

Reply by QCGN President Geoffrey Chambers to Mathieu Bock-Côté's column [La trahison](#) published in Le Journal de Montréal on July 6, 2019.

Mathieu Bock-Côté's column on the recent entente between the Francophones of Ontario and New Brunswick and the English-speaking community of Quebec perfectly illustrates why many members of our community do not always feel welcome in their home province. The contempt with which he refers to our contribution to the social, economic, political and cultural success that is Quebec in the 21st century borders on race hatred.

As is frequently observed, many English-speaking Quebecers have the tools and resources to move elsewhere and prosper. Most of us have stayed here or come here not because we had to, but because Quebec is our home. We are committed Quebecers not some toxic foreign influence to be mocked and scorned. Bock-Côté's insulting and demeaning treatment of our efforts to support and defend the French fact in the rest of Canada in effect means that he rejects the notion that we are native Quebecers and seeks to poison constructive dialogue between language groups.

Among the hackneyed stereotypes was the assertion that the English-speaking community is economically unthreatened. In actual fact, Quebec's English-speaking community is the poorest official language community in Canada. In the most recent census, English-speaking Quebecers have a lower median household income than Francophones outside Quebec, Anglophone Canadians outside Quebec, and French-speaking Quebecers. Contrary to Mr. Bock-Côté's caricature, English-speaking Quebecers are not simply a comfortable urban population but in fact form an economically disadvantaged minority across all of the regions of Quebec.

He also speaks critically of our institutions. While it is true that over a period of two centuries and from our own resources, we built and maintained three universities which now represent a valuable heritage for all Quebecers, we have nothing to apologize for. We contributed these assets to our collective community. The respect with which Quebec is held in the world and the many academic, medical and scientific contributions to public welfare made by these institutions reflect well on our society. Yet Mr. Bock-Côté believes we are culpable in some way.

Similarly, the many excellent hospitals founded and built by our community now provide exceptional care for all Quebecers. Today they are bilingual institutions, fully capable of welcoming and serving francophone patients in their own language and of delivering top-quality care. Again, this is a contribution for which we should be praised, not chastised. Of the many ways that illustrate how the English-speaking community represents an asset, and not a problem, for Quebec is that we are Canada's most committed Francophiles with a genuine commitment to the survival and flourishing of Quebec's majority French language and culture.

It was in this spirit that we have allied with our Franco-Ontarian and Acadian neighbours to build the bridges of understanding and co-operation Mr. Bock-Côté seems so intent on burning. I think our approach is both more constructive and more promising and I look forward to the day when rejectionist opinions such as those expressed in Mr. Bock-Côté's writings are a thing of the past.