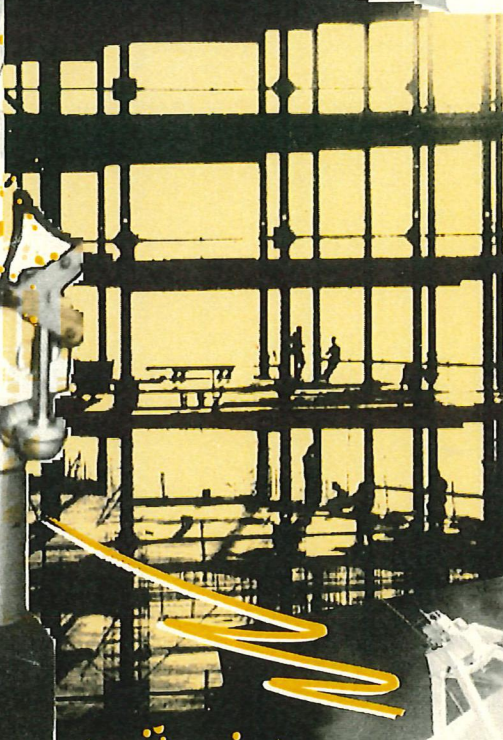


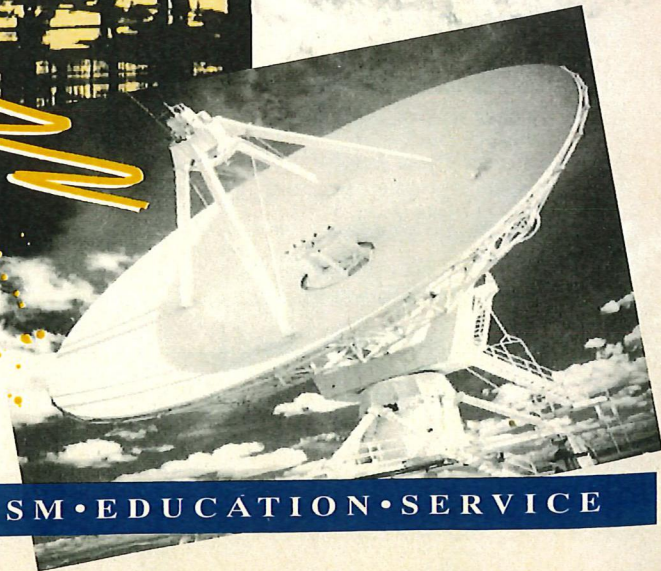
Language

AND SOCIETY

NUMBER 41, WINTER 1992



Living Together: A Common Purpose



ECONOMY • MULTICULTURALISM • EDUCATION • SERVICE

Language AND SOCIETY

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EDITORIAL NOTE

In March 1992 *Language and Society* began publishing in two formats, with the new Bulletin appearing in the Spring and Fall tabloid edition was adopted for reasons of economy and to appeal to a wider audience. The odd-numbered issues of *Language and Society* (Summer and Winter) – an example of which you are reading – will continue to appear in the usual form.

The magazine analyses Canadians' concerns from the linguistic point of view, while the Bulletin stresses the human touch and new developments in language issues. *Language and Society* will continue to emphasize the personal, national and international advantages of being a two-language country.

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.

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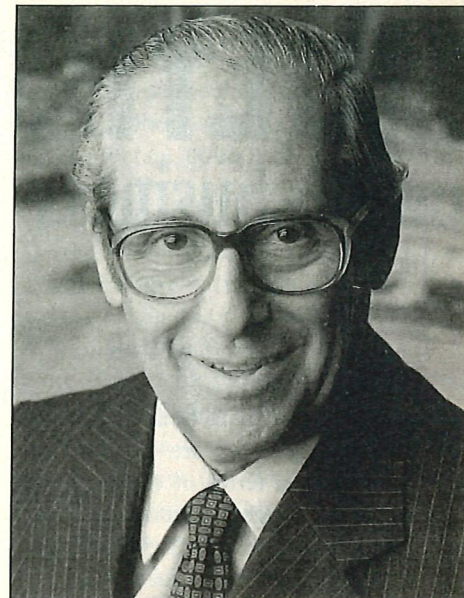
COMMISSIONER OF
OFFICIAL LANGUAGES



COMMISSAIRE AUX
LANGUES OFFICIELLES

A COMMON PURPOSE

**"Canadians are known
for settling differences in a civilized way."**



In Canada, with almost two and a half centuries of linguistic coexistence in English and French — and more than four and a half centuries of far from perfect relations with the Aboriginal peoples — we face special challenges and special opportunities.

For a considerable time now we have been expending effort and emotion on talking about texts and structures. Now it is

essential — especially in the aftermath of the referendum — to focus on human beings and human relations.

Canadian society is characterized by its diversity, and out of that diversity we must distil some measure of cohesion and cooperation, some sense of common purpose. Whatever constitutional decisions may eventually be arrived at, we live next to one another, and we shall have to talk to one another.

Knowledge of our own and others' aims and motives, of our histories, both shared and disparate, is essential. We need clear, honest dialogue, expressed in clear, honest language.

Canadians are known for settling their differences in a civilized way, in a fashion that is the envy of others, but we must not expect instant satisfaction or instant accomplishment, nor lose patience or our sense of commitment.

We must not perceive our linguistic duality as a zero-sum game, one in which no one can win unless someone else loses. A country or a confederation or a common market cannot be built on bitterness. Despair is not a policy; resentment is not a basis for human relations.

Relations must be based on fairness and equity: equity in employment, equity in advancement, equity in participation in the life of our society. They must be based on understanding, especially of our historical roots and the present-day emotions which underlie our various concerns and objectives. They must be based on mutual courtesy and mutual consideration.

The vast majority of Canadians are decent and caring people. We must make a continual effort to point out, to sustain and reinforce, what is positive in people's attitudes and personalities. It is better to light a single candle than to curse the darkness.

—Victor C. Goldbloom

*Language
AND SOCIETY*
Volume 12 Number 2
Spring 1992

Living
Together:
A Common
Purpose

ECONOMY • MULTICULTURALISM • EDUCATION • SERVICE

COVER

"We have before
us the uplifting
possibility of
building an
exemplary society,
just and generous,
self-confident
and open to
the world
surrounding it."

Victor C. Goldbloom

Construction site photo/Ron Chappel — FPG/MASTERFILE
Satellite dish photo: Telegraph Colour Library/MASTERFILE

MULTILINGUALISM

means business

TOM SLOAN*

When Canadians hear the world "language", we are all too often liable to think in terms of disputes over the extent of bilingual governmental services and the rights of official language minority groups to things such as an education and health care in their own language. These issues are important, but they are far from exhausting the subject of language, even in Canada.

While this country's language legislation recognizes, and even within the limits of practicality insists on, the right of English- and French-speaking Canadians to remain unilingual if they so desire, its language policies do not stop there. It would be strange indeed if a country where two international languages are used did nothing to encourage its citizens to at least make an effort to be able to communicate in the country's other language; and of course it does so. Cooperation between the federal and other levels of government has not only ensured that the teaching of English and French as a second language remains a priority in the various school systems, it also helps account for the explosion of French immersion classes across Canada over the past two decades.

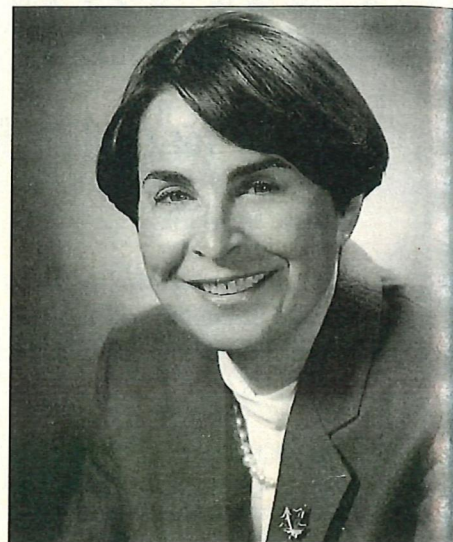
Outside government and education there has been a rapidly growing awareness in the business community that it is in its own interest to communicate with its customers and employees, where possible, in their preferred language, whether English or French. The same philosophy has been increasingly adopt-

ed by voluntary organizations and business and professional associations operating at the national level. In short, well beyond the purview of the Official Languages Act, bilingual services, at least to a certain degree, is becoming institutionalized in considerable sectors of the Canadian business and professional communities.

As this internal process continues, a new dimension has been added in the form of a growing understanding by business of the international benefits that can accrue to a nation that has the capacity to operate bilingually, all the more so when the languages concerned are international in their scope and spoken as a first or second tongue by millions of people around the world. Benefits are now being increasingly seen on local as well as national levels. In New Brunswick, Moncton, because of its bilingual character, will benefit from 400 new jobs at a regional service centre for the Purolator company. For language reasons as well, Unitel Communications Inc. was, at last report, deciding among two or three bilingual communities for the location of a customer service centre involving between 300 and 400 new jobs. These may be relatively small examples, but they are perhaps indicative.

Multilingualism

If two languages can be good for business, what about three and more? What about multilingualism in general? While specialists in the field complain about the lack of empirical studies that conclusively demonstrate that the more linguistic capacity the better in the world of trade,



Mary Gusella

commerce and investment, the reply dictated by common sense appears to have won over educators and observers of the scene, as well as many practical business people themselves. At the same time, they deplore the slowness of many business schools to respond to the need increasingly being felt for specialists in the field of international business. "A global strategy must 'fit' products and services to the language and practices of each market," writes Edward R. Koepfler, vice-president of Software Assocs. Inc. of Chicago. David Grier, vice-president and chief public affairs adviser of the Royal Bank of Canada, puts it succinctly: "A service is a service, and if you are going to deliver it to the market you have to deliver it in whatever language that market demands." There are cases, of which Canada is a good example, where the law imposes mini-

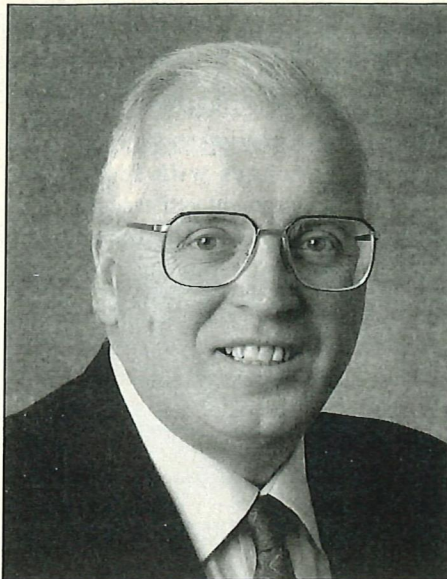
* Tom Sloan is a freelance writer.

imum language requirements before a product can be offered for sale. The Consumer Packaging Labelling Act and the Canadian Food and Drug Act both stipulate the use of English and French on all goods entering the country. Even where similar laws are not in force, adaptation to the local market is now generally conceded to be essential.

If this is true, what about the most recent piece of conventional wisdom, that today, more than ever, English is overwhelmingly the international language of business? There is just enough truth in the statement, some observers say, to make it a truly dangerous belief to act on. "The very fact that English is the most widely spoken language in commerce represents to its native speakers its most significant handicap," writes an American specialist on business communications, David Victor. Laziness and overconfidence must be replaced by knowledge, not only of the language but also of the culture of the society with which a firm is doing business in order to avoid errors that could destroy efforts to create good will and sell goods and services. Reliance on translation services is emphatically not enough, says Mary Gusella, deputy minister of the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship, in a speech to business communicators. "While translators have an important role to play, they are not trained to provide you with an in-depth knowledge of the cultural particularities required to introduce your product or service to the new language community."

Laziness and overconfidence must be replaced by knowledge.

Certainly the hiring and careful use of citizens of the host community can greatly improve performance. But nothing, we are now being told, can replace basic knowledge of that community on the part



Edward Lang

of the company concerned and at least some of its senior officials.

Business has a large responsibility for the present, and business educators have a large responsibility for the future, experts on the subject say. They also say that there is a good deal of catching-up to be done.

"In an age when cross-cultural and interlingual communication and co-operation have become more the norm than the exception," says Jan W. Walls of Simon Fraser University, there is no reason "to institutionalize monolingual, monocultural education as the only option available to a potential international business major." Cross-cultural business competence is more and more an essential element of international business success.

Falling behind?

Both business itself and business schools are being found to have a woefully inadequate past in this area. This judgement applies to Canada even more than to the United States. A 1989 discussion paper prepared for the Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship notes that there are disquieting signs of Canada falling behind in international competition, with a narrowing trade surplus and a substan-

tial deficit in high-tech goods and services. "Part of the difficulty is simply that Canadian business has never learned how to co-operate effectively in the world's markets. Three-quarters of our international trade is with one familiar market — the United States — and the dependency has grown instead of abating." In an article in the *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, University of New Brunswick professor Basu Sharma and Lloyd Steier of the University of Alberta warn that if Canadian business does not meet the challenge of global interdependence, "this interdependence can play havoc for the growth and survival of Canadian business."

And what about the business schools of Canadian universities? As late as 1988 a report of a task force of the Corporate Higher Education Forum concluded there was no coherent approach to international business education; in fact, such education was virtually nonexistent. "No comprehensive degree program incorporating business-management functions, foreign language and geographic or cultural area specialization is available..."

Since then there have apparently been improvements at all levels. In a 1991 article in the *Financial Post*, Edward J. Lang, chairman and Chief Executive Officer of RJR-Macdonald Inc. of Toronto, acknowledged there have been some positive exceptions to a general refusal to understand the need for foreign-language training. "Some Canadian firms have taken the challenge of international markets seriously by combining intensive language training for North American employees working abroad with sophisticated recruiting methods targeted at nationals in the host country." As for Canadians, "one of the

Business and business schools have been woefully inadequate in the past.

greatest gifts we can give our children is fluency in languages."

Education

In the realm of education there has been movement involving exchanges abroad and language study. In 1989 three universities, York, the University of Toronto and Sir Wilfrid Laurier, jointly established the Ontario Centre for International Business, which has since set up an international MBA program that requires students to specialize in a particular country. Students study in their country of specialty for at least one term and work for at least a year at a company based there.

There have been other initiatives as well. Among them, the Carleton University Development Centre intends in 1993 to begin to offer training for professionals "in virtually any language" and in 1992 was offering such courses in Chinese, Japanese and Russian. For its part, the Saskatchewan Language Institute in Regina offers training in about 20 modern languages.

Multiculturalism

A potential ace in the hole for Canada in the field of international business could well be the policies of multiculturalism developed by successive federal governments over the past 20 years. Although originally conceived with strictly internal political and national unity objectives in mind, many inside and outside of government are now looking to the economic and business dimension of multiculturalism. Over the years there has been considerable argument as to what this entails. Regardless of internal issues, one conclusion seems to be emerging: the high profile of Canada's ethnocultural communities could and perhaps should have a considerable impact on our international relations, especially in trade and investment. Above all, perhaps, the emphasis that has been placed on the study of

heritage languages at least has the potential of helping to provide new openings for Canadian business abroad. In 1989 it was estimated that 200,000 young people across the country were studying more than 60 languages with federal and provincial government assistance.

The Multiculturalism Department's discussion paper on international trade sums up the possibilities: "Canada's ethnocul-

Canadian market it gives contacts in other national markets around the world, permitting Canadian businesses, if they are so inclined, to take steps to join forces with their counterparts elsewhere.

Just one example is an Ottawa firm, Paradigm Communications, which has the capacity to operate in nine languages, ranging from German and Czech through Danish and Spanish, and has recently joined forces with a company in Prague to take advantage of new opportunities in Europe. "There is undoubtedly a real potential in eastern Europe," says senior partner Stephen Goban. Like other companies in the field, Paradigm is eclectic in its language activities, with one of its latest operations being a survey of the teaching of Japanese in Canada at the elementary and secondary levels. The survey is one of a number commissioned by the Department of External Affairs, the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada and other groups concerned with Pacific Rim issues, including Canadian awareness of the languages spoken in Pacific Rim countries. The

Paradigm survey is just one part of a long-term federal government trade strategy known as "Going Global". It includes a \$14 million program to encourage the learning and the teaching in Canada of Pacific Rim languages.

Where does Canadian business go from here in meeting the challenge of international trade and investment markets? To ask the question is most certainly not to answer it. The opportunities are there and at least some of the tools are being forged. English and French are a good start and an increasing multilingual capacity will most emphatically not hurt. Of course, a knowledge of many languages and cultures will not take the place of business acumen, but more and more it seems to be an essential part of the mix. ■

**Many are now looking
to the economic and business dimension
of multiculturalism — the high profile
of Canada's ethnocultural communities
could have a considerable impact
on international relations,
especially in trade and investments.**

tural communities can play an important role in fostering awareness of the demands of international markets. They can also contribute linguistic skills, cultural insights and concrete business experience to the overall objective of strengthening Canada's international business presence." These communities "constitute a vast and untapped resource that can be of decisive significance in our international business dealings."

The implications are clear for government, for the ethnocultural communities, for Canadian business and for Canadian society. The title of a federal government directory of ethnocultural businesses, groups and professional associations across Canada is *Multiculturalism Means Business*. In addition to providing information for businesses serving the

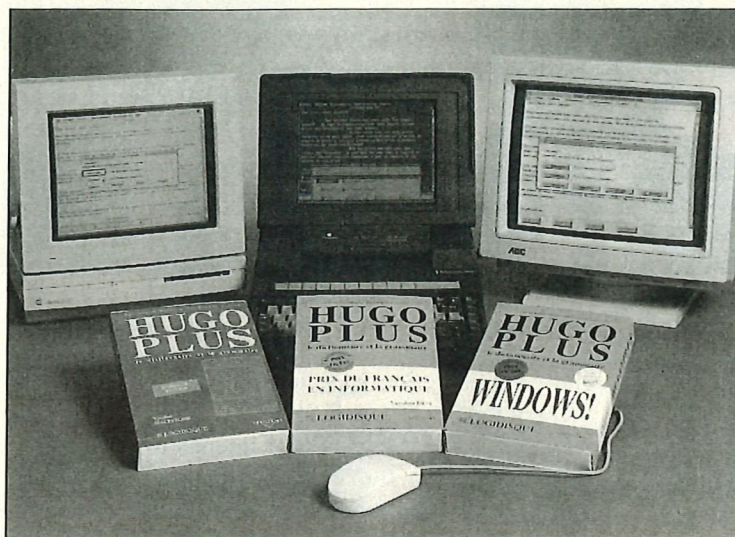
LANGUAGE INDUSTRIES

GILLES LAFRAMBOISE*

If you want to know the cost of bilingualism in Canada there are several studies that will even give it as a percentage of the gross national product. Unfortunately, if you want to know how much of a contribution bilingualism makes to the country you will have to be satisfied with vague evidence.

This is because, over the years, the coexistence of the two official languages has, more often than not, been reduced to its political dimension. As soon as a new cost assessment is published defenders of the policy repeat that, when all is said and done, it is a bargain. The opponents of bilingualism brandish new figures to justify their opposition. The "economic" argument stops there.

No one, it seems, has taken the trouble to evaluate the economic spinoffs of our "national language industry". In just a few minutes' time several federal agencies can provide you with very precise data on the number of tonnes of cod caught, the number of barrels of oil refined and what it costs to build a kilometre of highway in the Rockies. Ask what the return on bilingualism is and you will see raised eyebrows.



Thousands of jobs

Few people realize the size of the language industry in Canada. Figures provided by the Department of the Secretary of State show that it alone employs 773 translators and has contracts with some 530 freelancers. For the Department, a freelancer may be a single translator or a translation firm employing up to 30 translators.

In 1992-93 the budget authorized for translation contracts amounted to nearly \$28 million in this Department alone. Finally, the Department's internal and external production for the current year will be in the order of 293 million words. That is equivalent to translating 18,000 plays by Michel Tremblay or 2,000 novels by Margaret Atwood.

"Imagine then what role translation plays in society as a whole," commented Julien Marquis, President of the Canadian Translators and Interpreters Council. After deploring the fact that no study has been conducted to evaluate the true economic spinoffs of translation in Canada, Marquis issued a warning against calculations that are too simplistic.

In his view an inventory limited to translators' jobs would represent only the tip of the iceberg. "The Council that I head has 3,500 members," he says, "while thousands of other translators are not members of our professional association. You must also take into account the thousands of support staff who assist these translators,

that is, the secretaries, receptionists, and so forth."

What about the tools of the translator's trade? The vast majority of Canadian translators, according to Julien Marquis, work in what he calls an "ideal environment" — a work station that usually includes a computer, a laser printer, on-line reference works and, often, a well-stocked library. This basic equipment can cost between \$12,000 and \$15,000 for a single translator.

"Moreover, when a Canadian translator is invited to speak at an international meeting it is usually to speak about informatics and computerized terminology banks," Marquis noted. "Canada makes the widest use of informatics for translation and it is precisely because we are at the forefront of the technology that we can export some of our best products," he added.

The President of the Canadian Translators and Interpreters Council is in a good position to speak on this topic because he plied his trade in France for a while. "In the French company where I worked," he says, "we could consult

* Gilles Laframboise is a freelance journalist.

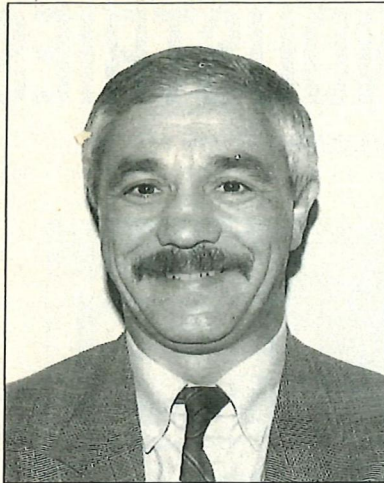
the many reference works published and sold by the Canadian government.”

The agency chiefly responsible for translation in Ottawa, the Department of the Secretary of State, has not failed to exploit this market. Over the years, to satisfy its own needs, the Department's specialists have prepared many reference works for its translators and revisers.

These meet such a need in Canada and abroad that total sales of the 80 publications brought in \$258,000 last year. Another language data bank on compact disk, Termium, alone generated sales of \$182,400.

The Canadian Observatory on Language Industries

In November 1990, in connection with its participation in the Francophone summits, Canada established the Canadian Observatory on Language Industries (COLI), which is headed by Malcolm Williams, Director, Terminology



Julien Marquis



Malcolm Williams

and Linguistic Services, in the Department of the Secretary of State.

Among other things, COLI intends to find partners in four sectors: governments, professional associations, teaching institutions and industry. It also wishes to make an inventory of the technological tools and the activities characteristic of the language industries and to make these tools and the documents related to them known in Canada “to determine whether products from other regions can find an application within la Francophonie.”

As for promotion, COLI is closely associated with the International Symposium on Language Industries, held in Montreal in November 1990. In the technological display set up for the symposium COLI introduced four products: the computerized data bank (Termium), the translator's work station, IRIS (a system for the hearing impaired) and CRITTER (machine translation software).

According to Malcom Williams, Canada is very rich in courseware for learn-

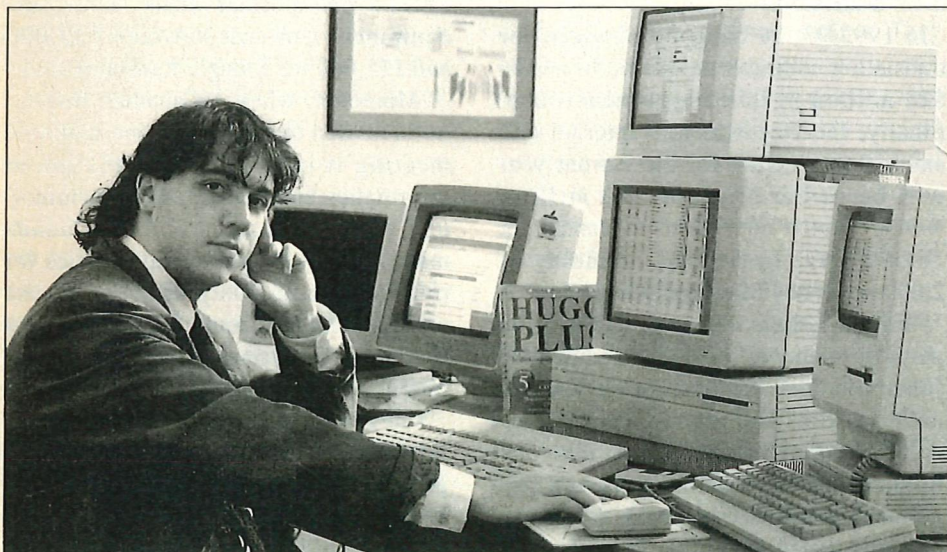
ing languages. He cites DEFI software, developed in Ontario to assist in learning French, which has had marked success in a number of Francophone countries.

The Public Service Commission of Canada has also developed tools in this area. It even sells a computerized grammar of French in the workplace. This is exercise courseware addressed to adult Anglophones who wish to improve their French communication skills by mastering the grammar. It includes a vocabulary used in situations familiar to federal, provincial or municipal employees, educators, and workers in the service sector.

Private sector

The private sector too has lost no time in capitalizing on the bilingual character of Canada to develop new language tools. A few examples will illustrate the dynamism of this sector. Thus, after having had great success with its *Dictionnaire thématique visuel*, the

Canada is a world leader in courseware for learning languages.



Francis Malka

Photo: Christian Hébert, photographer

Montreal publisher Québec/Amérique this fall launched multilingual versions of the work for Europe and the American markets.

In the preface to the dictionary, which is distributed worldwide, the head of Les Éditions Québec/Amérique, Jacques Fortin, points out that in Canada terminological research is necessarily characterized by feverish activity and that our researchers have long had a world-wide reputation.

"In this context," he adds, "it is natural and logical that Les Éditions Québec/Amérique should embark upon the great adventure of making a dictionary."

The successes of the private sector are not limited to the field of publishing. Hugo Plus is no doubt the Canadian software best known and most widely sold abroad. When the first American grammar correction programs appeared in English Canada no such tool existed in the French-speaking world.

Canada's private sector has scored successes in publishing and in software.

As a Paris newspaper pointed out, French specialists had too hastily concluded that computer programs did not have the capacity to deal with the grammatical analysis of French. The journalist went on to say that, "Five Canadian professors, connoisseurs of the language of their ancestors (French, naturally), more pragmatic and less hamstrung by this type of reasoning, broke the taboo by creating Hugo Plus."

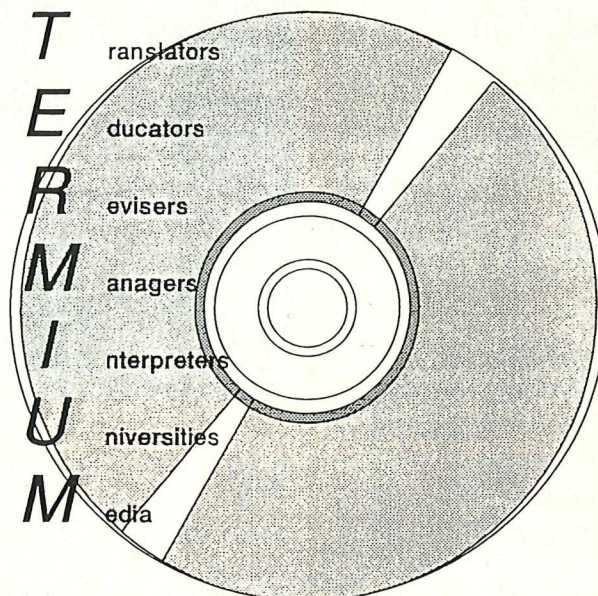
The program makes corrections of the French text based on French grammar. In its most recent versions the program underlines the mistake, suggests a correction and can even cite the grammatical rule that applies.

According to Francis Malka, one of the program's creators, the principal

markets are Canada and France. As well, a number of copies are sold in the United States, Italy, Japan, Switzerland and Francophone Africa. The software has just passed the threshold of 500,000 installations worldwide. Logidisque recently won a contract with the Ontario Ministry of Education, which will install Hugo Plus in some 200,000 work stations.

All the program's menus appear in French by default. However, by changing a single parameter an Anglophone user can see all the menus in English. "Thanks to these bilingual menus," Francis Malka explains, "our program can be used anywhere in Canada and nearly anywhere in the world, whether the user is a Francophone or an Anglophone." ■ *(Our translation)*

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 Department of the Secretary of State of Canada Secrétariat d'État du Canada

Canada

Never too old to learn

CAROLYN GREEN*

International Translation Day was celebrated in Canada on September 30.

Professional associations and public agencies had taken care to organize activities to mark this event, which is observed world-wide.

September 30 was chosen because it is the feast day of St. Jerome (c. 342-420), patron saint of translators and himself a translator of note.

Celebrating TRANSLATION

In Ottawa Translation Day was marked by a reception on Parliament Hill attended by, among others, members of the Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario, the Canadian Translators and Interpreters Council, the Corporation professionnelle des traducteurs et interprètes agréés du Québec and the Canadian Union of Professional and Technical Employees. The Department of the Secretary of State, which employs nearly 800 translators, was also represented.

In Toronto the Canadian Translators and Interpreters Council marked the event with a reception. It used the occasion to reveal the names of the winners of a poster competition organized for Translation Day.



When Quaker Oats Company of Canada chairman Jon Grant and a senior Russian government official met in Moscow earlier this year the pair conducted business through a Russian-English translator.

As the conversation wrapped up the Russian official said — through his translator — that he was soon leaving the Russian capital for a holiday.

Without thinking, Grant said, “Bonnes vacances.”

“I forgot momentarily whether we were speaking in English or French,” recalls the 57-year-old executive who makes his home in Peterborough, Ontario. “But he turned around and started speaking to me

in perfect French. We then had a common language in which to converse because he had learned French in school.”

Indeed, the experience was unique for Grant and illustrated how far he’s come in just a very short time.

Until about four years ago Grant’s French linguistic skills were negligible. In fact, his only French-language training dated back more than 40 years ago to his high school studies in his native Toronto.

But his interest in learning French with an aim to becoming bilingual was piqued when he was invited to join the board of directors of Montreal-based Laurentian Financial Services.

“Their meetings are conducted in French,” says Grant. “Claude Castonguay, Laurentian’s chairman, asked me if I wanted a translator but I said: ‘No, now is the time to start to learn French.’”

* Carolyn Green, a former *Financial Post* staff writer, is a freelance journalist living in Napanee, Ontario.

Initially Grant's language education included private lessons a few times a week, augmented by watching and listening to French television and radio. While his skills improved, he felt he needed additional training.

To expedite his transition to becoming a fully bilingual Canadian Grant enrolled last spring in a two-week French immersion program at Jonquière, Quebec.

There he studied the language in a classroom context during the day while evenings were spent at cultural events, including French films and lectures. Because students live with a French-speaking family during the two-week program, Grant was given another opportunity to practise French, this time in an informal setting where everything from politics to grocery shopping was discussed.

In addition to improving his language skills, Grant says the program accomplished other objectives.

Jon Grant fervently believes that being conversant in English and French is a unifying force.

"The thing I learned about that process is that we're never too old to learn," he says. "Learning is life-long and the discipline of going back to school is fantastic. We tend to get into middle age and say, 'Life's done us well, and get mentally lazy.'"

His new French skills have also assisted him in business. Recently, he addressed Quaker's sales force, which includes a French contingent. In the past his French remarks would have been read from a written speech. This time he spoke casually without the aid of notes.

"Everybody told me that until you do that you really don't feel you have any confidence," he says with a smidgen of pride and accomplishment.

While his experience at Jonquière has resulted in dramatically improved French-

language skills, Grant's education is far from over. On the suggestion of his Jonquière tutors he's taking private language training four hours a week. As well, he plans to enrol in another immersion program, some time next year, he hopes.

"Learning is life-long and the discipline of going back to school is fantastic.

We tend to get into middle age and say, 'Life's done us well, and get mentally lazy.'"

When Grant, a trim, bespectacled man with a calm and warm demeanour, isn't putting out fires at Quaker or improving his language skills he's involved in countless other interests and causes.

In addition to his directorship at Laurentian Bank he performs similar duties for Consumers Gas and Scott Paper. He's also honorary governor and past chair-

man of Peterborough's Trent University and is vice-chairman of the Ontario Round Table on the Environment and Economy.

And if those outside duties aren't enough to fill spare time, Grant also devotes some attention to his alma mater the University of Western Ontario, as a member of the business school's advisory committee; to the Canada/USSR Business Council and to the Ontario Science Centre. In 1990 he was honoured by the Canadian Federation of Humanities with the Corporate Humanist Award for a speech entitled "The Business of Protecting the Environment".

Although Grant's French-language education was precipitated by his appointment to the Laurentian board, he now sees several other advantages to being bilingual.

"We are a two-language country and increasingly if you are going to do business in one part of the country, especially if your customer is of a different culture and language, you should be able to address that person in the language of their choice and background."

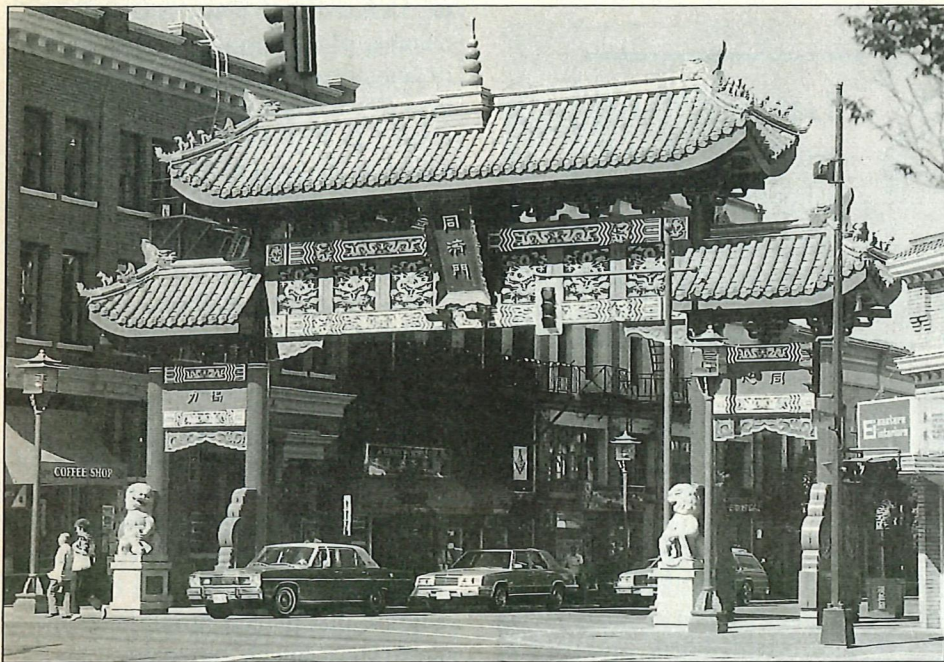
But more importantly, because Canada is supposedly a bilingual nation, Grant fervently believes that being conversant in both English and French acts as a unifying force. ■

Over 4 million Canadians told the 1986 census they spoke English and French.



The British Columbia CHINESE COMMUNITY

GILLES LAFRAMBOISE*



Chinatown, Victoria, British Columbia

Photo: Lindner/Maur-REFLEXION PHOTO THEQUE

The Chinese community in British Columbia has managed an unusual feat: it has succeeded in integrating successfully with its host country while preserving its language and culture.

Many other ethnic groups have also taken their place in Canada's vast spaces, but few can boast of 85% to 95% speaking their heritage language.

According to Victor Wong, president of the Vancouver Association of Chinese Canadians, this retention rate is attributable as much to the recent and massive influx of Asian immigrants as it is to the isolation to which the Chinese community in Canada was condemned for decades.

Statistics Canada figures allow us to understand why this community current-

ly shows exceptional dynamism. According to preliminary data from the 1991 census, some 492,000 Canadians identify Chinese (either Mandarin or Cantonese) as their mother tongue, that is, the first language learned at home and still understood today. This is an increase of no less than 59% compared to 1986. No other language group has experienced such growth in this five-year period.

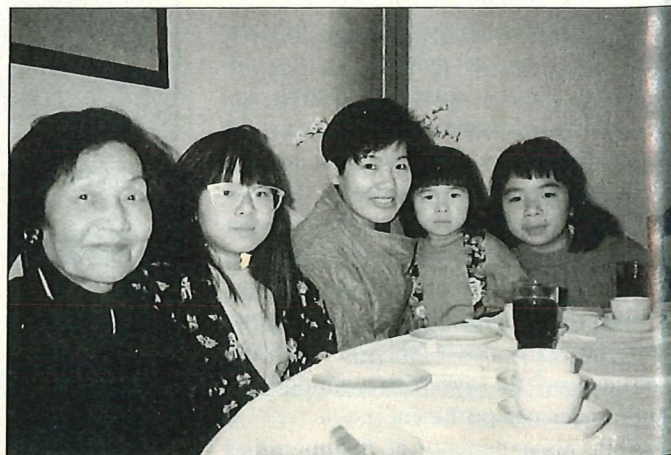
Vancouver and its suburbs alone last year had 131,000 residents of Chinese origin, 8.1% of the region's total population. According to

Wong newcomers from Hong Kong, Taiwan and the mainland of China continue to arrive every day. At the Vancouver Chinese immigrant aid centre, called "Success", assistance was given to more than 50,000 Chinese immigrants last year, says Nancy Li, the agency's director of community relations: "The least that can be said is that it is quite a challenge to assist so many people." From Hong Kong herself, she understands the problems an immigrant faces in a new country. "The first challenge," she says, "is learning one or even two new languages, as is the case in Canada. When I lived in Ontario I spoke English, naturally, but I made a point of practising my French whenever I visited Montreal."

"Despite these enormous figures," Wong says, "integration into Canadian society is successful in the great majority of cases." Far from shutting themselves up in Chinatown, the Chinese population, both the old and the new, is now overflowing into the suburbs and assuming its rightful place. "While the expression of Chinese culture is not marked by the same dynamism and exuberance as that of French Quebec, for example, people are nevertheless concerned to preserve traditional Chinese culture."

Head tax

In the not too distant past, Wong recalls, "Canadians of Chinese origin would



Nancy Li (centre) with her mother and her three nieces

* Gilles Laframboise is a freelance journalist.

have liked to integrate as they do today, but they did not have that right. Canadian laws and racist policies condemned them to isolation in a single area." On their arrival in British Columbia in 1858 the first Chinese immigrants found work in the mines and the forests. From 1885 Chinese immigrants had to pay an "entry" or "head" tax before they were let into Canada.

Set at first at \$50 per person, this discriminatory tax rose to \$500 in 1903. At the time such a sum could buy a house. In 1923, a few years after abolition of the head tax on Chinese immigrants, the government forbade all Chinese immigration. According to Wong, Canada had to renounce this policy 20 years later when it applied for admission to the new United Nations.

"Throughout this period," he explains, "members of the Chinese community were forced to turn in upon themselves since they could not be full citizens of their new country. Integration could not but be adversely affected." Community leaders are now demanding that the Canadian government acknowledge its mistake and compensate the some 1,000 Canadians of Chinese origin who had to pay the head tax and are still living in Canada.

Language and integration

Although discriminatory policies were done away with some time ago, the Chinese community did not really begin to integrate until the late 1970s, according to Hanson Lau, a radio host and Chinese community organizer for 19 years.

Lau says that recently there has been an awakening of political awareness. Accustomed to not becoming involved in politics in their country of origin, these new Canadian citizens tend at first to avoid the subject. "People must be



Hanson Lau



Victor Wong

made to realize that not only can they express their opinions, and sometimes their disagreement, but that they must do so," he says.

He expresses satisfaction with the fact that, recently, it was possible to muster 300 to 400 people to protest against a change in zoning regulations affecting a Vancouver neighbourhood. "It was a major victory because barely 15 years ago people were silently resigned to change," he says. The Chinese community also makes a point of electing peo-

**The British Columbia
Chinese community
is exceptionally dynamic
and integration into Canadian society
is successful in the great
majority of cases.**

ple who will be able to defend its interests on the municipal council and the school board.

Lau gives some of the credit for this awakening to the Vancouver Chinese media. Radio station CJVB, where he

works, broadcasts 13 hours of programming in Chinese every day, 12 hours in Cantonese and one in Mandarin. "We pursue two objectives very clearly: the preservation of the Chinese language and culture and facilitating the integration of new immigrants," he explains. To this end, a team of some 60 persons offers daily programming for every taste, from children's programs in the morning to traditional operas for the elderly, and including rock

music and substantial news bulletins.

The station also makes a point of keeping its listeners in contact with other Chinese communities in North America and Asia. Every day it broadcasts Chinese programs from the United States, Hong Kong or China, for example.

"This link with foreign countries is important to us, and to all Canadians," he says.

Benefit to Canada

Lau believes that the presence of a dynamic Chinese community in British Columbia is beneficial to all Canadians:

"In the field of business, we serve as a kind of bridge between Canada and our countries of origin. I do not mean to say that we are responsible for all the investment coming here from Asia, but I can assure you that our strong presence in Canada reassures certain investors and makes things easier for them when they visit this country or decide to settle here. Relations with Hong Kong, for example, would surely not be as good if the greater Vancouver

area did not have a strong Chinese community. As well, the Canadian business community would not have as much success in Asia if channels of communication were not so well developed." ■

(Our translation)

FRENCH-LANGUAGE COLLEGES

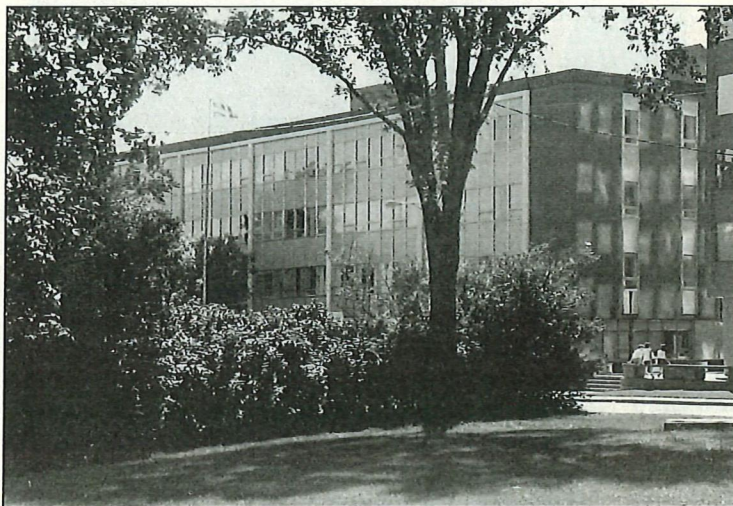
Special needs, limited resources

TOM SLOAN*

What happens when children grow up, graduate from high school and want to continue the learning process in their own official language? It might seem that the natural corollary of the constitutional right to a primary and secondary education would be a similar one at the post-secondary level, but such is not the case. The constitutional right to an education in your mother tongue stops with the end of high school. From then on, the extent of your options depends on the luck of the draw: where you were born and grew up, where you happen to be living when you set out to look for a post-secondary institution offering courses in your own language.

In this article we shall concentrate on the availability of such courses at colleges, as distinct from universities. It is generally conceded that university students are more mobile, more willing to travel a considerable distance from home when necessary, whereas those at the college level, looking for one- or two-year technical and professional courses, tend to stay closer to home. In several regions of Canada the situation for minority official language post-secondary students is bleak and simple: there is nothing close to home.

This, according to federal government statistics, is the case in British Columbia, Yukon, the Northwest Territories, Alberta, Prince Edward Island and New-



Heritage College, Hull, Quebec

foundland. The reason, according to the governments involved, is austere simple: the tiny number of potential students at the post-secondary level and, particularly in the West, the fact they are scattered over such a vast territory. In such circumstances it is difficult to offer courses in French at the post-secondary level. Elsewhere in the country, the situation is both more complex and more reassuring.

Quebec

From its beginning more than two centuries ago the English-speaking community of the province concentrated on building an educational system at all levels. As a result, today there are three full-fledged English-language universities and a network of English-language CEGEPs (Collèges d'enseignement général et professionnel) funded by the province.

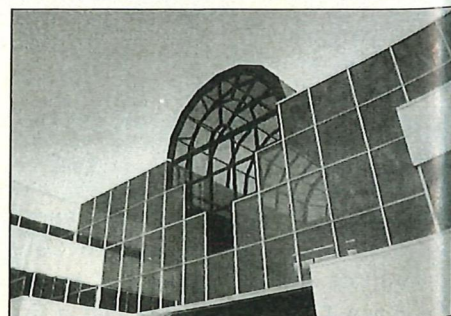
The three largest colleges are, not surprisingly, located on the Island of

Montreal, where more than three-quarters of Quebec's Anglophones live. But there are others too, gathered under the wing of Champlain Regional College, with campuses in the Quebec City suburb of Ste. Foy, Lennoxville in the Eastern Townships and St. Lambert on the south shore of the St. Lawrence near Montreal. The most recent addition is Heritage College, which became independent from the Cégep de l'Outaouais in 1988 and is now serving West Quebec Anglophones as an independent entity. In

addition to the publicly funded schools there are private institutions such as Marianopolis and Lower Canada College. There are also two or three bilingual business schools, teaching a variety of courses in both English and French.

Ontario

The last few years have seen significant improvements in the situation of French-speaking college students in Ontario and more are promised in the future. Until



La Cité collégiale, Ottawa, Ontario

* Tom Sloan is a freelance writer.

1967, however, the situation for Francophones was dismal.

It was in that year that Algonquin College of Applied Arts and Technology became the first bilingual post-secondary institution operating at the college level in Ontario.

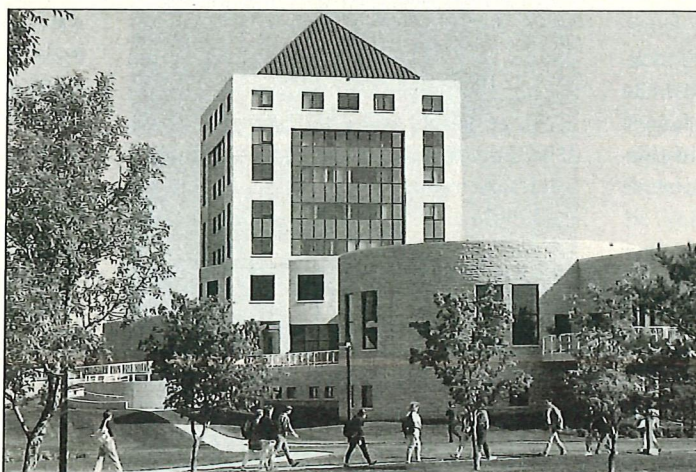
Algonquin maintained its leading place until 1990, which saw the opening of the first completely French-language public post-secondary institution in Ontario. It was a major development, costing about \$100 million and jointly funded by the federal and provincial governments. By 1991 it was serving more than 2,600 post-secondary students and 800 adult students at its three campuses in Ottawa, Cornwall and Hawkesbury. Created to meet the needs of an estimated 300,000 Francophones living in eastern Ontario, the college offers more than 80 programs leading to a diploma or certificate as well as courses for adult education and special training.

With appearance of the Cité campus in Cornwall, St. Lawrence College joined Algonquin in reverting to a uniquely Anglophone course structure. For the moment there remain four bilingual colleges in the province: Cambrian in Sudbury, Canadore in North Bay, Niagara in Welland (the only one in southern Ontario) and Northern in South Porcupine. Their own status may well be placed in question if plans go ahead for two new Francophone colleges, one each in the northern and southern parts of the province. A 1990 federal-provincial agreement was followed by funding problems as the province decided it needed more money to meet Francophone needs adequately. Officials of the Secretary of State's Department express confidence that the project will go ahead, although timing is uncertain.



Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick – Dieppe, (N. B.)

As to the future, there are some voices being raised among educators questioning whether bilingual colleges should automatically be phased out as more Francophone institutions arrive on the



Collège Saint-Boniface, Manitoba

scene. In a brief presented in 1990 to the Advisory Commission of French Language College Services in Northern Ontario, Cambrian College argued that, while it would welcome the establishment of a French-language institution in the region, there should still be a place for colleges like itself to offer courses in both languages.

**What happens to those
who want to go to college
in their own official language?**

Beyond formal education in physical institutions, in 1989 the province, assisted by federal funding, set up the Forma-Distance program, co-ordinated by Cité collégiale, with the participation of the four bilingual colleges, to enable students across the province to follow courses at college level. For the moment the emphasis is on training students for the education of young children.

In Educ-Action, another new program, an information van, the "Caravane technologique", visits all regions of the province to provide prospective students with information about post-secondary programs available in French.

New Brunswick

Outside Quebec, the province where the needs of minority official language education are being most adequately met at all levels is New Brunswick. One reason is that Francophones, largely concentrated in the northern and eastern parts of the province, account for about one-third of the population. This in turn explains the rich tradition of private French-language education facilities supported by the Roman Catholic Church and dating back a century and more.

Today, in the realm of post-secondary education, the province boasts the Université de Moncton, backed up by a network of campuses, four in all, under the collective name of the Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick, with about 2,500 full and part-time students in Bathurst, Campbellton, Dieppe and Edmundston. There is also l'école de Pêches du Nouveau-Brunswick, located in the Acadian cultural and commercial centre of Caraquet on Chaleur Bay on the province's north coast.



Nova Scotia

In Nova Scotia, where the Acadian community is also considerable, the Université Ste-Anne has just been joined by the province's first Franco-phone college, the Collège de l'Acadie, officially opened last September as another joint federal-provincial project. The facility temporarily comprises six centres throughout the province offering technical and professional training courses and linked by distance education technology. The centres are located at Comeauville, Halifax-Dartmouth, Petit-de-Grat, Pomquet, St Joseph du Moine and Ste Anne du Ruisseau. Construction of permanent campuses is planned over the next three years.

Manitoba

The largest and most concentrated French-speaking population in the West is in Manitoba, and so is the oldest and largest French-language post-secondary institution. This is the Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface, dating back to 1818.



Saskatchewan Language Institute

Since 1871 the Collège has been recognized as a degree-granting institution; it is affiliated with the University of Manitoba, which it helped found in 1877. Since 1972 it has also provided some education at the college level, a fact officially recognized in 1989 with the creation of the École technique et professionnelle du Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface. The emphasis so far has been on bilingual secretary training, business administration and child care, as well as teacher training.

It has also a wide-ranging adult education program.

Saskatchewan

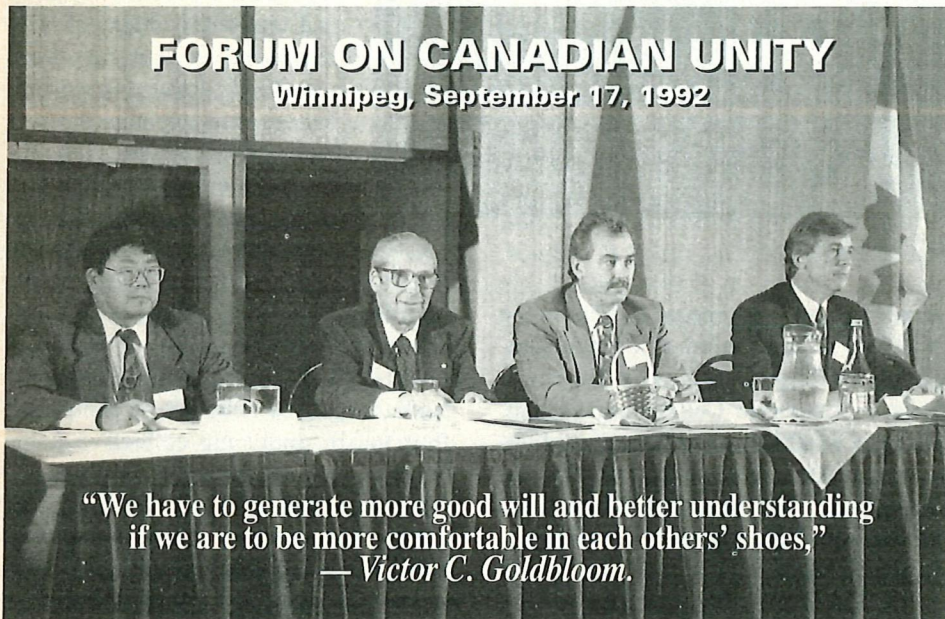
In the neighbouring province, the multilingual Saskatchewan Language Institute, affiliated with the University of Regina, offers post-secondary courses, some at college level, in French, including mathematics, history, education, computer science and geography.

Alberta

Perhaps the most paradoxical situation occurs in Alberta, where the Faculté Saint-Jean, an affiliate of the University of Alberta in Edmonton, offers university degree courses, adult education and courses for children, but as yet no courses at college level. Alberta Francophones are hoping such courses will be offered soon, but for the moment there are no firm plans to do so. There appears to be agreement on one point: if there is to be a French-language college program in Alberta it will be affiliated with the Faculté and in all probability associated with its province-wide adult education program.

Future options

What of the future of college-level education for official language minorities? Outside of the areas where it is relatively solidly entrenched in present campuses and future plans, it will probably lean heavily on distance education, especially through electronic means. Another possibility, brought up at the National Forum on Post-Secondary Education held in Saskatoon in October 1987, is to put more emphasis on concentrating expertise in particular disciplines in a few institutions. In the words of the 1987 Annual Report of the Commissioner of Official Languages: "Outside Quebec, French-speaking student numbers are small, their needs are special, and neither expertise nor resources are unlimited, all of which makes this an area where the principle of concentration should be pursued seriously." ■



"We have to generate more good will and better understanding if we are to be more comfortable in each others' shoes,"
— Victor C. Goldbloom.

LEFT TO RIGHT: Art Miki, President of the National Association of Japanese Canadians; Victor C. Goldbloom, Commissioner of Official Languages; Raymond Bisson, President of the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada; Claude Beauchamp, President of the Regroupement économie et constitution.

Canadian Parents for French 15 years later

BRIGITTE MORISSETTE*

"If the universities were living in the real world they would deny a diploma to anyone who does not speak at least two languages. What a blessing that would be for our children and our country!"

Roch Carrier, the well-known author of *La Guerre, Yes Sir!*, experienced his road to Damascus at the Collège militaire de St-Jean in Quebec. As Rector of this National Defence institution, the writer preaches linguistic openness with his iconoclastic humour in a recent issue of *Canadian Living*. All his books have been translated into English and into many other languages. He prides himself on being bilingual and is pleased that his daughters are polyglot. One of the greatest privileges in the world, he says, is to speak at least two languages.

This is somewhat the same message that Canadian Parents for French, a voluntary organization that has just celebrated its 15th anniversary, expounds. It had 35 members to begin with, true believers in learning French in immersion classes. Today it has 18,000 members who are still just as imaginative at finding ways to stimulate the practice of French. Many of these parents do not speak the language of George-Étienne Cartier, but they share Roch Carrier's pride in having given their children some of the best tools for achieving mastery of French.

The French immersion classes chosen in the 1960s by these daring parents — some were even accused of foolhardiness — have grown to a powerful network of 2,142 schools all across Canada.

In 1990-91, 11% of all second-language students in Canada were enrolled in immersion classes. In all, they represented 6% of Canada's school population.

It is therefore no surprise that the learning of French in immersion classes



Josalys Scott

constitutes the most studied phenomenon in the recent history of education in Canada.

The royal road to communications

Matthew Scott was not yet six years old when his mother, Josalys, an immigrant to Regina from her native Great Britain, decided to enrol him in French immersion, starting with nursery school. Her two daughters would follow in his footsteps. The time was the 1970s, when there were less than 200 schools offering

French immersion classes. In 15 years their number would increase tenfold and achieve the phenomenal growth rate of between 10% and 20% from 1984 to 1989 — and up to 600% in some areas. Gradually, Anglophone children would be able to attend elementary and then secondary school in immersion classes. The system would grow according to the old law of supply and demand, at the same rate of growth as that of the pioneer pupils themselves — an unprecedented success story.

Matthew Scott, now 19, has just been admitted to the famous Ryerson Polytechnic Institute in Toronto. He wants to be an engineer. He has all he needs to achieve his goal, probably at the head of his class. His only regret is that he now has fewer opportunities to practise his French and may lose some of his fluency. This is the major problem facing the hundreds of thousands of young people who now form the cohort of immersion children.

Canadian Parents for French therefore tries to develop a great many para-educational activities: French immersion weekends and camps, exchanges with Québécois families, trips to France and other countries in la Francophonie, films, videos, plays and other performances. In addition, there are the famous oratorical contests that arouse keen interest in young people from the various provinces, and annual congresses such as the one just held in Toronto.

Some day, perhaps, in his spare time Matthew Scott may want to record his impressions of an education that enabled him to reach the top with a head start on most of his Toronto colleagues: being



* Brigitte Morissette is a freelance writer.



Pat Brehaut

able to speak two languages fluently, and without paying too dearly for it. That is the major object of the operation: to teach French as the most natural thing in the world.

"At first, we parents were in the vanguard, a little bit reckless," Matthew's mother, Josalys Scott, says, laughing. But she has not lost her enthusiasm, which she now directs towards the administration of Canadian Parents for French in Ottawa. The association, with the support of the Department of the Secretary of State, has offices in many parts of Canada. Its president, Pat Brehaut, lives in Alberta, where her two daughters attended French immersion schools until high school. Pat wanted to open up to her children a door that had been closed to her, despite a French-sounding name. She herself, like many of her colleagues in the association, took advantage of immersion to familiarize herself with French and Quebec culture.

French immersion classes have forged a close-knit network, responding to the fears of parents in a more difficult and, above all, fiercely competitive environment. "Will attending French courses from primary school not have an adverse

effect on the quality of my children's English?" anxious parents ask. Experience shows that it does not. On the contrary, learning a second language results in a deeper knowledge of one's mother tongue, even after two or three years of trial and error in elementary school. Comparisons between the two languages lead to a more flexible understanding of linguistic and grammatical concepts. Intellectual curiosity is stimulated, resulting in greater ease of expression and assurance in learning new material.

The teaching of French through immersion now constitutes a veritable network of education. The most recent findings by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages show stabilization around annual growth of 4% to 7% at the secondary level. Canadian Parents for French, for its part, is not resting on its laurels. Enrolment in pre-school immersion classes has shown a slight decline. The influx of immigrants who speak neither official language is resulting in new pressure on budgets allocated by some school boards for the teaching of French, since priority is being given to learning English as a second language in places with great ethnic diversity.

Moreover, young Canadians like Jennifer Brehaut have to abandon immersion when they enter secondary school because they are unable to follow their career choice at that level. The number of Francophone teachers is insufficient in many regions of Canada, and the choice of subjects that can be studied in French is limited. This is particularly true of instruction in science and mathematics. On the other hand, regular French programs — the core French programs — have improved considerably. Jennifer is therefore pursuing her training in French and, happily, a short exchange with a Francophone family in Quebec recently enabled her to regain her fluency in her second language.

Practice is the key to linguistic fluency. Canadian Parents for French does not need to be convinced of this when it issues a message that receives wide media attention: learning French makes a world of difference. The hundreds of thousands of young Canadians who learned French in immersion classes seem so convinced of this that 90% of them say they would give their children the benefit of the same experience. ■

(Our translation)



In 1990, 3 out of 4 Canadian parents hoped that their children would learn a second language.

RESOLVING COMPLAINTS: SPEEDING UP

KIRSTY JACKSON*



Pierre Gravelle and Victor C. Goldbloom

The Commissioner of Official Languages is resolving complaints from the public about three federal departments more quickly and more effectively, thanks to new agreements signed by the departments.

In October Revenue Canada (Taxation), Revenue Canada (Customs and Excise) and Consumer and Corporate Affairs signed agreements that facilitate the ability of the Commissioner's Office to deal directly with local department managers, in an effort to speed up the resolution of language-related complaints from the public. The move should cut the time it takes to resolve most complaints about language service in these departments considerably.

"This is a necessary step, which allows us to be in direct communication with the people responsible for implementing the different sections of the Act," says Victor Goldbloom, Commissioner of Official Languages.

Officials in the other departments agree. "The move makes a lot of sense. It fits in with the philosophy of serving the public," says Pierre Gravelle, Deputy Minister of Revenue Canada (Taxation) and Revenue Canada (Customs and Excise).

Now investigators from the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages will deal directly with 43 local Taxation offices across the country. "There was an internal delay and we are going to bypass it with this [new arrangement]....The more recently an incident happens, the easier it is to trace," says Marcel Pilon Director of Official Languages at Revenue Canada (Taxation).

The agreements are an effort to move away from the hierarchical thinking that has dominated the federal Public Service and to allow regional managers more responsibility for problem solving in their local offices. In the past bureaucrats saw official languages policy as the responsibility of a few people in a far-off division. But, increasingly, federal line managers have become accountable for the Official Languages Program. "If line managers don't feel responsible for implementing official languages it's difficult to get them to do things. Our agreement with the Commissioner's Office will empower managers responsible for official languages," says Pierre Gravelle.

Ever since becoming Commissioner, Dr. Goldbloom has emphasized quality service to clients. He plans to sign similar agreements with six additional federal organizations in 1993. ■

* Kirsty Jackson is an Ottawa-based freelance writer.

The regulations are here

ANDRÉ CREUSOT*

December 16, 1992, is another milestone in the implementation of the official languages program in Canada. That is the date for most of the regulations on services to the public to come into force. Some others will take effect in December 1993 and a small number in December 1994.

The regulations define the concept of significant demand set out in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and in the Official Languages Act. They clarify the linguistic obligations of federal agencies and define the situations in which Canadians who speak the minority official language may expect to be served in their language. In general, the regulations confirm the services now available; some services will be extended and a small number of services reduced. Impact of the regulations will not be clear until they are fully implemented. However, even though the federal government does not provide services in both official languages all across the country, Canadians who speak the minority official language are, in general, treated in a reasonable and equitable manner.

We are eager to see what initial impact the regulations, which mark another step towards linguistic justice, will have.

* André Creusot is Chief of OCOL's Policy Secretariat



Photo: Hubert Panetel

THE COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATES WITH CANADIANS

Victor C. Goldbloom speaking with callers to Peter Warren's phone-in show on CJOB, Winnipeg.

The Commissioner reminded listeners that the Official Languages Act makes it unnecessary for individual Canadians to be bilingual when dealing with the federal government — the institution, not the citizen seeking service, must be able to operate in either language.

THE ROOTS OF CANADA'S LANGUAGE POLICY

MARC ROCHON*

Anniversaries are traditionally a time to take stock of where we are and how we got here. Canada's 125th anniversary is no exception. Canada's official languages policy has its roots in the past and the present. English and French have co-existed in what is now Canada for almost four centuries. The Canadian Confederation marked a turning point in the relations between the English-speaking and French-speaking inhabitants of the northern half of the continent. Fundamental to the Canadian reality, then as now, is the need to form a working partnership between two linguistic communities.

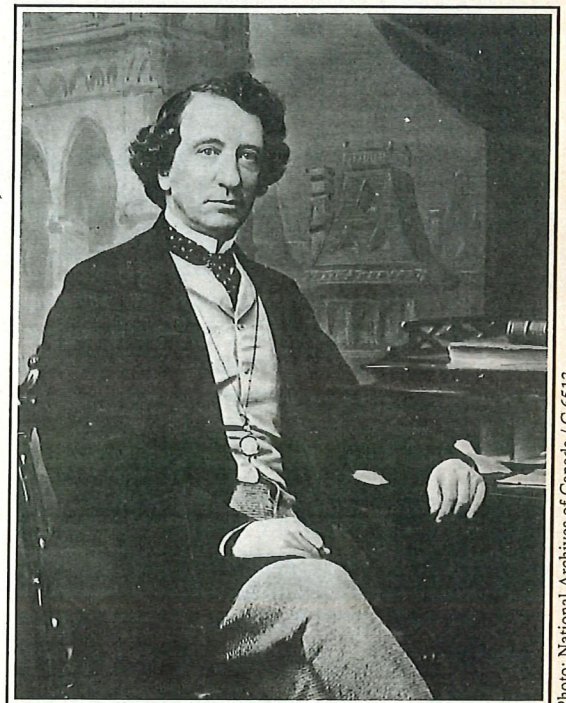
The confederative pact was deeply rooted in the Canadian experience and signalled a response to the presence of two significant language communities based on a respect for linguistic differences and the desire to pursue common interests. Where language is concerned, the drafters of Constitution Act of 1867 may have benefited from the experience of unilingualism under the 1841 Union Act. That Act, which made English the sole language of the legislature, had proved unworkable and its linguistic provisions were repealed seven years later at the request of the Canadian legislature.

Language is a recurrent theme in Canadian federalism, yet, surprisingly,

it was not initially a controversial one. According to Sir John A. Macdonald's account, the issue was raised and the essentials of Section 133 agreed to with little debate at the 1864 Quebec City conference. The Constitution adopted was largely silent on the question of language. The Constitution Act of 1867 establishes the right of any person to use English or French in the Parliament of Canada, the legislature of Quebec and in the courts of Quebec and Canada. It also requires the laws and the records of the Parliament of Canada and the legislature of Quebec to be in both languages. To modern eyes this seems very limited; however, we must also recall that the impact of government in 1867 on the lives of citizens was equally limited.

There were undoubtedly unwritten assumptions about the new nation being created which are implicit in the Act's businesslike text. After three years of constitutional discussions and with the pragmatic realization that unilingualism would not work, much of the philosophical underpinning of the linguistic regime went without saying.

The key concepts are clear from the outset. Canadians are to have the choice of language, governments have obligations in relation to the use of languages and both languages have equal status. John A. Macdonald noted:

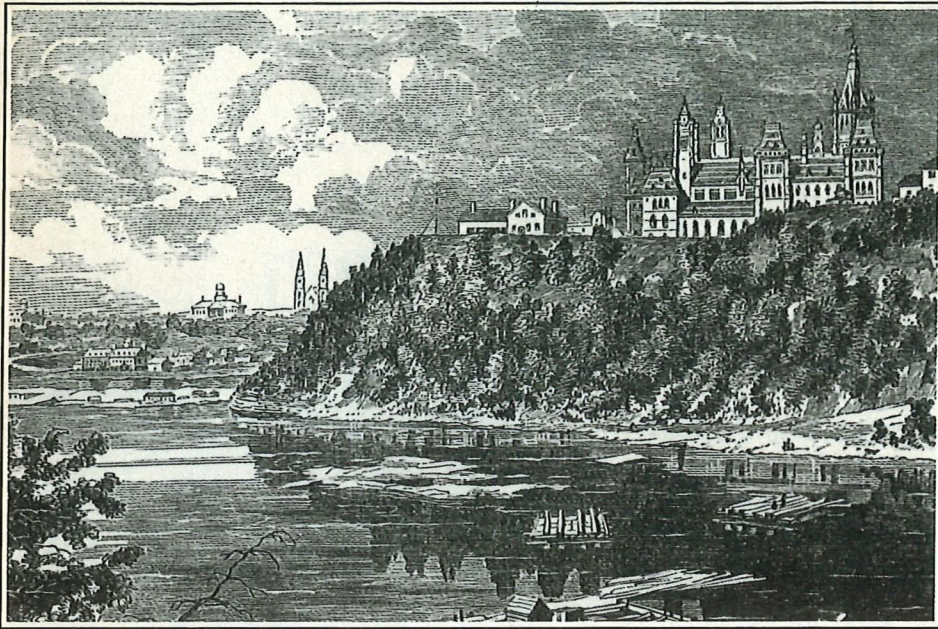


Sir John A. Macdonald

I have no accord with the desire expressed in some quarters that by any mode whatever there should be an attempt made to oppress the one language or to render it inferior to the other; I believe that would be impossible if it were tried, and it would be foolish and wicked if it were possible.¹

It was also clear to the Fathers of Confederation that the Constitution must do more than simply allow a majority to express itself; it must also respect the legitimate rights of the minorities, including linguistic minorities. Macdonald recognized this, noting:

* Marc Rochon was Under Secretary of State when he wrote "The roots of Canada's language policy", published in the June issue of *Terminology Update*, from which this is excerpted. He is now Deputy Minister of Communications.



*The Parliament Buildings
near completion c. 1865.*

Photo: National Archives of Canada / C 117841

We will enjoy here that which is the greatest test of constitutional freedom — we will have the rights of the minority respected. In all countries the rights of the majority take care of themselves, but it is only in countries like England, enjoying constitutional liberty, and safe from the tyranny of a single despot or of an unbridled democracy, that the rights of minorities are regarded.²

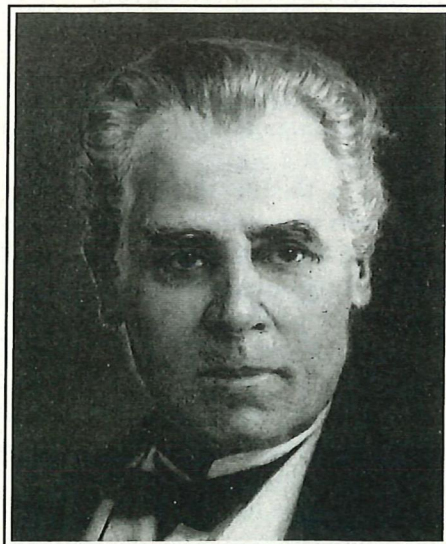
From the beginning our linguistic diversity was a defining feature of the new country, as George-Étienne Cartier stated in the Confederation debates:

We can not legislate for the disappearance of French Canadians from American soil, but British and French Canadians alike can appreciate and understand their position relative to each other....It is a benefit rather than otherwise to have a diversity of races.³

Cartier realized that the agreement on which Confederation was based would need to be adjusted from time to time, but hoped that these changes would

remain faithful to the original spirit of Confederation. He noted, "I hope that if [this grand project of Confederation] must be amended...it will not be to narrow the principles of fairness on which it is founded, but rather to enlarge them even more."

Certainly in that sense it can be argued that the official languages policies we have today are the direct descendants of



Sir George-Étienne Cartier

Photo: National Archives of Canada / C 8007

the framework provided by the Constitution Act of 1867.

In 1867 English- and French-speaking Canadians set out on a new journey together and have travelled a great distance since. It may be fair at this point to ask ourselves how well we have passed Macdonald's test of constitutional freedom and consider whether Cartier's challenge of enlarging on principles of fairness is not as real today as it was 125 years ago. As Prime Minister Mulroney has stated:

The struggle for the official acceptance of linguistic duality in Canada did not, of course, start with the B and B Commission, nor did it end with the Official Languages Act. Indeed, the birth of our country, through Confederation in 1867, happened because English-speaking Canadians and French-speaking Canadians, in respect of both groups' distinctive characteristics, decided to share their ideal of economic development and national unity. There have been encouraging victories and there have been frustrating setbacks on the road to linguistic equality. But I believe that the larger vision, the one inspired by generosity and tolerance, will always triumph....⁴ ■

Notes:

- ¹ House of Commons Debates, February 17, 1890, 745.
- ² Parliamentary Debates on Confederation of the British North American Provinces, 1865, reprinted (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1951), p. 44.
- ³ As quoted in "Towards a National Understanding".
- ⁴ An address by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Official Languages Act, June 13, 1989.