

THE F.A.R.O.G. FORUM



JOURNAL BILINGUE

AVRIL 1978

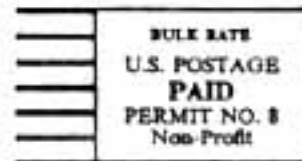
The Franco-American Program

The Franco-American Program is an advocate of the Franco-American Fact at UMO. This office stimulates the development of academic and program offerings at UMO relevant to the history and life experience of this ethnic group in Maine and New England. In addition the program provides bilingual and bicultural work experiences, for UMO-BCC students; maintains a readily available library of materials and informations and has established a network of resources in Maine and New England to assist students, faculty, administrators and agencies with the special research and programming needs.

In conjunction with the student organization, FAROG [the Franco-American Resource Opportunity Group], the Franco-American Office publishes a monthly [8 per yr.] bilingual socio-cultural journal. The FAROG-FORUM (circ. 5500) has become a major voice for Franco-Americans in Maine and New England as well as a unique vehicle for the dissemination of works and information by and about Franco-Americans (300,000 in Maine - over 2 million in New England).

FAROG FORUM
FERNALD HALL
UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
ORONO, MAINE 04473

5-4-20904



Perspectives

BRAYO
THUMBS UP

to local department store salesman for his "dumb frenchman" remarks to P. Michaud

BOO
THUMBS DOWN

to Steve Robbins for instigating genealogy workshops in the state and to Richard Fortin for doing the genealogical presentations at same

to the author's letter in this issue

to the University of Vermont for not keeping Virgil Burtout (Make him an offer he can't refuse)

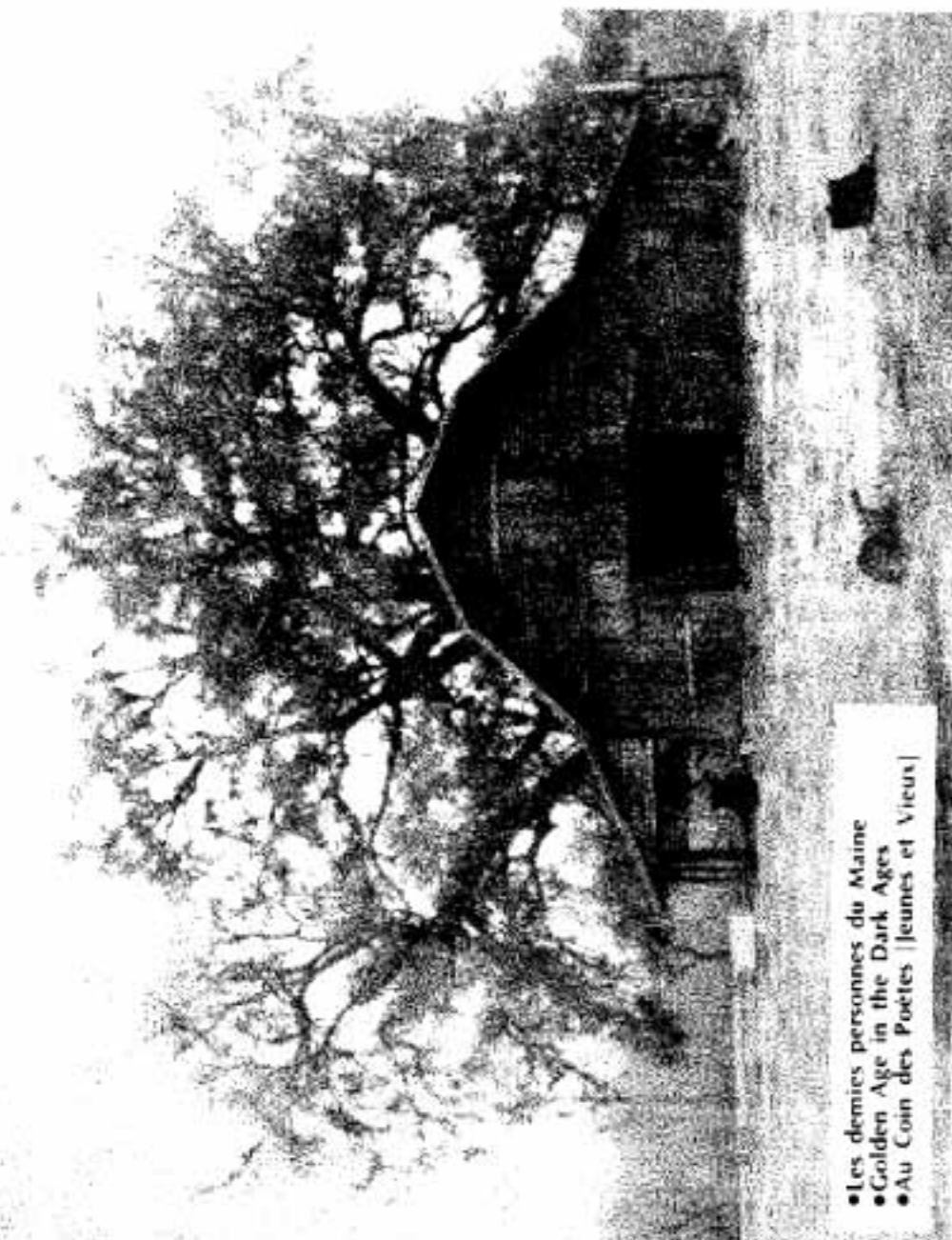
to the Maine State Library for its exemplary Franco-American effort

to Maine Public Broadcasting for the lack of Franco-American Maine Public Broadcasting

to Bangor Mental Health Institute for your APPARENT inactivity in following up in our mutual Franco-American effort of 2 years ago

to the BILINGUAL loggers conference at UMO

to FAROG FORUM for publishing a Franco-population map of New England with inaccuracies



• Les demies personnes du Maine
• Golden Age in the Dark Ages
• Au Coin des Poètes [jeunes et Vieux]

Photo - Claire R. Bolduc

THE WIZARD OF OZ AND THE FRANCO-AMERICAN RENAISSANCE

by Bernard Luegnan

At 7:00 PM on Easter Sunday, March 26, 1978, little children and, yes, big children as well, after having thoroughly satisfied their appetites with a hearty Easter dinner, planted their over-stuffed bodies in front of the nearest available television set in order to partake in the annual American tradition of viewing The Wizard of Oz.

Year after year, we see the main characters in search of their respective goals in life; Dorothy wishes to return to the comfort of her home in Kansas; the Scarecrow would like to have a brain; the Tin Man needs a heart; and the Cowardly Lion wants courage.

They all expect to find these treasures in the land of Oz, where the Great Wizard will supposedly grant them their every wish. Their illusions are shattered in the end when they discover that the Great Wizard is but an ordinary man. Yet, this Great Wizard did indeed prove helpful to them: he made them see that the treasures which they had sought so long and hard were already within them, and that the realization of these gifts may only be achieved through much soul-searching and self-discovery.

Viewing The Wizard of Oz recalled to mind a statement made by Norm Dubé, director of the National Materials Development Center for French and Portuguese in Bedford, N.H., while speaking at one of the workshops during the First Annual Franco-American Conference in Lafayette, Louisiana in March. Norm drew an analogy between The Wizard of Oz and the current Franco-American renaissance. Briefly, he stated that just as the characters in The Wizard of Oz learned that their goals and gifts were already within them, so must all Franco-Americans learn that their language, their traditions, and the very essence of their ethnicity are all contained within them as well.

For several years, Franco-Americans have sought government funds with which to establish bilingual-bicultural educational programs. Their hope is that these programs will bring about a Franco-American

renaissance by fostering ethnic awareness among children as well as among adults. What many people don't appear to realize is that government grants have no more power than did the so-called Great Wizard. That power is already within the Franco-Americans, and no amount of money, large or small, can artificially inject ethnic awareness among members of this group.

The Great Wizard proved to be an essential tool in aiding the characters in the film to achieve self-awareness, and government funds may be employed likewise, so long as Franco-Americans know and fully understand that ethnicity cannot simply be "bought" with x amount of dollars, but moreover, that it must be found in and extracted from the hearts and minds of all individuals. Only through a great deal of soul-searching and self-discovery can a true and genuine renaissance among Franco-Americans take place. The answer is not to be found in Oz or in Washington, D.C., but right in our own backyards.

As Dorothy said: "There's no place like home." One might add to this: "...for discovering one's ethnic heritage."

SUNLIFE

leurs d'une autre culture. Leur combat est d'abord un combat pour que vive en terre d'Amérique cette inestimable richesse de l'esprit qu'est la différence de culture. Ils ne se battent pas contre les Canadiens anglais. Ils se battent pour leur langue... La voilà bien la grande originalité. Ce n'est pas premièrement sur le terrain économique, c'est sur celui de l'esprit, de la culture que se situe la jeunesse québécoise, plus résolue encore que ses aînés... Robert Bourassa - économiste éminent - a été battu (le 15 novembre 1976) par un jeune poète, le mari de la chanteuse Pauline Julien. Tout un symbole..." (Panorama Aujourd'hui, No de décembre 1977, page 12)

R. D. ✱

Candide

activated. "Let us propose to the State and Country that the Franco-Americans have abandoned their cultural heritage and even their language [The Valley dialect] and with the Franco-American funds available, we might be able to teach them pride in their cultural heritage." And so the bilingual bicultural push was on in our school systems.

Funding became available for anything that one could attach a Franco-American tag on.

They are now telling us that our once distasteful dialect is beautiful and to help the English speaking professional to develop competency in the French dialect and increase interpersonal action with us, we need to develop and publish an instructional text of the French dialect native to the St. John River Valley.

This text would be disseminated to unilingual individual students, educators, and those who would come in contact with Valley culture. A text of the Valley idiom so that they may acquire a satisfactory working knowledge of the language and culture of the Franco-Americans.

We are not against teaching the dialect of our ancestors to others. What we object to is the impression that the French people of the Valley had lost pride in their cultural heritage. We object to the insinuation that without the dialect text book to teach, other Americans are not able to relate to us. We strongly object to educators who play their games - off with the dialect and on again. Oh! The games people play for the sake of money.

Si mon grandpère me voyait from the grave today, his first grandchild, his Godchild - son enfant gâté - he would be very proud of me. "Apprend l'Anglais ma ti-fille, et l'univers est à toi", he used to tell me. I have not conquered the universe, but I have learned enough English to be able to express my feelings. Specially when I feel that the educators of my Valley are playing "the games that people play" at the expense of the French speaking American of Northern Maine.

If they must teach les tête de pioche the dialect of the Valley, let them do it with other funds. These Franco-American funds can serve a better purpose.

Mrs. Candy Desrosiers

Joe Halle's transcription of testimony at public hearing.

Universite du Maine a Fort Kent

Dec. 8th Cyr Hall, UMFK.

It would be nice to follow up (previous topic) but I had prepared an article on the Stet, and I had, I think I could have taken two hours to show all the discrepancies, but I don't think it's necessary.

There is only one point I'd like to make, it's that we talk a little bit like this over here. Business people, industrial leaders find themselves hiring people speaking principally a language - not standard French and not Canadian French - a language which has never been recorded, it implies a little bit that it's a totally different language.


I don't like the idea, (but) you can call it a dialect if you wish because there are differences. You can call the Brooklyn English a dialect too for the same reason. When our people talk French at home it's their family French. It doesn't sound very much like the standard but everybody knows it, everybody is attuned to the standard language. They will listen (listened) to radio long before we had TV and when they could get Montreal and Québec they had the model of a language and they understood everything. I remember my father sitting at the radio for hours at night after work. It was always Montreal. Jamais été à l'école à l'école lui.

Now that TV has come out, well, think of the education that our people can find through that medium of TV just by connecting with Québec or Rivière du Loup or I don't know what. And don't think that those people do not talk standard French. Il y du beau français à Québec et à Montreal.

Parlons d'un autre problème, si on n'a jamais eu l'occasion d'apprendre sa langue écrite, voilà ces gens-là s'ils ont à écrire à des parents ils vont trouver un moyen phonétique, ça ne sera pas du gibberish comme ça. Ma mère avant de savoir écrire - j'sais comment écrire presque toute ma vie - j'ai quitté la maison très tôt, et puis si eu des lettres en français tout ma vie d'elle. Elle n'était pas aller à l'école elle aussi, mais elle allait à l'école du soir ensuite. Puis voici qu'en écrivant ses lettres, elle a amélioré à travers les années. Mais elle savait au lieu de se trouver une phonétique pour

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ENVIRONNEMENT • STATUT DE LA FEMME • AGRICULTURE • MATHÉMATIQUE
et
REPRODUCTIONS D'OEUVRES D'ART

RENDEZ-NOUS VISITE!

J'étais au Mardi Gras

This year I decided to do something different for Mardi Gras, so I went to the Carnaval in Quebec City. It was a very enlightening experience. Only the Québécois could put together the real Carnaval, with floats, parades, beauty queens and all outdoors in below zero weather and have it turn out a success. But the Quebec Carnaval is more than just a good time, it's a whole education.

We got things off to a good start by getting up at 6 a.m. on a Saturday morning to catch a train to Quebec. The train was only about an hour and a half late leaving the station, which meant we only got to Quebec around 1 p.m. Well, the first thing I learned was that Frenchmen and Englishmen don't ride in the same railroad cars, at least not on the Mardi Gras train. It's all done very subtly, you wouldn't even notice it except for the fact that everybody in your car has dark hair, swarthy complexions and speaks French & that everybody who passes through the car on their way to the refreshment stand has blond hair, rosy cheeks and speaks English. And just in case you miss the message, these English there run through the car at a trot, clutching their French dictionaries to their breasts and looking at everybody with obvious distaste. One woman was whispering to her husband "I hope they have toilet in some other car."

Then there was a good group in our car . . . a bunch of gar de Montréal who started singing the old traditional songs and playing the spoons and dancing. And they spoke jovial, not Tchoupoule. Best of all les gars had smuggled several bottles of whiskey on board the train and were very mellow. One just kept weaving from one end of the car to the other. "Well," I told myself, "real people. . . none of those Tchoupoule - quoting snobs from the Mont Royal." But I spoke too soon. Just about that time a very respectable member of the French-Canadian middle class leans over to me and says "Please excuse them. They come from the classe populaire, they're not too educated and rather vulgar. Not all québécois behave like that."

Anyway, by the time we got to St. Foix on the outskirts of Quebec City, at least one of the gars de Montréal had fallen into an alcoholic coma (this I later learned was a common phenomenon of Carnaval. Keeps the ambulances busy) and as we descended from the train, the conductor was trying desperately to revive him. Well, you had to catch a bus into town and lo and behold the same group of gars were on the bus with us. There was one drunken Englishman on the bus who kept shouting, "Sing in English, you god-damn Frogs! Nobody can understand you!" Everybody appeared to be trying to ignore him. At that point, another middle-class French-Canadian said to me, "Some of these québécois just haven't learned not to be loud in public. All that singing, really!!!"

Now Quebec City has a fascinating geography. Actually it's not one city, but three. You have what they call basse ville and what they call haute ville. Now basse ville and haute ville are separated from each other by a sheer vertical cliff that varies from about 60 to nearly 200 feet in height. Social status is directly proportionate to whether you live en bas or en haut de la falaise. Then you have the New City, which is located in haute ville but outside the fortification wall. The Quebec Parliament headquarters of René Levesque and company, is fittingly located in the New City. You even have two carnivals in Quebec City: one at Place Carnaval in the New City between the parliament building and the wall, and one in the basse ville. Now the Carnaval in New City is frequented largely by the French-Canadian upper classes (or aspirants to the upper class) and by tourists. They have a competition to make ice-sculptures, very impressive. And they had every nation represented, except Quebec. . . Actually you could say Quebec was semi-represented, the eskimos made a sculpture (that won 1st prize). Only the eskimos and the québécois have something less than a mutual admiration society going

Les Cajuns

par Debbie Clifton



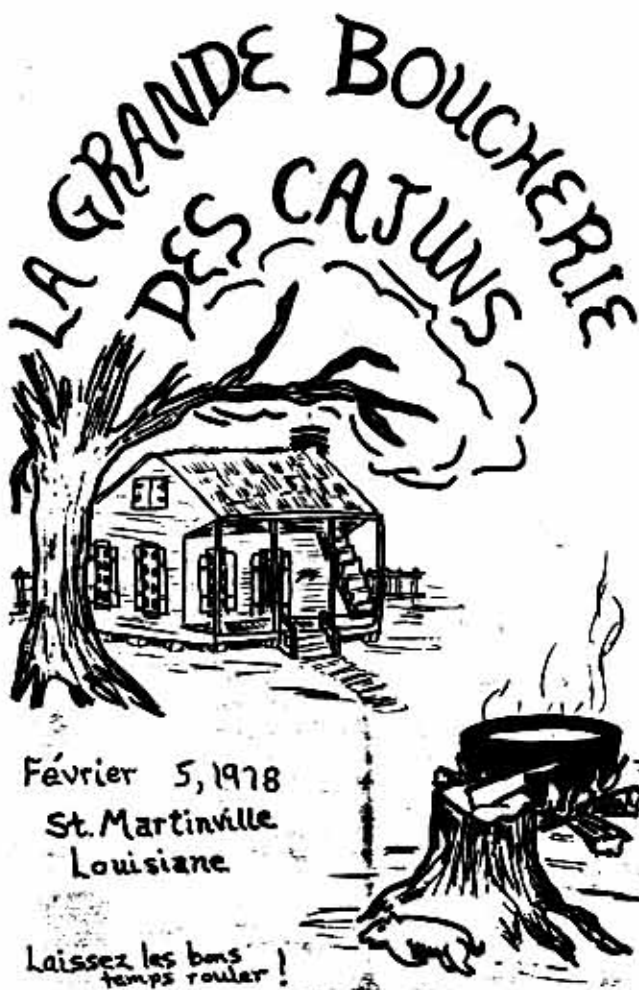
And they had some lumberjacks there, sawing wood and all. And I stopped to watch. At which point one of the liberated generation of Québécois stopped and said, "How can you waste your time watching that?"

But the real lesson came when we went to the basse ville. After a tour of haute ville, and after being shown the elevator (closed in winter) and the stairway by all the landmarks; I was escorted with suitable fanfare to basse ville. Well what I saw was an eye opener. First of all, the overwhelming majority of people at this Carnaval were québécois and apparently natives of Quebec City. And the ice-sculptures were either representative of episodes of French-Canadian history and folklore or surrealistic satires on real-life situations. Many statues were headless. This I was informed was due to the "wanton vandalism" of the culturally deprived classes. Most of the houses were little high-roofed jobs painted in pastel colors, usually with a porch or balcony somewhere. There was a honky-tonk (or the Quebec equivalent) on every corner, and no business establishment had the owners' full name on it. . . everything in basse ville operates on the basis of nicknames. And they had set up a big outdoor slide, similar to the one in haute ville; only in basse ville they call it a use-culotte, whereas in haute-ville it's a glissoire. About this time I suggested we drop into one of the honky-tonks and drink some Caribou. My guides looked horrified and informed me that honky-tonks were for eux-autres, meaning the lower-class residents of basse ville. If I was hungry, they informed me, we could return to the haute ville and have some croissants, in a French restaurant. I protested, that, numero uno, I can't stand croissants or French Restaurants either.

Honky tonks and beer on the other hand are just my speed and the eux-autres of basse ville were the first normal Frenchmen I'd seen in weeks. But, said my guides "Ca c'est 'canoyen', ça c'est la basse classe, ça c'est tout démodé, c'est juste pour eux-autres, pas pour les gens instruits!" "Vous-autres est pas des 'canoyens'? J'ai maudé." "Oh nou, 'ça dit, 'nous, ou est des canadiens français, eux-autres c'est des 'canayens'". Well, I'd heard that line before, but not in reference to Québécois.

The sad thing, is that most people in the States seem to have the idea that Quebec is turning into a communist state. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, if Quebec were learning left, that would mean there were some fundamental changes going on. Maybe the 'Canayen' would be getting more of a voice. Maybe the people in all the basse ville of Quebec would be getting recognized for what they are: the heart and soul of French-Canadian civilization. But, the elitists of Quebec are not going left, they're going right. And their heads are so brainwashed, that they'd rather put down on their own québécois, than go against the English and the big businesses. In fact, the québécois don't need the English to oppress them, they've got the elite. And that gang would rather see Quebec continue to function like a siberian labor camp, they'd rather see the québécois continue to be the nègs blancs de l'Amérique, than to do anything to really change conditions in Quebec.

But Quebec City is just a microcosm of what goes on everywhere. As long as we have people supposedly leading us who can glibly make distinctions whereby they are the canadiens français, the acadiens or the Créoles and the unassimilated masses of the people are canayens, cajuns and nègs, we don't need any other enemies.



NDLR: Un grand merci pour le festin et votre chaleureux accueil lors de notre visite le mois passé. Merci aussi pour la grange.

Louisiane acadienne

Tu m'étais inconnue;
On m'avait parlé de toi,
Mais je n'avais jamais senti
La douceur de ton coeur.

Tu t'es parée pour moi,
Tu savais que je venais.
Ton plus beau tu l'as découvert
A mes yeux, à mon âme.

Tu étais si loin,
Je n'avais jamais appris
A te connaître. . . à t'aimer
A respirer ton parfum.

Tu étais toute gaie
Le jour de mon arrivée
Tu avais hâte de me montrer
Tes charmes réservés.

Ta chevelure se jouait dans le vent,
Tes yeux rieurs, reflets du soleil.
Mince et svelte,
Tu rajeunissais mon coeur.

Main dans la main, comme de jeunes cousins,
Nous sautons le long de tes trottoirs,
Tu chantaient en me les apprenant
Ces refrains si doux:

"J'ai passé devant ta porte
J'ai crié 'by, bye la belle'
Y a personne qu'a pas répondu"
Oyé-yaie mon coeur me fait mal.

"Quand I je pense, je pense à toi,
Quand je rêve, je rêve à toi,
Et pour moi, je vis juste pour toi
Oyé-yaie, mon coeur me fait mal

Et maintenant que j'ai dû te quitter
Je pense à toi, je rêve à toi,
Et vraiment mon coeur en est malade
Pour te revoir. . . et chanter avec toi.

Viendras-tu me voir à ton tour?
Combleras-tu cet espoir de jeunesse?
Déjà je rêve à la fête que je te prépare
Et au bonheur de tes yeux.

Pierre-Paul Parent

UMFK (cont.)

expliquer la langue, elle savait vingt-et-une elle. Puis lorsque l'on dit 'J'veux ça mien', français tous ont apprend tous que c'est le J qu'on faut servir. Puis, 'J'vend ma maison', on va l'crire ça VEN on bien VAN, choisissez ce que vous voulez, mais vous allez être compris. Puis ensuite nos gens qui n'ont jamais eu l'occasion à l'école, par exemple, de développer leur langue puis d'apprendre ce qu'on appel standard, bien, ça fait longtemps qu'ils savent le standard, fait longtemps qu'ils se font prêcher à la chair, qu'ils comprennent tout le sermon du curé, c'est un bon français.

C'est une bonne excuse pour attrapez \$50000. de Washington.

L'HISTOIRE

La "Grande Boucherie des Cajuns" fut créée par Monsieur Mac Greig en 1968, dans le cadre de ses efforts persévérants pour préserver les traditions, la coutume et la langue de la Louisiane française et Cajun. La "Grande Boucherie" se veut conforme à la vieille tradition française et Cajun de la Boucherie.

Avant la glace et la réfrigération, les familles, amis et même les communautés entières se réunissaient chaque semaine à l'occasion d'une boucherie destinée à fournir de la viande fraîche aux populations rurales. Un membre de la famille, ou le boucher local, s'occupait de la boucherie proprement dite, et organisait un horaire pour que les participants apportent successivement leurs cochons. La famille entière de joignait alors à la préparation des mets de porc: fricassée "ranchée", boudin, andouillette, fromage de tête (ou tête pressée), gratons, et porc sale, notamment . . .

Bien avant les temps modernes, la boucherie était devenue une institution sociale, bien établie dans son organisation, les participants, l'endroit et le temps.

En 1975, les Jaycees de Saint-Martinville commencèrent à parrainer "La Grande Boucherie des Cajuns" avec l'aide de son promoteur, Monsieur Mac Greig. Les Jaycees ont l'espoir de poursuivre les efforts de Mr. Greig en vue de préserver les traditions, les coutumes, et la langue de la Louisiane française et Cajun.

Le Patrimoine

Notre héritage vivant
Perspectives, pensées, étincelles

On vieillit mal

GOLDEN AGE IN THE DARK AGES
NDLR - Concerned persons have found it important to make public the background information, the communications and in particular the realities regarding the discrimination which exist at the publicly funded Senior Citizen Center, the Open Door, in Saco. The first complaints came to our attention last Fall and given the seriousness of the situation, we hope that our elected and appointed officials as well as others responsible will endeavor to rectify this blatant wrong.

Dec. 1, 1977

Gentlemen:
Is there a law in the City of Saco that states French can't be spoken in their public buildings?

Are French-speaking people exempt from paying taxes in the City of Saco because they speak French?

There have been quite a few incidents at the meal site center at The Open Door in Saco where the elderly have been told not to speak French there. They have been told that if they want to speak French to go to the Ross Center in Biddeford.

In 1977 bigotry is still with us. Maybe we need a different place for this meal site.

Why hurt people?

Saco officials should look into this. Federal Funds could be cut off.

One who cares



Ils ont reçu leur salaire: la solitude

Le monde des personnes âgées n'est pas facile à pénétrer. Ces hommes et ces femmes qui ont eu, presque sans ressource, le courage simple de bâtir un pays ont gardé une grande pudeur à parler de leurs propres misères. Et pourtant entre les lignes, on devine parfois le fond de leur sentiment et c'est celui de la solitude. Une solitude d'autant plus difficile à porter qu'ils auraient mérité beaucoup mieux.

Revue Notre-Dame
C.P. 400, Sillery
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G1T 2R7

AT THE OPEN DOOR

Feb. 1977

OPEN DOOR?
My observations at the Open Door has been one of amazement and an eye opener. To me "Open Door" means that senior citizens of Saco are welcomed to come and socialize with their friends and neighbors and to be able to communicate with each other in their mother tongue, be it English, French, Greek, Polish, whatever nationality.

But unfortunately that is not the case in Saco. Due to a small group of people who as far as I now speak only English, resent the facts that the French speaking people revert to their mother tongue.

I could have understood this attitude about 75 years ago when Saco was then primarily an English speaking community. But now a days the French and Greek population almost equal in numbers to the English speaking people. So to my way of thinking the French speaking people have a right to speak French, anywhere, anyplace or whenever they choose.

I would think that people in this day and age would respect and be tolerant of other people's cultural heritage.

My one wish is that one day in the near future this discrimination will end and any ethnic group will be accepted along with their cultural heritage and mother tongue at the Open Door.

Name withheld on request

Memoirs of Alice Michaud Cyr

Written At The Age Of 91



Tout du Cyr Plantation Centennial Book

ONT PORTE LE BON DIEU:

When a person was in danger of dying, someone would get the priest and he would come at once to the one who needed him, and also the "Bedeau" or someone who came with the member asking for a priest, headed the cortege, and rang the bell. The church bell also rang and one counted the tolls; so many for a woman and so many for a man. When the carriages went by, everyone went out and knelt while the Priest was going by. In winter one opened the door and knelt. In summer, even people on the sidewalk would kneel. The Faith of our ancestors is something we should remember, and also speak about to our children.

Children had been taught to help in any way possible, and many saved their pennies for the visit of a Priest, so they could give "Pour le Petit Jesus."

"Les Rogations" was a special day, which meant that farmers and others, would gather money, "pour les biens de la terre". This was to have Masses said. Money was collected among themselves or a family would give in the name of all the children. Also bowls of grain, etc. were brought to the church. A special Mass was said, and the grain was blest and then planted with the crop of different kinds of grain to insure a good harvest in the Fall.

"La Cabanne a sucre" - Who among the farmers did not have a sugar camp? Not many, as this was part of the sweets for a year, and many who did not have any left for the next sugar time, borrowed some. My grandads used to go to Houlton with their horse and buggy and buy 100 pounds of white sugar, and also some unbleached cotton, to make sheets, underwear, etc. They would bleach this on the snow in winter, thus having it real white when summer came and when the children needed new clothes.

These were the days!!!!

WINNERS ANNOUNCED

OUR FIRST EDITORIAL

NOUS AUTRES

THE YCCCS FRANCO-AMERICAN GERONTOLOGY TRAINING PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

Editor: M. Nuckus

MARS 1978

CAME THE NO NAME NEWSLETTER CONTEST
Voting was close and some terrific new suggestions came in, the best of which were: INSIGHT, POURQUOI PAS, VIEILLIR EN BEAUTE, and THE ADVOCATES, but the winner by a narrow margin is NOUS AUTRES. This will be our Newsletter name, and it has been suggested we adopt last month's Puzzle Contest solution as our logo. VOILA! See more about this inside.

EDITORIAL
NOW OPEN IS THE "OPEN DOOR?"

This Newsletter has received several reports of discriminatory incidents, and it has come to our attention on good authority that an unwritten policy exists at the OPEN DOOR in Saco which discourages the use of French in that facility - which, in fact, tacitly or otherwise, broadcasts the message, "No French Spoken Here."

Is this in keeping with the purpose of such a gathering place for older persons, especially in an area with a large French-speaking population? Would anyone really want to force these people to deny their cultural heritage - to cut them off from conversing with others in the language most comfortable to them? To force them to speak "American" is also, oddly enough, unamerican in its denial of freedom of choice.

If any readers have any further information either corroborating or challenging this editorial, please get in touch with Nous Autres. Ed.

Un Histoire de Comédie
by CLAIRE GODEAU

C'était une journée de printemps, il pleuvait, parce que c'était samedi, les enfants étaient tous dans la maison. Avec six enfants tous ensemble autour de moi la tête me tournait. Tout à coup j'ai décidé d'aller magasiner et d'amener une de mes grandes filles avec moi. On a fait le tour du grand magasin tranquillement, on a vu une grosse piscine en plastique en vente de bon marché. S'en pensait à rien pour comment j'apporterai chez nous on achète la piscine on arrive dehors et il pleuvait encore, la piscine en plastique ne rentait pas dans la car. Comment pour-on apporter cette pauvre piscine chez nous? Ah, ma fille, a dit, baisse le top du convertible. Alors, dans la pluie on baisse le top du convertible et on met la piscine en dessous de nos kates, ma fille le top fermé et moi j'ai embarrasé, tous les personnes qui nous regardait on éclaté de rire de nous. J'ai jamais voulu arriver chez nous d'autant plus que cette journée de pluie avec tous mes enfants dans la maison.

UN BON HABITANT

Cyr Plantation

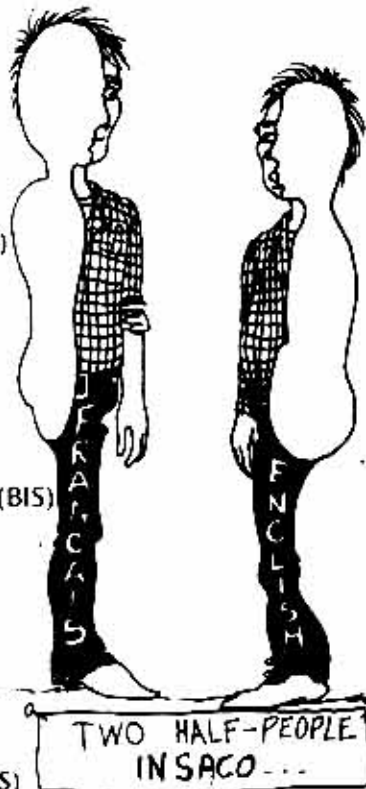
Je suis ce qu'on appelle un Habitant (BIS)
Je suis née tout près du dernier rang (BIS)
Toute l'a semaine je vous l'assure
Je me rends avec ma voiture
Vendre des légumes, c'est mon métier
Sur l'marcher d'Jaque Cartier

Malgré q'j'ai l'air pas mal chausson (BIS)
Je n'suis pas rester vieux garçon (BIS)
TOUT les ans, je vous le jure
J'ai d'la progéniture
Je m'suis marié depuis quinze ans,
et j'ai vingt deux enfants.

Le plus vieux de mes fils c'est un docteur (BIS)
J'en ait un autre qu'est ramoneur (BIS)
Jean-Marie sert la messe
Ti-Pite qui vente la presse
Pi-Touche exerce l'métier de Quétuex
C'est tout qu'il peut faire de mieux.

La plus vieille de mes filles est une cuisinière (BIS)
J'en ait une autre qui est couturière (BIS)
Marie est fille de chambre
Sophie c'est faite servante
La Toune se cherche un cavalier
Pour tâcher de s'marier.

C'est ainsi, pour tout les autres (BIS)
S'ils sont comm'ça c'n'est pas de ma faute (BIS)
J'ai fait tout mon possible
mais c'était des enfants terribles
Quand Dieu qu'j'les ait donc fait brailler
Quand j'leur claquait l'fessier



Le drame de la vieillesse, c'est souvent celui du silence. Le drame de ces milliers de silences accumulés au cours des années. On rentre de son travail éreinté, la tête pleine de problèmes. A quoi bon parler? Les enfants, ça ne comprend rien. C'est vrai. Mais les enfants, ça entend le silence. « Il était du genre silencieux, mon vieux ». Quand on porte à longueur d'année le même pardessus râpé, on a un peu honte devant ses enfants. On n'ose pas trop les regarder. Les enfants, ça ne peut pas comprendre. C'est vrai. Mais les enfants, ça sait lire dans les yeux. « On a à peine ouvert les yeux, nous deux ». Finalement c'est le mur qui s'installe. On gueule un peu plus fort les jours de paye, mais les enfants finissent par connaître la chanson. Et ils vont ailleurs chercher quelques heures d'évasion.

Et pourtant, un jour, les enfants comprennent. Mais il est trop tard. Et c'est eux qui à leur tour ont peur de parler à leur « vieux ». Ils auraient bien des choses à dire, des excuses à faire. J'aurais pu faire

avec lui un bout de chemin ». La reconnaissance pour ces matins frireux où l'on va gagner la croûte comme on peut, elle est là. Mais c'est une reconnaissance muette qui n'arrive plus à briser ce silence que les années ont épaissi. Et les chemins s'éloignent toujours plus, au fil des ans. « Dire que j'ai passé des années à côté de lui, sans le regarder ». Et pourtant, il aurait fallu si peu pour que fonde cette glace. Un mot. Un regard peut-être. Et cela aurait suffi à redonner un peu de lumière, un peu de bonheur, au moins pour le soir de la vie. « Ça l'aurait peut-être rendu heureux, mon vieux ». Malheureusement, les regrets sont toujours tardifs. Il n'y a rien de si triste que de devoir dire : « Il est trop tard ; si j'avais su ». Mais il peut arriver qu'il soit encore temps. Dans pareils cas, il n'est jamais trop tard pour dire « papa » au lieu de dire « mon vieux ». En un sens, la vie n'a pas d'âge. Il y a des amitiés qui s'éveillent après avoir dormi vingt ans dans le silence et la nuit des ignorances parallèles.

TWO OPEN LETTERS TO OPEN DOOR

AN OPEN LETTER TO FAROG-FORUM:

In the fall of 1977 *Nous Autres* came into existence. As editor of this Newsletter for the F.A.G.T. Program in Biddeford and Sanford, I was almost immediately bombarded with a barrage of accounts of discrimination aimed at French speaking patrons of The Open Door, a senior citizens center in Saco. Elderly people, we were informed, were told not to speak French in that facility; if they wanted to speak that language, the accounts read, they should go to the Ross Center in Biddeford, which apparently does not adhere to an apartheid system.

Well - we had adopted as our logo - a carpet beater - intended as a reference to an outmoded object with an ecologically approved opportunity for a new life - and here we were, faced with its more active function - that of "getting out the dirt."

We were, and are, well aware of the hazards of prematurity and unsubstantiation, and we continue to receive complaints and check out the facts.

In the spring of 1978 came more facts on this issue. One of our students was placed at The Open Door for her Practicum work and shortly thereafter witnessed at first-hand the insidious intimidation of the elderly Franco-Americans, many of whom are not bilingual. As a result of her own attempts to converse with these senior citizens in their first (and in some instances, only) language, the student was taken aside and chastised; she was told "confidentially", that speaking French is to be discouraged. This was done in a diplomatic manner, but the message was clear - "No French Spoken Here."

We wrote our editorial, "How Open Is The Open Door?" soliciting readers' responses, and sat back with great trepidation to await repercussions. We had not long to wait. The following week arrived an indignant response

from a Constance Bouter of The Open Door, written on City of Saco, Dept. of Parks and Recreation stationery. (See letter below) Our information was wrong, she wrote; we had not checked our facts. Ms. Bouter said that the French and Greek speaking people who attend the center are **encouraged** to speak English (Ed. Is that different from being **discouraged** from speaking French or Greek?) so as not to leave others out of the conversation. The center is open to all, she continued, and everyone should be able to feel a part of it and not an outcast because the language spoken was **foreign**.

We think Ms. Bouter's letter speaks for itself - it is self-indicting. The intent - whether it be hers or comes from a higher source - is clear. The letter does not deny the discouragement of speaking French, rather it cites the encouragement of speaking English. All other languages are called "foreign."

As for checking our facts, our editorial was corroborated by several sources and despite Ms. Bouter's insistence, these sources will remain protected in line with standard newspaper policy. We only regret the ostracism to the Practicum student which, as we expected, has resulted. *Nous Autres* examined the facts for several months, checking and verifying them before printing the editorial which has been attacked.

It certainly does seem that the editorial has hit a tender spot somewhere. Ms. Bouter is outspoken in her claim to be sensitive to the needs of English speaking people in order that no one feel "an outcast," but - what about her lack of concern for all those "foreigners?" who are made to feel like outcasts in their home environment?

Marilyn Mockus
A concerned citizen

NDLR - Marilyn is editor of *Nous Autres* a Franco-American Gerontology Program newsletter in Biddeford.

Dear FAROG-FORUM

I am writing to you to let you and your readers know how deeply saddened I am by the situation described above. While the discrimination related falls within my professional area of expertise, I would like to react as a Franco-American citizen by giving you more background information and facts concerning it.

My perspective is as Coordinator of the Franco-American Gerontology Program in Biddeford/Sanford. I have been professionally involved in Franco-American programs in Maine for the past seven years. I personally find this kind of discrimination ludicrous and as a professional I must tell you that it runs counter to all current practices in gerontology today. It is unethical, immoral and at best deplorable. I intend to address this issue, the harm and hurt it can cause (and has already caused in the case of The Open Door) in the next issue of FAROG-FORUM.

It seems to me that the described situation is very symptomatic of the plight Maine Franco-Americans have silently suffered for much too long. I think the appropriate agencies need to take a close look at it. Further I'm convinced that you Franco-Americans in the state legislature, in local and state government and in social services agencies, who are all representing our people, should in particular be sensitive to the welfare and needs of the elderly.

Why should Saco Franco-Americans have to go across the river to Biddeford to speak french? What happens to these people who are forbidden to speak their native Greek or french language? How frightened, lonely and powerless do you have to be before action is taken to remedy a seriously depressing debilitating and alienating situation?

I feel very sad to see that our elderly still suffer today the humiliation of being treated and regarded as foreigners after they have given faithfully a lifetime of labor, love, loyalty (not to mention taxes) to their local community, their state and their nation.

Deeply concerned,
Cécile Collin

On peut estimer que c'est le devoir d'une société riche d'assurer aux plus anciens une retraite aussi heureuse que possible. C'est compter sans l'égoïsme naturel de toute société. Les personnes âgées ont souvent la pénible impression d'être de trop dans une société bâtie sur la loi du profit et de la consommation.

Campus Observations

Morissette: Jeux dégouine

Pete Morissette's family had come from Arrostook County. They lived for a while on a dusty country road in China, Me., and later lived at North Vassalboro, Me.

Pete Morissette probably gave his first public performance of the saw while attending Thomas Business College in Waterville. John Thomas, the college president, knowing of Pete's ability with the musical saw, invited Pete and his classmate Herman Massé, who played violin, to perform before the Waterville Kiwanis Club. Thus Pete on his musical saw, accompanied by Herman on violin, played one Thursday evening at the Elmwood Hotel before a delighted group of Kiwanians.

Pete, still young and unmarried, came to work in 1926 for Herman Massé at the Massé Lumber Mill in East Vassalboro, which Herman had taken charge of that year. Pete had just previously worked for the State Highway Dept. on a bridge construction project in Washburn, Arrostook County, as a timekeeper.

Pete and Herman were good friends, and Pete suggested that they take a vacation together and go up north. They took their pup tent and Pete's musical saw, of course, and in Herman's Model-T Ford began a three-week vacation. They went to Island Falls, to Washburn where Pete called on several of his lady friends, to Fort Kent, Cabano, Rivière-du-Loup, and Ste-Anne in Québec. They spent a week or so in Bécancour with Herman's grandmother, Celena Massé, where Pete acted as interpreter because Herman did not speak French, and his grandmother did not speak English. While at Bécancour, Pete was quite a ladies' man with Herman's cousins, and charmed them all with tunes from his saw. One young lady in particular, Germaine Cyrenne, was quite sweet on Pete. Our two adventurers would return to Maine via Montreal, Niagara Falls, Albany, and over the Mohawk Trail to Boston.

While Pete and Herman were driving through Island Falls, Me., they heard there was to be a dance that evening in the local pavilion, at which the nationally celebrated fiddler, **Mellie Dunham** was to play. They decided to stay that night in Island Falls and go to the dance.

Now, there was nothing wrong with Pete, but he was apt to get up anywhere and do just about anything that might come into his head, to make a show for people, whereas Herman would be more reluctant to do such things.



FAROG prints over a beer.
traces de FAROG dans nos bières.

What could it be about?
I can pour my own beer!
That's close! That's close!
What could it be about?

Don't know what brought us here.
The beer brought us here, I remember.
We were talking about together,
What could it be about?

Lui y aime pas ça!
Well, anyway, he caves.
Sometimes I don't give a damn
So what could this damn thing be about?

What is it?
(Yvon, Pete, Steve, Deb...)
reflections of me
and every word I say reflects you
everytime I say 'der',
and every french joke,
and all the times you get scared,
I get to reflect
because I get scared too
Why do you think I fight now?
Soon I'll be too old to care
and you will be too scared to fight

What is it?
reflections of me,
descriptions of me,
justifications of me,
realities of me.

Validation,
that's what it is.

Steve, Deb, Pete and Yvon



by Stephen Poirier Mickeriz

C'Encore à Mon Tours

Ca été un mois curieux. Ordinairement, mon Franco-alité ne me fesse pas en pleine face souvent, mais le mois de mars a été un temps d'incidents variés. Pour commencer, j'ai passé une fin d'automne avec une fille de Rouen, Québec. Elle est venue au Maine avec un groupe d'étudiants secrétaires bilingues. Ça faisait une grand' escousse que j'avais eu un si bon temps. On a parlé français (et anglais), et on a ri con me des folles! J'ai toujours eu l'impression que mon français et celui de Québec était si différents qu'on pourrait pas vrai. Elle parlait pareille comme ma Grandmère et elle disait que moi je parlait comme la Sagouine! C'est drôle que après tout le temps que j'ai travaillé à FAROG que une fille pourrait faire un point si fort. Hélène, Merci!

However, all was not so bright in sunshine city. Just a few days after Hélène left, a guy from my dorm came up to me and said (in a slightly inebriated condition), that I was fighting the wrong cause, and as far as he was concerned he just wanted to forget his Frenchness because he was an American, and that his French could only hinder his chances for success. At first I was so frustrated I wanted to throttle him. What he was talking about was illegal discrimination to start with and furthermore he was making discrimination easy by being down and letting himself get stepped on! I didn't know what to say to him. I was too frustrated to get past my stutters of protest. He stomped away, and I went to brush my teeth! DAMN.

Well, yesterday a more positive thing happened. A friend told me of an incident that occurred at a local clothing store. Apparently, he went in the store to buy a suit and as he was trying on the jacket, the salesman said to another customer, "You'll have to use another dressing room, some dumb Frenchman put the doorknob on backwards." My friend ripped the jacket off and said, "Take your suit and shove it." The salesman was taken aback, but a friend said "I don't think Mr. Michaud appreciated your comment at all." Well, of course everybody apologized to Mr. Michaud. Everyone was sorry the comment cost them the sale. And, of course, Mr. Michaud felt funny about having to be defensive. The point had been made, but was it necessary to have to make it?

Bin, comme j'ai dit C'a été un mois curieux. Des bonnes choses, Des pas si bonnes choses, mais quand mêm mes, des choses. Moi, j'figure qu'on a gros d'raisons d'être fière si ça fait aïohque du bon sens d'essayer di garder sa fierté là envie. J'vous verrai le mois qui vient. Pinez bon soin - O.K.?

par Debbie Gagnon

Genealogy Workshop

On Tuesday, April 4th a genealogy workshop, open to the public, was held here at UMO. The guest lecturer was Mr. Richard Fortin of the American-Canadian Genealogical Society of New Hampshire. Steve Robbins, formerly of the Forum staff, organized the workshop. Mr. Fortin's objectives were not to try and tell anyone's specific genealogy, but to make the interested people aware of the places to look.

Mr. Fortin mentioned certain difficulties in looking for genealogies such as there are over thirty variations of the name Roy. There are also so many problems in trying to get permission to enter Canadian archives. He suggested shortcuts like writing to the proper authorities beforehand. Another suggestion was to look in the Maine Library in Augusta, before traveling any distances. Some of the best records of Franco marriages are stored there. The Mormons, in Salt Lake City, also have extensive records.

Mr. Fortin said that the chief aim of the genealogical society is to encourage member participation. Today more than ever people are concerned where their Roots came from. Aren't YOU interested???



Well, Pete got it into his head that he'd ask the pavilion manager for permission to play his saw during intermission, and pass a hat around to collect some traveling money. Herman said no, but Pete went ahead and asked anyway. The manager didn't want them collecting money but he'd let them into the pavilion free if they'd agree to play a few tunes up front. Pete went right up with his saw. Herman went up just to sit beside Pete and put some rosin on Pete's violin bow.

Pete's tunes were well received by all. After he'd finished, Mellie Dunham himself came up to Pete and said, "I've been in New York and in vaudeville and have travelled around a number of years. I've heard others play the saw, but," he says, "you're the best I've ever heard."

Pete Morissette later married, lived on Bolton Hill in Augusta, and worked as a postal clerk in the Augusta Post Office. He died in middle-age, of cancer.

Campus Observations

Rince Ta Guenille

En lavant ton plancher
tout un hiver te revient en flashback

Tache par tache,
une petite épopée passe sous ta guenille.
Que de gestes, petits et grands,
que de va-et-vient, de petits et de grands,
ont laissé leurs pistes,
ont tracé une carte de famille.

Des faits souvent insignifiants,
inaperçus, oubliés, des bagatelles,
des histoires de cuisine, d'l'eau d'vaisselle
grossissent lorsqu'on a le nez au plancher.
Toute une saison va se délayer
dans une chaudière d'eau tiède et de Mister Clean.

La chatte a renversé son lait,
rinçe ta guenille,
des perles roses de syrop d'enfants aux rhumes éternels,
rinçe ta guenille,
une sauce de spaghetti éparpillée,
rinçe ta guenille,
un pois vert écrasé,
rinçe ta guenille,
d'la vase d'un avril qui ne sais pas vivre,
rinçe ta guenille,
quelquechose endurcie, sans identité,
qui ne veut pas partir, entêté,
rinçe ta guenille,
frotte plus fort,
rinçe ta guenille,
frotte encore,
change ton eau,
t'as mal au dos.

Sans tristesse, tu vois les mois s'écouler,
sans tristesse, tu fais couler ta toilette.

Ta chaudière remplie d'une nouvelle eau,
encore une fois sur les genoux,
des souvenirs,
un confessional,
une pénitence,
t'as pas fait tes Pâques,
rinçe ta guenille,
frotte plus fort,
rinçe ta guenille,
frotte encore.

Paul Paré
le 8 avril, 1975



"Coeur de Maman"
par
Armand Durochers

Coeur de maman, je chante pour toi que j'aime
Coeur de maman tu es la bonté même
Tu as souffert de cruels émois
Je t'ai fait mal
Je t'ai rempli d'effrois
Bonne maman
Sèche bien tes tristesses
moi ton enfant
Qui prie pour le coeur de maman

vieille maman au cheveux blanc
votre coeur a connu les tourments
nous chantons pour vous avec amour
ce coeur qu'on aimera toujours

Coeur de maman, je chante pour toi que j'aime.....



SPECIAL SEMINAR ABOUT VERY SPECIAL PEOPLE

A 3 credit seminar on the French presence in New England; The Franco American is being offered at the University of Maine at Orono in the fall semester. The course will research contemporary issues dealing with the Francos especially in Maine. Sponsored by the Language Dept. in cooperation with the Franco American Program.

Workers Needed for Fall 78

In the next month, FAROG is looking for personnel in;

WRITING
REPORTING
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Le FAROG-FORUM was built by amateurs and continues to grow with amateurs. This is your chance to work in a unique, challenging innovative area. A great opportunity to use your Franco-American French and actualize your Franco-American heritage. Jobs are open to work-study, non-work-study and volunteers.

If interested contact;

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208 Fernald Hall
Tel. 581-7082

Debbie Gagnon
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Tel. 945-9124

Steve Mickeriz
UMO
Tel. 866-3262

VACANCY NOTICE

Position: Bilingual Specialist/Teacher (French)
Franklin Northeast Supervisory Union
Title VII Bilingual Education Program
Richford, Vermont 05476
Tel. 802-848-2791

Spring is near
The robin will soon be here.
Then summer will come
I love to like gum
Fall is here
Snow is near
Winter will come
It is fun

~~9/15~~ Michael Langlat's
Rumford age 10

"Nothing to do"
The big, black cat
Sat on the window sill
Watching the birds fly by.

A small, yellow bird
Perched on a tree nearby
Watching the cat watch him.

A wise, old spider
Watched them watch themselves
Asking himself why they had
Nothing better to do.
- 13 yrs. old - 1977

"Flowers"
The flower's dress is of
Bright green
Hidden in the surrounding grass.
Although, their headresses
Are of many colors
For all to enjoy.
The flowers' beauty is wonderful
Setting all who are among them
At peace.

- 13 yrs. old - 1977

The beauty, fragrance,
And friendliness of nature
Calms me magically.
- 12 yrs. old - 1976

A Collection of Poems Written By Lisa Archambault Throughout Her Life

"Time"

Time can be a bird
Flying quickly away.
Time can be a stone
Waiting to be skipped across the water.
Time holds the memories of both
Good and bad, old and new.
In the past, present, and future
Time was, is, and always will be there.
- 13 yrs. old - 1977

"Windy Times"

Time is like the wind...
...Blowing quickly by...
When you're having fun
...Or standing very still...
When there's nothing to do.
- 13 yrs. old - 1977

"Thunderstorm War"

Swords of lightning
Peirced the dark
As cannons shattered
The stillness of the night.
Showers of bullets
Rained on the earth
As flickering torches
Lit up the heavens.
A lone, frightened child
Looked out the window
And then took refuge
Under his blankets
As he waited for
The battle to end.
- 13 yrs. old - 1977

au
coin
des
jeunes
poètes

Fussy Frogs

Fussy frogs
Fidget over Their
French flies.
Denise Archambault

Au Coin des Vieux Poètes

LES NUAGES DANS MA TÊTE

par

Don Dugas

VENT

par

Maxine Michaud

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

Quand j'es aime
c'tà 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

Acheter une terre
Non, j'ai pas envie de cultiver la terre.
Je ne veux pas devenir fermier ou cultivateur.

Je voudrais tout simplement rester à la campagne.
Je voudrais entendre les oiseaux de bonne heure le matin.
Je voudrais descendre dans mon âme avec le coucher de soleil.
Je voudrais marcher dans les bois,
m'arrêter près d'un courant,
écouter l'eau... qui coule,
accueillir ses reflets du soleil.

Je voudrais partager ce bonheur avec mon enfant.
Je voudrais retrouver tout ce bonheur dans ses yeux.
Je voudrais m'émerveiller dans cette glorieuse nature.
Et d'avoir le temps de réfléchir, de voir clair,
de lire tout ce qui est écrit dans ce grand livre.

Non, ce n'est pas une terre que je veux acheter.
C'est que je veux m'échapper de cette captivité.

Pierre-Paul Parent

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

Avez-vous déjà arrêté pour vous demander pourquoi sê pour?
Apar que sê 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 sê fun d'y penser
Sa move des nuages

voies
des foits du monde
bois
papier
aucune chose
Sa refrashi l'air
sa me fradi
Ma fait tremblé
Sa sèche la terre
les almas
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

Dehors le chat

Papa se réveillait souvent la nuit;
C'était le chat qui demandait à sortir.

Il ne voulait plus être obligé de se lever
A cause de chat.

Alors à tous les soirs vers onze heures,
Papa ouvrait la porte en disant:
"Dehors le chat!"

Moi, j'étais déjà au lit.
Depuis plus d'une heure.
Mais je ne m'endormais pas facilement.

C'est-à-dire que je voulais savoir
Ce qui se passait en bas.

J'entendais maman qui préparait
Nos vêtements et notre dîner
Pour l'école le lendemain.
Papa froissait une dernière fois
Son journal.
Aussi il y avait mon grand frère
Qui regardait la télévision.

Moi, étendue sur mon lit, j'attendais.

J'attendais que tout se calme dans la maison.
J'attendais que le sommeil m'enveloppe enfin.
J'attendais les dernières paroles
Qui annonçaient pour moi la fin de la soirée:
"Dehors le chat!"

Et je glissais doucement dans mes rêves.

MYSTÈRE

par

Don Dugas

Nos corps
se tourbent
Sous une peine féroce
Qu'on essaie
frénétiquement
De faire
disparaître
En faisant à crêre
K'i n'existe même pas.

Nos être
sont prisonniers
dans une cage
que nous nions
et que nous ne
pouvons plus ressentir.

Nous avons décidé de
miser sur l'acquisition de
bâbelles
au prix de la perte
de notre sagesse intérieure
le seul héritage
qui vaut la peine.

15 février, 1975

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

Promesse du printemps

Un matin sombre vers la fin de l'hiver
J'entendais deux oiseaux à ma fenêtre.

L'un me dit: "Ne t'en fais pas."
L'autre par derrière: "Le printemps est là."

Tout au coin de ces quelques jours sombres
Il l'attend."

"C'est pas vrai," je leur ai répondu.
"On en a encore pour un mois,
Même deux ou trois!
De cette neige sale, de cette pluie,
De ce temps couvert, poussiéreux et gris."

"Mais non, mais non-mes deux oiseaux
me chantent -
Tu ne vois pas qu'on s'excite
Pour annoncer le beau temps?"

En effet, je ne les avais pas entendus
Se débattre avec tant d'ardeur
Depuis le mois d'octobre
En faisant la dernière toilette
de mon jardin.

Eh oui, peut-être qu'ils ont raison
Ces deux amis en plumes.
Ils doivent connaître ça mieux que moi,
Le temps.

Eh bien oui, me dis-je.
C'est bien vrai: le printemps est proche.
Et je m'en allai vers mon travail,
Tout en sifflotant... comme un oiseau!
Pierre-Paul Parent

Slush

Last Snow of Winter or
First Snow of Spring--
How Wat you are
what Misery you bring--

I'm not Afraid though
You Won't last--

hourly you Fade a n d f a d e
until earth Shows again its' Face--

Stephen Poirier Mickeriz

LIBERATION

Pierre-Paul Parent

Dans une grenouillère,
Il y a bien des étés,
Les têtards avaient pris la décision
D'éliminer les grenouilles:
Leurs idées
Leurs traditions
Leur parler
Leur discipline.

Le phénomène arbitraire
A persisté très longtemps.

Dès qu'une génération
Prenait conscience d'elle-même,
Il fallait isoler têtards et grenouilles.
Puis, on se défaisait des anciens
Dont le comportement
S'était fixé dans le temps.

Le coup d'extermination
Était toujours exécuté
A la guise des révoltés.

Ainsi,
Dans la grenouillère,
D'une génération à l'autre,
On se protégeait de l'une contre l'autre.

Aussi,
L'espoir de chacun n'avait jamais
De concurrence;
La liberté de personne ne souffrait
De la suppression.

Les actions d'aucun
N'étaient mesurées d'après un système
De valeurs.

Personne n'avait de complexe,
Sauf un:
Celui d'être meurtrier.

Par Norman Dubé

NOTRE FOLKLORE



l'architecture



la danse



la tradition orale

la musique



l'artisanat

les recettes

les contes

les remèdes

les jeux

les sobriquets

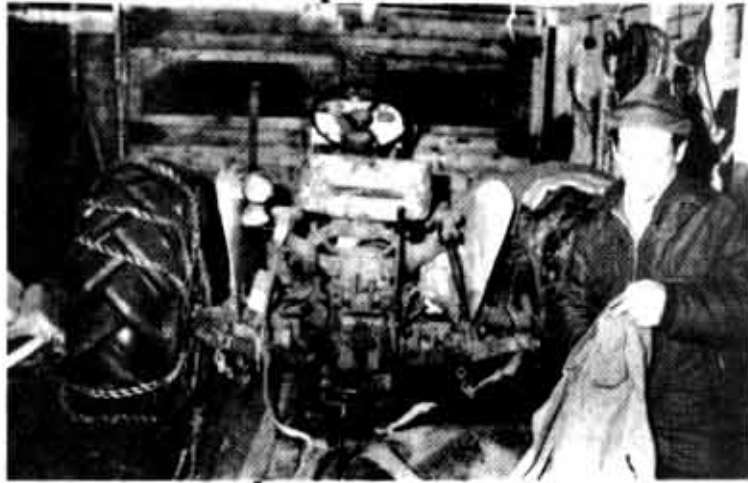
les superstitions

les devinettes

les coutumes

la poésie

les chants



une éducation bilingue, c'est pour qui veut...

Le Québec doit se battre sur deux fronts en même temps

(le Pr P. Patenaude)

Tout Québécois, de quelque appartenance qu'il soit, a une lutte à livrer pour la reconnaissance de la souveraineté culturelle du Québec, a déclaré le Pr Pierre Patenaude, de la Faculté de droit de l'Université de Sherbrooke, invité au dernier séminaire d'actualité économique de la Faculté des arts.

Me Patenaude est persuadé que la bataille du Québec doit se livrer simultanément sur deux fronts: interne en ce qui concerne le référendum et externe, pour obtenir la garantie qu'un nouveau texte constitutionnel fédéral permette aux Québécois de vivre à leur manière si le Gouvernement du Québec n'obtient pas un vote positif lors du référendum.

Les minorités

Faisant une distinction nette entre une minorité culturelle et une minorité nationale, le Pr Patenaude estime que les Québécois, à l'encontre des Canadiens-français des autres provinces, ont su imposer leur mode de vie. Cette caractéristique de minorité nationale, ayant le contrôle politique d'un Etat, devrait permettre aux Québécois d'obtenir un texte constitutionnel qui leur garantirait la protection de leur culture propre.

Les minorités culturelles du Canada, quant à elles, peuvent tout au plus espérer obtenir des écoles dans leur langue, le droit de pratiquer leur religion et, quelques fois, l'utilisation de leur langue devant les tribunaux et les parlements. Le Pr Patenaude constate que les forces d'assimilation des minorités culturelles francophones hors Québec

ne peuvent être arrêtées: "L'exemple canadien prouve qu'une telle minorité est vouée à l'assimilation parce qu'elle n'est pas assez forte pour imposer un mode de vie distinct à son entourage."

Constitutionnaliste réputé, le Pr Patenaude estime désuète l'actuelle constitution canadienne. L'essence même du fédéralisme, déclare-t-il, est de consacrer la souveraineté des Etats membres dans les domaines de leur juridiction. Or, la constitution canadienne est remplie d'articles qui permettent une invasion massive du Fédéral dans les domaines provinciaux. Elle n'est plus adaptée, de l'avis du Pr Patenaude, à la dualité politique du Canada quant à la protection à accorder aux minorités culturelles ni quant à la reconnaissance de la réalité sociologique québécoise.

Fédéralisme et unité

La rédaction de la constitution fédérale, précise-t-il, a été inspirée par deux visions différentes: les anglophones voulant bâtir un pays anglophone avec une minorité culturelle et les Québécois espérant contrôler les moyens d'assurer une société à leur image avec une minorité anglophone. Citant un auteur, Me Patenaude déclare qu'on ne sait plus aujourd'hui si le Canada est un Etat fédéral ou un Etat unitaire. C'est que "l'Acte de l'Amérique du Nord britannique a confié à l'Etat central des juridictions exorbitantes: on créait les outils nécessaires à une évolution vers un Etat quasi-unitaire contrôlé, évidemment, par une majorité anglophone."

Grâce à son pouvoir absolu de dé-

penser, Ottawa s'ingère, affirme le Pr Patenaude, dans des domaines qui affectent le développement d'une société propre aux Québécois. Par le Conseil des arts et le Secrétariat d'Etat, il empiète dans le domaine de l'éducation. Par son pouvoir dans le domaine de la radio et de la télévision, il touche aux véhicules de la transmission culturelle. Par l'immigration, il règle l'insertion des étrangers dans le milieu québécois.

Plusieurs études, note le conférencier, ont démontré que la constitution canadienne ne répond plus aux besoins des Québécois. Pourquoi alors ne pas avoir tenté de régler le problème? Il explique que la mentalité anglo-saxonne, fidèle aux principes de la Common Law, répugne à solutionner une crise par une loi. Les Québécois savent, pour leur part, que seuls des textes précis peuvent leur assurer la survivance culturelle.

Par ailleurs, l'attitude fédérale tend actuellement à défendre les droits des individus sans reconnaître les droits de l'Etat national des Québécois. Pour le Pr Patenaude, il est clair que les droits individuels ne protègent pas un peuple contre l'assimilation.

Du principe de la souveraineté des Etats membres en système fédéral, le régime actuel s'oriente, constate le Pr Patenaude, vers une décentralisation administrative dirigée par Ottawa.

Exigences québécoises

Dans la négociation d'une nouvelle constitution fédérale canadienne, la mi-

norité nationale devra exiger l'exercice de sa compétence exclusive sur des domaines essentiels comme l'éducation, la langue et les secteurs à fortes incidences culturelles tels que les arts, le bien-être et le développement urbain.

Le domaine primordial à contrôler est l'éducation. "Cependant, note le Pr Patenaude, l'éducation n'est plus aujourd'hui l'apanage exclusif des écoles: les radio-télécommunications et les médias d'information affectent l'évolution culturelle et transmettent les valeurs du groupe national. A ce titre, ils devraient relever de la juridiction exclusive du groupe national."

A propos de la langue, il estime impérieux que le peuple québécois soit autorisé à créer un climat favorable à l'expansion du français. Pour qu'un tel climat existe et que la minorité ne soit pas constamment victime de l'assimilation, un seul remède semble efficace: la reconnaissance du principe de la territorialité et de la souveraineté linguistique. Entre autres, ce principe obligerait toute personne à travailler dans la langue de la région.

En matière d'immigration, Me Patenaude pense que le contrôle de l'admission devrait être laissé au Fédéral, mais que le Québec devrait y avoir droit de regard et le pouvoir de légiférer quant à l'insertion des immigrants dans le milieu.

"Il serait illusoire, dit le Pr Patenaude, de parler d'autonomie en matière culturelle si le Québec ne jouissait pas d'une autosuffisance financière. Pour réaliser le principe du fédéralisme, le Québec et les autres provinces joueraient d'un champ de taxation proportionnel à leur champ de juridiction de façon à mettre fin au système de la St-Vincent-de Paul fédérale.

"En corollaire, le pouvoir de dépenser du Gouvernement fédéral se réduirait à un système de péréquation dont les normes seraient élaborées par des réunions fédérales-provinciales." M.C.

La fierté Québécoise

Au moment où la nation québécoise s'apprête à prendre la décision la plus importante de son histoire, décision qui va décider de tout son avenir, il est bon qu'elle réfléchisse non seulement sur le pourquoi mais aussi le comment de sa lutte pour sa liberté politique.

Vouloir devenir souveraine, pour une nation saine devenue adulte, ce n'est pas une catastrophe, comme adulte, ce n'est pas une catastrophe, comme enfant de nous le faire croire les fédéralistes: c'est une chose normale, juste et parfaitement logique. La santé politique d'une nation exige qu'elle ait un minimum de fierté.

La fierté n'est pas l'orgueil. Nous ne nous croyons pas supérieurs aux autres; nous nous croyons seulement égaux à nous-mêmes. Disons-nous bien, et disons-nous-le souvent parce que c'est la pure vérité, que nous avons tout ce qu'il faut pour devenir politiquement libres, c'est-à-dire souverains. Nous avons le nombre qu'il faut, nous avons la richesse qu'il faut; il ne nous reste plus qu'à le vouloir. Et à le vouloir ensemble.

Aucune nation dans l'histoire humaine n'a eu une chance aussi grande que la nôtre de devenir souveraine à si peu de frais. Au contraire de la plupart des autres peuples qui ont dû arracher leur souveraineté politique par la force des armes et au prix d'énormes sacrifices de toutes sortes, nous, nous n'avons pas à tirer un seul coup de feu, nous n'avons pas à verser une seule goutte de sang, nous n'avons pas à sacrifier notre jeunesse sur les champs de bataille ni nos biens dans les incendies des bombardements, nous n'avons même pas à faire de sacrifices d'ordre économique parce que la souveraineté c'est la prospérité; nous n'avons qu'à faire une croix sur un bulletin de vote. Notre liberté n'est pas au bout du fusil, elle est au bout de notre crayon.

La bataille des prochains mois sera la bataille de la fierté contre la peur. Avez-vous déjà vu ça, vous autres, avoir peur de devenir libre? Quand vous avez eu 20 ans, et que vous êtes devenu majeur, c'est-à-dire responsable de vous-mêmes, avez-vous perçu votre avènement à la majorité comme un malheur qui fondait sur vous? Depuis quand la perspective de la liberté, pour les nations comme pour les individus, devrait-elle être perçue comme une tragédie au lieu d'un bienfait? Devenir propriétaire de soi-même et prendre son destin en charge, est-ce donc un si grand mal? Est-ce vraiment, comme on l'a dit, un "crime contre l'humanité"? C'est pourtant ce que s'acharneront à nous

| | BONASSE | AFFIRMATIF | AGRESSIF |
|---------------|--|--|--|
| 1. Paroles | Excuses 'rien à dire' ne dit pas sa pensée significations cachées 'y va par quatre chemins' | Dit sa volonté exprime ses sentiments franchement use des mots clairs Dit "JE" | Accuse des mots 'supérieurs' use des mots facheux Dit "TU" beaucoup |
| 2. Physique | | | |
| a. Général | agit silencieusement, en espérant que les autres devineront ce qu'il/elle veut des autres agit comme si son message n'était pas important | écoute attentivement; agit en confiance laisse sentir son affection pour l'autre; paraît solide | exagère sa force; se prend rien au sérieux; se moque; |
| b. Spécifique | | | |
| 1. Voix | faible, douce, halotante | ferme, bien modulée, descendue, chaleureuse | parle très fort, froidement, autoritairement; tendue |
| 2. Yeux | détournés, baissés, larmes | ouverts, francs, clairs, survisage les gens sans les dévisager | sans expression, froids, déviés, ne voit pas 'vraiment' |
| 3. Autre | | | |
| Posture | n'appuie, est croché; courbé, replié; signe beaucoup de la tête | balancée, à l'aise, droit; détendue, survisage les autres; | mince sur les hanches, raide et bourrauc; envahit l'espace des autres |
| Mains | agitée; 'bat des ailes' | détendues, chaudes, gestes constants | poings serrés, gestes brusqués; mains froides; neutre du doigt |
| Pieds | traînants; agités; se balancent beaucoup | détendus, position confort- table | tape du pied; bien plantés. |

Traduit d'un document préparé par Human's Programs, Extension Division, University of Missouri, 1974

par Claire R. Bolduc

ACTEURS

Le projet F.A.I.T.S. (Franco-American Informational Television Series) est à la recherche de quelques acteurs pour une série d'émissions de télévision pour enfants.

Il nous faut des personnes bilingues (franco-américain/anglais) adultes, enfants (dix à treize ans) qui ont une certaine expérience comme acteur, soit comme professionnelle ou amateur.

Ecrivez, y incluant votre résumé à:

Projet F.A.I.T.S.
17 Madbury Road, Apt. 3
Durham, New Hampshire 03824



FOCUS ON...

G. GUY

Grant Guy Ducharme
Bear Pond Rd.
Canaan, N.H. 03741

I don't know quite how to begin this so I'll begin by telling why I'm writing it. The immediate reason is because Yvon Labbé asked me to write to the Forum about myself and my ideas about Québec and my hopes for Francos in New England. The main reason is because I want to communicate to other Francos about us and this appears to be the easiest way to reach those of you who are trying to create a greater role for Franco culture in New England.

Now I would like to say that I think that the Forum might be one of the most important tools in our reaching our goals. The Forum allows anyone who is interested in contributing regardless of their so called level of cultural awareness. In the end it is going to be things like this that are going to help us to succeed and not all the conferences or talk between the enlightened few, although they obviously play a very important role. For if we are to succeed it is only as a grassroots movement, otherwise it will just become an intellectual curiosity with no substance behind it.

As for my own connection with all this I was born in Ottawa in 1953. My father is a French Canadian from Montreal, my mother an Irish American from the suburbs of New York. After living in Ottawa two years we moved to the New York area.

There I was growing up in northern New Jersey, the melting pot of all melting pots, and so I melted into an alloy heavy on the American and somewhere in there a bit of Franco although I didn't realize it at the time.

When I was seventeen I began the search that everyone who isn't quite sure of their identity begins. That much clichéd phrase of our time "the search for the self". Naturally I hitchhiked to California. After three weeks there I knew it wasn't me and so I headed North and ended up in Vancouver where I stayed for a couple of months. But again something didn't quite fit and so back East I went, stopping in Québec to visit relatives.

Although I didn't realize it at the time those few days in Québec were going to solve a lot of problems for me and create some new ones. When I returned to New Jersey I decided I'd better learn some sort of a trade since I knew I wanted to move to a rural area and didn't want to attend University so I took up carpentry.

Four years later I found myself becoming restless again. I had married in the meantime and my wife and I knew that we wanted to move so we decided to go to Québec where, maybe, I could find what I felt was missing.

Before I went I had naively thought I would be welcomed with open arms, a Franco returning to find the missing Franco in himself. It didn't quite work out that way. In fact, when they heard my name and could hear that I couldn't speak French they resented me. They thought I was a vendu. I tried to explain that I was from the United States but it didn't work too well trying to explain to every stranger I ran into.

Learning French wasn't much easier. I was in a town that was about half French and half English. Most of the French could speak English so everytime I would stumble along in French they would just switch to English.

After two years in Québec I realized that I couldn't just turn myself into a Québécois. The American side of me was too strong to ignore and so I came back realizing and wondering if I could find the French side of me within the context of being a Franco-American. I felt that my own search was more closely tied to that of the French here and that it will probably live or die by my own efforts and the efforts of other Francos here.

I am not trying to pass the buck by saying that reaching my own goal is dependent on other Francos. It is just a fact that I am dependent on others as anyone is who is a member of any particular group. I, as anyone else cannot become a part of a culture if there are not others who see the worth in that culture and so want to contribute to it.

The irony of our situation is that it is not so much a matter of numbers for there are certainly plenty of us here in New England especially if you consider all the Francos who have become assimilated but just that too few of us have seen the value in our own unique situation.

I have shown my own connection with Québec and as a Franco-American. I would like to talk about what I feel about Québec and our own situation. I would also like to say that I am no expert on Québec and that these are just a reflection of my own personal views that have come from reading and personal experience.

I am also only going to talk about one aspect of Québec and that is how Québec independence and the aspirations of French-Canadians in general are portrayed to the American public. I feel that this is of extreme importance to us for many different reasons. We should make ourselves very aware of Québec and so put ourselves in the position of making sure that the Québécois side is understood by us and the American public.

Since I have been back I have seen four shows on TV pertaining to Québec independence. Two of them on public TV were fairly objective, another one on commercial TV was completely irresponsible in its portrayal of the situation in Québec. They gave a very brief historical background about French Canadians in Québec not even mentioning anything about the French in the rest of Canada or the United States. Although it may seem irrelevant to the question of Québec you cannot isolate the history of the French to Québec. The immigration to the U.S. and the other provinces in Canada, and the repression of the French culture there, all have had a great impact on Québec.

They then proceeded by interviewing an Italian immigrant who was very emotionally upset over Bill 101 and the fact that his children would have to attend French schools. They also portrayed the P.Q. as being a repressive regime that was threatening the unity of Canada the U.S.'s friend.

What they didn't bother to say was the fact that nearly all the immigrants to Québec are becoming part of the English community and therefore are changing the ratio between the English and the French in Québec, especially when the drop in the birthrate among French Québécois is considered. It also didn't bother to say that this tactic had been used against the French for the past 200 years and that without complete control over immigration and education the French speaking majority in Québec will never be able to feel secure as to their remaining a majority.

No one can expect the French in Québec to just sit by and watch themselves become a minority in the one place that they have had some strength. The one place where they have a chance of having a government that will work with them towards achieving the goals of French culture in North America.

The Québécois know all too well as to what chance French culture would have without a strong Québec. They just have to look West, South and East to see how far a Franco gets if he or she stays a Franco. They know you leave to give up everything that you are and become an Anglo or the American version of it. There are no places in North

American society for a Franco to aspire to if he or she wants to do it as a Franco. At least nowhere but in Québec.

Things have started to change a bit in the rest of Canada and maybe are starting to here. But what chance do we have without a strong Québec. What chance would any Franco-American here have if he or she wanted to advance in their career, but wanted to do it within French culture if there wasn't a place in North America where the French culture had the power to achieve its own goals.

I hope all Franco-Americans and anyone else concerned about French culture in North America realize that we need a strong and independent Québec that is free to work out its own future and will provide us with the help we are going to need in strengthening French culture in New England.

In talking about connection and to a certain extent of dependence on Québec I am not trying to relegate Franco aspirations here to an outpost of Québec but trying to show that Québec is and always will be the center of French culture in North America. It doesn't mean that we can't have a vibrant and creative culture of our own. Nevertheless, all cultures tend to have a center just as New York is for the U.S. and Paris more so for France so Montréal is for French culture in North America. Eventually perhaps there will be a city in New England that will become a center of Franco-American culture.

As for the future for us if we can regain what it is we have lost, it will leave us and our children with many options. Those words they feel strange to me, but again they are meant to be taken as part of a contribution to a dialogue and not as a part of a dissertation. I hope we will put ourselves in the position of being able to explain Québec and French culture to the rest of the country, but also explain the U.S. to Québec for they have many misconceptions about the U.S. of course this is dependent on having someone to listen. We will also have the option of growing in either culture or even in both. I think it will enable us to understand this country better, and how people with a different cultural background perceive it, whether they are from Québec, France, Haiti, or the French speaking African countries. But more importantly I think we will be able to contribute a great deal of life here in New England. I certainly feel it would gain by having French culture grow here. By having French spoken on a more widespread basis that would reflect our numbers. By our being able to be an audience but more importantly participants in music, plays, and literature done in French, whether they pertain to us or other contributors to French culture. We will then be able to develop our own culture as a truly bilingual and bicultural people.

If there is anyone who has had the perseverance to get through this I am going to ask you for some help. As you have previously read I am a carpenter a trade which I have learned was also that of the first Ducharme to arrive in Montréal in 1659. He was a menuisier from Paris. So you see I am trying to take up an old family tradition. The survival of French culture in North America is also a family tradition. My great grandfather started La Banque Provinciale and Le Sauvegarde Insurance company which he sold to the Caisse Populaire so the French could retain control of it. He also helped to start Le Devoir. His grandfather was Léandre Ducharme who at the age of twenty-three fought in the rebellion of 1837. He wrote a journal, which I found at Dartmouth, while he was exiled in Australia for six years.

To get back to my question what I would like to do is to build traditional French Canadian or Acadian style houses, which I came to love while in Québec. I would build them using post and beam framing which is something I have just started to get into. I have my first post and beam house to start in a month. I realize that I will probably have to travel all over New England in order to do this, but I think it will give me a good chance to get to know some of you who are also trying to establish our culture on a living basis and not just on paper. So if there is anyone who has any suggestions or knows of any good books on French Canadian architecture or even has some pictures I would greatly appreciate their help.

Salut



*Yvon's
Encore
a short story by
Denis
Ledoux*

In the morning when I awake, the room is filled with light. The snow has stopped falling; the sun is shining. I lie beneath our checkered quilt, with Corinne asleep, and am excited like I was when a child and I'd awaken and realize that a very special day lay ahead of me.

It is perhaps too early yet to get up. I am warm in bed. When I turn my head, I can see our plants growing profusely before the window. We have a table, full of cyclamen, begonias, Swedish ivies. From the ceiling hangs a wandering Jew and a parlor ivy. I remember being at St. Joseph's and awakening in a dormitory and realizing we had a day of congé. I would lie abed, in one row of many rows of single beds, happy not to have any Greek or Latin classes, knowing that we were having an ice festival at Silver Lake.

After breakfast, on an ice-holiday, we boys walked quickly to the lake, carrying a hockey stick and a pair of well-used skates. There were about two hundred of us, forming a long line as we first poured and then trekked out of the school grounds, happily leaving the three large brick buildings behind us.

At the lake, we would get our skates on and then leave in groups of two or three to cross the lake. In the early winter, the wind blew the snow away. There were patches of snow, here and there, but mostly the ice was clear. In the distance, a row of pointed firs encircled the lake. The sky, as I remember it, was always deep blue.

Once at the other end of the long lake, we stopped and ate the apples we each had brought. Then we headed back, tired, but propelled by the idea of the lunch waiting for us. Afterwards competitions and pickup hockey.

"Tabernacle!" I realize. "I want to play hockey!" This afternoon, we'll skate until we're exhausted. We'll buy hockey sticks, a puck, and see what remains of all the hours we played in high school, every afternoon, between the last class and late afternoon study, between three when we rusehd out and the fifteen minute bell at quarter past four which called us back in for the fourthirty study.

One afternoon, André lost three front teeth. He clutched desperately at his mouth. We encircled him nervously and thought, "Father Moreau will be angry if he ever hears about pucks flying again." There was no blood, and, when André opened his mouth, he found two teeth broken off at the gums, in his mouth. The other tooth was never found although, out of a sense of responsibility for André's loss, we looked around on the chipped, "snow"-covered ice.

André is gone, but that leaves me indifferent. I don't even feel bad about my indifference anymore. Yvon is here today and that makes me very happy. I want to be with Yvon. We will be close friends.

Corinne is still asleep. I can no longer stay abed. I am too excited about the congé ahead of me. I am a boy again, impatient for the reveille bell to give me permission to begin a new day. Only now, I can get up without an admonitor taking my name down. I'd much rather be an adult. I am glad that Yvon and I are both men now.

I get up quietly and slip quickly into my corduroy pants and my flannel shirt. When I lived in the country, it was cold there in the morning. It comes back to me how quickly we dressed there. I used to wonder then who I would become. And I realize that I have become who I have become. It seems no more difficult than that.

When I enter the living room, I see that Yvon is already up, dressed, and is sitting in the same chair he was sitting in last night. Behind him, the shades are up and, outside, the world is white. To his side is a full wall of books. He is reading and does not notice me.

He is a lean man, who, unlike many men our age, has not begun to turn to fat. He is in excellent condition and, I think as I look at him, growing handsome with aging. But, it does surprise me that he looks so much like a man, with a filled-out physique, a full beard, and some grey at the temples. I still think of him and me as boys, yet I no more look like the skinny kid each of us was than he does.

"Allo, bonjour!" Yvon says, as he looks up in response to my staring. I became aware that I have been staring.

"Bonjour. Ça va ce matin?"

"Oui. Pis toi?"

We exchange notes on our night, how we slept, and how we feel this morning. I ask, "What are you reading?"

"Les Opiniâtres," he says, as he closes the book and places it in his lap. The index finger of his left hand is inserted in the book as a marker. "While I was browsing through your books, I came across Desmarais. I'm just rereading passages. Do you remember he was on our recommended list at St. Joseph?"

"Yes, and it's good in spite of that!"

We both laugh, remembering "good" books which had been imposed on us.

"They must have been crazy to leave France, where everything was settled for the misery of the St. Lawrence Valley. Mosquitoes in the summer. Cold in the winter. The damn Iroquois marauders from New York being prodded on by the British. Always the risk of a bad harvest."

Then he adds, "Damn, they had to be crazy!"

"What I find even more interesting is the compulsion, almost, which we French people have to remain Franco. For hundreds of years, we've fought to maintain whatever it is which distinguishes us as Francos. Generations seem to pick it up as by instinct. We constantly struggle for survival. Perhaps the struggle is related to the drive we French people have."

"Something in us does drive us, doesn't it? It drove us to Canada; it drove us to the U.S."

And I think, "It's driving you"; but I say, "It is just like whatever it is which is driving us, each one of us, to become who we become."

"Hunger," says a sleep-laden voice from behind me, "is driving me into the kitchen to make crêpes. Are you two men hungry?"

She is dressed in a long, blue housecoat and she is pushing hair from her face. For me, there is the moment of discovery. I see her again as for the first time and feel how good it is to be with her.

"Starving," says Yvon.

"Let's go into the kitchen," I say. "I'll start some tea." Inside I tell myself that comments kept to myself are of no use to Yvon nor to his being with me. I say, as I wait

for him to put his book aside and walk up to me, "You know, it's probably the same force that drove you to the West Coast."

He shakes his head and says, "Now my father is dead and I'll never get to do whatever I had to do with him. Awful isn't it that I feel anger instead of sorrow?"

I haunch my shoulders, "Aren't they both just variations of the same thing?" He doesn't answer. I begin to realize that this is a pattern with him. Yvon consistently evades the pursuit of difficult subjects. He just lets them slip away.

"We are all vagabonds," I say. "It's in our Franco blood."

Outside the kitchen windows, schoolboys are throwing snowballs. I see their school bags lying in the snow where they have been flung. The boys run at each other and then away and back and pull each other down.

For a moment, I am back at the sacristy window of St. Joseph's looking at adolescent boys milling about the compound below. It is so cold outside that the window panes are covered with frost. Yvon is sacristan with me, and we talk about what we expect from life, while, below, our schoolmates are shivering.

Again this morning, after a dozen years, we are in a warm room looking down on boys outside in the cold. These boys however seem to be having more fun than our classmates did hovering by the lockerroom door during evening outdoor recreations. Some nights, it was below zero.

"I have forgotten about snow," says Yvon. "At first, in California, I missed it but now it seems a bother."

I pour the water for the tea. I say to Yvon, "Do you remember when we were sacristans?"

"Yes. What about?"

"I was just thinking how cold it would get at night, and we'd be warm upstairs talking."

"Year, remember how Father Moreau wouldn't let the boys in. What a way to go. Freeze your ass off circumbulating those three large buildings ten times. It took about

twelve to fifteen minutes to do that, didn't it?"

"Something like that - and all the while you'd be resenting it like hell. The bastard was warm inside saying how good it was for you to take a nice freezing walk after supper."

Something about our frail healths. Say, do you want to go skating today?"

"Do you have any extra skates?"

"We'll go to my brother's and get his. What do you say, Corinne?"

"Sounds good - if the rink is open."

"Que c'est bleu!" says Corinne and then she lowers her head again and continues to tie her skates. She sits on a wooden bench her back to the park. In front of us, beyond the skating rink, are the three-and-four storey apartment buildings, some of whose

clapboard sidings are badly in need of paint.

"I read someplace," Yvon says, "that when the Dutch and the Flemish went to Italy they discovered the soft blues of the Southern skies. I had forgotten how 'steel blue' the sky here can be."

It has been grey for several days in a row, a fitting time for a funeral. This day, however, which had begun well as remained beautiful.

Yvon puts two fingers up to his mouth as if they are holding a cigarette. He inhales in a marked manner and loudly exhales. His breath comes out white, smokelike.

"Look folks, I'm smoking in the schoolyard," says Yvon, "and the teachers can't catch me."

Corinne and I laugh.

"I love it," she says exuberantly.

We get up and begin to skate. Yvon's ankles bother him.

"It's been a long while," he says.

At that moment the blueness of the sky overhead, the whiteness of the snow in the park, the redness of the red brick Irish Catholic Church, whose two unmatched steeples reach into the blue winter sky, the soft stone greyness of the Episcopal Church where the mill owners worshipped, the yellowness of the medieval brick complex housing a Catholic high school, where many Francos have studies, where many in my family studied, all of these blend into a wholeness for me.

"This is home," I feel, and my energies at that moment are boundless.

Everything has come together for one instant. All complexity has vanished in this great simplicity. All is one for me. And then I begin to remember the feeling. It is no longer mine. I am no longer feeling but only remembering, only thinking of feeling.

"What's that large yellow, brick building," Yvon asks. "Niches and recesses and small-paned windows! What is the secret of this medieval facsimile in a proletarian city?"

"It's the Catholic high school. It used to be the Franco high school, but now it's a regional high school. They even run an ad that says 'no ethnic discrimination with us'."

"Is that where you'd have gone to high school, had you not gone to St. Joseph's?" he asks.

Corinne, who is ahead of us, is skating with two little girls. On the far side of the park is a new bank in a suburban architectural style. Where the bank now stands, there had been a large hotel, a four-story bastion which had dominated the city park. Because of changing lifestyles, the hotel had lost its clientele, was razed, and a suburban bank built in its stead on the edge of this city park.

"Probably," I answer.

I begin pointing out the different structures around the park, underlining the history and significance of each, getting in, for instance, that the two large brick houses at the far right side of the park, structures which now house social agencies, were once the homes of mill directors representing absentee factory-owners who at first were from Boston and then as the mills were jockeyed about the marketplace, from New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago. Now many of the mills are closed, or house different companies on each floor, small local companies. The houses of the representatives of the millords, two, have had to change their functions.

These people have come and now they are gone and somehow we remain. It is our home. We are here to stay.

Across these houses, to our left, is the city hall, a massive red brick building with only bay windows and a tower. It has replaced another city hall, a stately structure by its photos, a wooden building which burned to the ground in 1890.

"Chrisse," Yvon says, "it feels strange to be here."

"What do you mean 'here'? Do you mean the city or the rink?"

"Oh, I mean St. Joseph's. The cold air, the blue sky, skating. It all reminds me of the afternoons when we skated and then had study periods."

"Is that good or bad?"

"It makes me think that I've become an adult. Preparation time is over. This is it. Or shall I say, 'Is this it?' I'm who I was supposedly preparing to become. It's the real thing. Somehow life promised more."

"We're still always changing," I say.

"In depth, yes. But, I miss the width, the magnitude of possibilities."

"But we have width as adults. It's just that our scope is more within a range of possibilities. We don't waste our energies on hopeless, futureless ventures. You know, the fat kid wanting to become a ballet dancer."

In books, in novels, it is possible to observe the development of a character and come to an understanding. But observe Yvon as much as I will, I don't understand him. What does he mean when he says what he says? I tell myself to flow with him, to stop trying to grasp him. What I really want to do, and what I want to get over wanting to do, is add this and that to that and arrive at a meaning.

Like a weaver at a loom, I want to add color to color and texture to texture until I have arrived at a pattern and there emerges a fabric, a design. For the novelist, what emerges is called characterization.

Can this be done with Yvon? Is there a craftsmanship which can be exercised to get to know him? Can I place this impression next to that impression, this observation next to that observation and arrive at a feeling about Yvon? Will the synthesis I arrive at, so useful to novelists and psychiatrists, be useful in understanding Yvon?

"This rink is like a Brueghel painting. All these children scurrying about. A dog, even, running after his mistress and barking everytime she falls down."

The little girl, ahead of us, well-muffled, is a little ball of clothing and, when she falls, because of the layers of clothing, it is difficult for her to get up. Impatient, her dog

barks. We laugh. She is struggling to get up. I help her up.

"Thank you," she answers, as she wobbles away. Then, Yvon falls. I think how funny it would be if the little girl came to help him up, but she is far away.

"Look, Mommy, look at the big man fall," Yvon says mimicking a child's voice, as he picks himself up from the ice, brushing snow off his pants.

"How do you live here?" he asks, looking piercingly at me, trying to see into me. "Aren't you like the prince among the ugly ducklings or something like that? How can this city understand you and appreciate you? I couldn't live here."

"Why should the city understand me?" I'm just a citizen among many. The city doesn't owe me anything."

"But you've differentiated yourself. There's no place for you here."

"Au contraire. This city is my home. There is no place where I can know myself so well as here. This is where my great-grandparents headed to when they came down from Canada. What personal history I have in the US is here. This is the only place which my people have fashioned. I don't feel different from the people here. I am just a Franco in a different stage of evolution. We are all part of a continuum, and that is why I remain here — or have returned here. I need to be part of a continuum."

"My family has lived in the Valley since the eighteenth century. We left Acadia a few years after le Dérangement. The expulsions by the English were in 1755 so that places us in the Valley at least three to four generations before the area became American territory. Corinne was right last night. The Valley was ours before it was theirs, but that doesn't change the fact that the Valley really is theirs and not ours."

"Theirs? Les américains?"

He does not answer me. He goes on with his flow of thoughts. He says, "Your ancestors came here a long time after the region was settled and yet you feel a claim on the place. My people settled the Valley and, in spite of that, I feel no roots."

"Perhaps roots have to be helped along a bit. Perhaps education and society have to contribute. What I have written," I point out, "has been written to give a public stature to my feelings. We Francos are living in closets and backrooms emotionally. We are afraid to be Franco. In some part of our defeated selves, we feel that being Franco is not legitimate — so in our public lives we force ourselves to be something else."

"It was my father," he answers, continuing his train of thought. "He became 'the Acadian' for me. We did not get along. I guess, in rejecting him, I rejected everything else. None of it fits anymore. I've gotten all my past out of American history books."

I say, "I used to feel, and sometimes I still do, like some one who dressed completely out of donation-box clothes. I felt that nothing fitted very well. Being here helps a lot though."

We are deeply spiritual in our preoccupations, it is difficult to be occupied in the skating. We stop against a bound.

"St. Joseph wasn't the same thing for you and me, was it? We began approximately the same way; we even had some of the same education. Somewhere along the line, things changed for us. What is it that happens to people?"

"Individuality," I answer, hoping not to sound too facile.

"Gnoti seauton," as Father Moreau was fond of quoting.

"To a point. But 'knowing yourself' isn't enough. You've got to be yourself, to act upon your knowledge."

"Gnoti seauton." If he didn't say that a thousand times, he didn't say it once. Whatever happened to Father Moreau?

"He was in a car accident. He was killed."

"Pas possible!"

0 "After St. Joseph's closed down, he worked in Vermont at some new ministry for a while. In the winter, skidded off the road and dropped down a mountain side."

"None of us know when it's going to come, do we? You'd think that we'd stop wasting our time! But we don't."

"And you feel you're wasting your time?"

"I see my life slipping by. I'm not living it. When I was younger, I thought I'd have all the time in the world. And now I'm aware of time. But to quote Eliot, I'm still measuring my life by coffeespoons."

"What do you need for your life to be more satisfying?"

"I don't know, but I'm living a death and not a life."

We stand against the hockey bounds. Across from us Corinne is playing with kids. They have been with her a long time now. I wonder what it would be like if, someday, we had children of our own. Would they be Franco too?

"I can't understand why you think of death. You are intelligent, attractive, well-educated, knowledgeable. You are what many people aspire to become!"

"Something is slipping away from me. I feel like an observer of things. It's all going on before me but I can't affect any of it. I observe myself going through the motions of doing whatever it is I do every day."

At first, I want to say to him, "Yvon, come here and live with us in this city. Come and live with your people and let your roots sink deep." But I realize that his roots are not here. Yvon is an Acadian. His people do not live here — not the particular shade of Franco that he must deal with.

"Go back to the Valley," I say. "Find yourself a good Acadian woman and have some kids."

After I've said it, my advice seems brash. I hope he does not suggest that Corinne and I have kids too. I certainly deserve to be told that after what I've said.

"I'd like that," he says, "except that I would feel silly. You know, 'You can go home again'."

"Home is where, when you go there, they have to take you in."

"I couldn't."

"Because you've set impossible priorities for yourself. Yvon, you don't have to meet any of those priorities. Yvon, you don't have to meet any of those priorities. They reflect childhood anxieties. You're going to show those Anglos that you're just as smart as they are. You're going to beat them at their own game. But, don't you see, Yvon. You're losing because you're playing on their terms. And in a sense there is no game at all."

"I just can't be with my family. My father tried his best to keep me like him."

"So you've pulled up roots and are adrift. Some revenge. Now that he is dead, you no longer need to hold your happiness as a hostage in your play for his attention."

"Is that what I'm doing?"

"Yeah, you know how kids hold their breaths? They do it to force their parents into submission. Now that your father is dead, what are you withholding yourself for?"

"I'm waiting for myself."

"You are yourself. You don't have to will that. All you have to do is allow conditions which facilitate that to be. You live far away from your people in terms of history and culture. What do you have now that mirrors meaning back to you?"

"It's not your legal clients who will give you meaning. They see you as a do-gooder from the enemy ranks. They don't have the experience or the emotional detachment to understand you for what you are. You're a stereotype to them. You're a white man. Nothing more."

"You're being hard ass," he says.

"What else can I say? You're out to fill yourself with a do-gooder mission and, of course, it's not working out. What you do and what you are are not the same thing. You've got to let yourself be instead of letting yourself do. If you don't watch out you'll wake up one day and your life will have been all lived out."

"Even coffeespoons measure up, don't they? Sometimes it seems I spend so much energy dealing with being lonely that I have little energy left to build with."

"I suppose," I say to be reconciliatory, "if you were being dragged behind a car by a rope and I were to scream to you 'let go of the rope' you would know what to do. But what do you do if I say 'let go of whatever it is you are holding?' And there is something that you're holding on to which is ruining you."

We stand silent now against the bounds. The sky overhead is deep blue. My nose is running.

"It's St. Joseph that made us this way, isn't it. André and me and others. You were this way too once."

"It was something in us perhaps that was attracted to St. Joseph's. We went there freely. It isn't fair to blame the school for offering us what we wanted."

"What did we know about anything. We were just kids!"

"Yvon, St. Joseph's can't be the sacrificial lamb which will bear all our sins. Don't we have a responsibility for some of them too?"

"We get locked in all of this, don't we? I want you to tell me how you made it. I want a key."

"I've already given it to you."

"I don't know how to deal with what you're telling me."

Corinne comes up and takes my hand.

"My feet are getting tired. I think you men have had enough too from the way you've been standing for the longest time!"

"Yeah, let's go," I say.

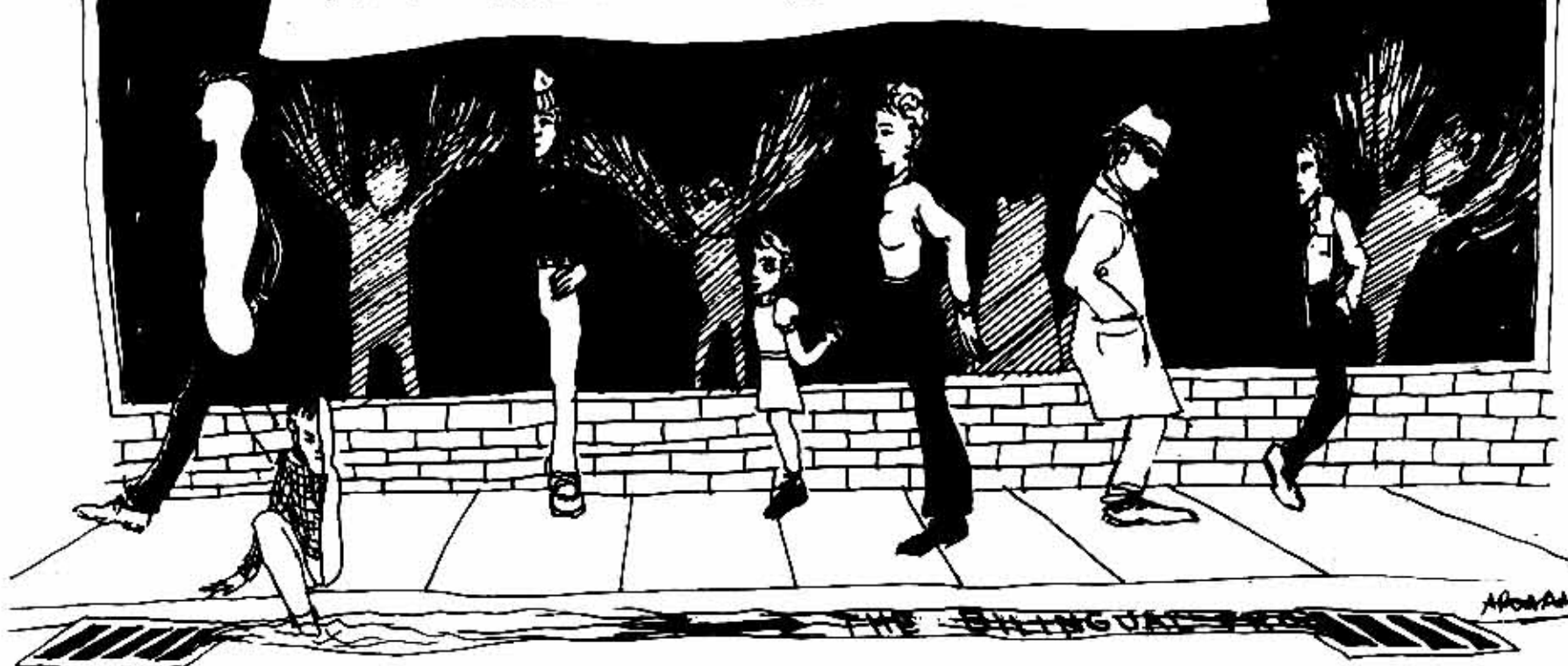
"Sounds good," answers Yvon.

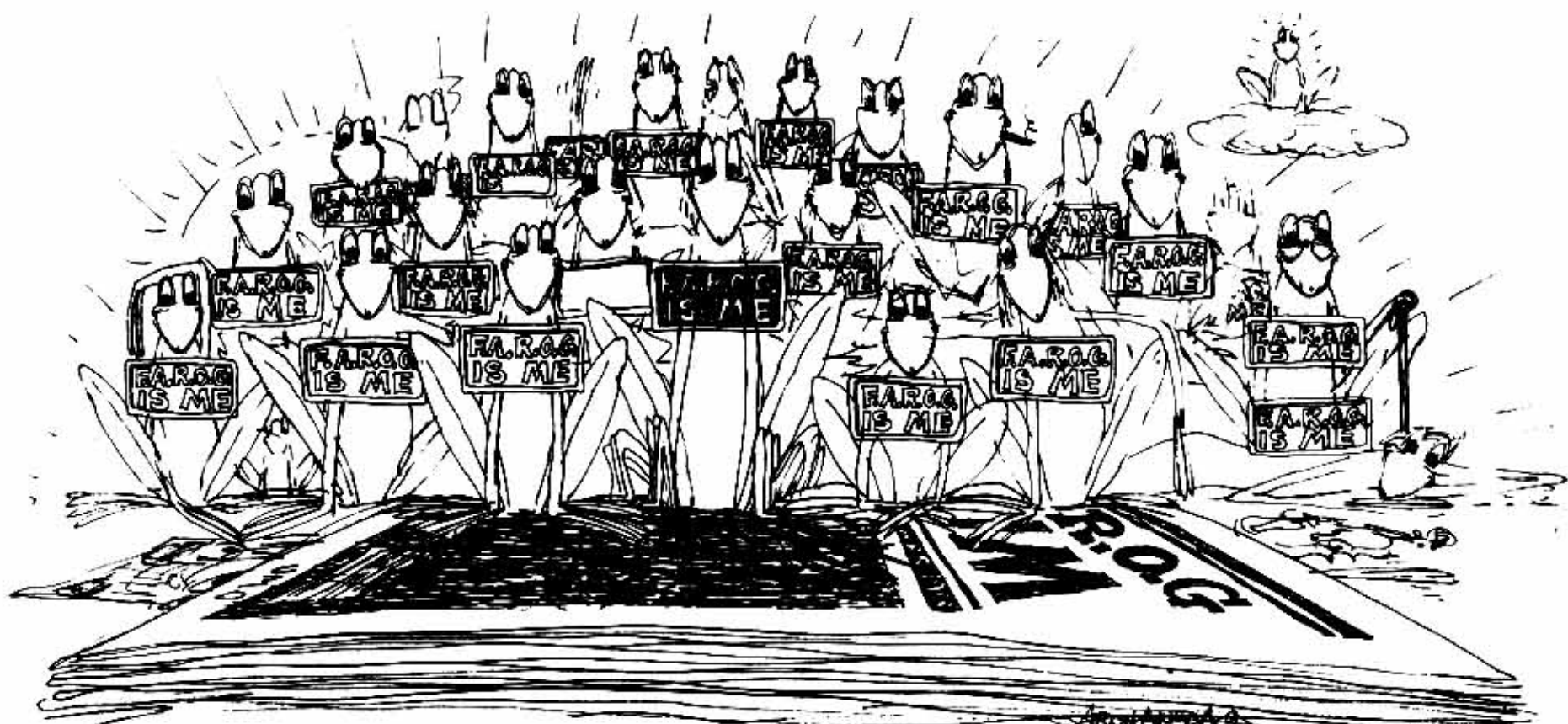
I skate impatiently across the rink to the wooden bench where we will take our skates off.

to be continued

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THE HALF-PEOPLE OF MAINE





Poster of above drawing on sale at FAROG

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REFLEXION CANDIDE

Par Ms. Candide C. Desrosier

On Dec. 8, 1977, I attended a meeting with the educators of our area concerning a proposal written to the Federal Government for funds to write a text book in the dialect of my Valley to teach other Americans our cultural heritage and dialect. I recall during another recession what the educators of my country did to us Frenchies and I don't like it. I call it The Games People Play. Sitting in their ivory towers, finding themselves lacking of innovations, playing their games, they made generations of decent, hard working people ashamed to be who they were.

In the early 20's the educators of our area told the French speaking Americans of Northern Maine to learn to speak English so that they could be absorbed in the mainstream of their country.

We were made aware that we were born Americans, and as Americans, it was our duty to become English speaking citizens.

Over the years we were made ashamed of our dialect. Our parents and grandparents were made to feel inferior, ridiculous at their lack of English understanding and even worse, at the lack of proficiency in their own language - French. Our parents were not immigrants, they were American born, and as a result they should have made a move to learn the language of their native land, at least to teach their children they were told.

The system of that time appeared to be out to break the French speaking people - almost succeeding but not quite.

With deep rooted pride our parents pushed us to let go of our French tongue and to learn English. Even though they themselves were not able to speak or understand the language. Our mother tongue was banished from the school system. We were forbidden to speak French on the school grounds!

We worked hard to become the Americans that our

educators said we should be.

Evidently we did not do so well in the language department. Not many of my generation mastered the English and the proper French language. We were caught between the dialect of our ancestors and the dialect we created ourselves trying to learn to speak proper French and English. However, with the same deep rooted pride we made sure that our children, the seventh generation of Americans born of French ancestry, became proficient in both languages. The educators of our formative years made us (the French speaking children) look upon our language (dialect??) as rather vulgar. The bureaucrats of my early adult years had not categorized us in any way. We were Americans or other. We were never given a place in the sun as French speaking Americans.

About 1950 or later a list of words was published in the Reader's Digest as it is done each month to extend one's vocabulary. Among that list, was the word Ethnic. Looking up the definition of the word I find that it means "relating to those groups sharing a common language, customs, origin, characteristics, classifications belonging to the distinct cultural tradition of a people."

At last the system had found us a place in the sun, we would be known as Franco-Americans, to be used as a political ball whether it be in the government of our State and Country or the school system.

By then many years had gone by, Americanizing the French of Northern Aroostook had been a struggle. Now the children of my generation and their children spoke English in their homes. For the educators there was nothing left to do but sit back and pat themselves on the back for a job well done.

With the economy of the Country at a low causing a tight budget in the ivory towers, an idea was

Cont. pg. 2

La "Sun Life" de Montréal

Symbole d'un certain crétinisme.....

Comme corollaire, en quelque sorte, à ce qu'on vient de lire, nous ajoutons les commentaires qu'un prêtre patriote, - M. l'abbé Roger Ducharme, curé de Ferland, en Saskatchewan - faisait récemment dans son semainier paroissial à propos du déménagement de la Sun Life à Toronto. Elles valent leur pesant d'or.

—Symbole du Canada anglais, "race supérieure" en certains quartiers, plantée en plein Montréal, la plus grande métropole française du monde après Paris et qui, après cent ans, a réussi à ne pas s'y intégrer;

—Symbole du Canada anglais qui a trop souvent "écremé" son partenaire (co-fondateur), et qui l'a fait avec la plus grande apparente innocence et qui ne s'en repent pas;

—L'image-type du 20% anglophone dans le Québec qui veut continuer de dicter les dires et les faire du 80% francophone... "dirigeants qui exercent depuis trop longtemps une influence proprement coloniale" (Lévesque à Paris);

—Exemple de l'exploiteur qui, sur chaque dollar fait à Québec, n'en ré-investit que 41¢, soit quelque \$400 millions sur le milliard de dollars brassé jusqu'en 1976;

—"Partenaire" à sens unique qui, avec le Canadien français pourtant ici depuis Jacques Cartier, 1534, a réussi à n'embaucher qu'une poignée de parlants français dans ses bureaux de Montréal... L'éternel "Jean-Baptiste: cirque de bottes".

—Autre exemple de la grosse finance qui suce son client tant qu'elle peut jusqu'à ce que la mort s'ensuive... S'il ne meurt pas et qu'il ose décider de devenir maître de son propre destin, simplement quoique par législation... on joue à la vierge offensée...

—De ce temps-ci, quand le Québec éternue... tout le Canada a le rhume.

"Le Canada anglais est en train de payer pour avoir ignoré les réalités psychologiques du Canada français," a dit MacLennan, le grand écrivain qui a écrit "Deux solitudes" (Two Solitudes), au Canadian Club, lundi le 9/1/78.

ooo

Notre Canada aujourd'hui: un mariage de raison (pas un mariage d'amour) qui ne va pas bien. Mariage pourtant entre deux êtres humains, deux êtres de même nature, mais de psychologie différente, la psychologie masculine et la psychologie féminine. Ça peut marcher comme dans un mariage. Ça peut aussi froter, grincer, même fracasser...

L'ancienne autorité masculine qui avait toujours raison, qui se donnait tous les droits, qui matait brusquement toute résistance, tout désir de dialogue: le Canada anglais dans toute sa gloire. Et l'autre partenaire du mariage, le Canada français, pourtant être humain aussi, mais de psychologie différente, de culture différente, de langue différente qui, comme de nos jours la femme, veut avoir un mot à dire dans l'édification du foyer, veut dialoguer, partager, être respecté, être traité à part entière tenant compte (de sa féminité): sa langue, sa culture, ses traditions, son héritage culturel, ses façons de penser latines, sa présence, son histoire, sa population, son esprit, sa foi...

"Alors les Québécois se sont servi de leur langue comme d'une arme. L'arme de leur libération. Ils se savent por-