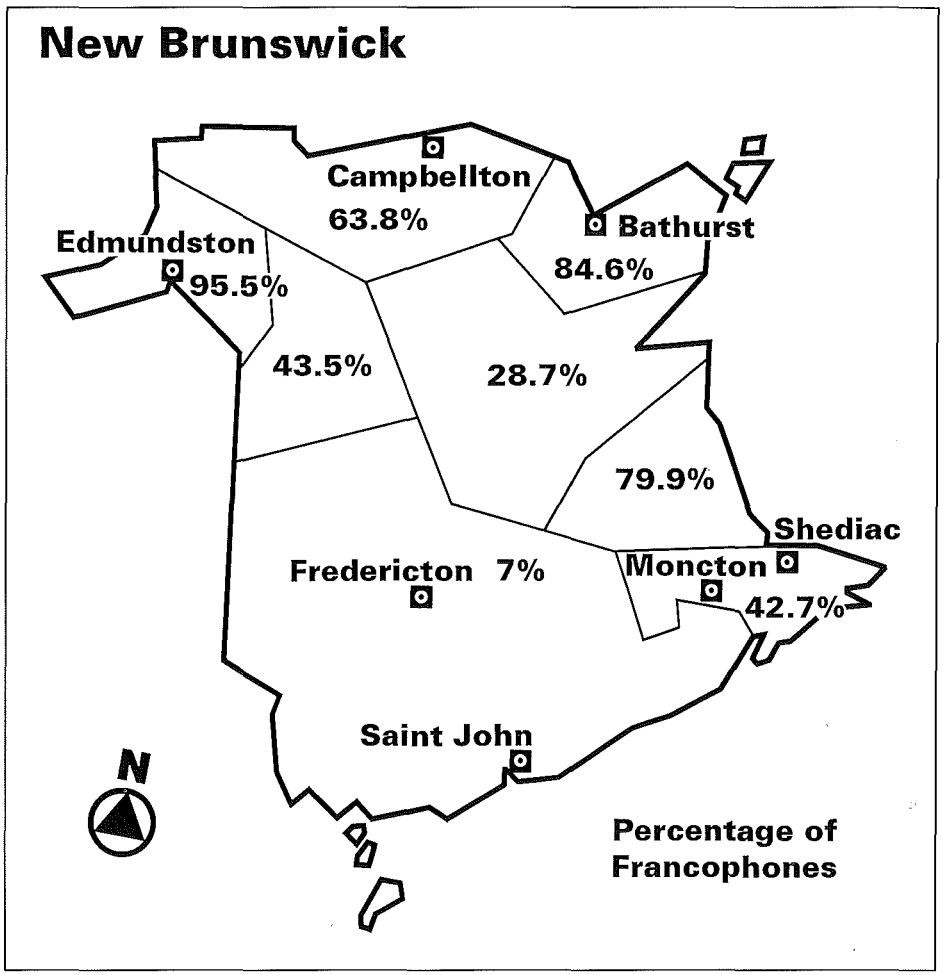
In 1969 Fredericton was virtually a unilingual city, inhabited by unilingual people. French was tolerated — barely. Commerce and government spoke English only. Louis Robichaud had, to be sure, made a considerable impact on the province. As the capital, Fredericton too had been touched, but not much more.

As for Moncton, despite its large Francophone population, as far as local politicians were concerned it might as well have been in Fredericton. The mayor was Leonard Jones — subsequently to be rejected as a Progressive Conservative candidate by party leader Robert Stanfield — who considered it a personal insult when students from the recently created University of Moncton attempted to speak to him in their language. Moncton was hardly the model of a bilingual city.

Moncton today is still not a perfect model of such a city, but the changes have been considerable.

One of the most noteworthy, less than 20 years after Mayor Jones, occurred in May 1988 with the first election ever of a member of the Acadian community as mayor. He is Léopold Belliveau, a Moncton businessman with ties to the Anglophone business establishment as well as to the Acadian community and strong support among both. His election was not exactly a revolutionary act. He had been a member of city council since 1969 and deputy mayor for several years before becoming acting mayor since the departure of former mayor George Rideout for the House of Commons following the 1988 federal election.

His success was, nevertheless a symbolic breakthrough — all the more so since he will be presiding over the city's centennial celebrations in 1990. "English-speaking people in Moncton have certainly changed their attitude," the affable Belliveau comments. And, while he considers himself to be a moderate and a non-boat-rocker in the language field, "being mayor is good not only for me, but for the whole Acadian community."




One thing has not changed. The proceedings of the city council continue to be in English. The reason is simple. The three Francophone members are fluently bilingual. The eight Anglophones are not.

Nevertheless, Francophone observers believe that Moncton is slowly but surely turning into something like a bilingual municipality. Part of the reason is the expanding presence of Francophone institutions, especially the main campus of the University of Moncton, now with more than 4,000 students in its seven faculties, located on spacious grounds a few kilometres from the centre of the city.

One French-speaking federal official who has lived in Moncton several years sums up the situation. "We no longer feel under siege."

Starting from a much lower base than its sister city, Fredericton has, in relative terms, made even more impressive strides in the past two decades.

Jacques DeGrace, a senior translator for the province, recalls arriving in the capital in 1948. "There were between 20 and 30 families in all, and about three Francophones in the civil service." By 1969 there had been some movement, but the pace of change was still glacial. Today, he says flatly, "Fredericton has pretty well accepted French."

Jean-Bernard Lafontaine, regional director general for the Department of the Secretary of State, works out of Moncton but travels frequently to the New Brunswick capital. Not only have French-speaking business people joined government workers in the city, he says, but they have achieved considerable success. The Acadian flag is now a permanent fixture at the legislature buildings, "and they even fly it at City Hall on August 15" — the Acadian national holiday. "Fredericton has come a long way."

According to Bernard Poirier, director of official languages in the Board of Management, things have gone even further. Most mid-sized commercial establishments, including restaurants, can now serve their customers in French. "You can actually live in French here now."

Without doubt, however, the biggest single recent event for the 5,000 French-speaking Frederictonians was the opening

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in 1978 of the $4.4 million Centre communautaire Ste-Anne, a joint federal-provincial endeavour and the first combination school and community centre funded by the federal government. In addition to providing grade 1-12 education for about 670 pupils, it is home to some 25 French-language institutions and organizations as well as a library, a theatre, a gymnasium, and other amenities. In September 1989 a $4 million extension was announced to extend facilities that, according to the centre's president, Denis Savoie, were already becoming overcrowded shortly after the 1978 opening.

If it was the first such centre combining educational, social and cultural activities, Ste-Anne was not to be the last. In the past decade two others have been built, at Saint John and Newcastle, and they have become models for enriching the vitality of isolated English and French linguistic minority communities across Canada.

Not all in Fredericton, however, is perceived as perfect. Mayor Brad Woodside has drawn some media fire for his stand that bilingualism is a federal and provincial matter in which the responsibilities of the city are strictly limited.

In Mayor Woodside's view Fredericton's essential characteristic is "an understated and understood tolerance towards both English and French", which, he claims, has helped prevent language divisions. Although he is not functionally bilingual Mayor Woodside makes it a point to use at least some French when speaking to Francophone groups. "I am satisfied that I have made efforts to do enough to satisfy the needs of the French-speaking citizens without creating problems."

## Grand Falls/Grand Sault

For all their size and dynamism, Moncton and Fredericton are not the only municipalities to be sending messages concerning the official languages to the people both of New Brunswick and Canada.

The municipality of Grand Falls/ Grand Sault may have fewer than 7,000 residents, but that does not prevent it from referring to itself in superlatives. It has the deepest waterfall (24 metres) and the longest gorge (1.5 kilometres) in New Brunswick. It is the World Potato Capital and has a weeklong festival to prove it. It is the province's fastest growing town. It is, in the words of its tourist brochure, "the most progressive town in New Brunswick." Last, but not least, its literature proclaims that "it is considered a model bilingual community."

It may well be all these things. Certainly, in terms of official language relations, it is, for several reasons, a fascinating town.

One of them is geographic. Situated about three-quarters of the distance between Fredericton and Edmunston, it is at the frontier between the English- and French-speaking parts of the province. In fact, the town itself is divided between the overwhelmingly French-speaking county of Madawaska and the overwhelmingly Anglophone county of Victoria.

While this might suggest that the population is split more or less evenly, such is not the case. In fact, the Anglophone population is estimated at 15-17%. Nevertheless, the town prides itself on its bilingual character. That character goes even to the name: Grand Falls/ Grand Sault, which Mayor Ronald Ouellette claims is the only official bilingual name of a city or town in Canada, recognized in 1980 by both the federal and provincial governments.

According to Patrick McCooey, co-editor of the local weekly newspaper, bilingualism has such deep roots that in 1981, when the bilingual school system gave way to two unilingual systems, the pupils demonstrated in the streets against the change. Peace was soon restored in the community when the nature of the changes was better understood.

That paper, *La Cataracte/The Cataract* is itself bilingual, with two co-editors and even two editorial pages, one in each language, with identical editorials, editorial cartoons and, on occasion, letters to the editor.

To Mayor Ouellette, a teacher of English and mathematics in a Francophone school, Grand Falls/Grand Sault is a model, not only of bilingualism, but also of serenity. The eight town council members are all Francophone, but they are also all bilingual and Anglophones appearing at a meeting can speak their own language without any problem, the mayor says. More and more Anglophones, too, are bilingual, the mayor notes, due to the popularity of French immersion classes among Anglophone parents. Municipal services are available in English and French and commercial signs are in both languages with, if anything, English predominating.

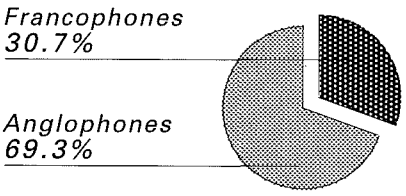
"It has been really quiet here. People go their own ways," the mayor says, adding that one important factor is the number of mixed marriages, which helps nourish good feelings between the two groups.

As for the threat posed by the Confederation of Regions Party, "CoR is just something that will come and go. I can't see it having any long-term impact."

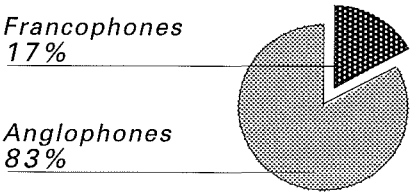
Certainly, it would appear, not in Grand Falls/Grand Sault. ■

### *Linguistic Distribution in the Federal Public Service*

*Whole of New Brunswick*

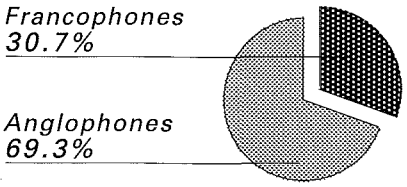



*Fredericton*




### *Linguistic Distribution in the Provincial Public Service*

*Whole of New Brunswick*

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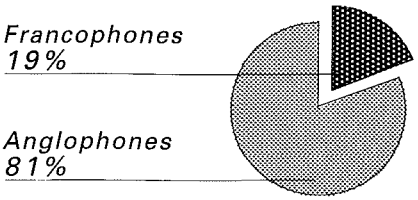


# The Anger Will Pass

*Jacques Verge**

## *Most Anglophones have accepted the equality of the two language communities in New Brunswick.*

For some time bilingualism has once again been an issue in New Brunswick. To some Francophones it seems increasingly important to make Bill 88, which guarantees the equality of the two language communities in New Brunswick, part of the Canadian Constitution. On the other hand, some Anglophones want the province's official bilingualism abolished.

This group of Anglophones has rallied around the banner of a new political party, the Confederation of Regions Party (CoR). Faced with these two contradictory positions, we may ask, "What accounts for this negative reaction among Anglophones?" Since official bilingualism in New Brunswick is not a recent policy, the causes must lie farther in the past and, no doubt, at a deeper level.

It should be noted at the outset that this negative reaction is not widespread among Anglophones. On the contrary, it is very restricted. The discontented Anglophones are few in number and mainly over 50 years of age. It was expected and announced that more than 5,000 persons would attend the founding convention of the CoR. Only some 2,000 actually did.

In my view, two factors account for the dissatisfaction of the Anglophone minority: the vitality of the Francophone community and a feeling of insecurity among the Anglophones themselves.

For approximately 20 years, New Brunswick Francophones have been developing linguistically, economically, culturally and politically. Since the founding of the University of Moncton and its three campuses, Francophones, in addition to attaining a higher educational level, have achieved a degree of economic stability. There is a growing number of Francophones in the liberal professions and, increasingly, they are gaining recognition on both the provincial and national levels.

Francophone artists are no longer satisfied with amateur status but strive to reach markets in Quebec, throughout Canada and even abroad. From the economic point of view, while the Francophone community as a whole may not be more comfortably well off, more of its members are.

In athletics, Francophones are reaching hitherto unknown heights of excellence. Some dream of participating in the Olympic Games or the National Baseball League, for example. They are no longer content with regional weekend competitions.

If we have reached these heights it is because of our institutions. All the structures we have developed — the University of Moncton, the Fédération des caisses populaires acadiennes, the Association des enseignants et enseignantes francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick, the Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick, the Société des Jeux de l'Acadie and the cultural organizations, for example — are now bearing fruit. We are reaping what we have sowed.

Not only have we created various organizations from scratch, we have succeeded in "bilingualizing" others that used to function only in English. When organizations do not provide service in our language, more and more people, who are not radicals, demand service in French. If the organization refuses, we do not hesitate to create another structure. We are no longer afraid of being on our own. Our old fear of not being able to succeed without Anglophones is disappearing. We want to be treated as equals.

Another surprise is that we have succeeded in learning the game of politics and play it better and better. Francophones have become politicians and, at the same time, Francophone politicians wield more and more power. A case in point is the position of Chairman of the Board of Management, the person responsible for the Public Service.

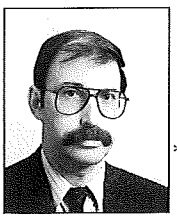
When we speak of the official bilingualism of a province, we refer to the services provided by the bureaucracy, by public servants. This is therefore a very important and highly visible political position. Three of the last four incumbents of this position, two of them consecutive, have been Francophones. A unilingual Anglophone might find this irritating!

The significant improvements that the two most recent governments, that of the Liberal Louis Robichaud and of the Progressive Conservative Richard Hatfield, have made in the lot of Acadians are the direct consequence of the vitality of the province's Francophone community and of the pressure that it has brought to bear on politicians.

The province's official bilingualism has not and is not apparently causing difficulties for most of the Anglophone population because, for one thing, the number of bilingual Anglophones is constantly growing. On the other hand, unilingual Anglophones have had and are still having difficulty in accepting the fact that Francophones are invading territory they had considered their own and that they are losing their monopoly. Most Anglophones have accepted this more equitable arrangement, this equality of the two language communities. Young Anglophones, for the most part, have come in contact with the French language at school either through second-language courses or immersion courses.

Since the end of 1988, and especially since the government of Quebec adopted its position on the language of signage issue, the insecurity and discontentment of a minority of Anglophones have been aroused. The letter-writing campaign in English-language newspapers is evidence of this. The insecurity of this minority is evident from the fact that the overwhelming majority of the anti-Francophone and anti-bilingualism letters are unsigned and, on the other hand, that the pro-bilingualism Anglophones who reply to such letters (some of which might be termed racist or hate-mongering) are not afraid to sign their names.

This anti-bilingualism anger will, in my opinion, quickly die down. The common sense of the Anglophone majority and the reasonableness of Francophones will, unless the McKenna government makes the kind of errors that Bourassa did, prevail over the lack of understanding and narrow-mindedness of this Anglophone minority. After all, Francophones are not asking for the lion's share, but only their fair share! ■



**Jacques Verge** *teaches history at Clément-Cormier School in Buctouche.*

# *Needed in New Brunswick: More Dialogue*

*Fred Hazel**

## *The province's English- and French-speaking citizens, living and working together, will be an inspiration to Canada.*

New Brunswick has the greatest potential among all Canadian provinces to be a leader in linguistic relations. From the rocky shores of Grand Manan Island in the south to the green peat moss bogs of Miscou Island in the north, this unique province has shaped à unique people. In linguistic relations, we can be a shining example to the rest of Canada.

This is the only officially bilingual province in Canada. And that's no arbitrary designation. It's based on the distinctive linguistic makeup of a province whose 710,000 people are roughly 67% English-speaking and 33% French-speaking.

### Acadian opportunities

What some people forget is that Acadians, who clung to and drifted back to the land after the British expulsion 200 years ago, had fewer economic outlets and fewer educational and self-development opportunities than the Anglophones. Gradual recognition of this brought social change, and that change was accelerated when the province's first elected Acadian premier, Louis Robichaud, implemented the Equal Opportunity Program based on the recommendations of English-speaking lawyer E.J. Byrne.

Progressive Conservative Richard Hatfield continued and expanded the programs, including an Official Languages Act designed to welcome the province's Acadian people into equal partnership.

The present premier, Liberal Frank McKenna, has given his own unequivocal commitment to the principle of a language policy designed to provide public services in English or in French. The opposition — the Conservatives who elected Barbara Baird Filleter as their new leader in November and the NDP under Elizabeth Weir — also support the principle.

Nothing has changed this goal in New Brunswick. But events on the national scene — separatist aspirations in Quebec, insensitive application of some federal employment policies that were seen to discriminate against English-speaking job-seekers in some fields and, finally, Quebec's French-only sign edict — all combined to focus a new resentment within this province.

Its outlet has become the Confederation of Regions Party, a group of western origin which made little impact federally, but which is seeking to rally discontent in New Brunswick.

CoR has the publicly-stated aim of dismantling all that has been done in official bilingualism. The new party's leader, Arch Pafford, preaches the simplistic doctrine that he's not opposed to bilingualism, only to official, or as he calls it, "forced bilingualism".

### Job losses?

The party and its supporters have yet to produce any firm evidence of job loss or promotion denial in the New Brunswick Public Service because of the language policy. At a public meeting in Saint John, Board of Management Chairman Gerald Clavette challenged anyone to come up with such an example. There were no takers.

A case in point is the province's largest medical centre, the Regional Hospital located in English-speaking Saint John. Because it serves the entire province in a number of specialties, including cancer care and a soon-to-be-opened cardiac unit, efforts are under way to ensure that Francophone patients can be served in their own language.

Due to lack of communication within the hospital and ignorance of the facts, one of the hospital's unions placed a newspaper advertisement expressing concern about jobs — but also containing some unfortunate anti-French sentiments. The hospital responded by enunciating its policy — only 125 of 2,500 employees would have to be bilingual, and no one was threatened with job loss. Significantly, the Canadian Union of Public Employees officially disassociated itself from the anti-French sentiments in the local union advertisement.

### Shared richness

More typical is the happy relationship of Mayor Harold Culbert of the English-speaking community of Woodstock and Mayor Réal Boudreau of the French-speaking community of Beresford. They got together in a twinning project promoted by the provincial government. Mayor Culbert said the Acadian hospitality left him "on Cloud Nine".

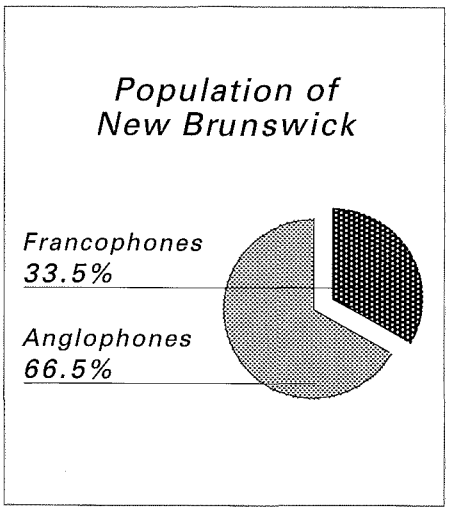
As editor-in-chief of New Brunswick's largest daily newspaper, I have been calling for more of such dialogue. I want the English to experience the warmth and generosity of Acadian hospitality which I have seen in 40 years as a newspaper reporter. I want the Acadians to be sensitive to English fears about job opportunities. I want both groups to share in the richness and unique diversity this province offers.

Canada should not get an impression of New Brunswickers as a divided people fighting among themselves.

This is not the way we are. I believe the people of this province are recognizing and reaching out to one another as fellow New Brunswickers, regardless of the language they speak. I believe we are going to identify and resolve any Public Service language differences.

I believe New Brunswick's English-speakers and French-speakers — together — are going to set an inspiring example for Canada. ■

***Fred Hazel** is Editor-in-Chief of the Saint John* Telegraph-Journal *and the* Evening Times-Globe.



# *New Brunswick: The Bilingual Province and Its Place in the International Community*

*Paul-André Comeau**

*The status New Brunswick has gained internationally has been confirmed.*

Many Canadians, starting with the residents of New Brunswick, would have been surprised early in October to see and hear the province's Premier Frank McKenna speaking in praise of its attractions and assets before a group of Parisian businessmen. Speaking in French, which he practises frequently, and without the aid of notes, the premier had turned into a "super-travelling salesman" before the industrialists and businessmen of the French capital. On the threshold of 1992, when Europe will become a single large market, Mr. McKenna invited his listeners to make overtures to New Brunswick in their attempt to penetrate the North American market, which has also been integrated into one vast free trade zone since January 1989.

***Paul-André Comeau** is Editor-in-Chief of Montreal's* Le Devoir.

## Provincial activities

This was indeed a surprise because New Brunswick is not known for its initiatives on the international scene. That at least is the general feeling in Canada, where we tend to focus on Quebec's initiatives or, more recently, on those of Ontario Premier David Peterson with respect to American or Asian leaders. Indeed, the international dimension of the activities of a number of provincial governments does not receive all the attention it deserves. And yet this is an important aspect of what, along with federal diplomacy, gives tangible expression to the openness of Canadians to the world and their visibility on the international scene. In this regard, New Brunswick can claim two decades of practising a form of international relations which is unique and interesting in more than one respect.

## Maillet and Butler

It is an interesting fact that New Brunswick gained recognition abroad thanks to two women. In every country of the Francophone community the names of novelist Antonine Maillet and singer Edith Butler are now associated distant Acadia, French-speaking and part of a Canadian province. Antonine Maillet, the winner of the Prix Goncourt, assumed the mantle of the American poet Longfellow. The odyssey of the Acadians of the deportation, their survival as a people, their accent and their folklore have now found a place in the cultural universe of a Francophone community that is still in its infancy.

## Four musketeers

The appearance of New Brunswick on the international scene was above all the work of these Acadians, stubborn and tenacious like their ancestors who came from France at the very beginning of the 17th century. For they showed boldness and a degree of temerity, the "four musketeers" who went to Quebec to open discussions with Alain Peyrefitte, the Minister of National Education in the government of General de Gaulle. Boldness and temerity because this was in September 1967, just a few weeks after the General's famous "Vive le Quebec...libre" was heard from the balcony of Montreal's City Hall.

They were truly four musketeers: the rector of the brand new University of Moncton, Adélard Savoie; two directors of the Société nationale des Acadiens, Léon Richard and Gilbert Finn; and the publisher of *L'Évangéline*, Euclide Daigle. The historian and political scientist Dale C. Thomson has recounted in detail in his book *Vive le Quebec libre* (Toronto, Dawson, 1988) the twists and turns of this adventure which would take these four emissaries from Moncton to Quebec and finally to the Elysée Palace! To term it an adventure is no exaggeration: the Franco-Acadian meetings took place in an ambiguous atmosphere and involved, among others, Philippe Rossillon, of the Haut Commissariat à la langue française, he whom former prime minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau would one day, in a fit of anger, characterize as a more or less secret agent of a foreign power!

*The international dimension of the activities of provincial governments does not receive the attention it deserves.*

With the energy of a people who have accumulated more than their share of misfortunes and suffering, these four attracted the attention of France, and also of Canada, to their uncertain enterprise. A special relationship grew up between this rediscovered Acadia and France, where General de Gaulle would soon step down from office after the defeat of the referendum on the regionalization of power and government. Early in the 1980s the Société nationale des Acadiens pursued its diplomatic efforts by signing an agreement with the French-speaking community in Belgium.

## Louis Robichaud

It would be impossible to tell this story without placing these efforts in the

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broader context of the affirmation of the French fact in Canada during the same period. This was, of course, the time when the forces of independence were in the ascendant in Quebec. It saw the completion of the work of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism under André Laurendeau and Davidson Dunton. It was also, as we tend to forget, a time when Louis Robichaud headed the government in Fredericton. All in all, an eventful, dynamic and sometimes conflict-ridden time when Acadians initiated their English-speaking fellow citizens to the subtleties and master strokes of the art of diplomacy.

*Only history will reveal the manoeuvring that led to the creation of la Francophonie.*

Master strokes? What else, with the benefit of hindsight, can we call Premier Louis Robichaud's decision in March 1968 to ask the federal government's permission for New Brunswick to participate in the conference of ministers of education from the French-speaking countries, scheduled for a few months hence? Was this inspired by Ottawa or did it originate with the premier himself?

### On the scene

History alone will reveal the inside story of the international conferences, diplomatic manoeuvres and back-stabbing that would lead to the creation of the Agence de coopération culturelle et technique of the Francophone countries, at Niamey, Niger, in March 1970. New Brunswick thus acceded to the international scene through the Francophone community, thanks to its Acadian minority.

*Premier McKenna's European trip has broadened the range of New Brunswick's interests.*

The province took an active part in the work of the new agency and in 1977 obtained the status of a "participating government", similar to that held in the agency since its inception by Quebec.

The end result of this manoeuvring was the calling of the first Francophone summit, in Paris in February 1986. The New Brunswick Premier Richard Hatfield represented his province beside Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa. This marked the recognition on the international scene of the unique status of Canada's only officially bilingual province (thanks to the historic initiative of another Acadian, Louis Robichaud, who meanwhile has taken his place in the Canadian Senate). After this initial conference in Paris, the Francophone community would meet in Quebec in September 1987 and then in Dakar, last May.

### Intergovernmental Affairs

In April 1988 New Brunswick created a Department of Intergovernmental Affairs to co-ordinate activities within and commitments to the Francophone community, to assume the responsibility for federal-provincial relations and to keep watch on a changing world. Premier Frank McKenna assigned these responsibilities to another Acadian, Aldéa Landry.

This new Department currently has a staff of about 40 and has taken charge of matters heretofore attended to by the Office of the Premier or by other offices scattered throughout the provincial administration.

*New Brunswick now has a Department of Intergovernmental Affairs.*

The province's Department of Intergovernmental Affairs is also responsible for dealing with diplomatic personnel stationed in the province, with visiting foreign missions, diplomats, officials and others.

Aside from Francophone issues, Aldéa Landry's colleagues follow international developments in a number of international areas where New Brunswick also feels the need to take a position. The evidence of this was seen during Premier McKenna's recent tour of France, West Germany and Great Britain. His message was clear and evidenced a close reading of developments in the European community. New Brunswick thus takes its place among several other Canadian provinces and a number of American states who are active in certain international issues where their economic interests are at stake.

Two years ago some eyebrows were raised when the President of the French Republic, François Mitterrand, insisted on making a stop in New Brunswick at the conclusion of an official visit to Canada. The shadow of the meetings between Acadians and Charles de Gaulle still inspired fears. The purpose, however, was to acknowledge and confirm the status that this province has gained within the Francophone community. Mr. McKenna's recent visit to the Europe of the Common Market has now broadened further the range of New Brunswick's international interests. ■

*An Interview with Antonine Maillet*

# *Swimming Against the Current*

***Prolific Acadian writer Antonine Maillet is the author, among other works, of* La Sagouine *and* Pélagie-la-Charrette, *which latter won France's most coveted literary prize, the Prix Goncourt, in 1979 and brought her overnight fame in that country.* Language and Society*'s Lynne O'Keefe spoke to her in Ottawa, where her translation of* Richard III *was being premiered, in September.***

**Language and Society:** What does being an Acadian mean for you?

**Antonine Maillet:** Being an Acadian is different from being a Quebecer, from being French, from being North American. Yet you are all of that....It means more a people, a culture, a history, than a country for me. But being an Acadian is also being a Canadian, which means that you belong to a vast country and you belong to its culture, yet within this you belong to a small group with a specificity.

*— What motivated you to sign a petition, along with 10,000 others, asking that your French nationality be restored?*

— According to French law, any French descendant who has French ancestors and who never renounced the French culture and language has a right to be a French citizen. So I said, "Why not me? Why not us?"

I feel that I have a right to this. However, this does not mean that I choose France instead of Canada, not at all. I want that to be very clear.

*— Do Acadians have stronger ties than Quebecers with France?*

— Yes. First of all, Quebec had some kind of independence. It had its own government, its own educational system and they always kept their language. Therefore, they could proclaim themselves Québécois and cut, more or less, the ties with ancient France. We didn't have that. We had no Acadian system of education. For a long time we had nothing but our ties with history. So we had to keep our ties with France to be able to keep our language and our culture.

*— English has now become a universal language. Do you think that the use of English will affect the Francophone culture of the Québécois and the minorities outside Quebec?*

— It's a very complex question and it needs a complex answer. If you look at history, at one time Latin was the English of the epoch. Latin was the universal language, but this did not stop Greek from being taught, spoken and transmitted as a great language. There will always be and has always been a dominant language, and this for a variety of reasons — not necessarily for reasons of quality or superiority but for political and historical reasons.

So I think that today, even though English is a great language, it is not because of this that it has become the universal language. It is because of a series of political reasons. For instance, both England and the U.S.A. have been dominating powers for the past two or three centuries, and as it happens both of these countries spoke English. I accept that there will be a dominating language.

But what I would not accept is that a universal language would mean that everybody would speak that language solely and uniquely and abandon all others. Because a language is an asset. A language is a treasure. Because we admire Shakespeare doesn't mean that we don't want to study Molière or Cervantes' *Don Quixote.*

*— Do you feel there is a threat to other languages?*

— Yes. If we are not aware that a language is a treasure we might say, "For convenience, let's all speak English and then it will be easier." I recently heard someone on French television say, "Well, it would be so much easier if everybody spoke English. We wouldn't have such complicated relationships."

*— In reference to the international situation?*

— Yes, and I have an answer to that. Of course it is easier, but it would also be easier to have just Picasso in a museum and not have all the problems of finding the other treasures. Of course, Picasso might be the greatest, but we need the others also, because we don't want to have just that vision, that Picasso vision of the world. Renoir gave another vision of the world and so did Miro and so forth.

*— Is bilingualism the solution for Canada?*

— I think bilingualism could be a solution. I am not saying that every person has to know the two languages, because then I would not be realistic.

*Antonine Maillet*

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Bilingualism for me would mean that the country as a whole would say, "We have two languages in this country. Everybody is free to speak the two everywhere. Everybody is free to speak one of the two everywhere, and everybody would be better off either speaking or respecting the two everywhere."

*— How can we bridge the gap that exists between Anglophones and Francophones?*

— We should start in a positive way. We should try to say, "You and I don't have the same language or the same name or the same ancestors and background. Yet we speak together and we enjoy it." I enjoy speaking English. I have my accent but that doesn't matter. That's my personality. I have an accent when I speak French and when I speak Spanish. It doesn't matter. I have my own personality. I enjoy speaking somebody else's language.

*— While the rest of Canada appears to be making an effort to respect our two official languages, Quebec, with its Bill 178 on signage, seems to be going in opposite way. Will this affect the Francophone communities outside Quebec?*

— It's going to affect them, but I can explain why Quebec is doing it. First of all, everyone's rights should be respected. But sometimes when there is a conflict you have to choose which one overrides the other — it is a paradox. I have been living as a minority all my life. I understand perfectly the position of the English in Quebec. But I also understand that Quebec is a minority in North America, and that's a fact. If Quebec doesn't take a strong position on protecting the French language, the French language in Quebec is going to disappear, and after Quebec it is going to disappear everywhere in North America, which means that we would have lost a language spoken here. Because of that [the government of Quebec] has to do something which is apparently an injustice, that of depriving the English of a certain right. But they are doing it to give a right which also belongs to the Francophone minority in North America.

*— Many people thought that Quebec could now feel secure because the situation had changed and attitudes had changed.*

— To a certain degree, but not absolutely. I always compare the Francophones, especially the Acadians, to salmon. You always have to swim against the current, all the time. At a certain point you get fed up. It's tiresome. You want to swim once in a while, just swim. But going upstream all the time, you get fed up. The only thing is that salmon is a better fish than any other. But who wants to be served on the other's plate? You want to live your life.

Being a Francophone, you know that from the inside. At a certain point I understand that people get fed up, and then they throw bombs. I don't approve. I don't agree, but I understand that they get fed up because, after all, they're at home.

*— The Anglophones in Montreal are also upset.*

— I understand perfectly. They're just as much at home but they didn't have the same reason for being fed up because they never swam against the current. They were the bosses, they were the dominating group.

*— But now they are swimming against the current.*

— Yes. But we've been doing that for three centuries. And they have just done it for a few years. I understand their panic. We're almost in a position — and I don't want to say it — but we could be in a position of saying, "Now it's your turn!" But I don't want to say that because it's not right.

*— What do you think of the Meech Lake Accord? Does it bother you that Quebec has a special status and the Acadians don't?*

— No. It doesn't bother me that Quebec has a special status, because I think it belongs there. I think Quebec has a right to a special status — not only a right, but if it doesn't get it, it's going to be very dangerous for Canada.

But I also think that the Acadians and the Francophones in Canada have a right to recognition and to their rights and this is not included in the existing Accord. What's the solution? Why not make a little "lac Meech parrallèle?" — and when we sign one, we sign the other with the left hand, to make sure that when you give something you get it back. Sign the Meech Lake Accord. Don't open it. But on the very same day, at the same moment, sign a parallel agreement which also gives the rights to other minorities.

*— How would you try to convince someone what an asset learning another language is?*

— I would say many things. Every time you look at the world and life and humanity through the key, which is language, you discover another profile, another vision of the same world, but it is enriching. It is so much better.

I looked at *Le Misanthrope*, and I discovered the world of man through Molière. And all of a sudden I looked at another kind of misanthrope looking through Shakespeare's eyes, and it's different. It's the same life, the same man, but seen through another key hole.

So learning another language makes you bigger, gives you a wider vision, makes you feel subtleties that you don't get in one language. You get others, for instance a different kind of humour. When you hear a French joke or an English joke, it's two different kinds of humour. It's much better to have two jokes than one joke, two ways of laughing.

When I say that Shakespeare is the greatest literary genius that ever lived, I don't even know. What I mean is that he is a summit. It's not because you get to Mount Everest that you must neglect another mountain. ■

## Dialogue New Brunswick

Antonine Maillet and Anglican Archbishop Harold Nutter co-chaired the symposium Dialogue New Brunswick, which took place in Fredericton from November 22 to 24, 1989.

Some 100 persons representing all sectors of New Brunswick life exchanged views on the province's linguistic situation and on ways of meeting its challenges. (Editor's note: **Language and Society** went to press before the symposium took place.)