L'AVENIR DES FRANCO-AMÉRICAINS

TEXTE D'UNE CONFÉRENCE SUR L'AVENIR DES FRANCO-AMÉRICAINS

Présenté le 4 juin, 1974, par Yvon A. Labbé, à Biddeford, Maine.

On m'a demandé de résumer en quelques minutes mes idées et mes pensées au sujet de l'avenir des Franco-Américains. Comme vous le savez c'est un de ces sujets qui n'a pas de fin.

En essayant de concevoir cet avenir, je me suis forcément choisi comme point de départ, et c'est avec toute humilité je m'empresse de vous le dire. Alors ça devient tout de suite très sérieux, non pas parce que je crois l'idéal de ce qu'un Franco-Américain doit être, mais parce que je vois en moi ce que j'ai vu et ce que je vois dans beaucoup d'autres; c'est à dire, un désir mystérieux de s'absenter de sa culture et de sa langue, à vrai dire s'absenter de soi-même.

Par ailleurs s'il y a un moi bicultural et bilingue -- ajoutons plus ou moins -- et si c'est le seul moi que je possède (et je vous assure que c'est très difficile d'en posséder un autre, j'ai essayer) et ce moi doit faire face à un monde d'une complexité effrayante; j'ose dire que je suis inspiré par un désir et surtout par le besoin de devenir tout.

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réfléchir sérieusement à ce que nous sommes.

Puisque la théorie du "melting pot" n'est plus l'obstacle qu'elle a déjà été, et que notre situation économique est moins en danger, il est maintenant plus facile de se permettre de poser des questions, et d'autant plus facile si on peut entrevoir la possibilité d'agir.

Tout ça c'est un peu déprimant. Je suis au contraire un optimiste. On est un peuple fier. On n'aime pas être pauvre, ni à l'intérieur, ni à l'extérieur. On sait que l'on détient une richesse mais on ne sait pas encore l'exploiter et d'en obtenir les fruits. Il y a dans notre sang toute une puissance créatrice qui est encore dormante. Il faut reconnaitre ce que nous avons trop longtemps ignoré.

Il nous faut un miroir. Il n'est pas loin. C'est moi, c'est vous, c'est nous. C'est à dire je me vois dans vous et j'apprends à aimer ce que je vois parce que ça fait aussi partie de moi. Pour arriver à se connaître il faut créer, découvrir, se révéler; et ça c'est un peu comme manger, dormir, et respirer. Le second produit un renouvellement du corps tandis que le premier engendre la remise en vigueur de l'esprit. Cependant, on a besoin du premier et du deuxième procédé pour se rendre compte que l'on est vivant, que l'on est différent, et qu'on est pas impuissant.

L'avenir des Franco-Américains ne dépend pas des autres. Ça commence avec moi, avec vous, avec nous. Afin de pouvoir réfléchir sur cet avenir, il faut bien sur s'inspirer du passé, mais il faut surtout voir comment l'on vit le présent. On doit faire l'inventaire de ce que nous sommes maintenant, ce qui sans doute fera de la lumière sur ce que nous pouvons être demain.

Dans mon cas, l'inventaire se fait avec difficulté quand je tiens compte de ma culture, mes langues (puisque j'en ai deux) et ma religion. Ce qui simplifie la chose c'est qu'on m'a appris rien à l'école, ou à l'université sur l'histoire, la culture, la langue franco-américaine.

L'inventaire se fait déjà maigre. Je peux tout de même aborder le problème par des questions. Comme vous le savez, ce n'est pas là que nous sommes dans notre plus fort. Ces questions peuvent sembler
L'AVENIR, CONT. FROM PAGE 3)

compilées dans leur formulation, mais
quand elles prennent forme, elles ont une
simplité inattendue.

--- Est-ce que l'on existe?

--- Ben oui, la preuve, c'est qu'on est ici.

--- Est-ce qu'on est plusieurs?

--- Assez! Plus d'un million en Nouvelle
Angleterre et à peu près trois cents mille
dans le Maine.

--- Est-ce qu'on se ressemble?

--- Ça c'est plus difficile. Y a pas eu de
recherche. Mais ça doit qu'on se ressemble.
On vient presque tous de la même place.

--- Est-ce qu'on parle tous français?

--- Dans les écoles y vont vous dire que
ce n'est pas vrai. Mais à mon point de vue
on a tous la même culture avec les mêmes
valeurs. Ce qui se passe c'est qu'avec
certaines personnes ces valeurs culturelles
se manifestent en anglais. Y disent "Go
ahead, back up. Close the light." Et
puis, y savent pas la différence entre
I like you et I love you.

--- Mais pourquoi est-ce qu'on est ici,
qu'est-ce qu'on fait ici, qu'est-ce qu'on
va devenir?

--- Je me sens mal!

Bien, c'est comme mon grand-père me
disait:

"Ya une soixante d'années y avait
rien à faire au Québec. On avait besoin
d'exercice. Ça fait qu'on est venu aux
États pour couper de la pâture, pis en-
suite on a décidé de rester par ici.
Pis pas longtemps après qu'on a trouvé
qu'on était pas assez smart. On avait
besoin d'exercice pour le coco.

"Si faut qu'on a fait venir des prêtres,
pis des frères, pis les sœurs. Pis on a
fait des écoles. A été pas mal ben pour
une escoupe. Mais y m'paraît qu'on a
encore besoin d'exercice. J'parle à mon
p'tit gars en français pis lui y m'répond
en anglais. J'vus à la banque en anglais,
pis j'travaillé en français. Ce qui a de
pire, j'é-note la messe du dimanche en
anglais, pis j'prie en français.

"Ça ben l'air qu'on a encore besoin
d'exercice."

Y était pas fou mon grand-père!

Le Larousse définit le mot exercice
de cette façon: c'est l'action de se
donner du mouvement. Pourquoi de l'exercice?
Parce que le défaut d'exercice nuit à la
santé. Le peuple franco-américain n'est
pas en bonne santé, c'est vrai.

--- Ce fort mais y est pas mort.

Je suis de l'avis qu'il est possible
de savoir, de faire savoir ce qu'on a
fait comme peuple pendant plus d'un
siècle de présence. On a une langue, on
a une culture, on a une histoire. On
travaille ben fort pis on joue ben fort,
ce qui fait tout de même un bel équilibre.
De l'intelligence on en a en masse. Mais
qu'est-ce qui manqué? Rien, sauf de vivre
au complet ce que l'on est, et d'être con-
vaincu que notre présence active va con-
tribuer au développement de notre société,
aussi qu'à l'évolution saine de notre
peuple franco-américain. L'avenir n'est
qu'il y a des gens comme vous et moi qui
se posent des questions. Il y en a en
plus qui trouvent les moyens d'agir. Je
nous souhaite réussite.

STUDENT EXCHANGE

Eight students from St. Georges
Quebec arrived on the Maine campus Monday,
March 3rd. This marks the beginning of
the student exchange program that was or-
organized by the Franco-American Resource
Opportunity Group and university students
from St. Georges, P.Q.

The Canadian students visited the
New England Atlantic Provinces Québec
Center (NEAPQ). The center is responsible
for many of the Canadian courses offered
at UMO. They also have a broad range of
activities associated with the flow of
Canadian cultural information from New
England to Canada. Due to the fact that
the native language of these students is
French, and since presently the NEAPQ has
no French-speaking personnel, some of the
students had difficulty expressing them-
soever in English. The students did,
however, enjoy the visit.

During their stay, the Canadians
will attend classes, movies, basketball
games and many other activities. After
speaking with them, I was pleased to know
they enjoyed the social and academic at-
mosphere at UMO. As quoted by one of the
Canadian students, "Students at UMO are
very much open in expressing their feelings
and attitudes, and I can almost feel a
wave of involvement in the air." Others
were amazed by the size of the campus and
structures.

UMO students will have the opportunity
to visit the St. Georges college during

(CONT: PAGE 5)
the spring break at the end of March and
beginning of April. Eight students will be
chosen for the F.A.R.O.G. sponsored trip
on a first to sign-up basis. Any Franco-
American or French speaking person is
eligible for the trip.

Among the activities that will take
place at St. Georges is a visit to the
maple sugar farms, where students will have
the opportunity to tap maple trees. For
further information concerning the visit
to St. Georges, contact Robert J. Pelletier
at the F.A.R.O.G. office, 208 Fernald Hall,
UMO.
Robert J. Pelletier

There is a sizable population of French
Canadian ancestry in this area and such
a project involving their children would
hopefully renew pride in their ancestry.

Miss Lorraine Martel, Mod. Lang. Dept.
2615 Warwick Ave.
Warwick, R.I. 02889

TO THE FORUM: Je suis une étudiante ici à
l'Université de Massachussetts — en train
de faire des recherches pour un étude des
franco-américaines dans le Maine. Je vais
me concentrer sur les villes de Waterville
et Lewiston. Je veux montrer les raisons
pour et les effets de l'assimilation des
franco-canadiens. Avez-vous de l'informa-
tion que vous pouvez m'envoyer au sujet du
pourcentage de franco-américains dans
la population, n'importe quel information
statistique.

Our F.A.R.O.G. group down here is sort
of floundering at the moment but we're
working on getting our newsletter OFFSPRING
together ... should it work out, we'll
send a copy up to you.

Karen Kay
Amherst, Mass. 01002

TO OUR READERS: For those of you living in
Waterville or Lewiston, and with some in-
formation to share with a neighbor, please
contact Ms. Kay at her Massachusetts
address.

Paul Collette, Language Dept.
Woonsocket Senior High School
777 Cass Ave.
Woonsocket, R.I. 02895

TO THE FORUM: I am anxious to involve my
students of French III and IV in a bi-
centennial year project. If you have any
suggestions I would be most grateful.

Karen Kay
Amherst, Mass. 01002

Another piece of information -- the
Department of Health, Education, and Wel-
fare are providing funding for an Ethnic
Heritage Studies Program. We are applying
for funds. It would enable us to involve
several departments as well as the com-

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LES NUAGES DANS MA TÊTE

par

Don Dugas

Oui, chérie,
Il y a des nuages
Dans ma tête
Des fois j'estime
D'autre lors
J'es déteste.

Quand j'estime
C'ta cause que
J'y sens
Un amour de soleil
Qui sourit
Sur un divin
Que je soupçonne
En moi.

Quand j'es déteste
Mes nuages
Dans la tête,
C'est à cause
K'i m'font peur
Effrayant
J'ai peur
Qu'un beau jour
I m'annoncent
La distance entre
Toi et moi.
Et même pire,
de la distance entre
Moi et moi.

Ecoute, chérie
Ces nuages
Dans ma tête
Si t'font peur
C'est correct
de l'dire
Et je comprends
Que si ça nous sépare
Avec beaucoup de peine
Ça nous diminue pas.
Nous sommes toujours
Des êtres dignes
D'amour divin et de respect humain.
I s'agit de le croire --
(Au moins c'est ça
K'i me disent.)

15 février, 1975
VENT

par

Maxine Michaud

Avez-vous déjà arrêté pour vous demander pourquoi soi pour?
Apar que so froid
sêch
sa move des affaires
Avez-vous déjà watcher comment sa fait des affaires?
Pourquoi sa change de bords?
Pourquoi sa le fait des foits et pas d'autre foits?
Je sais pas mé se fun d'y penser
Sa move des nuages
voles
des foits du monde
bois
papier
aucune chose
Sa refresh l'air
sa me fradi
Me fait tremblé
Sa seche la terre
les almes
la pluie
la sueur
Sa change de bord
Regard comme le monde change le mood
Le vent est bien humain
Et-vous comme le vents?

15 février, 1975

PRINTEMPS

par

Claude

Toute chose à son temps
J'ai hâte pour le mien
Temps
Tant d'hiver
Tant d'printemps
Vie
Vivre l'espoir
Vie
Vivre l'amour

Pourtant?? Pourquoi.
Pourquoi?? Pourtant.
Tout'l'temps pourquoi
Souvent pourtant
A qui la croix
A seul lui qui la faite
Pourquoi la porter
Pourquoi moi
Pourquoi le printemps
OTHER CAMPUSES

UNMI ANNOUNCES A NEW FRENCH MAJOR OF ESPECIAL INTEREST TO FRANCO-AMERICANS

The University of Maine at Presque Isle has recently received approval for their B.S. and B.A. Majors in French.

The French Major at the University of Maine at Presque Isle has as its primary objective the facilitation of the language learning process. It is designed to develop in its students the greatest possible proficiency in the skills of reading, writing, speaking and understanding; that is, an ability in the language which is as close as possible to that of a native speaker.

This effort, abandoned in most institutions at the intermediate level in favor of the in-depth study of literature, (very often conducted in the English language) continues at UNMI with a wide range of courses divided along linguistic and cultural lines.

Since the language acquisition is the goal, a linguistic orientation would seem to be appropriate at all levels. Therefore, upper-division offerings feature such courses as stylistics, translation, phonetics, idiomatic expressions, conversation and grammar. However, the French language, like any other, is the constantly evolving product of dynamic social forces and, as such, cannot be taught in isolation from the culture which matures it.

If linguistics is the proper vehicle for language acquisition, culture is the natural medium and the student is constantly dealing with cultural material as he strives to become articulate in the target language. Specific civilization courses furnish the necessary insights into the culture from which the language derives, and at the same time provide the student with an opportunity to make meaningful use of his language skills.

Situated as we are in an area where French, for many thousands, is the mother tongue, and in consideration of our proximity to Quebec, the language department at UNMI places particular emphasis on the language and culture of the French in North America. In this way it hopes to make the language experience a more meaningful one for our Franco-Americans and to expose all of our students to a valuable linguistic resource at their very doorstep.

If we can assume that we learn by doing, it seems to follow that only by providing a situation in which the student is constantly dealing with his environment and his ideas, through the target language, can he hope to achieve anything like the native speaker's mastery of his own language. Sophistication in the use of any language is a very personal matter. To treat language learning as a purely intellectual problem is to subvert the process and preordain failure. The French Program at UNMI takes into account the individual nature of language learning, providing specific linguistic tools to deal with specific linguistic problems only when the student is prepared to make meaningful use of them. Since he deals with the target language with little or no reference to English, his thought and language patterns cease to be those of his native tongue. In short, he learns to think in French.

All classes at UNMI are conducted in French. The instructor is the facilitator of a process in which the student is directly involved. In beginning classes, once new material has been introduced by the instructor, the classes are divided into small conversation groups assigned to advanced students of the language. Here basic language patterns are reinforced by meaningful use and the emphasis is placed on the oral skill. Writing is introduced at an early stage and developed through programmed instruction. Laboratory work includes workbook activities, listening and responding to materials on tape, and slide presentations to which the student makes

(CONT: PAGE 9)
oral and written response.

During the first semester of the intermediate level, students are still involved with the programmed learning of reading and writing skills. In addition, one half of the program now becomes individualized. In consultation with the instructor, they contract for a number of projects designed to develop the understanding of speaking skills. They are encouraged to choose those projects which have the most meaning for them and which suit their particular needs. As an example, a student whose mother tongue is English may opt to conduct a series of taped interviews with a Franco-American, for which he must develop questions, spend several hours in conversation and discuss with the instructor, in French, an analysis of the interview. The psychological advantages to the student are apparent: he gains confidence in his ability and a readiness to make even greater use of his skill.

In his second semester, of the intermediate stage, the student is involved in a totally individualized program. Depending on his abilities and needs he will undertake programs designed to introduce him to upper level course material. These projects may take the form of taped dictations, slide presentations, conversations with a native speaker, listening exercises, written compositions, reading and re-telling of French stories or novels, mini-classes in phonetics, idiomatic expressions, and evaluated in consultation with the instructor.

At the upper division level the process becomes more deductive. The curriculum is divided among linguistic and cultural lines. Although the student is encouraged to take a more analytical view of the language, he is always involved with its use. Civilization classes do not primarily impart information. They encourage the student to make meaningful use of cultural material through the target language. Linguistics based courses do not concentrate on theory, they develop the more complicated language skills needed for dealing with cultural material in a sophisticated fashion. Through individualization, even civilization courses become language courses; grammatical and stylistic principles are introduced to the individual student when he is prepared to make meaningful use of them.

A graduate of the program would be well qualified to enter into graduate degree programs in French.

Guy Gallagher
Robert Armstrong
UMPI, Presque Isle, Me.

MYSTERIOUS CAVE
IN THE VALLEY

What I'm really writing to you about is of a certain cave along the St. John River. I want to say right now that all my information is second-hand and third-hand. I haven't had a chance to check any of it out.

It seems that an article in the Mars Hill newspaper, year 1902, mentions this cave.

The story is told by a woman who was kidnapped by Indians some years earlier. The Indians were bringing her to a settlement in the province of Quebec where she was traded for a barrel of gunpowder or some such thing. On the trip to the province, she mentioned a certain cave where they spent the night. It was a "two storey" cave. It had a large chamber and in a far corner was a hole dropping six to eight feet into a second smaller chamber which was partially under the first chamber but also to the side and deeper back into the hill or mountain.

A few years back was a rumor saying that someone found a "two storey" cave which held remnants of articles said to be left by the British. This rumor was never proven as far as I know.

Also a few years back (two or three years), Mr. Aaron Jackson of Allagash claimed he found a "two storey" cave and described it the same as in the Mars Hill newspaper article. He claimed it is on the St. John River southwest of Dickey, Maine. It is not directly on the river, but not far from it. Shortly after this claim, Mr. Jackson died at the age of 99 and without giving the exact location of the cave.

Since that time, a few explorers-geologists from New York have visited the

(Cont: Page 10)
area. An Indian graveyard was found in St. John, Maine area revealing many relics but no cave was found. They have said that the land does not lend itself to having caves. One man claims that these explorers did not do a thorough job searching due to very bad roads in the area, also the fact that dams in repair in that area discouraged the explorers for some reason.

So it appears at the moment that no one knows exactly where this cave is. I think it will more likely contain Indian relics instead Acadian. There is no proof that it actually exists, though I think it probably does. I think it also possible that this cave may be under water now.

I know several people in the area who are interested in finding it, and as soon as winter leaves, they will begin searching.

I myself plan to talk to some of the "vieux bonhommes" in the Allagash area, though I know one can't believe anything they say. They are endless in their hilarious tall tales. But they just might know something.

Anyway, that's all I know for now. I have a lot of people to talk to and I may know more in a few weeks.

At the moment, I have two jobs and other things to work on (my plans for study in Paris) so spare time is rather rare.

David Boucher
Madawaska

MINORITY OR DISADVANTAGED?

The terms "minority" and "disadvantaged ethnic group" are used when talking about or classifying the Franco-American. However, there are those who feel that minority is too strong a word, or that it doesn't even apply. On the other hand, there are those who definitely feel the tensions and pressures characteristic of most minority groups.

According to one professional sociologist, Madeleine Giguère, "disadvantaged ethnic group" is the appropriate terminology. She qualifies this by stating the following:

"Did you know that a smaller portion of the French labor force in Maine is employed by the State of Maine as compared to the remainder of Maine's labor force? This is also true of employment by the Federal government in Maine. But the difference is in the percentage of the employment of the two groups which is less (in regard to the French labor force of Maine), suggesting that educational preparation does not wholly explain the underemployment of the Francos at that level." And ... "Did you know that the proportion of poor people among the French in Maine is about the same as for the population of the state as a whole, but that the proportion of higher income persons is less among the French as compared to the rest of the population?"
As previously noted, Maine's location and economy have resulted in a large number of French-speaking citizens who have come here, and continue to immigrate, from the surrounding provinces of Canada. The estimated date population range from 1% (1970 census) to over 25%, but it suffices to say that on a state-wide basis, French-Americans represent a substantial minority.

The geographic distribution of this population, also previously referred to can be identified as three distinct areas: (note map).

--- The St. John River Valley Villages such as Van Buren and Madawaska (approximately 75% French-American- Acadian descent).

--- The Lewiston-Auburn and Augusta-Waterville areas of Central Maine (lumbering and paper towns).

--- The Saco- Biddeford area of southern Maine (mill towns of historic importance).

The map indicates a number of sample communities in each area with a 1970 census percentage for French-American population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Madawaska</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Van Buren</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Caribou</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Augusta</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Waterville</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Lewiston</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Auburn</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Biddeford</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Saco</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information:
STAFF, F.A.R.O.G.

REMAINDERS
On vous demande de manière chaleureusement tout votre effort de contribuer à notre effort pour faire:
Irémerger de l'oubli, le Boucher, Raymond
 largo de l'édification, Chet
A
B
C
D
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Q
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S
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V
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X
Y
Z
La Redaction
VOTRE QUOTIENT CULTUREL FRANÇOPHONE

1. La wangan
   a. petit wagon à une roue
   b. orage de neige dans le nord du Maine
   c. company store

2. Avoir ses règles
   a. se faire taper les doigts par la maîtresse
   b. avoir sa tante
   c. trophée que l'on reçoit dans un syndicat de menuisiers

3. A la job
   a. un gros besoin
   b. le contraire d'un swampeur
   c. faire du salon

4. Amarrer
   a. Sanford
   b. Lewiston
   c. Madavaska

5. Le ding
   a. ce rapporte à "Frère Jacques"
   b. 
   c. marteau d'une cloche qui a perdue la voix du matelotant

6. Faire non douce à la main
   a. truc de gynécologue propre, à
   b. ;
   c. voilà, j'ai tout sol-même

7. Y
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 

8. En
   a. État de l'autruche
   b. 
   c. 

Résponses correctes : a, b, c, d, e

MAY TERM IN QUEBEC
Applications for the French May Term in Québec must be received by March 28th, 1975. Admission will be announced by April 14th. A $50.00 deposit payable to May Term/Québec Program will be required by April 21, 1975.

Three academic credits will be given, hence, tuition at $75.00. A registration fee of $5.00, and $50.00 room and board fee (breakfast) for the duration of the course (2 weeks).

Contact Mr. James J. Herlan, Foreign Language Dept., Little Hall, UMO 04473.

NEEDED: PUPPETEERS
Project F.A.C.T.S. at the Maine Public Broadcasting Network are in search of Bilinguals to be used in a puppet production for two pilot programs in the month of April, 1975. Needed are 3 male French voices and 2 female French voices. Applicants must have some feeling for puppets and a sense of theater. You will be trained by professionals and are needed as soon as possible.

If interested, please contact Mr. Nelson, Project F.A.C.T.S., MPBN, Augusta 50, UMO, Orono, Maine.
Tel.: 581-463.