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The Monthly Report

September, 1984

Vol. 2, No. 6

CANADA CLAUSE CASE WON

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled on July 26th in favour of the Canada Clause on access to English Quebec schools. Alliance Quebec, in assuming responsibility for the case originally sponsored by the Positive Action Committee, represented the seven families who were plaintiffs in the case. Julius Grey, a member of the Alliance Quebec Legal Committee and an active volunteer with the Alliance, was the lawyer speaking on the Alliance's behalf in the Supreme Court.

The decision struck down the Bill 101 "Quebec Clause" which limited access to English schools only to the children of parents who were educated in English Quebec schools. Now Canadian citizens, who received primary school education in Canada in English, have the right to send their children to English Quebec schools. As well, children who received or who are receiving primary or secondary schooling in English in Canada have the right to continue their education in English in Quebec.

There are a number of specific applications of the Canada Clause which await clarification. Alliance Quebec has convened a meeting of educational organizations and the AQ network on Sept. 6 to discuss some of these applications.

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LANGUAGE TESTS RULED DISCRIMINATORY

Alliance Quebec is overjoyed with the Quebec Court of Appeal decision on Aug. 31 in favour of Nursing Assistant Nancy Forget who had sought a court ruling that the Quebec government's language tests are discriminatory and illegal.

The case goes back to 1981 when Nancy Forget lost her job as a nursing assistant after failing to pass the written part of the French language tests for professionals. (She passed the oral.) Ms. Forget lost the first battle in Quebec Superior Court and then appealed to the Quebec Court of Appeal.

The Alliance has provided legal support to her throughout the two-year legal fight. Julius Grey, a member of the AQ Legal Advisory Group, has been one of her two lawyers.

The Aug. 31 decision was based on the court's view that the language test is discriminatory because it creates two classes of candidates for positions in professions.

Alliance Quebec believes the court ruling will have a profound impact on Bill 101 and how it is applied to those seeking jobs.

ACTIVITIES IN CHAPTERS AND ASSOCIATIONS

The English population of Trois-Rivières, including the St. Maurice Valley Chapter, participated fully in the summer activities celebrating the 350th Anniversary of the founding of the city.

St. Patrick High School hosted a reunion that was attended by former students and staff from all across Canada and many parts of the U.S. Over 750 participants enjoyed a banquet, dance and a tour of the present St. Patrick High School, greatly changed since 1929.

St. James church, which was built before 1700 and houses the Anglican and United Church congregations, was opened to the public over the summer months. Student guides described the colorful history of this building to over 10,000 visitors.

The largest parade in the history of Trois-Rivières was held on Aug. 19. One of the 15 floats was sponsored by the St. Maurice Chapter of Alliance Quebec. The float represented English churches and schools and featured participation of English-speaking residents in community sports activities. Twenty-five persons representing the various groups of the English-speaking community followed along the route, proudly carrying the AQ banner. This project brought together for the first time all members of the English-speaking community.

Other summer projects, including translation of a Walking Tour Guidebook for use in the English schools and microfilming of the city's last English newspaper, are now nearing completion.

In August, the West Island Chapter was successful in getting out its second newsletter, the "West Island Dialogue". Two games, 'Explanation' and 'O'Canada-2', put out by the Commissioner of Official Languages, are being distributed to the elementary schools of the Lakeshore School Board by the chapter.

In mid-August, eight chapter members ran an information and membership booth in Les Galeries Lachine shopping centre. This event was co-ordinated by John Gonin, Board member for Lachine. Chapter Chairman Harry Morrison and Chapter Animator Alma Baker met recently with Board Member Margaret Peyton from Como with a view to increasing membership and becoming more involved in Sector 6. This area includes Como, Hudson, Hudson Heights and St-Lazare.

Several problems in the areas of health & social services, education and government services experienced by West Islanders and received at the office by the Animator, were successfully solved with help from provincial Programme Directors.

The Health & Social Services Committee of the Côte St. Luc/Hampstead/Snowdon West Chapter met with Russell Williams, AQ Programme Director in the relevant programme area, with the goal of orienting committee action. A CLSC is being planned to serve the chapter area, although a date has not yet been set for an election.

The Communications Committee has written letters to the various schools, town councils and other organizations in the area to introduce the chapter and its new location. The committee is also busy working on its first newsletter to be released by the end of the month.

The Employment/Business Committee has outlined its program objectives for the coming year. John Parisella, Quebec Representative for the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, spoke recently to the committee on "The Federal Government and Bilingualism".

The Townshippers' Association is sponsoring the 5th Annual Townshippers' Day on Sept. 22 in Knowlton. There will be music, dancing, displays, history and trivia, all in a picturesque town near Brome Lake.

This event brings together members and friends to participate in the Annual General Meeting of the Association, and to enjoy cultural activities. It is held in a different area each year to allow Townshippers to become better acquainted with the charm and richness in a specific town of the region.

Under the theme, "The Way We Are", this festival will reflect the many facets of Townships culture and talent. Music will include oldtime fiddling, rock and roll and a barbershop chorus, while those who enjoy dancing will be entertained by breakdancers, square dancers, Scottish Country dancers and clog dancers.

Knowlton Academy will offer you another side of "The Way We Are", as many types of Townships artisans will have their work on display, and also have articles for sale. Other displays will be information booths from the Townships newspapers, health and social service agencies and other private or public agencies. All booths and displays will be open from 10:30 am to 5:00 pm.

The Annual General Meeting of the Townshippers' Association will be held at the Knowlton Academy at 1:30 pm. This is the occasion for the membership to review the year's activities, and bring forward ideas for the coming year.

Townships history will be present in the form of a fashion show of antique clothing to be held on the lawn of the Brome County Historical Society Museum at 11 am. featuring apparel from various historical societies from across the Townships.

An event not to be missed is the Hysterical Historical Trivia Quiz of the Eastern Townships at the Knowlton Academy at 2:30 pm. This activity is a fun look at our history in a game show fashion. Using the Memphremagog as a geographical division, three member panels will represent the 'East' and the 'West' for this showdown. Audience participation will be a must. Marc Côté, well-known CBC personality, will be the master of ceremonies for both of these events.

As you arrive in Knowlton, you will be greeted by volunteers who will give you complete details of the day's activities, and point you in the direction of the nearest parking lot. From there, you can enjoy a short walk to the centre of town, or make use of the shuttle bus service which will be available all day. To get to Knowlton, take Exit 90 from the Eastern Townships Autoroute.

The Townshippers' Association would like to extend a cordial invitation to all to experience "The Way We Are". If you would like further information, please contact us at (819) 566-5717.

The NDG/Montreal West Chapter participated Aug. 26 in the NDG Sunday Festival in the Park held in Loyola Park. Nearly 1,500 Montrealers turned out to view or sample the wares of various community organizations and to meet local federal election candidates. The chapter was pleased and encouraged by the number of people who visited the Alliance Quebec booth.

In other news, the chapter has moved to its new office at 5801 Monkland Avenue, Suite 2, NDG, H4A 1G4; Tel.: 481-1774.

Board members will meet on Sept. 10 at 7:30 pm. On the agenda are: Identification of needs, evaluation of resources; and adoption of a general focus for membership and specific objectives for committees. There is a general consensus that the chapter needs to raise its profile in the community and expand community outreach. Sophia Skiadas, Community Liaison Animator at Alliance Quebec, will attend to discuss her role and how best to link up with chapters and associations.

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The East Island Chapter Health & Social Services Committee has been participating in the Information and Documentation project. The committee publicized the project through a notice mailed to all chapter members and an interview with a reporter for the East Island Section of The Gazette. Front page coverage was given the chapter. The Committee helped a number of people by referring them to services available through their local CLSC.

The Committee also wrote to Camille Laurin, Minister of Social Affairs, voicing concern over cut-backs in health and social services. The reply given by Mr. Laurin's aide, Laurent Martineau, suggests that the minister's policy of cut-backs has not led to inadequate services.

Judy Haydock, on behalf of the committee, has also written to the Regional Council for Health and Social Services for Greater Montreal, requesting recognition as a socio-economic representative on the boards of local health and social service institutions.

Finally, this committee is in the first stages of planning for three pre-CLSC advisory committee elections to take place in the fall. The areas included are Ville d'Anjou, Mercier Est and Mercier Ouest. Meetings are being arranged with the people responsible for organizing the elections and a call for bilingual information sessions will be made.

The Employment/Business Committee was established early this summer, and is running a letter-writing campaign. The chairperson, Wendy Garland, and committee members Serge Peronne, Peter Salomon and Lois Todd are focusing on companies which distribute unilingual flyers, coupons and brochures. A letter is sent to companies, informing them of the McKenna decision and letting them know they are allowed to advertise bilingually. The goal is to remind them that there is an English-speaking community in the East Island and it is in their own interest to inform them of their products.

Albert Watson, the chapter's communications chairperson, is working with Sophia Skiadas, the Community Liaison Worker at Alliance Quebec, to develop a list of cultural communities in the East Island Chapter for the purpose of outreach.

The latest issue of the chapter newsletter, The East Islander, has been published and has been distributed to chapter members.

The Health & Social Services Committee of the TMR/Outremont/Côte-des-Neiges/Snowdon East Chapter has been following with great interest the election of citizen representatives to the pre-CLSC advisory board of postal code H3W, Snowdon East. The board will be responsible for setting up the structure and programs of the permanent CLSC that will service the health and social service needs of the citizens of H3W. In a few months, another pre-CLSC election process will begin in TMR and Outremont. The chapter's Health & Social Services Committee is heightening its involvement in the process by actively promoting candidates in the election.

C.V.E.S.P.A. has had a busy summer and heads into fall with a greatly expanded program of activities. The membership campaign has brought the total number of members to 1,800. New members of the Board of Directors are Hugh Maynard, as Chairman of the Government Relations Committee, and Lindsay Cullen as Zone Representative for the Ormstown area.

The Association has participated in several community projects during the summer. A bilingual Day Camp, coordinated by Education Committee Chairperson Mary Sherry, and funded by a federal grant, provided new opportunities for children in Huntingdon and Rockburn. Through an agreement with the Rockburn Presbyterian Church for the use of its Hall, a Cultural Centre has been developed and renovated, also with the help of a federal grant. The Centre is being used often for meetings, displays, youth activities and special events such as a local arts festival and a visit by the Quebec Drama Festival Summer Touring Company. Another aspect of this project has been the preparation of a directory of English-speaking and bilingual non-profit groups in the Châteauguay Valley area.

C.V.E.S.P.A. is contributing a weekly column in the local newspaper, The Huntingdon Gleaner, in which special current issues and activities are publicized. A newsletter for the C.V.E.S.P.A. membership is close to publication and will feature the views of English and French-speaking community leaders concerning the future of the English-speaking community in the Châteauguay Valley.

The Board of Directors has scheduled meetings with the CLSCs in Huntingdon, Napierville and Beauharnois/Valleyfield in September and October, as part of the program to evaluate and monitor services to English-speaking residents.

The mayors of 15 local municipalities have been invited to attend a meeting of the Board of Directors of C.V.E.S.P.A. on Sept. 12. Tom Mulcair, Director of Legal Services for Alliance Quebec, will speak on Bill 101 and its application to municipalities in Quebec.

Outaouais Alliance held two successful "Camps Francophones", one in Chelsea and one in Shawville. Approximately 50 children attended both camps over a six-week period.

During the past summer, the association completed its survey of the attitudes and opinions of English-speaking West Quebecers in the Pontiac, Gatineau, Labelle area, begun in the summer of 1983. The results will be made public when all the data is processed.

Pauline Smith, Community Development Officer, has been attending the summer fairs, distributing information and selling buttons, t-shirts and memberships.

Upcoming events include a Career Development Day this fall for English-speaking senior secondary and Cegep students in the Outaouais region.

The Laval/North Shore Chapter concentrated this summer on the fight to preserve the only English-language newspaper serving the residents of the area. The chapter takes credit for spearheading the drive to encourage residents to help maintain a vital communication link in the area. The local paper, The Victory, published its last edition in June. Due to the efforts of Employment/Business Committee Chairperson Sue Quarles, a meeting of local residents was recently held at the Two Mountains Community Centre. All of the 42 residents attending demonstrated their commitment to the cause by taking subscription booklets and the first edition of a proposed new local paper called The North Shore Journal.

September also marks the start of a series of meetings within the chapter. There will be a chapter board meeting as well as a health and social services meeting. The agenda for both meetings will be the formulation of strategies for the coming year.

The St. Laurent Chapter extends an invitation to attend a public information meeting to be held Thursday, Sept. 13 at 8 pm at St. Andrew's-Norwood United Church, 1600 de l'Eglise (corner Cardinal). The subject of the meeting is the development of two new CLSCs, one in St. Laurent and the other in New Bordeaux/Cartierville. The guest speaker will be André Lemelin, CLSC Co-ordinator. For further information, call 747-0764.

A public meeting, sponsored by Alliance Quebec and the Egyptian community, will be held at 2:30 pm, Sept. 16 at the Centre Communautaire et Culturel Bois de Boulogne, 10025 de l'Acadie. The meeting is being organized by members of Truth, the Egyptian-Canadian monthly magazine, and Sophie Skiadas, Alliance Quebec's Community Liaison Animator. The meeting will focus on business and employment issues.

LET'S COMMUNICATE

The Sunday Express begins publishing a weekly column on Sept. 9 written by Alliance Quebec. Appearing in the community news section, the column will cover activities in Alliance Quebec, including news from the chapters and associations. Communications Chairpersons of the chapters and associations are invited to submit material for the column, with a deadline of 5 pm Wednesday for events happening in the following week.

Now that activities are once again underway, chapters and associations are reminded to submit information for The Monthly Report in double-spaced writing or typing. The deadline is the 15th of the month before publication.

EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Eligibility for English Schools

Alliance Quebec is responding to a set of draft regulations published in July regarding the application of the Bill 57 amendments to Bill 101 on access to English schools.

It appears that the new regulations and government directives to the Bureau d'admissibilité de l'enseignement en anglais are interpreting the law in a restrictive fashion. If necessary, Alliance Quebec will take court action to ensure the broadest application of Bill 57.

Reorganization of the Education Ministry

Discussions continue with the Education Ministry on the establishment of a division responsible for English education within the Ministry. A proposal has been considered by the highest decision-making body in the Ministry and is now at the stage of discussion with representatives of the English-speaking community.

AQ Education Programme Director Doug McCall, Martin Murphy, President of the Association of Directors of English Schools, and Ian Trasler, President of the Association of Directors General of Protestant School Boards of Quebec, have been engaged in discussions with Ministry officials. It seems that satisfactory arrangements can be made concerning the responsibilities and staffing of such a service for the English-speaking community.

English-speaking Parents' Network

The founding convention of the English-speaking Parents' Network will be held Nov. 16 and 17. School committees of English schools across the province will be contacted about a series of consultative meetings to discuss proposals developed by the Steering Committee of the network. As well, meetings with educational institutions and organizations will be held to explain the goals of the network. Alliance Quebec has been providing support to ensure the development of this association which will work on behalf of all English-speaking parents across Quebec.

EMPLOYMENT/BUSINESS PROGRAMME

The Employment/Business Programme is working with chapters and associations to assist the municipalities whose appeal for bilingual status was met recently, with an invitation by the Office de la langue française (OLF) to further discussions. The South West Chapter is helping LaSalle and Verdun; the Townshippers' Association, Beebe and Stanstead Plain; and Outaouais Alliance, Buckingham.

All five municipalities, as well as Aylmer, were told that they the OLF did not see why they should have bilingual status since the majority of their residents do not have English as their mother tongue. However, the door was not completely shut on the question by the OLF as it requested that the municipalities submit written representations on why they should receive bilingual status and how they interpret the law on this point.

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Montreal City Council Move Lauded

Alliance Quebec congratulated Jean Drapeau, Yvon Lamarre and Sam Berliner on the recent decision of the City of Montreal to adopt a policy of distributing bilingual notices and documentation to its citizens. "The City of Montreal's decision to distribute notices and documentation is extremely positive and encouraging", President Eric Maldoff said. "It reflects the new spirit of cooperation and mutual respect between Quebec's two language communities which has emerged throughout the province. This will provide an important psychological boost for English-speaking Quebecers because it is a tangible demonstration of English-speaking Quebecers being welcome and at home. This City of Montreal policy is evidence that solutions which provide dignity and security to all Quebecers are possible.

City Councillor Sam Berliner, a member of the Alliance Board, initiated a precedent setting debate on language at the Montreal City Council last year which resulted in a unanimous resolution calling for changes in Bill 101 to allow for improved services in English. Recently, Mr. Berliner, once again with the assistance of Alliance Quebec's Research and Legal Departments, called upon the municipal administration to provide bilingual documentation and pointed out at the time that such a policy was permitted under Bill 101.

Community Legal Self Help

The Employment/Business Programme is helping in the organization of a conference on community legal self help to be held by the McGill University Law Faculty in mid-November.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES PROGRAMME

Alliance Quebec's Health and Social Services Committees have been actively involved in the process of CLSC advisory committee selection. These advisory committees will provide the nucleus of boards of directors of new CLSCs as they are formed.

Members have been and will be involved in this process either by their own candidacy in the election process, nominating an Alliance Quebec member as a voluntary organization representative, or by supporting other community groups. This direct committee involvement in the social affairs network will continue to develop Alliance Quebec's role in ensuring English-language social services.

Reorganization of Social Services

The Social Affairs Ministry's original plan to transfer a large proportion of staff resources and budgets from Social Service Centres to CLSCs has been revised. It is now the responsibility of all Regional Councils to submit detailed plans by Nov. 15, 1984 to the Ministry on how the scheduled changes will be carried out.

The Ministry has recognized the importance of providing English-language services to members of the English-speaking community. It seems to have accepted that language is an integral part of providing good social service care. Alliance Quebec is continuing to work for legislative guarantees that English-speaking Quebecers receive services in their own language.

The Alliance is developing a provincial initiative to discuss the implications of the reorganization and the transfer of services throughout each regional administration. Marylee Kelley, the Health and Social Services Provincial Committee Chairperson, and Vaughan Dowie, AQ Executive Director, recently presented the Alliance Quebec position to the Regional Council of Metropolitan Montreal.

Task Force on Social Services

The Task Force on Social Services has received a response to its recent presentation before the Regional Council. A delegation headed by Gaby Ostro presented the main recommendations of the Task Force document to the CRSS-MM in an effort to offer a more effective regional plan for English language institutions and services.

New Staff Members

Alliance Quebec welcomes Dianne Allison, formerly South Shore Animator, as the new Health and Social Services Programme Assistant; Richard Silver has left the position to begin studies for a law degree at McGill University. Also welcomed is Nancy Erickson, the new Health and Social Services Secretary.

COMMISSION ON DEMOGRAPHY PLANNED

A brief is being prepared by the Research Programme for submission to the parliamentary commission on demography being held this autumn. The Quebec government has called for reaction to its recent publication, "The Evolution of Quebec's Population and its Consequences". It is also interested in briefs concerning the demographic situation of Montreal and other regions as well as demographic policies adopted by other countries.

Preparation of the brief is being coordinated by a work group chaired by John Trent, President of Outaouais Alliance, and Catherine Duff-Caron, member of the Alliance's Executive. Royal Orr, former Executive Director of the Townshippers' Association, is carrying out the project on an interim basis. Research Programme Director Laurent Marcoux has left AQ to article for the Supreme Court of Canada.

Monthly Report

COMMENT IN THE FRENCH PRESS

A unanimous decision by the Supreme Court of Canada on July 27 put an end to the long dispute over rules of access to English schools in Quebec. The ruling came as no surprise to French editorialists. They agreed that the practical effects of the decision will be minimal since various studies, most importantly one by the Conseil de la langue française, predict that there will be no threat to Quebec's linguistic balance by the enrolment of a few hundred more students into English schools (with the possible exception of the Outaouais). The French press also agreed, however, that the political repercussions of the ruling will be monumental, causing provinces to reassess their relationship with Ottawa and forcing Quebec to seek an accord on the Constitution.

Michel Roy in La Presse, July 28, recalls that in the initial adoption of Bill 101, many members within the Quebec government (including the Premier) were in favor of the Canada Clause. By adopting this clause, the government would have been in tune with the majority of Francophones who find ultra-protectionism and vengeance repugnant, Mr. Roy writes.

Michel Roy goes on to discuss the reaction of Quebec Justice Minister Pierre-Marc Johnson who saw the ruling as "a lack of respect for the legislative competence of Quebec". Mr. Roy concludes, "No short term solution to the problem of Quebec and the Canadian Constitution would be viable, but perhaps with a new federal government a just accord will be reached. In the meantime, there will be no harm in adopting Article 23 in the Quebec Charter since it has already proven beyond a doubt that it poses no threat to the future of Quebec's language or culture."

Raymond Giroux in a Le Soleil editorial, "Here Lies the Quebec Clause", agrees with Mr. Roy of La Presse on the insignificance of the practical implications of the Canada Clause. "The government should have understood the political and human realities involved, and stopped victimizing a few hundred children by meddlesome techniques of which the majority of the population disapproved," he writes. He goes on to blame the obstinance of the Quebec government for the total failure of the Quebec Clause. "By refusing to deal justly with a minor problem, the Quebec government invited a federal intrusion," he says.

On a more cynical note, Mr. Giroux adds that "the decision will be long studied by constitutionalists, and certain politicians will have their hands full watching for the apocalyptic effects of immigrants and Francophones who will stealthily enroll their children in English schools in Ottawa, stopping at nothing to obtain their eligibility certificates."

If the Supreme Court decision is not taken seriously, however, Mr. Giroux predicts a grim outcome for Canada. "The Supreme Court has launched an appeal to Quebecers and Canadians to settle between themselves the Constitutional matter. If not, each province in its turn will bail out, producing a destructive centralization of regional cultures and economies."

Lise Bissonnette in Le Devoir, July 27, sees the whole judgement as a direct attack on Quebec's legislative powers. She writes, "The court is not examining the legitimacy of one objective over another. The federal government and the nine provinces who voted in favor of the Constitution in 1982 are attempting to overstep the political jurisdiction of Quebec." Ms. Bissonnette feels that the Quebec government can react to the judgement in one of two ways. It can attempt to produce its own version of the Canada Clause or better yet, it can make provisions to protect itself from attacks on its power to legislate competently.

AQ IN BRIEF

Alliance Quebec bids farewell this month to Laurent Marcoux, the Research Programme Director for the past year. Laurent came to the Alliance as we were preparing for The Parliamentary Commission on Bill 101; he was also part of the team which travelled to Manitoba in support of that government's attempt to entrench a constitutional amendment guaranteeing French-language rights. In the ensuing months, under his directorship, the programme initiated a number of research projects in the areas of education, health & social services and community development. Laurent and his family have moved to Ottawa where he will article for the Honorable Antonio Lamer of The Supreme Court of Canada.

Alliance Quebec has regretfully said goodbye to Lyette Robert, Secretary to the Executive Director for the past two years. Her abilities are greatly missed. Lyette is now Executive Secretary to the Quebec Representative of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages. Her position has been taken over by Diane Moisan, whom we welcome.

The NDG/Montreal West Chapter has a new Animator, Fred Anderson, while the South Shore Chapter's replacement for Dianne Allison is Pat Pearman. Congratulations to them both.

Cheryl Scott, who had been working during the summer as Employment/Business Programme Assistant, has returned to her law studies at the University of Windsor.

And finally, this is the last Monthly Report edition which Barbara Verity will tuck under her belt. As the Communications/Research Assistant of Alliance Quebec for three years, Barbara was instrumental in shaping not only this newsletter, but also our quarterly Quebecer. Her talents as a writer-photographer, her skills in public and media relations, and her unwavering commitment to the principles and actions of Alliance Quebec will be sorely missed. Barbara will take up her new duties as the Public Relations Editor of the Thursday Report, an internal publication of Concordia University, in mid-September.

