

**"Many sections of the Charter of the French Language  
violate the constitutional rights of Quebecers:" AQ President William  
Johnson**

**Montreal, Tuesday, September 14, 1999** - Alliance Quebec supports the Lester B. Pearson School Board's decision to affirm the right of the school board to have some answering machines deliver a message in English only. From the moment the *Office de la langue française* entered the picture to order the addition of French to the answering message, the issue became one, not of etiquette or courtesy, but of defining the limits of rights.

The Charter of the French Language was designed to remove from English its status as an official language and a common language of Quebec. It is designed to transform English institutions into bilingual institutions on the way to becoming French institutions. "Il ne sera plus question d'un Québec bilingue," stated the White Paper on the French Language, of April 1, 1977.

"Alliance Quebec believes that many sections of the Charter of the French Language violate the constitutional rights of Quebecers," according to AQ President William Johnson. "It is important to restore a larger area of freedom and to defend the English language against a government that, year by year, creates new restrictions and suppressions on the use of English."

On a range of issues it is important to go to court to test whether the interpretations of the *Office de la langue française* are not in violation of our constitutional rights. Whether it be on the issue of answering machines, web sites, the right to attend English school, the right to English health and social services or English on signs, it is important that the institutions of the English-speaking community be vigilant to resist unreasonable restrictions and defend our rights in court.

Alliance Quebec hopes that the Lester B. Pearson School Board will stand firm.