

## **EVERYONE IS INVITED TO PICKET STORES WHERE ENGLISH IS BANNED**

**Saturday, December 7**, beginning at 9:30 am, we will picket the Sears store in Carrefour Laval. This shopping mall, the largest in Quebec, is situated in the Chomedey district, where about half the population is English-speaking. It serves about 60,000 English-speaking residents from Laval and another 60,000 from surrounding areas, but has not one English sign. This shows intolerable contempt.

Why is there not one sign in English in most major department stores and shopping malls in the Greater Montreal area, where one third of the population is English-speaking? Since 1993, it has been legal to display English and other languages on signs as long as French is predominant. Yet most chain stores and shopping malls reject our language by posting signs only in French and using only French for flyers, warranty extensions, technical descriptions and literature describing items for sale.

Some stores began to include English signs for short periods, but often removed them when the signs were replaced. Others never installed any signs in English. Some chain stores even ignore the customers' language preference encoded on their credit cards, and print receipts only in French. Enough! We demand changes to these policies.

Alliance Quebec met with a senior Sears' official in Montreal. We asked that Sears put up at least some English signs in all their Montreal area stores, such as bilingual store directories. They refused to make any commitment at all. On November 14, we wrote to Mark Cohen, president of Sears Canada Inc, whose office is in Toronto. We described for him the situation in the Greater Montreal area, and wrote: "This shows a lack of respect for your English-speaking customers and demonstrates poor business practices." He never replied to our letter.

We therefore call for a national boycott of Sears stores until they show respect for English, one of the two official languages of Canada.

**The demonstration will take place on Saturday, December 7, at 9:30 am, at the south entrance to the Sears store. We ask all Canadians to refuse to shop at Sears until they change their policy.**