As cultural diversity becomes increasingly apparent within the French-speaking community in Canada, the French language stands out more clearly than ever before as the single characteristic distinguishing the two major elements of the Canadian population. Although 99 per cent of Quebec's French-speaking population is still nominally Catholic, religion is no longer the adhesive force it once was; nor are English Canadians preponderantly Protestant. The relative affluence of an increasingly urbanized Quebec tends to narrow economic disparities between individuals in the two cultural groups, and the growing realization that “Americanization” is a misnomer for many of the side effects of industrialization hastens the pace of both toward a common pattern of life. With traditional concepts evolving in Quebec, the French language is increasingly a focus of group loyalty as well as the principal identity trait. As such, it has become both the symbol and the object of French-English friction. There is a new recognition on the part of English Canadians that French Canada represents a political force and a new willingness on the part of French Canadians to use their strength to advance the language cause.

THE FRENCH-SPEAKING POPULATION

Examination of a few statistics helps explain both the current confidence French Canadians feel about their ability to survive as an ethnic entity and their apprehensions about their future in the Canadian Confederation. For the first time in generations, perhaps even since the Conquest, they believe they have sufficient numbers to resist assimilation and maintain political control of the province of Quebec. In the 1961 national census, 4,965,579 Canadians claimed French as their mother tongue, and 68 per cent of them spoke French only. They compose over 81 per cent of the population of Quebec, 35 per cent of
New Brunswick, and about 7 per cent in Ontario, Manitoba, and Prince Edward Island. In the first three provinces the outlook for French has been steadily improving. Except for the Montreal area, where three-fourths of the non-French part of the Quebec population is concentrated, and one or two border counties, French predominance in Quebec is overwhelming. Quebec City, for example, is now 95 per cent French-speaking, and most of the Eastern Townships, originally settled by United Empire Loyalists who fled the United States after the American Revolution, are now heavily French-speaking.

Even Montreal, where the French-language element accounted for only 46 per cent of the population in the middle of the last century, has been well over 60 per cent French-speaking for decades, despite a heavy influx of immigrants from overseas. Five out of seven of these "New Canadians" opt for English; the initial waves of Italian immigration to Montreal assimilated with the French-speaking community, but recently the Italians have tended to follow the pattern set by German, Polish, and various Jewish strains in becoming anglicized. Fear that Montreal may revert to an English-speaking majority is a major incentive to French-Canadian nationalist leaders, who are belatedly looking for ways to encourage immigrants to adopt French rather than English as their new tongue. This may well be the critical factor for the continued existence of French Canada as a political entity to be reckoned with. If the French Canadians lose their numerical preponderance in the Montreal area, which accounts for 40 per cent of Quebec's population and wields vastly disproportional economic and cultural influence, the chances for even the cultural survival of the rest of French Canada will be drastically reduced.

Two factors would seem to favor at least maintenance of the current ratio of French to English speakers in the Montreal area. The first is the experience of the past half-century or more, which indicates that the requirement for the French-speaking wage earner to learn English has not resulted in anglicization of his entire family. His children have repeated his experience where necessary, and in the vast majority of cases their offspring spend their early years in French-speaking surroundings. This state of equilibrium was achieved in a period of relative passivity as far as aggressive programs to safeguard French-language claims are concerned. The second phenomenon favoring the position of French in Montreal is the new willingness of English Canadians to learn to speak it.

In 1961 almost half a million people in the Montreal area spoke only English (over 800,000 spoke only French). The new emphasis on
French in educated circles throughout Canada has stimulated interest in the second language among English-speaking Montrealers, who have felt especially vulnerable to the attacks of French-Canadian nationalists. English-Canadian apologists for intergroup relations cite the figures of recent censuses to argue that in Quebec province proportionally more people of British origin speak French than vice versa. Though it is true that 29 per cent of Quebeckers of British origin know both languages whereas only 24 per cent of those of French origin claim this ability, a debating point cannot be scored on the face value of this comparison. For nearly one-third of such racially British Quebeckers, French is now the mother tongue, so that culturally they are French Canadians. Their existence, however, and the bilingual skill of the remaining two-thirds of French-speaking Quebeckers whose ancestors came from the British Isles are prima facie evidence that proficiency in French is not beyond the competency of the average English Canadian. The ability they demonstrate in the second language belies a cliché that had long been overworked by linguistically slothful English Canadians. Even today, the letters to the editor columns of English-language newspapers in Montreal frequently print patronizing communications praising the language ability of French Canadians and bemoaning the congenital predispositions which prevent the letter writer from exhibiting the same capability. The French Canadian who scans such letters remembers the thousands of hours of effort his facility in English has cost him, and he reads between the lines a reluctance to sully Anglo-Saxon lips with the speech of a conquered people.

This attitude is no longer as widespread as it once was. Moreover, the problem has ceased to be a simple confrontation of French versus British racial stock, and percentages based only on such distinctions distort the language picture. The influx of New Canadians since the last war has added a third element, which promises in the long run further to reduce the French-speaking proportion of the population. Those of British extraction are now a minority group in Canada, but they do not consider this situation unduly disturbing. Unlike the French Canadians, who have long harped on the disadvantages of being underdogs, they see no threat to identity in their new minority status. The adjustment of nine out of ten immigrants to the English-speaking community poses practically no personal problem to the average English Canadian. The French Canadian has a different perspective, because he sees the assimilation of newcomers to English as a further distortion of the linguistic imbalance he has struggled against for a century.

In the letters to the editor columns of Montreal’s French-language
press the linguistic problem is a daily topic. A frequent aspect of the subject is the frustration of not being able to get service in one or another commercial establishment in downtown Montreal. The reasonably alert French Canadian of good will is ready to admit that such a situation is relatively rare today. Indeed, the change in this regard in a matter of five years or so is little less than astounding. Even a smattering of French is evidence of a new attitude, and most French Canadians respond with pleasure to such consideration for their sensibilities.

For thoughtful French Canadians with a deep concern for the future of their cultural group, an increasingly serious threat is shaping up on the national level. For generations the French-Canadian part of the population of Canada has been roughly 30 per cent. Quebec spokesmen have insisted that the census form list individuals according to the national origin of their first Canadian male ancestor. English Canadians protest that such a procedure undermines efforts to develop a sense of Canadianism, because no one can describe himself in the official census as being of Canadian nationality. French Canadians are unmoved by this contention, because they consider it more important to establish the existence of as large a number of French Canadians as possible. They have long been resigned to being a minority; they are determined not to lose any possible buttress for their national position. There is an increasing element of deception, however, in the origins query, or at least in the propaganda use to which champions of French-Canadian rights put it. The anglicization of French Canadians who do not live in Quebec has been proceeding at an accelerated rate, at least since 1921. In 1961, 34 per cent of these Canadians knew no French. In Quebec, on the other hand, less than one per cent of the population of French origin spoke only English. This drain on the French-language community in Canada has been a major argument advanced by Quebec separatists to bolster their demand for independence.

Sincere French-speaking proponents of confederation are equally perturbed by these statistics. They draw some comfort, however, from the improved position of French in Quebec and its brightening outlook in the federal service. Their reaction is to look for surer safeguards for French on a national level rather than to cut Quebec off from the rest of Canada. They are both discouraged and spurred to positive action in that direction by a population projection sketched out by a University of Montreal demographer in 1961. Taking into account immigration, internal migration, and linguistic transfers, he estimated that even with sustained growth, French-speaking Canadians will be less than a quarter of Canada’s population in 1981. In 2011, he estimates, they will be
barely 20 per cent at best, and with a declining birth rate, less than 17 per cent.1 Whereas Quebec's birth rate was 28.3 per thousand in 1959, compared to a national average of 27.4, by 1965 it was down to 21.3, whereas the national figure was 21.4. The comparable figure for the United States is 19.4, but the Quebec rate is declining faster.

This line of reasoning explains the sense of urgency with which Quebec leaders seek to send French-language roots as deep as possible into provincial soil and spread its influence as widely as possible within the federal framework. There are two aspects to the task: spreading the use of French is seen as essential to the life of the Confederation, but there is also growing emphasis on improving the quality of the spoken and written language.

CANADIAN FRENCH

The quality of the French spoken in Canada is no longer the subject of impassioned debate it was only a few years ago. The simplistic distinction between "Canadian" and "Parisian" dialects is giving way to a realization that every resident of Paris is not a member of the French Academy and that Montreal could provide some respectable candidates if the Academy's only criterion were command of French. Les Canadiens no longer feel constrained to defend the purity of their speech by invoking the language of Bossuet. They are now more ready to acknowledge the dictum of a famous nineteenth century literary critic who quipped that no one but the eminent seventeenth century prelate himself spoke it. On the other hand, they are less frequently obliged to defend themselves from the charge of speaking only a crude patois unintelligible to the average Français de France.

Frenchmen have always been much less exacting in judging the quality of the Canadian vernacular than Americans or English Canadians or, in recent years, than French Canadians themselves. The vast differences in regional dialects in the various provinces of France has conditioned them to a looser interpretation of norms than that of the linguistic purist. A Parisian might jibe at the montréalais drawl exactly as he would at the marseillais accent. Before travel facilities made possible today's Canadian invasion of Paris it was not unusual for the Quebec visitor in the French capital to be stopped in the street by Frenchmen curious to learn what French province he came from. They recognized the authenticity of his French; they had no difficulty under-

standing him; they wanted simply to locate him on the linguistic map of France. The provincial accent which drew their interest does not have quite the same pejorative social connotation an unfamiliar intonation may have in English. Yet it was this distinction, which a foreigner could detect, that led to initial adverse assessments of Canadian speech by Americans who accepted the politically colored opinions of English Canadians, equally ignorant of French. This generalization was more valid in the prewar years than it is today, when the bastardization of some levels of urban speech provides more substantial reason for the charges.

Professional linguists are less concerned than laymen about the niceties of "correct" speech. They assume that economic and educational levels will be reflected in a variety of language patterns in a given locality. French specialists who are quite alert to the deficiencies of Canadian French grant its bona fides. An example of a strong defense but at the same time solid scholarly appreciation of the language spoken in Quebec is a study done in the early 1930s by Ernest Martin, professeur agrégé de l'Université de France. A professor at the University of Poitiers, he had spent some time as director of the Institute of French Language and Literature at Dalhousie University, in Halifax. He took advantage of his stay in Canada to assess the language of both Acadia and Quebec. With due allowance for occasional lump-in-throat nostalgia on encountering a familiar expression which impressed him as touching evidence of fidelity, he maintained that most of the words of the so-called Canadian patois were still in current use in the countryside of western France. After careful observation of all social levels in French Canada he found nowhere evidence of a real patois with its own vocabulary or syntax. The so-called Canadian patois, he said, is a myth created by the ignorant or ill-intentioned.

It is not too surprising to learn that the language of the original Canadians assumed a broad measure of uniformity before modern French became generally accepted within the confines of European France. The colonists who arrived from many different parts of France were quickly faced with the need to adopt a common language. The relative importance of the immigration from west-central France, where the common speech is closest to the literary tongue, probably swayed this development toward a parler reasonably like that of l'Ile de France, which the accident of politics was establishing as the standard.

Over the years the enunciation and articulation of French-speaking Canadians tended toward the relaxed pattern found in both English and Spanish in the Western Hemisphere. It came to be characterized by the monotony of intonation and the lack of color which are frequently attributed to American speech. At the same time the problem of vocabulary development was hampered by the lack of ties with France and the growing threat of anglicization.

In the early years following the Conquest, little English penetrated the rural areas, which managed to retain a high degree of linguistic self-sufficiency until well into this century. In addition to provincialisms traceable to different French dialects, the vocabulary of this relatively pure canadien has several distinctive features. It uses an unusually high proportion of nautical terms, a circumstance common to other colonies. Canadians embark and debark when they travel by train or bus; other French-speakers prosaically get up and get down. The verb “touer”—“to tow”—is also a mariner’s term; this apparent anglicism is still resisting attempts to supplant it by the modern “remorquer.” A number of archaisms no longer current in standard French are in daily use. The journalists’ “fiable,” for example, seems a much more felicitous translation of “trustworthy” than the more cumbersome “digne de foi” which international French insists on.

A third characteristic of good canadien is a number of expressions coined to describe situations or things unknown in France. One example is “poudrerie,” to describe a blinding snowstorm; another is “claire d’étoiles,” to portray the cloud-free sky of a moonless northern night.

In the cities the effects of close relations with the language of the conquerors were in evidence very early. Particularly as British administrative practices became widespread, literal or faulty translations led to the dissemination of an official vocabulary unknown in France. Similarly, commerce introduced additional anglicisms, including turns of phrase, which a Français de France is often unable to fathom. Later, with increasing industrialization, a completely English vocabulary became established in specialized occupations. This is most obvious and most flagrant in the automotive industry. Until very recently the car salesman or automobile mechanic worked from charts and instruction manuals available only in English. Only with the threat of European competition and the prodding of language-conscious pressure groups is a knowledge of the terminology developed in France beginning to displace the borrowed English equivalents.

Gradations in language purity are fairly sharply drawn in the urban areas. The penetration of English and the impoverished vocabulary
French-Canadian critics of the popular speech increasingly bewail are, of course, most apparent among the working class and in business and industry where English is the normal vehicle of communication. In professional circles the situation is much better. Educators, clergymen, intellectuals, journalists, many political figures, and an increasingly large number of businessmen speak very good French; many of them have an impeccable pronunciation and a fine vocabulary. Particular mention should be made of the excellent language habits thousands of young women adopted in the course of their years in colleges and normal schools. The same is true to a lesser degree of young men.

The general effect of exposure to French movies and radio, and especially television, is quite apparent in this regard. The combination of improved and expanded communication facilities with the special effort exerted by the secondary schools is obvious in the speech habits of successive generations of the same family. Even in working-class neighborhoods the difference is obvious, and the most caustic critics concede that the language of the man in the street has changed for the better in only a few years.

This is not to belittle the dimensions of the problem to be solved if the general level of language competence is to be restored to the level that prevailed before urbanization was so far advanced. A constant struggle against anglicization has been the lot of the publicist and the professional translator. In the past, most translators lacked professional training and thus did inadequate work. A definite improvement in this situation is evident. Years ago many of the advertisements in the big Montreal dailies were in English. Today the language of the daily press may be awkward and lacking in elegance, but on the whole it is reasonably good. This is particularly noteworthy considering the amount of translation involved.

A formidable puzzle for the newspaperman has been the almost constant challenge of new objects and concepts developed and disseminated in America before Europeans had an opportunity to learn of them. French Canadians often went to extremes to avoid using the English word or its literal translation. In the past few years, as France accedes to the complexities of modern industrialization, Quebec's experience of linguistic colonization is being repeated in Europe with many of the same hesitations and defensive measures. In 1964 a Parisian editor published a humorous but admonitory volume on the status of the English invasion of "Parisian" French. Parlez-vous franglais? popularized a new name for the hybridized language resulting from the indiscriminate adoption of English or, more specifically, American inno-
A Montreal professor of French lays claim to the paternity of the term “franglais.” Raymond Barbeau teaches French at l’Ecole des Hautes Études Commerciales; a docteur ès lettres de l’Université de Paris, he is totally dedicated to French. His devotion has made him a fanatic on the need for drastic action to rescue the language from the low state he insists it is now in. In Le Québec bientôt unilingue?, the most recent of several volumes he has written to forward the idea of independence for French Canada, he displays more bitterness than humor in explaining the genesis of the expression. It contains the word “anglais” in full, but the “c” of “français” is replaced by the “gl.” This points eloquently, he says, to the intermediate stage of anglicization which is under way in Canada.3

The preoccupation with the influence of English on the language of Quebec is almost an obsession with many who avoid the political conclusions Barbeau draws from his analysis of the linguistic situation. It is a source of concern and irritation for those who are willing to make an effort to speak as correctly as possible. Even those who are confident of their command of the language cannot disregard the threat. An extreme example is Jean Ethier-Blais, McGill University professor and literary critic for Le Devoir. Paris-trained, Ethier-Blais speaks and writes flawless French. Nevertheless he confesses his hesitation to use on occasion an expression that he is certain is perfectly good French, because he is afraid of committing an anglicism.4 He denies any hint of preciousity in this attitude, but the line is rather fine. Many French Canadians who lack Ethier-Blais’s command of their mother tongue are equally determined to be more rigidly purist than the French themselves. Numerous journalists persist in writing “fin de semaine,” “vivoir,” or “oléoduc,” for example, although they are quite aware that their Parisian colleagues just as persistently write “weekend,” “living room” and “pipe line,” because these are now perfectly good French.

At the other extreme is the pro-revolution coterie which recently attempted to initiate a literature in joual. This is the form the word “cheval” supposedly takes on the lips of the illiterate Montreal working-man who can express himself adequately in neither French nor English. Their predecessors never hesitated to put purely “canayen” expressions in the mouths of their characters where the requirements of local color demanded. The young Montreal team associated with the radical review Parti pris has sought to go beyond merelyrenchifying a few English

3. Le Québec bientôt unilingue?, pp. 81–82.
words or transcribing Canadianisms. In an effort to shock the intellectuals and the bourgeoisie into the realization that French language and culture are in vital danger in Quebec, they stuff with profanities page after page of disjointed and imprecise mouthings attributed to an inarticulate subproletariat with no interests but to satisfy the basic animal needs and desires.

Between the extremes of servile fidelity to the finest nuances of literary French and careless acceptance of the grossest deformation of the language, all possible shades of expression can be found in Quebec today. The infiltration of English into everyday speech is difficult to combat. From neon lights advertising “hot dogs stimés” or “le roi du smoked meat” to TV commercials for Monsieur Muffler, the Montréalais is bombarded daily with a mixture of two languages that call for a constant effort to keep them separate. Periodic campaigns to ameliorate the position of French, not only in Montreal but in smaller cities where the preponderance of the French-speaking population is overwhelming, have usually come to naught in the past. At best they have encouraged the Canadian mania for bilingual signs. Even if it is merely a question of the juxtaposition of nouns and adjectives common to both languages, the words will be repeated in reverse position, presumably to forestall protests from literalists of either ilk. No stop sign in Quebec is complete without the addition of “arrêt,” although throughout France itself the English word is considered close enough to the French verb “stopper” (“to stop short”) to convey the necessary warning without translation.

FRENCHIFICATION OF QUEBEC

Increasingly, refrancisation carries more serious connotations than it did formerly. As in the past, the press, La Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste, and individual writers or educators still air their apprehensions about the state of the language and their recommendations for what everybody else should do about it. An important difference from former exhortations of this sort is that today practically all of them terminate in an appeal to the state to take the matter in hand. Raymond Barbeau has been insisting for years that the plight of the language is primarily a political question, and that only action by the state can remedy the situation. The French language in Quebec should be nationalized on the same basis as the most precious natural resources, he reasons. He supports this contention by citing the recommendation of the Biennial International Meeting of the French Language held at Namur, Belgium, in September, 1965: all governments of French-speaking countries
should consider the language the state’s concern; they should use all means in their power to safeguard it. Though Barbeau’s proposals for Quebec independence have found scant support, his efforts on behalf of the language have played a considerable role in stirring public opinion.

Official willingness to undertake definite steps to improve the quality of French in Quebec and to foster wider use of it is linked both to the psychological atmosphere of the quiet revolution and to the measures the French government has taken to safeguard the purity of the national language in France. Quebec’s Ministry of Cultural Affairs, unique in North America, is patterned on its Parisian counterpart. Quebec, like France, has its Office de la Langue Française, whose director, not surprisingly, finds the state of French in the province to be alarming. It is not surprising, either, that he sees no salvation for the language without state direction.

A systematic effort for better French is a specific recommendation of the Parent Commission, the provincial study group on education. Pressure in that direction was augmented in unusual fashion by a hard-hitting speech by a former rector of the University of Montreal at the 1966 annual banquet of the Montreal Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste. This is normally an occasion for self-congratulation, but Monsignor Irénée Lussier, who had just returned from an investigation of Canadian cultural and aid missions abroad, particularly in Africa, had much that was bitter to mix with the sweet. He relayed the complaints of several African officials on the careless speech habits of some of the advisors from Canada. He emphasized that only a minority of the French Canadians in the field were at fault and stressed the linguistic competence of most of the overseas personnel. He made clear, however, that le joual was not a suitable item of export and that Ottawa should be discouraged from sending technically qualified advisors to foreign countries if their French is not on a par with their professional competence.

Since 1963, La Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste has been on record in favor of making French the only official language in Quebec. There seems little likelihood of such a move as long as Quebec remains in the Canadian Confederation. Aside from the constitutional problems such actions would create, the whole question of language rights for the French-speaking minorities in the other provinces would be at stake.

There is, however, a clear tendency toward decreeing priority for French in the province. Several ministers of the Lesage government

made their support for such a measure clear when the Liberals were in power. They included the minister for cultural affairs, Pierre Laporte, and René Lévesque, the bright star of Quebec nationalism in the Lesage constellation. Laporte’s ministry launched, in 1963, an interministerial committee for the correction of administrative French. The Ministry for Cultural Affairs has also adopted a standard for written and spoken French in Quebec, based on international French. It is meant to be a guide for teaching and for the business world, as well as for public administration.

Lévesque took impish delight in startling English Canadians with his demands that French and French Canadians play a larger role at all levels of national life. Speaking before a gathering of McGill University students, he stated that control of Montreal’s business life was a French-Canadian objective. When you control economic life you control linguistic life, he said, and went on to compare the attitude of certain unnamed English-speaking industrialists in Montreal to Rhodesian Premier Ian Smith. He has taken pains, however, to reassure all concerned that he wants the language rights of Quebec’s English-speaking minority respected.

Spokesmen for the English-speaking business community in Montreal quickly responded to Lévesque’s blast with citations of the progress made toward greater use of French in recent years and professions of intentions for the future. They protested that an evolutionary process was the only way to avoid chaos. It is true that the position of French in Montreal’s economic life has improved considerably in the 1960s. More important than the actual increase in the use of French has been the changed attitude on the part of many English Canadians in positions of authority. They still think of Montreal primarily as a national center, where the head offices of many firms doing business on a countrywide basis are located. They are exhibiting a new willingness, however, to consider Montreal as a Quebec, as well as a Canadian, metropolis and to grant the desirability of having it reflect the French-speaking aspect of the province.

Although the attitude of English-language businessmen in Montreal is a vital consideration at the present stage, the posture of many of their French-speaking counterparts has been almost as important, at least psychologically. For many of the latter, a certain degree of reverse snobbery has operated in the past, to the detriment of French. Now they are discovering that they can actually do business in their own tongue. Others, who had conducted their business mostly in French but who had usually gone out of their way to deal in English with any firm
so inclined, are now changing the pattern. The over-all increase in the use of French is still relatively modest, but an evolutionary process has been set in motion. The atmosphere in Montreal today is such that a reversal or even a slacking of this trend seems unlikely. Nationalist leaders who have long maintained that no improvement in the quality of Quebec speech could be achieved without a break-through into the economic sphere are determined to continue agitation for wider and wider use of French in all aspects of the economic and social life of the province. Such pressure is much more effective today than in the past because provincial political and social forces are increasingly committed to expanding the use of French in the economic life of the province and especially of Montreal.

Even Claude Ryan, whose editorials in Le Devoir normally express moderation, insists that English-speaking businessmen who deal with the public or with French speakers within their own enterprise learn French without delay. In order to establish a more equitable balance between the two cultures, he insists, special consideration should be given French Canadians to advance as quickly as possible. He parries charges of favoritism by denying any desire to reward incompetent opportunists. He is also alert to the temptation many Montreal firms have succumbed to by having public relations specialists who give the French-speaking public an impression of regard for their language rights but who are merely a façade behind which all internal matters are handled in English by all personnel.

The Parent Report highlights the desire of Quebeckers to be able to work in French. It avers that a language spoken only after five o’clock in the afternoon is already dead. Its point is that no schoolboy can be expected to take French seriously if workers, administrators, and businessmen are obliged to speak English in their daily work; unless French is considered equally necessary there is no incentive to master it.

Though French has been used freely in the provincial and most municipal administrations in Quebec, an exaggerated deference to the needs of the English-speaking minority has been the rule. Many small cities maintained records in both languages, even though recourse to English was rarely required. Several years ago, the city of Saint-Jérôme decided that such bilingualism was useless and costly. All its municipal council documents are now available only in French. Similar action to spare needless effort can be expected in other Quebec municipalities.

8. Part II, chap. XII, para. 621.
Over 800 of the province's 1,700 municipalities have fewer than 10 English-speaking residents. Even where there are more than one or two thousand English Canadians in relatively large towns such as Trois-Rivières, they make up less than 5 per cent of the population. The need to maintain duplicate city records in English in such cases is coming increasingly into question. Dependence on one language would obviously not be practical in Montreal. Nor will English alone suffice in most of the industrial enterprises in the province, where French is gradually beginning to penetrate above the worker level.

A survey released in 1966, based on a selected sampling of Quebec enterprises in which at least three-quarters of the employees were French Canadian, gives some insight into the language problem where both racial elements are concerned. Although French may be the usual working language when the owners are French-speaking, in over one-third of such firms English may frequently be used at the administrative level. In only one-third of the firms controlled by other than French Canadians is French the usual working language. Another third uses both tongues more or less equally, and the remainder use English habitually. Employees must be bilingual to win promotion in the companies owned by English-speakers. Over one-third of such firms also use English exclusively in their correspondence. The increased use of French in the first five years of the 1960s in the firms polled was most evident in the lowest echelons.9

According to the minister of cultural affairs, "a good number" of English-speaking enterprises established in Quebec have sought the assistance of the Office de la Langue Française. Some seek advice on frenchifying their structure, others, their staff. Many corporations have been more responsive to pressure on the language issue than smaller firms, although some of the most notorious from the French-Canadian point of view have been large mining companies. René Lévesque created an uproar in 1965 when he blasted Noranda Mines, Limited, for persisting in ignoring the language sensibilities of many of its employees and clients. His strictures against the company's "uncivilized" practices were interpreted as a threat of nationalization. Recently the president of Canadian British Aluminium took advantage of a press conference announcing expansion plans to let it be known that more than 80 per cent of its employees work in French, and that 50 per cent of the upper echelons of the company are French Canadians. When Firestone opened a new tire factory in Joliette in 1966, the manager made a point

of publicizing the fact that ability to communicate in French was a prerequisite for technicians and foremen.

The most notable example of the conversion of an enterprise from English to French is the case of the nationalized electric power industry. When Hydro-Quebec came into being in 1944, the companies it took over were preponderantly English-speaking. In 1962, when province-wide nationalization of electric power production began, the service was largely French-speaking and the English-language elements among the newly absorbed plants were quickly assimilated. By 1965, well over 90 per cent of the personnel were French Canadians, and the rest were able to work in French. Publicity for Hydro-Quebec is in both languages where required, but the normal language for internal communication is French.

The Lesage government had undertaken a study of the language question, but the results were not made public before the Liberals were ousted. Lesage presumably drew on this study during the 1966 provincial electoral campaign when he stated his government’s intention of giving preferential status to the French language. He said the government would make French the main tongue for work and communication in Quebec in all sectors. In addition to proposals for strengthening the teaching of French and for improving the quality of the language used in public administration, Lesage pledged specific steps to enhance the position of French in private industry and its use in all types of commercial signs and advertisements. The use of English alone would not be permitted, he said, and where both languages were employed French would have priority; in collective bargaining, the official text would be the French version.

In enumerating the various proposals Lesage said his government intended to implement to put French into a dominant position in the province, he was careful to specify that the fundamental rights of English-speaking Quebeckers would not be endangered. He made clear, however, that a solid knowledge of French would be a sine qua non for public employment. English-language schools would continue to enjoy provincial support, but they would be expected to provide their students with a better opportunity than some now offer to develop a good command of French.

If such a program were to be applied, there is little doubt but that the position of French in Quebec and in the rest of Canada would be immeasurably strengthened. A signal improvement in the quality of the language would also probably be almost automatic. The president of the
Quebec federation of the Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste is probably correct in seeing little practical distinction between such a system, in which French would have a preferential status, and the situation which would prevail if French were decreed the only official language in Quebec. In effect, he says, it would oblige anyone who earned his living in the province to learn French. Even the most rabid proponents of “French alone for Quebec” admit the need for an educated North American to have a knowledge of English. If French were the only official language, English would probably not lose much ground insofar as the number of French Canadians able to speak English is concerned. Even with the psychological pressure relieved of its immediate bread-and-butter connotations, the average well-educated French Canadian could still be expected to attain a knowledge of English comparable to the foreign language skill of the cultivated Western European, who expects, as a matter of course, to be conversant with at least one language other than his own.

The difference would be the possibility of choice rather than coercion. One recommendation of the Parent Commission, which has elicited strong protests from opponents of bilingualism on a national scale, is the proposal to introduce English in the second grade of Quebec’s French-language schools. Raymond Barbeau characterizes such a proposal as cultural genocide. He attacks Dr. Wilder Penfield’s theories on early bilingualism as unsubstantiated and cites the pessimistic conclusions of over a dozen specialists in as many different countries to support his contention that primary school children should not be given formal instruction in a second tongue even when they live in a homogeneous linguistic environment. He would postpone introducing English into the French-Canadian classroom until the ninth grade, and then only for those students capable of demonstrating mastery of their mother tongue.

English instruction in French-Canadian schools may become an increasingly sensitive topic. Quebec parents, according to numerous polls, are overwhelmingly in favor of some preparation in English for their children. They will not necessarily be guided by the opinion of education experts if high-quality instruction in English is not made readily available. Relative social and economic status, particularly in the Montreal area, has long been conditioned by this question. Much of the

current impetus for broader use of French in commerce and industry stems from the expansion of the French-language middle class and the disinclination of many young French Canadians to accept a language handicap which was not openly rated on the labor market but which nevertheless operated to their disadvantage. Many of their peers have chosen to play the game under the rules that custom had established. They achieved an acceptable proficiency in English—at what cost they themselves may not know. Although many French Canadians speak flawless English, most of those who lay claim to bilingual skill are far from a mastery of the second tongue. Critics of broad-based bilingualism charge that most so-called bilingual speakers in Quebec speak both languages poorly. Those perfectly at ease in both tongues, expressing themselves equally well in either, are rare. Raymond Barbeau is probably not guilty of exaggeration when he says they can be counted on the fingers of two hands. 12

Nevertheless, thousands of French Canadians have, through necessity, learned sufficient English to permit them to compete in an English-speaking economy. They reason from their own experience that a working knowledge of the dominant language on the continent is a necessary economic tool. They are ignorant of or discount the fulminations of Barbeau and other linguistic purists who warn of the deleterious effects their servile acceptance of English will have on their command of French.

Agitation for a broader knowledge of English is by no means confined to those Quebeckers who are basically indifferent to the survival of the French language and culture in Canada. Many outspoken defenders of French-language prerogatives are convinced that a wide expansion of bilingualism is essential to the preservation of the Confederation. Though many of them are thinking specifically in terms of encouraging more English Canadians to achieve facility in French, they see a higher degree of national cohesion developing from the mutual comprehension both sides can gain from a wider knowledge of each other’s language. André Laurendeau, for example, is deeply committed to the spread of bilingualism. A determined and articulate champion of French-language rights, Laurendeau as editor of _Le Devoir_ and earlier of the monthly _Action Nationale_, did as much as any other Quebecker to advance the cause of French in Canada. As co-chairman of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, which he was largely instrumental in generating, he has adroitly brought many thoughtful English Canadians

12. _Ibid._, p. 89.
to a realization of the frustrations and aspirations of their French-speaking fellow citizens.

The most extreme position on bilingualism is that propounded by Laurier La Pierre, head of McGill's French-Canadian Studies Program. A personable individual whose television role as co-moderator of what was English Canada's most popular public affairs program, "This Hour Has Seven Days," won him a wide empathic response, La Pierre has done much to make the French-Canadian view of Canada clearer to English Canadians. He prides himself on having come up the hard way, learning English on his own and completing his education in English-speaking schools. The direct contacts he had absorbing the other language and culture made him an enthusiastic proponent of pan-Canadianism, but it seems to have given him an overdose of optimism on the ability and desire of his fellows on either side of the cultural barrier to duplicate his experience. His position on the language question is excessively idealistic. He advocates abolishing provincial distinctions and according both languages equal rights across Canada. Although he concedes the practical obstacles to such a course, he is intellectually and emotionally committed to the concomitant idea of national bilingualism—that is, to the ability of every Canadian to express himself in either language. So utopian a goal could be expected to have considerable appeal to the French-speaking Canadian for whom bilingualism has usually been a one-way street; for many defenders of French rights in Canada it is anathema.

Opponents of generalized instruction in English maintain that bilingualism is a delusion if it means requiring all residents of a given country to be able to speak languages. Such a system can only work to the detriment of one of the two tongues, they maintain, and in North America the outcome is beyond doubt. The only reasonable solution, they contend, is strict adherence to the concept of a bilingual country. They usually cite Switzerland as a paragon; similar conditions prevail in Belgium, Finland, and the Republic of South Africa. The basic point is that one language is recognized as the normal vehicle of communication in a given administrative jurisdiction. German, French, or Italian is the only official language in a given Swiss canton or, in bilingual cantons, in a given commune. It is the language of business and government, and is used for all communication with the central government. A relatively small portion of the national population is required to have a command of one or more of the other official languages of the Confederation. The essential consideration is that the Swiss people themselves are not required to be bilingual; several different
linguistic elements share a common political structure without endangering their individual cultural heritages. This is the dream of all moderate French Canadians.

FRENCH IN THE FEDERAL STRUCTURE

A cursory knowledge of the way in which the Canadian federal service functions is sufficient for an understanding of the French Canadian's complaint that he is constantly made to feel like a stranger in his own country. At the same time, the changes that have taken place in Ottawa in the past twenty years, the reforms now under way to improve the status of the French language in government, and the outlook for French-speaking civil servants give some inkling of the political leverage English Canadians are beginning to recognize in Quebec. There is no doubt that French is now held in higher esteem in Ottawa than at any time since the last war, and probably in this century. Its position is vastly improved over that which prevailed at the end of the war.

Nevertheless, from the standpoint even of moderate spokesmen for French Canada, a much more far-reaching transformation of the personnel and language policies of the federal bureaucracy must take place before French Canadians can feel at home there. In an era when symbolic change was sufficient to mollify recurrent resentment over unequal treatment, the decision to add French inscriptions to Canada's postage was considered a significant victory. Yet this was not achieved until the Confederation had been in existence seventy years. A similar "concession" was forthcoming twenty-five years later, when federal government checks became bilingual. That this should be achieved just five years short of the centennial of confederation seemed to convey an element of reverse symbolism to many French Canadians. Like the distinctive Canadian flag which was finally approved in 1965, it was symbolic of too little, too late; it reminded them of the energy dissipated over the years in harping on the rights which they felt they should have been permitted to exercise without question. Such efforts, the modern French-Canadian nationalist believes, could have been turned to more practical purposes. His attitude is an implicit criticism of his fathers for accepting less than their due and of English Canada for withholding it. He is determined not to be denied. In a word, the new pragmatic orientation of French Canada is more intent on the substance than the shadow.

In 1963 French Canadians, with 30 per cent of the national population, had only 15 per cent of federal government posts. This was an
appreciable increase above the low of 12 per cent the preceding decade. However, it was far below the level that had prevailed until World War I; in 1918, for example, French Canadians made up 27 per cent of the federal civil service. More significant than numbers is the distribution of relatively well-paid positions. In 1963 only 10.5 per cent of civil servants earning $5,000 or more were French Canadians. In 1946, according to a Montreal Chamber of Commerce brief, no French Canadians could be found in top positions in several ministries. The Finance Ministry, for example had 14 jobs paying $6,000 or more; Commerce had 33 such positions; neither ministry had a French Canadian employee at those levels. Other ministries, with thirty or forty such positions, might boast one French Canadian. According to Robert Rumilly, author of an exhaustive history of Quebec Province, the situation was substantially unchanged in 1961. In 1962 the Glassco Commission on public administration found only six French Canadians among 163 occupants of positions with salaries of $14,000 or more, in 11 government departments. Some progress seems to have been made in this area by 1966, when 135 federal civil servants, of the 1,200 earning $17,000 or more, claimed French as their mother tongue.

Of course, discrimination is not the sole explanation of this state of affairs. Perhaps as many as 75 per cent of the positions in question required specialization in the social sciences. The French-language universities had done practically nothing in the social science field before the 1940s, and when they did initiate such courses, few students were attracted. Some English-Canadian universities, on the other hand, had been offering degree programs since the beginning of the century. The absence of French Canadians in lower echelons from which they could feed into higher posts is less readily explained.

A high proportion of Quebeckers are extremely reluctant to take up residence in Ottawa. This is particularly understandable on the part of Montrealers, who shudder at the provincialism of the nation’s capital. The major reason, however, has been the generally inhospitable atmosphere French Canadians feel they have encountered in the federal service. For those who object to living in Ottawa’s English-speaking milieu, Hull offers a French-speaking refuge on the north bank of the Ottawa river, but the nine-to-five environment cannot be overcome by such an expedient. The almost total absence of French as a tool in the administration of the nation is a major deterrent to aspiring civil servants from Quebec.

The situation in the armed forces was, if anything, more discriminatory. According to a study made in 1959 for the Defense Ministry by Marcel Chaput, subsequently one of the founders of Le Rassemblement pour l’Indépendance Nationale, French Canadians enlist in the armed forces in the same proportion as other Canadians. Although 26 per cent of common soldiers and 21 per cent of lieutenants in the Canadian army were French Canadians, they accounted for only 8 per cent of sergeants major, colonels, and higher rank. Percentages in the air force and the navy were even smaller.

Chaput drew the conclusion that French Canadians had little incentive to make a career of what he characterized as essentially a foreign army. Until the early 1960s English was the sole language of command, even in regiments composed entirely of French-speaking men and officers. Though this situation still prevails in the navy and air force, it is no longer true in the army. Army policy today is to train a bilingual officer corps, capable of handling French-language units in their own tongue. The military college at Saint-Jean is bilingual, with both language groups given instruction in both tongues. However, the college at Kingston, Ontario, where Saint-Jean graduates complete their training, still is almost entirely English-speaking. In 1966, for the first time in Canadian history, a French Canadian was appointed defense chief of staff.

The reversal of official indifference in Ottawa in regard to the use of French in public administration can be fairly well pinpointed in 1963. Pressure from Quebec on this question had long been considered a necessary evil, which Parliament suffered through while getting on with the serious business of government. Token recognition of French in the parliamentary chambers was reduced to almost ceremonial level. If a Quebec member had something to say to the House of Commons, he said it in English or soliloquized; even the other French-speaking members quit the chamber or busied themselves with other matters. The introduction of simultaneous translation, in 1959, altered this situation somewhat, but not proportionally; from less than 3 per cent French annually in the Hansard, the amount of French went up to 9 per cent for 1960. Translations of official texts into French were always behind schedule, and only about one-third of the titles listed in the catalogues of the Royal Printer were available in French.

In April, 1962, however, the Civil Service Commission began to take

steps to assure that any Canadian citizen could be served in either
tongue in federal offices located in bilingual regions—i.e., with at least
10 per cent speaking the minority language. This did not imply any
basic shift in government policy on the working language of the civil
service itself. In the fall of 1962 the Glassco Commission on public
administration brushed aside the question of French as unrelated to the
efficient operation of the federal service; the Commission refused to look
into the place of bilingualism there. If anything, this decision seemed to
be no more than confirmation of the attitude of bright young French
Canadians who had had a go at the federal bureaucracy and decided it
was not for them. This had been particularly evident following the
election of Jean Lesage’s Liberal team in the Quebec provincial elec­
tions in 1960; some thirty especially competent young French Cana­
dians had deserted the federal employ subsequently, because the new
Quebec administration offered a more attractive opportunity for service.

The desertion of these young men was indicative of the inward
direction of Quebec energies in the first few years of the Lesage regime.
It was not a rejection of what Ottawa represented, but of what Ottawa
had become. On the very day of the Liberals’ electoral triumph in
Quebec, the blueprint for their return to the federal service was printed
in Le Devoir. Not that a precise plan of action had been charted; every
June, on the eve of the Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day celebrations, Le
Devoir publishes an assessment of French Canada. In 1960 it took the form of
an inventory of French-Canadian humiliations. They included the pau­
city of French in the federal bureaucracy and similar areas in which
French Canadians saw themselves disadvantaged.

More to the point, in view of the symbolic coincidence of the Liberal
electoral victory, were the essays suggesting grand strategy and specific
tactics to improve the lot of French and French Canadians. Jean-Marc
Léger, who later had Le Devoir teetering on the separatist brink he is
personally prepared to risk, discussed the linguistic situation in Belgium.
He is fascinated by the Flemish “lesson of admirable intransigence.”
He cited the division of the Belgian army into two sections with a
common bilingual general staff and praised the Flemish for persevering
until integral bilingualism had been achieved in everything relating to
the central government: “Fanaticism is indispensable for minorities who
mean to survive.” Perseverance and an understanding of situations
provide the key to integral bilingualism, in the opinion of one of Léger’s
colleagues, who recommended recourse to psychology. He charged that

for nearly one hundred years French Canadians had fought over or for formal texts while their English-speaking adversaries sought above all to meet situations. Bring social and political pressures to bear, he urged his compatriots, in situations structured to produce the desired response from the pragmatists English Canadians have shown themselves to be.¹⁶

*Le Devoir* is not followed blindly by the mass of French Canadians, or even by a majority of its readers. It is usually a reliable reflection of nationalist sentiment, however, and the prescriptions it proposed in 1960 were reasonably close to the mood of the moment. It took several years for the significance of the new state of mind in Quebec to sink in in Ottawa. Nevertheless the impact of various nationalist and separatist movements and utterances was becoming increasingly clear, and the sniping of Quebec members of the House, particularly the Créditistes who let no petty occasion escape if it could be used as an excuse to proclaim the rights of the French language, kept the issue alive in Parliament. Indeed, the election of a sizable block of Créditistes in 1962 did much to make English Canadians in general aware for the first time of Quebec's state of mind. The ink on the Glassco Report had hardly set when a minority report by Eugène Therrien stirred the government to action. By mid-1963 a committee composed of fifteen high-level officials in key ministries including Finance, Commerce, National Defense, and External Affairs was charged with expanding the use of French in the federal service. The government had begun to realize that bilingualism was the price it was obliged to pay to keep the country united.

The first positive result was a language school established early in 1964, primarily to give English-Canadian civil servants competence in French. This was largely the brainchild of Maurice Lamontagne, then a secretary of state under Prime Minister Pearson. A former professor of political science at Laval, Lamontagne is a long-time proponent of closer relations between the two language groups. He maintains that bilingualism in public services is the basis of eventual cultural equality in Canada, and he was influential in convincing Pearson that drastic steps were needed to assure French Canadians that Ottawa was their government, too. The success of the language school surpassed all expectations. It opened with 4 teachers and 42 students; two years later 112 teachers were instructing 1,980 students; an additional 1,300 applicants had to be refused forwant of space. The program called for 250 teachers by the fall of 1966. Most of the civil servants in these classes are high-level

administrators, university graduates whose duties require contact with the public in both languages. The intensive course demanded thirty hours per week for four months.

In the spring of 1966 the Pearson government announced that from 1967 on, bilingualism would be required in the federal service. Le Devoir's Ottawa reporter could not resist introducing his story with the reminder that it would be a hundred years after confederation before the public administration reflected the national complexion. That comment hardly hints at the implications of the government's decision, even taking into consideration the various loopholes Pearson was careful to provide. His first specific objective, he said in presenting his new policy to the House, was to establish the regular practice for written or oral communication, within the civil service, to be made in either language at the option of the author. The full weight of this proposal can be assayed only by recalling that a few years earlier Pierre Elliott Trudeau was suggesting to friends leaving the federal bureaucracy that they depart in a blaze of glory by daring the ultimate—writing their final report in French. Less gifted federal underlings who had on occasion prepared reports in their mother tongue—not for patriotic reasons but because the press of time put more stress on their command of English than they felt prepared to cope with—were rewarded with an admonition that their fitness reports would stigmatize them as unco-operative if the misdemeanor were repeated.

French Canada hailed the new policy but expressed some reservations about how it would be applied. Perhaps four-fifths of the 350,000 federal employees who would eventually be subject to the new regulations have no oral skills in French. Gradual implementation would protect old-line employees. Technical, professional, and scientific posts in the civil service, the armed forces, and autonomous public corporations were exempted from the blanket decree, but the agencies concerned were asked to prepare their own long-term programs. Criticism centered on the provision which set deadlines for compliance. By 1970 candidates from outside the federal service and, by 1975, those already employed, must have a reasonable competence in both languages or have expressed the intention of acquiring it. Skeptical French Canadians see in this provision, which would permit a unilingual candidate to be hired for a top-level job eight years after the ruling went into effect, an ambiguity which will invite abuse.

Vigorous action by the government will probably be required to implement the bilingual regulation. The mentality of the recruiting service will have to be transformed. The standard practice has been to
require a knowledge of English and to add that a knowledge of French
would be advantageous. This served in the past as a convenient exercise
to eliminate most French-Canadian candidates, since, in effect, it asked
of them equal competence in English with the top English-speaking
candidate. The new decree was criticized also for failing to offer any
immediate specific inducements to correct the imbalance created by the
reluctance of competent French Canadians to seek federal appoint-
ments.

There is an insufficient number of qualified French-speaking candi-
dates for the wide range of technical and professional opportunities now
available to them in the provincial service and in private industry. If
Ottawa is to attract high-quality personnel, it may be obliged, at least
for the short term, to offer a bonus for language competence in the
higher echelons as well as to beginners at secretarial and comparable
levels.

The effect of the new ruling on Crown corporations will probably
depend initially on the extent to which they come into direct contact
with the public. The Canadian National Railway has made huge strides
toward providing service in French and in bringing French Canadians
into high-level jobs since Donald Gordon, CNR president, was the
target of French-Canadian ire in 1962. Shortly after the government’s
bilingual policy was announced, the CNR set up a language service to
diffuse French railway terminology and adapt it to North American
practice. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has been under at-
tack for failing to introduce bilingual personnel into service functions
with jurisdiction over both English- and French-language networks.

It will be a number of years before Pearson’s announced objective of a
completely bilingual service will be possible. The surprising aspect of the
situation is that it was launched. Only a few years earlier René Léves-
que, in his capacity as provincial minister of natural resources, report-
edly initiated in French a correspondence with the federal government
anent Quebec’s desire to take over the administration of the Eskimo
population in the north of the province. When he received a reply in
English, he made his point by responding with a letter in Eskimo.

If the rank and file will be required to handle both languages, it is not
unreasonable to expect the same competence at the top. An increasing
number of English-Canadian political leaders can carry off a prepared
speech in French in satisfactory fashion, but they can hardly lay claim to
bilingual facility. The “election French” of others is almost as pathetic
as the grateful response of French-Canadian audiences, overcome by the
good will evidenced in such attempts to woo them in their own tongue.
That day is fast drawing to a close. A fair number of politicians from the English-speaking provinces have an acceptable knowledge of French; some do exceedingly well. Various Quebec spokesmen have gone on record with the opinion that no national leader will be acceptable to French Canadians in the future, unless he can communicate with them in their own language. Several aspirants to the leadership of the Liberal party have begun to study French. By the beginning of 1966 forty-one members of Parliament had enrolled in a special class under the government’s language-training program. Six of these were French-speakers intent on improving their English, but the bulk aspired to learn French. Astute English-speaking newsmen in Ottawa have begun to follow suit.

**FRENCH IN THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING PROVINCES**

The 1961 census showed that over one-third of the 1,300,000 Canadians of French origin living beyond Quebec’s frontiers consider English their mother tongue. Over 232,000 spoke only French, but the vast majority of these were probably young children. Except in some areas of New Brunswick and in northern Ontario, English is as much an economic necessity for everyone as it is in the United States.

Nevertheless, wherever the French Canadians have been sufficiently numerous to organize for cultural survival, they have striven, frequently at great personal sacrifice, to maintain a school system where at least a modicum of instruction could be given in French. Nowhere in Canada outside Quebec is free state-supported instruction in French available without restriction. This is the constant lament of all French Canadians, who contrast the freedom of the English-speaking minority in Quebec with the legal curbs on French instruction elsewhere. In the Maritime Provinces, French schools were outlawed within ten years of confederation. Since 1890, when Manitoba abolished French-language schools, until 1916, when Ontario legislated severe controls on the use of French in school, the rights of the French-speaking provincial minorities were practically destroyed. Since then, grudging recognition, extralegal in some instances, of some school rights has been won in most of the English-speaking provinces. The language status and outlook vary widely, depending almost as much on proximity to Quebec as on the numerical strengths of the individual provincial minorities.

The Acadians in New Brunswick have probably the best chance of any of the French-speaking minorities in Canada to retain their distinct cultural existence. With over 35 per cent of the province’s 600,000 population, they have begun to play an increasingly important political
role. For the first time in history, one of their number, Louis Robichaud, is provincial prime minister. He initiated a quiet revolution of his own to begin modernization of the province, whose urban population is still outnumbered by the inhabitants of the rural areas. He has drastically reformed the administrative framework and the tax base of the province over the strong opposition of the conservatives, who tried to arouse anti-French sentiment to block him. A major plank of his platform is educational reform. In the past, school ended at the seventh grade for most of the children in the province, including a disproportionally high number of Acadians. They have maintained a distinct cultural identity for generations, however, supporting three colleges, one over one hundred years old.

Symbolic of the new spirit of the French-speaking population of New Brunswick is the status of the French-language University of Moncton, created in 1963. Ten years earlier such an institution seemed unattainable. Acadians now have high hopes in the effect the university's normal school, on which construction started in 1966, will have on the expansion of French-language instruction in the grade schools of the province. New Brunswick provides precarious support to a French-language daily, l'Évangéline, which required a $100,000 transfusion from the Quebec government in 1965. Its circulation runs over 10,000. In addition, two weeklies share a circulation of less than 10,000. Moncton has French-language television, however, and there is good radio coverage in French in the outlying parts of the province.

Elsewhere in the Atlantic provinces, anglicization of French racial elements is well advanced. Less than 40,000 out of 88,000 in Nova Scotia claim French as their mother tongue. These are fairly well concentrated in the southern part of the province, where they support a college and a weekly newspaper printing less than 2,000 copies. The provincial government set up a commission in 1966 to establish a program of French instruction under the ministry of education. In Prince Edward Island, over half of the 17,000 inhabitants of French origin have been assimilated by the English-speaking majority; the law only permits two one-half-hour sessions of French instruction per week there. In Newfoundland less than 20 per cent of a similar number consider French their mother tongue.

The largest French-Canadian population outside Quebec is in Ontario; less than two-thirds of these 650,000 individuals are French-speaking. In some regions of the south and west of the province, the situation of the Franco-Ontarians is similar to that of other linguistic minorities in the Western provinces or in the United States. Elsewhere,
particularly in northern Ontario, the French community is compact, close-knit, well-organized, and politically powerful. After a few difficult years following the Ontario legislature's efforts during World War I to end instruction in French, an increasingly liberal *modus vivendi* evolved. Where the demand is sufficient, French-language elementary schools are supported by the province. The bilingual University of Ottawa has been in operation for over a century, and the bilingual Laurentian University of Sudbury opened its doors in the late 1950s. Both are now dependent on state funds. Several experimental bilingual high schools were opened in 1965. In these institutions instruction is in French for the humanities; in English, for science and mathematics. The French Canadians have been pressing for high schools with a completely French curriculum, but the Ontario minister of education, who is quite sympathetic to French-Canadian demands, insists that the exigencies of economic life in his province require above all a firm foundation in English. He reasons that the graduates of the new type of bilingual high school can be channeled into the two bilingual universities to afford the province the best of both cultures.

Northern Ontario is serviced by French-language television and radio stations. Since 1963 Toronto has had a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation French radio outlet, and Franco-Ontarian organizations are pressing for television service in southern Ontario. The Ottawa newspaper *Le Droit* is the only French-language daily published in Ontario. A good share of its circulation of under 40,000 is in the Hull region of Quebec, however. Six French-language weeklies published in Ontario run less than 20,000 copies among them. These figures offer a clear indication of the modest cultural commitment of the mass of French-speaking Ontarians.

When Manitoba was granted provincial status in 1870, the population was almost equally divided between French- and English-speaking inhabitants, and French was recognized as an official language. By 1890, however, a heavy influx of English immigrants had reduced the French-speaking element to less than 15 per cent, and the legislature abolished French schools. The federal government side-stepped the issue, and the courts eventually decided against the French Canadians. A system of separate schools was established over the years by the French-speaking community, and a few minor concessions were won. One hour of instruction in French is permitted each school day. Recently the French Canadians of Manitoba adopted a new tactic in an effort to win official recognition for French as a language of instruction. Heretofore their schools were primarily Catholic parochial institutions.
The Educational Association of Manitoba French Canadians is now on record in favor of public schools for French-speaking children and a normal school to train teachers for such a system. In view of the more tolerant attitude of recent years, there is some hope of change in this context, but development of a program to meet all requirements may prove difficult. Almost 30 per cent of the 84,000 Manitobans of French origin speak only English; only 10 per cent of the 60,000 who speak French are unilingual. The Winnipeg area has advantage of a television station, and radio coverage is adequate elsewhere; the provincial French-language weekly has, however, only 8,000 subscribers.

Saskatchewan has probably the most liberal policy of all the English-speaking provinces, insofar as its attitude toward its Catholic minority is concerned. Parochial elementary and secondary schools are tax-supported and are run by separate school boards. This system has worked increasingly to the disadvantage of the relatively small French-speaking minority, however, as urbanization and consolidation of school districts have tended to submerge the French Canadians more and more in their English-speaking surroundings. The law permits one hour of French daily, at the discretion of the school board and outside regular school hours. When French Canadians controlled the local boards in their isolated rural communities, the schools taught French. Now, however, the city school systems and consolidated districts have just one or two French-speaking members on the board, and neither of the major centers in the province, Saskatoon or Regina, for example, permits even the legal hour per day of French. About 36,000 of the 60,000 inhabitants of Saskatchewan of French origin were French-speaking in 1961. Most of the young people are completely anglicized. A group of about 150 families in Saskatoon created a stir in 1965 by withdrawing their children from religion classes, which can legally be held in English. Such a gesture seems more quixotic than practical in an environment where the proponents of an hour of French per day recognize that even that minimum is insufficient to preserve the language. Although two French-language weeklies are published in Saskatchewan, their combined circulation is under 2,500 copies.

While half of the 83,000 Albertans who come from French stock consider English their mother tongue, the remainder seem better prepared materially and psychologically to retain the language link with Quebec than their French-Canadian fellows in the three other Western provinces. The school arrangements in Alberta are the most favorable in the West, although they fall short of the minimum which would offer some assurance against ultimate assimilation. In the first and second
grades of state-supported Catholic schools, French is permitted as the exclusive vehicle of instruction. For grade three to nine, however, only one hour of French per day is allowed. Since 1963 Franco-Albertans have had a bilingual normal school affiliated with the provincial university. Because the Edmonton government has shown itself to be increasingly sympathetic, because the French-speaking population is relatively compact and especially because youth seems more dedicated to maintaining its French cultural background, the future is not entirely dark. With barely 3 per cent of the total population of the province, however, it is questionable how long even the most determined can resist assimilation. Here again, the 2,500 circulation figure of the lone French-language weekly in the province is probably a fair indicator of the degree of mass interest in cultural survival.

Two out of three Canadians of French origin in British Columbia claim English as their mother tongue. There is little organized effort or real incentive for the rest of their 60,000 fellows in the province to strive to retain the language. There is no state aid for parochial schools; a few parishes manage to offer at least an hour of daily instruction in French in the elementary school. This is hardly enough to give conversational facility, and the lack of other contacts with French reduces the utility of this minimum.

The ability of the different French-speaking minorities to maintain their cultural identity will probably continue to vary from nil to 100 per cent, depending on a number of factors. For most of the groups in the West, the chances seem increasingly slim. Spokesmen for various cultural associations continue to express optimism, but there is strong reason to doubt the tenacity of the rank and file. Some leaders place great faith in the ability of more and better-qualified teachers; they hope, without any firm basis for encouragement or any practical incentive, for complete schooling in French. This is especially illusory in areas remote from Quebec. They place perhaps too much hope in the aid a number of schools outside Quebec have been receiving from the department for “beyond the frontiers” in Quebec’s Cultural Affairs Ministry. Such optimism is tempered somewhat by the fear that the inward-looking preoccupations of some of the most rabid proponents of Quebec’s renaissance tended to foster indifference toward the fate of the French groups elsewhere in Canada.

Unlike Quebeckers, the other French Canadians are not convinced defenders of provincial rights. They look to Ottawa for protection against the arbitrary provincial rule which all have experienced in relation to their language claims. Many of them would welcome recognition
of a federal role in guaranteeing educational rights to the French-language minorities. A prominent Franco-Ontarian cites the view of Laurier's biographer that it is nonsense to say education is wholly a provincial matter. The only section which gave this power to the provinces limited its restrictions to the interests of the minority.

Federal moves to guarantee school rights for French-speaking minorities would have tremendous propaganda value in rekindling Quebec fervor in regard to the Confederation. It would have strong influence particularly on the segment of Quebec's population whose restlessness was a prime factor in sparking the quiet revolution. Prospective junior executives in nationwide corporations might be less reluctant to serve a stint outside the provincial confines if adequate schooling were available in French. Temporary assignments for military families would similarly gain in appeal. Quebec nationalists who have given some thought to such proposals continue to hesitate, however. A strong deterrent in university circles is the apprehension that Ottawa would take advantage of the situation to favor disproportionally the English-language minority in Quebec, and particularly to flood McGill with so much financial assistance that it would dwarf the University of Montreal's research potential.

Even with the maximum of French instruction practicable, considering the demands of their predominantly English cultural and economic environment, it is increasingly questionable whether pockets of French-language life far from the Quebec bastion can retain their identity. There have been numerous instances of French-speaking communities persisting in the relative isolation of rural pre-radio America. Sainte-Geneviève, near St. Louis, is one such which retained a core of French speakers well into this century. The urban environment, particularly with modern communication and transportation facilities, is another matter. Manchester, New Hampshire, is an example of the problems of cultural survival under very favorable conditions. The city is predominantly of French extraction, and in prewar years the French parochial elementary schools gave over to instruction in French half the daily program. Even so, by the 1940s, third and fourth generation Franco-Americans were increasingly unable to speak or understand the language of their forebears.

Had bilingual high school education been available on a broad basis in Manchester, the inevitable might have been delayed but hardly

forestalled. Even in Ottawa, bilingual high schools are not influential enough to ensure the use of French as the habitual tongue outside the classroom. The normal schools, in which the French minorities in the English-speaking provinces place such high expectations, can hardly bring decisive influence to bear at the elementary and high school levels, where their graduates will be called upon to exercise their regenerative talents. If there is any validity in the objections posed by the emerging middle class in Montreal to the cultural threat implicit in nine-to-five immersion in English, it probably applies with far more than geometrically progressive force, the greater the distance from Quebec. How much more difficult must it be to remain French Canadian in outlook and mentality for the isolated French-speaker where the total French population is only an insignificant minority! The experience of the American immigrant family is ample evidence in this regard. A perspicacious former professor at the University of Montreal drew on his knowledge of French-Canadian communities in the West to question the desirability of cultural survival. He may have been overly swayed by his economist's sense of values, but he expressed strong doubt as to the practicability of diverting limited resources to schools, press, and radio. He felt community leadership had distorted the wishes of the bulk of the population and probably hampered its progress by imposing on it the paraphernalia of nationalism.  

Whatever the ultimate fate of the linguistic settlements outside Quebec, they symbolize the Confederation today for many defenders of French rights in Canada. For the short run, their survival may be vital to the continuation of French-English partnership. The squabble in Saskatoon in 1965 over a few minutes of daily instruction in French is the type of incident that can exert a determining influence on a good number of Quebeckers, at a time when the future of confederation depends in large measure on the confidence they will be disposed to manifest vis-à-vis their English-speaking fellow citizens. The Tremblay Report made this clear in the mid-1950s when it discussed the sense of security French Canadians need in order to feel at home in their own country. The treatment the other provinces mete out to their French-Canadian minorities, it said, leaves much to be desired in that regard. More recently, two articulate champions of French stressed the impor-

tance of the minorities to the existence of the Confederation. Father Richard Arès, editor of the Jesuit monthly Relations, told a group of French-language school board members in 1963 that the destinies of the minorities and of the Confederation are linked and interdependent: "They will live together, or together they will die." Claude Ryan tied the issue directly to the school question in a Devoir editorial: "If French-speaking Canadians of the other provinces cannot freely receive, in their respective provinces, a French education, then Canadian biculturalism is a myth," he wrote. He went on to pose a question: "Our English-speaking fellow citizens dream of a Canada prosperous and united, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Are they prepared to pay the price?"

The price will probably be more than school rights, although that will be an important component. As far as schools are concerned, French Canadians want for their minorities exactly the same rights the English-Canadian minority in Quebec has enjoyed since the beginning of the Confederation—that is, tax-supported schools where warranted. In addition, they want equal treatment with English-speaking Canadians in the federal civil service without being obliged to pay a premium for language rights. They want the right to the use of French in courts outside Quebec. A specific demand, incorporated in the resolutions of the Quebec Liberal Party Congress in 1966, is to have French given official status in Ontario and New Brunswick. This would not imply equality with English but would permit provincial legislators to use French in the legislature and would allow the French-speaking citizen to exact service in his own language in provincial offices.

The most important constituent in Quebec's price for political unity is probably much less tangible than specific concessions on the use of French in a given set of circumstances. It is not integral bilingualism, if that is construed to mean that every Canadian should be obliged to learn both languages. If 20 per cent of Canada's 20,000,000 inhabitants spoke both French and English, the country could be considered bilingual, in the opinion of a strong proponent of "cooperative federalism." In 1961, 12 per cent of the population was bilingual, a drop of 5 per cent in twenty years. More important than doubling this figure, in French-Canadian eyes, would be the change of attitude it would portray. Acknowledgement by English Canadians that French has a place in Canada, that French-speakers should be made to feel they have a right

to use French in Canada outside Quebec, even if everyone does not understand them—that is essentially what the language issue amounts to.

The role the minorities can play in achieving a high level of mutual tolerance may be developing in the pragmatic response to situations exemplified by Premier Louis Robichaud in New Brunswick. He decries both the dramatization of daily problems and the oversimplification of idealistic solutions. He sees the answer to intergroup relationships in the art of finding an accommodation without sacrificing principle. He wants a frank dialogue between the two language groups; he rejects separatism as a betrayal of the patrimony he insists is his, to be at home everywhere in Canada.22