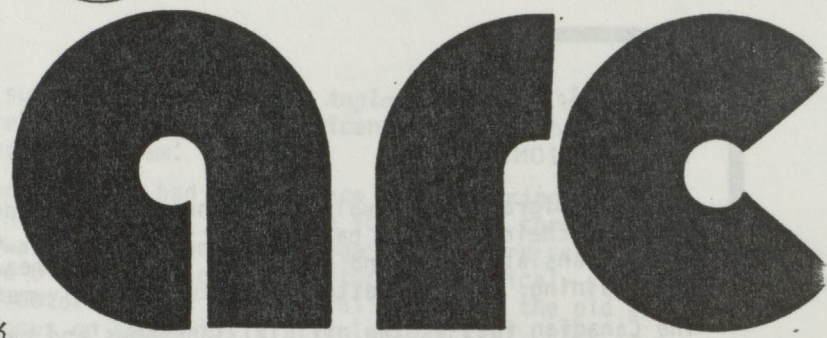


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QUEBEC: YEAR SEVENTEEN

To understand today's Québec one must appreciate what time it is. For Québécois it is Year Seventeen. It was André Laurendeau in *Le Devoir* (Montreal's prestigious daily) who dubbed 1959 "Year One". It was the year that Duplessis died.

Duplessis was Québec's *roi nègre*, maintained by the Anglophone business community, whose press refused to support French protests against his regime. "There is constant collusion between Anglo-Québec finance and everything that is most rotten in the politics of this province". In that same fateful 1959 the CBC French producers' strike of 68 days brought to the fore a certain René Levesque forced into disenchantment with the ideal of "national unity" (his point was well taken: only francophone solidarity carried the day). And Frère Untel (Brother So-and-So) began to challenge Québec's archaic educational system. Little wonder that the awakening sense of solidarity and in-

Editorial:

TRANSLATIONS

Simple lexicographic equivalents are not enough. Ideas and thought forms with all their cultural baggage (socio-political, economic, religious) need to be translated also and primarily. And that means more than linguistic ear training. It's a matter of cultural involvement.

The Canadian fact is two official languages and cultures (among many others —how did we manage to demote the Indian dialects and Eskimo to the "others" category?!). Of course, not all Canadians face or are concerned about this fact. Could it be that readers of *ARC* might number among them some who see this issue as primarily for Quebecers, perhaps also for a few New Brunswickers and Nova Scotians, and a handful of others who live near French speaking communities in Ontario and the West? Let it be said clearly from the start that the issue at hand (in hand, your hand!) is the issue of the Church's (our church's) relationship to the Canadian fact. That fact is our dualism and the reality of repression of some Canadians by other Canadians, even of some Christians by other Christians.

That's the primary rationale for an issue of *ARC* on Quebec politics. A secondary rationale (way behind the primary one but of some usefulness, nevertheless) is the possibility of translating the concerns and learnings of one situation into another. This is a kind of case study and can be useful when translated from one particular situation to another. Theological insights, Christian attitudes, ethical implications relating to Quebec's situation can, with a bit of imagination, be transferred to parallel situations. Are ecclesiastic politics so different from provincial? Are the concerns about minority power blocks localized only in Montreal and not also in Toronto? Are not the pleas for humanization cries from parishes and presbyteries as well as from agrarian peasants? This is what hermeneutics is all about.

Let's get behind (or ahead of) our Canadian fact and its historical lineage to our common Judaic Christian heritage concerning land. Look at the cultural and theological shift that took place when nomadic Semites settled in the land of the Canaanites. *Their* land (double entendre intended) became promised land, God's land, the locus of God's presence. Election of a people and possession of the land became (according to promise, of course) related elements in deuteronomistic theology—the holy nation was in a place separate from the "world" (of Egypt or Babylon). With the development of a royal theology the deuteronomistic conditions of obedience gradually declines and disappeared. Despite the Temple Sermon of Jeremiah and similar prophetic voices (harking back to a wilderness theology) and despite two exiles, the Jews who remained and, later, those who returned, rebuilt their land (and especially Jerusalem) and rooted themselves in that soil. The exilic

continued on page 19

dependence thought it the supreme irony that *les Anglais* couldn't understand why Québécois were reluctant to share the bicentennial celebration of the Battle of the Plains of Abraham!

The Notorious Abbés Dion and O'Neill had been (since 1956) scoring Québec's "political immorality". They helped set the stage for renewal through politics; the Liberal slogan was "Il faut que ça change". So there seemed to be a marvellous convergence of forces—social, cultural, political—calling for reform. The economic factor was not yet central: perhaps the old anti-communism made left-wing focus on economics difficult to accept. Yet separatism recognized that Québec occupied a state of dependence, *tutelle*: "The time has come for French Canada to cut the umbilical cord that chokes it, otherwise it will condemn itself to die of infantilism" (Marcel Chaput, *Why I Am A Separatist*, 1961). Chaput saw Québec as being milked (*vache à lait*) by Anglo-American big business, and linked this to cultural and linguistic survival: "A culture that doesn't give a man his living is a culture destined to disappear". This linkage is now accepted thinking in Québec, giving spice to every contestation of bilingualism and biculturalism. The nationalization of hydro-electric industry (Shawinigan!) in 1962 was the most dramatic instance of the new mood, while the bombs placed in the mailboxes of notoriously *anglo* Westmount underscored the sinister weight of the violence felt necessary for freedom to survive.

Two reports, the Parent and the Dumont, measured the temperature of today's Québec. The Parent Commission on Education (1963), among other of its signal contributions, clarified the shift from rural to urban: in less than a century the population had reversed itself, from 77% rural to 75% urban. The sociological and statistical bent of French academics was paying off in the rush to modernize the school system, to laicize the teaching profession, and to advance average schooling by introducing "colleges of general and professional education" (CEGEP) built on the classical collegiate system of the province.

Le Rapport Dumont, 1972, a commission on "the Laity and the Church", analysed the church in Québec as "un héritage, un projet". Québec's "revolution tranquille" relates to John XXIII's reformation, but the various crises which the Report notes suggest a complex *crise* that requires a complex solution. The Report stresses the positive, developmental nature of a crisis, especially when it is a crisis of conscience. It translates its hope by presenting profiles of future models (part 6: "Des structures pour l'Eglise d'ici"). The traditional catholic problem of authority needs to be solved by replacing the old pyramidal hierarchy with a communal authority—Québec's form of the concept of collegiality. And the church needs to find a new role under the impact of pluralism, as against the traditional church as master of French-Canadian culture.

The New Mandarins

One of the reasons (to risk a generalization) why one group cannot understand another is that each has its own set of teachers and guides, who

provide differing concepts and vocabularies. This is a striking feature of our French-English polarization in Canada. Although we may agree on certain external features affecting us—the scene in Europe or the USA, the emergence of the Third World or the significance of Oriental religions—we measure such phenomena differently and relate them to our Canadian scene with varying emphases. In theology this is quite apparent. The big names for the Québécois will be Ricoeur or Derrida in France and Grand'maison or Julien Harvey at home. There will be positive appreciation of Freud's meaning for theology but little of Jung's. There will be heavy stress on socio-cultural analysis and the use of Marxist material. There will be a decided anti-clericalism, echoed in the academic swing away from theology to *sciences religieuses* and even—a neologism coined in Montreal—*religiosologie*!

Jacques Grand'maison provides a careful analysis of the relation between ideology and religion (e.g. *Nationalisme et Religion*, Mtl: Beauchemin 1970). For him, the cultural revolution of our province is only understandable within the context of emerging political maturity and social self-consciousness. Therefore his influence is noteworthy as representing the theological breakthrough from the speculative character assigned it by Thomist and Neo-Thomist tradition to a practical theology rooted in the actual situation here and now. The stress on praxis is similar to the shift which occurs when any upheaval turns on its past and uses it critically for the needs of the new moment in history. Catholicism remains the heartbeat of Québec, but now it has been fitted with a social pacemaker.

Julien Harvey represents another side of Québec theology, the biblical side. The connection of scholars *canadiens* over past decades with both France and Rome has produced a scholarly tradition much more open and self-critical than perhaps our WASP image allows. Harvey is an excellent example of that first-rate scholarship, internationally acclaimed, which is not firstly Catholic but *biblical*. The recovery of preaching by Catholic clergy (coinciding with its decline among Protestants!) witnesses to the resources and preparation provided by the academics. One must also recognize the dynamic way in which the academic tradition is linked to the practical: the priestly vocation and "formation" represents an integrated, ideal. Today's vocational crisis which has hit seminaries hard results from several factors, but one of them is *not* the lack of good biblical scholarship.

The other two names mentioned, Paul Ricoeur and Jacques Derrida, are located in France (although Ricoeur lectures annually at Chicago; we might mention that he is a member of the French Reformed Church). They represent the European concern with *structure*, particularly the structure of language and of the *mythos* or *logos* in which language is rooted. The French tradition arose with Descartes and continues to reflect on the nature of the *subject*. It differs from the German in its critical attitude to idealism, and from the British in its limitation of empiricism. So it represents a third force, we might say, alongside those two which have influenced

British Protestantism the most. It is ironical that Presbyterians today look to British and German roots for their theology (or to German Switzerland) rather than to the countrymen of Jean Chauvin and his precise logic of selfhood before God. But that is another story. Now let us turn to the more sinister tale of what happened to both Reform and Counter-Reform movements in the 17th century, and how they merged into one unhappy phenomenon in our New World.

The Calvinist-Jansenist Syndrome

Ronald Sutherland of the University of Sherbrooke has entitled one chapter in his valuable survey of French-Canadian literature (*The Second Image*, Toronto: New Press, 1971) 'The Calvinist-Jansenist Pantomime'. His thesis is that Canadian Puritanism has developed in identical forms in English and French sectors. "Jansenism has been the skeleton in the French-Canadian closet ... always one is more aware of its gloomy effects on French-Canadian society than of its precise doctrinal influence upon the Québec church" (p 61). Both Calvinists and Jansenists (note that both movements have distinctly French origins in the 16th-17th centuries!) stress such themes as man's insignificance, predestination, submission to divine will (*la résignation chrétienne*), sins of the flesh. Such a caricature may repel the enlightened clergyman, but in novels, poems and plays such seems to be the way "others see us".

Margaret Atwood's provocative survey of Canadian literature (*Survival*) treats our subject under the heading "Québec—Burning Mansions". The burning of one's ancestral home is a symbol in some Québécois literature, linked to the burden of guilt and frustration compounded of sins of the flesh and life's calamities. The common saying is that ours is a *purgatoire sur terre*. In that classic novel *The Tin Flute* (Gabrielle Roy's title was *Bonheur d'occasion*, "chance happiness"), the mother Rose-Anna is faced by a series of family problems, not least the constant unemployment of her husband. She goes on a pilgrimage to her country home—the return to Paradise—only to encounter her own mother's criticism. She reflects on her mother's character: "Old Mme. Laplante stubbornly denied all hope ... it pleased her to think that she was going to meet her Creator, full of good works, and with all her sins remitted. She might almost be said to picture herself entering Heaven like a prudent traveller, who all her life had done the sort of thing to assure herself a comfortable sojourn there. According to her own expression, she had 'gone through Purgatory on earth'."

Jansenism and Calvinism—whatever their apologists may say about their historical necessity or true nature and aim—come through to the average man as gloomy and hyper-critical. Life is indeed a purgatory—not a Cabaret, my friend, so much as a Funeral. Atwood contends that funerals are big in Can-Lit. "If the central European experience is sex and the central mystery 'what goes on in the bedroom', and if the central American experience is killing and the central mystery is 'what goes on in the forest' (or in the slum streets), surely the central Canadian experience is death and the central mystery is 'what goes on in the coffin'. Nowhere is this more

evident than in Québec literature ..." (*Survival*, p 222).

The image of a God of judgment coupled with human life made up of uneasy attempts to please his inscrutable will: how did it develop? One could note the historical fact that both Calvinism and Jansenism arose as forms of polemical Augustinianism. That is, each came at a time and place in history when the Western or Augustinian tradition seemed threatened by an enemy of formal authority allowing wide latitude toward moral issues. Ethics tended to be viewed in very individualist terms, so that grace was focused on the assurance that one's own soul was destined for heaven despite the heritage of original sin and the daily temptations of the flesh. Appropriately enough, the liturgical and devotional stress was on crucifixion rather than resurrection: both Christ's once-for-all meritorious suffering and our daily human suffering. "A l'Ecole on nous parlait beaucoup plus de châtement divin que de miséricorde" complains Oliver in Dubé's *Les Beaux Dimanches*. The crucifix is on public display all over Québec, and present in subtler ways throughout Calvinism. The message of the Calvinist-Jansenist syndrome is mortification of the flesh. One cannot deny the historical necessity in such an emphasis—e.g. of Pascal against Cartesian rationalism. In part it was a heroic attempt to recover the classical tradition in which man ponders the weight of sin by acknowledging the glory of God (French critic Lucien Goldman suggests that Pascal and Racine opposed the new rationalism with a return to the "tragic vision", a refusal of the world (*The Hidden God*, 1964). Pascal once wrote, "Jesus is suffering the torment of death until the end of the world. We must not sleep during all that time" (*Mystery of Jesus*). Such a fixation with Calvary refuses the world because it refuses Easter, and needs the corrective of a theology of hope, of the re-creation accomplished in the Resurrection. And that is precisely what seems missing from both Calvinism and Jansenism, in Canada at least. One gets the feel of tragic destiny from the novels of Hugh MacLennan equally with those of Aquin or Marie-Clair Blais (the latter's anti-hero Emmanuel is "very fond of bad news ... shipwrecks and funerals").

This brief profile of a theological mood as background to today's Québec helps explain why the laicization movement could combine with the quest for liberation to develop a disdain for religion. The traditional anti-clericalism of Québec should not be misinterpreted; it remained within The Faith, a domestic critique. The new mood, however, is a mixture of social science and ideology, a repudiation of the institutions which are blamed with helping to subdue the people. This critique is not so simplistic as the Marxist, which tends to reduce everything to class struggle and opiates. Rather, it recognizes a plurality of motives and purposes (what French sociologists termed *polytélisme*). But those mixed motives and diverse aims—so the story goes—add up to a docile nation easily exploitable by the business-like Anglo-American corporate bosses. One must not quibble with the critique too quickly; not before one has taken time to seek empathy with these elements of subjugation, resentment and breathlessness. Then, perhaps one may begin to appreciate the explosive mood of today's Québec.

As usual, diagnosis is easier than prescription. Yet it seems clear that one chief need is for those outside Québec to cool their tempers and listen to the voices of hurt and of anger. Bilingualism helps—consider the mistakes of the past because English-Canadians did not understand what *demande* or *nation* mean in French! (I remember a dreadful debate in the 1969 General Assembly of our church because the idea of *deux nations* was completely misunderstood through bad translation). To see ourselves as the conquerors, the usurpers, the betrayers of youth and innocence and of religion itself—that is where to begin. Québec is a people desperate for survival; it interprets its particular survival in terms economic, linguistic—and religious.

J.C. McLelland

FRENCH PROTESTANTS IN QUEBEC

In 1875, at the constituting General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the first Act adopted was to create a General Assembly Board of French Canadian Evangelization whose offices would be in Montreal. This concern for French Canada was due, according to Dr. Paul Villard, "to the fact that Protestantism in France is more closely allied with Presbyterianism than with any other denomination". We may also expect that it was due to the consciousness of the responsibility of the Church to announce the Gospel everywhere in Canada.

The French work developed and a French Professor, Dr. Daniel Coussirat, was appointed at Presbyterian College to prepare French Canadians for the minis-

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try. A pioneer work was done in education with new communities and at the beginning of the century there were a good number of mission fields in Québec. With the compulsory education and the existence of Protestant School Boards which were English, the French Canadian Mission schools progressively disappeared. The French Protestants became anglicized and French work was considered by many as a corridor towards anglicization. The French Canadian Protestants were caught, even squeezed, "between two poles" and French work decreased. In 1925, all the French work passed to the United Church.

In 1935 there was a new start and there are now one congregation in Montreal and two mission fields in Québec city and in the Eastern townships.

In Montreal the work developed and became self-supporting mainly because of the interest taken in the education of the non-Roman Catholic francophones. It might have increased more without the paternalism of Committees of English Presbyterians who make decisions without really knowing the situation.

What will the future be?

We live in an important historical moment in Québec which could become hysterical. Bill 22, adopted last year, had the purpose of preserving the French language and culture of the majority in Québec. There is an irresistible trend, Dr. Cloutier claimed, toward affirmation of the French language and culture in Québec; Protestants (read English) are against this. The English Canadians want to maintain their conception of bilingualism which means the domination of the English language everywhere in Canada, even in Québec, obliging French Canadians, who are in the majority, to express themselves in English. Are the English Canadians ready to consider that Canada is a bilingual country and that every truly bilingual country is bound to have territories where one of the two languages is spoken and is the normal language of communication? Is it not evident that if a French Canadian is in an English Province he should speak English and if an English Canadian lives in the Province of Québec he should speak French (with clergy first to give a good example)? Is it so outrageous?

How is it that the Church is completely inefficient in the preparation of young people for the Christian ministry in Québec? What is the role of English Protestants in Québec today? Are we French Protestants alone to assume a responsibility? Are not English and French Canadian Presbyterians living in this Province sharing the same calling? Don't we together have to bring our contribution to the life of this Province and work towards a better understanding between French and English Canadians for the good of Canada as a whole? The Canadian unity must become a reality in respect to the two languages and cultures; Christians in general and maybe Presbyterians in particular have a primary role to play.

I wrote this in a spirit of friendship and not of judgment, hoping it will stimulate us to be more present in Québec.

André Poulain

JEAN PHILIPPE MCLENNAN III, WELCOMES THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO MONTREAL

Jean Philippe McLennan III, is a wealthy Quebec businessman. His generous financial support enabled ARC to come into being and continue to this day. However, grateful as the editors are, they must once again disassociate themselves from everything said by M. McLennan in the pages of ARC. The editors will continue with vigour to try to dissuade him from expressing his views in this journal.

My dear friends,

Once again, I, Jean Philippe McLennan III, take great pleasure in writing to the readers of *ARC*. The editors, miserable creatures that they are, once again made weak noises to the effect that I should refrain from communicating my views to you. They stood in my office, quaking in their boots; but when I threatened to withdraw all financial support, they grovelled and blubbered all over my persian carpet, finally consenting to publish what I wrote. What fools these intellectuals are! Did they think that I was ignorant of the fact that less than thirty subscribers bothered to renew their subscriptions to this disreputable rag? It is only my ample and unfailing generosity and great good-nature that impels me to continue my support to these editorial midgets. And by the way, dear Readers, to put it very bluntly: start paying up your late subscriptions. I have decided to take over this little matter from the editors. Do not, if you know what is good for you, underestimate my ability to collect due accounts. My goon squad has been nursed back to health from that unfortunate incident which I explained in an earlier issue. They have the subscribers' list and know who has not paid. I have, so to speak, unleashed the dogs. The hunt is on. It would be well not to be one of the rabbits.

But forgive me for this little unpleasantness. My real purpose in writing was to welcome the delegates to this great gathering in Montreal in June. As one who is more catholic (small "c") than Presbyterian, you must forgive my undoubted ignorance as to the reason for such a meeting (General Assembly, I believe it is called) or why at this pleasant time of the year so many English-speaking Canadians should choose to inflict themselves upon the genial citizens of Québec. Not that I would tell you to stay home where you belong. Perish the thought! Nor that you will not be warmly welcomed by our citizens. You will indeed. I, too, welcome you most warmly.

But these are troubled times, my friends, and groups of the type represented by this General Assembly cannot simply invade Montreal for a meeting unprepared and unwarned. How fortunate you are to have a person such as myself not only to give you suitable advice and warnings but also to smooth the way for you (unobtrusively, of course) with certain segments of our society which look with a certain suspicion, if not hostility, upon strangers. As the readers of *ARC* already know, I am a dealer in armaments. My great-grandfather was a noted revolutionary who began in deadly earnest to

manufacture bombs (for what use need not be further explained). However, he undertook this task with such industry and enthusiasm that overnight he found himself a successful capitalist and until his dying day he never succeeded in reconciling his revolutionary doctrines with his capitalist instincts. Indeed, my father and I myself after him have embodied this strange paradox. The armament field is, perhaps, the one endeavour which satisfies both sides of my nature. And this double life, by the way, puts me in touch with many levels of society and thus permits me to smooth the way for your visit.

As a successful businessman, I am naturally in touch with the local Mafia. You see, the underworld of Montreal has been terribly unsettled these days. The high number of shootings is a sure sign of a gang war. There is a great suspicion of outside organizations moving in to the extent that they shoot first and ask questions later. It would indeed be unfortunate if one of these gentlemen misunderstood the reason for your presence and your meeting in Montreal. I have done my best to explain that your meetings will be less than harmless and will cause no crime boss to lose any sleep. Nevertheless, I suggest that all visiting clergy wear their clerical collars, just in case. Stay away from large black limousines and unknown persons carrying violin cases.

Then again, some of my best customers in the armament business are revolutionaries whom I would have to label "extreme". They are actually very nice people but they have one failing. They suffer under the delusion that the English are the source of all evil. I have remonstrated with them on several occasions and tried to explain that it is not only the English, but to no avail. These friends of mine have one unfortunate habit. When they hear or see anything which reminds them of the English, they become very violent. They will, I fear, see nothing in you but conquerors, colonizers, and exploiters. I have sufficient influence with them to assure you that there will be no disruptions in the form of stink bombs, demonstrations, or worse. However, please do not attract attention to yourselves unduly. Do not make too much of being around 100 years. It only reminds my friends that they were here longer and they get terribly upset. If you find yourself in a sticky situation, just keep shouting "vive le Québec libre" until help arrives. If they are not on strike, the police will come and here, alas, you take your chances. More than one poor wretch has had several choruses of "Alouette" tapped out on his skull with a night stick before it was discovered that he was an innocent tourist.

However, from the average Québécois you will have nothing to fear. They will be friendly and helpful, generous to a fault, like myself. Yet they have limitations which you must take into account. From their French Catholic past, they still tend to think of Ontario as one big Orange Lodge. They might misunderstand your gathering. The General Assembly is likely to be translated into their minds as several dozen Ian Paisleys meeting to plan a re-enactment of the Battle of the Boyne in Montreal. It would be well not to wear any clothing or apparel which is orange in colour. If you

choose a leader (Moderator, I am told you call him), do not select one that looks like Ian Paisley and do not let him ride a white horse. If you heed my advice, you will have a wonderful time. I would be there to welcome you myself but I have an important smuggling operation on another continent which will need my attention.

Yours,

Jean Philippe McLennan III

Britain? All the name meant to them was a double conquest: the first one cruel and complete, cutting deep into the living body of the French nation to separate mother and child; the other conquest, which was still going on, was slow and underhand but even more cruel, as it crushed the life out of a little race of farmers and workmen under the weight of economic pressure and kept on snatching away and assimilating their most successful sons.

- Ringuet, "Thirty Acres" (*Trente Arpents*)

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MEDIA RARE

French-Canadian culture was once summed up (by a male Ontario WASP) as "Lili St-Cyr and Rocket Richard". Times have changed. It's not just a case of substituting different names—Monique Leyrac and Guy Lafleur perhaps. Rather, the very *rôle* of Québécois artists and folkheroes has changed. Today they are pacemakers, challenging and enticing their devotees to assert themselves as autonomous, free. Robert Charlebois is a flamboyant example of the new self-confidence and the different direction. Behind him, however, stands a generation of talented and shrewd artists who created the climate of protest which prepared the people for the *révolution tranquille* and, in a sense, the October Crisis of 1970 which unveiled the connection between art and politics.

They had seen clearly that Québec is a *parti pris* state; they highlighted the mood of alienation. Paul Chamberland's long poem of 1964, *L'Afficheur hurle* (the signpainter screams) put the message movingly: you have nothing to lose but your chains. Two books were singled out by Malcolm Reid (*The Shouting Signpainters: a literary and political account of Québec Revolutionary Nationalism*, 1972) as turning-points: "*Bonheur d'occasion* was Québec's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; *Le Cassé* was its *Native Son*". This is interesting for two reasons. It suggests the internal development of Québec society, the movement from an awareness of the bad luck imposed by historical accident ("chance happiness") to a deepening mood of frustration and the end of the affair ("flat broke"). And it also suggests the analogy with the plight of black America which Vallières was to exploit in *White Niggers*.

Québec is the beloved object of its artists. Their attachment reflects the ambiguity of every love affair, and of necessity expresses itself through images of woman and speculations on how to set her free. The films of Gilles Carle (*Red*; *Leopold Z*) which he calls "an exercise in liberty" show the need to provide a third alternative to the traditional female images—holy virgin or prostitute. The aesthetic protest in the burgeoning Québec cinema is made through that time-honoured combination of sex and violence. Both cinema and drama in the francophone culture are alive and well, acting as a boulevard-theatre to raise the popular consciousness.

Among the questions arising from the success of Québécois artists are these: how far does the aesthetic entrepreneur represent the actual needs and hopes of the people? is the general permissiveness of modern society a larger reason for artistic protest and a greater supplier of images than the artists themselves acknowledge? where are the norms and whence derived, which cultural leaders accept consciously or subconsciously in their function as critics and thermostats?

To such questions we are all bound to give attention and attempt answers, anglophone as well as francophone. For the power of contemporary art forms over the folk, especially the young, has never been greater.

GLEANINGS FROM QUEBEC AUTHORS

She is an apotheosis; the French-Canadian mother in front of a stove and a saucepan, clutching a child to her left hip, a big spoon in her right hand, a brood of children at her skirts and another baby lying in a cradle.

- Jean Hamelin

Pitou was a child, only a child! Yesterday he was playing with his harmonica or his guitar; today he was carrying a bayonet.... Pitou need mourn no longer because he was unemployed. Pitou was earning his living now.... Pitou was happy because he held in his hands his first working tools.

- Gabrielle Roy, "The Tin Flute" (*Bonheur d'occasion*)

footnote to Maria Chapdelaine...

The daughter of Maria Chapdelaine who was an ammunition factory-worker at Valcartier during the war now lives with her own family of five children in the Rosemount ward of Montreal. Maria's married brothers are employees of the Aluminum Company at Arvida and Shipshaw after having been workers at the Jonquières pulp plant.

- Prof. J.-C. Falardeau quoted by Ramsay Cook

My mission is suicide.... There comes a time, after two centuries of conquest and thirty-four years of sadness, when one no longer has the strength to push beyond this terrible vision.

- Hubert Aquin, *Prochain Episode*

When the World Alliance of Reformed Churches met in Chateauguay, Québec to honour the anniversaries of Presbyterian and United Churchmen in Canada, they were welcomed by the local Mayor, an ebullient Québécois who made jokes about *les soeurs grises* and said of the bicultural problem: "God made the French for fun, and the English for business."

A French pastor addressing his colleagues on the abuse of the "Long Prayer":
"Que votre Amen soit une surprise et non un soulagement!"

MISSION IN QUEBEC

People who comment on contentious subjects often have a prejudice. Québec is a contentious subject and I do have a prejudice which may be less harmful if identified at the outset. It is a motif, a starting point, a working principle which can be summed up in the word "mission".

If one insists on speaking of Québec in terms of mission perhaps he should also speak of Ontario (for example) in the same terms. In the case of Ontario, our church can hear the "sending" call of God recognizing that both the sent person and the persons to whom he is sent are within the prevailing cultural fabric. In Québec, the missionary can easily assume the same situation but in fact he is the odd man out—he is only a part of a ghetto fabric.

And that, it seems, is the contemporary counterpart to the cannibal's stewing pot.

Elephants

"When one is sleeping with an elephant, one is aware of his every movement, his every twitch, grunt, and sigh." -Pierre Trudeau on our relations with the Americans.

"As the elephant said when he was dancing with the chickens—Every man for himself!" -T. C. Douglas, socialistically satirical.

The elephant is an appropriate symbol for something so big and ungainly that it can no longer be sensitive, no matter how much it may want to do so. Whether he is dwarfed by the Americans or by the big corporations, the Canadian is used to being the little fellow in all sorts of situations. However, in the case of Québec, I think the English Canadian must see no one but himself as the elephant. English is the dominant language in the world; in North America it is imperially dominant. We all have our jokes about bilingualism which force the French Canadian into the role of the annoying fool to whom we must make the odd concession until that day when he comes to the wisdom of realizing that English is the language of a civilized heaven and earth. The English-speaking Canadian (or, perhaps more accurately, the Canadian who does not speak French) is the elephant who finds it extremely difficult to know "what *they* want" or to respond once he does know.

Into this milieu of elephants comes the Presbyterian Church in Canada which is even more badly equipped than the nation at large. Our roots are Scottish and historically we know little either of the Reformed Church in France or of the aspirations of Québec. We have a number of ethnic works across the country and do more work in Hungarian and Chinese than we do in French, therefore our French work is assumed to be ethnic. All "other" ethnic workers do their thing in their own language but the language of the courts, correspondence, extra-congregational affairs, etc., is assumed to be English. That we do not have the resources to take the Quebecker seriously is understandable; that we are not even concerned about the problem is the ethics of elephants.

The mission of the Presbyterian Church in Canada in the province of Québec

does not really need any more obstacles but it has another one. When one thinks of mission in our church, one inevitably must deal with the Board of World Mission. This is a board which, like any other bureaucratic entity, is rife with corruption of a sort. I want immediately to temper that harsh remark by saying that it has not become that way on its own. It is, at most levels, an integral part of the church of which we are all members. It is what we have made it. In actual fact many of our congregations are governed by one or by a few and that principle slides ever so naturally into the office of the church at large.

Let me give an example. The BMWX meets and receives recommendations from the staff. These are passed on to the Board. At that point the recommendations are sometimes cross-referenced to other boards, committees, etc. and thence to the Assembly. At first glance one is impressed with all this consultation. But on a more studied examination one finds an amazing similarity between what the staff proposes and what the Assembly disposes.

Back in the 1960's, our nation's institutions and universities underwent criticisms from protest groups. A lot of that protest was foolishness, of course, but some of it made for sensible updating in our corporate life. The church had a different fate. No one protested. They left yawning if they were upset. Can you imagine anyone boycotting Wynford Drive or any other ecclesiastical property or persons? We needed that kind of conflict to grow but we never got it. We still need it.

The end result is that our church has unchallenged power structures that are elephants. They have no serious mandate, nor even a capacity for hearing the prophet's call of mission. Mission is evaluated in a Wynford Drive mindset. The centralization is excessive and constricting.

Separatism

The problems just alluded to are not new and it is amazing that the church has been able to do some commendable things in spite of obstacles arising out of its own politics. Québec has suffered from this situation but Québec may also be the kind of milieu in which this problem can be dealt with.

The simplest way to live with elephants is to build a fence between the elephants and the rest of creation. The political separatism of René Lévesque is an attempt to do that. The reaction to this separatism in our church tends to be negative because we instinctively react as (English) Canadian citizens rather than as christians. We know separatism as a political word but perhaps it is an ideological motif that is far larger than politics. But what about Ephesians, the wall of partition, reconciliation? It is a little too facile to say that this stands in opposition to the theology of Ephesians. Reconciliation is the goal of every christian because it is the goal of his Lord. But if that which we call reconciliation is only a guise for oppression and ruthless assimilation, perhaps a circuitous route would be more just, more ultimately reconciling.

We would not want to take this route with our ethnic work. We all admit

that our goal is to have ethnic people speaking our language. The ethnic people recognize this too. In the case of the francophone, however, there is the significant difference that he has been constitutionally told that he can exist as a Canadian without speaking English. It seems that the church is acting unjustly if it denies him this right. The church becomes offensive in the wrong way.

Our French work in Québec is at the point of needing more breathing space. It needs a chance to be and to live, at arm's length from us. It needs the opportunity to be called *the* Church in Québec and the English should see that they are the immigrant church. The French work is tiny (three congregations and a chaplaincy) but it may still be able to thrive on its own. Perhaps a French presbytery, a separate mission board, some way to collect and dispense its own funds and become master in its own home.

The English church locally (the two presbyteries in the province) and nationally (Wynford Drive, the Assembly) has been slow in recognizing this fact. There was a rumble recently, however, that you may interpret as you like.

At the May meeting of the Presbytery of Montréal there was an overture presented which called for a separate fund for mission within the presbytery. It is significant in that it is another step in the direction of a real sense of stewardship for mission as it happens in our backyard. The overture may not succeed or it may be so radically altered as to be almost unrecognizable. It is fairly safe to say that something will happen in this direction. Could it ever be that the English Presbyterians in Québec would actually pick up the separatism theme and let it be manifest in a new way? It could be the Lord's way of doing something bigger than the minds of His servants could ever dream up.

Allen Aicken

My children you dance badly
One must admit it is difficult to dance here
In this lack of air
Here without any space which is the whole of the dance.

- Saint-Denys-Garneau, "Spectacle of the Dance"

ORIENTAL "BARC"

(Don't believe that "slow boat to China" bit. The following letters from Taiwan and Japan arrived before any other communiques from Canada).

"A grievous error has been perpetrated by myself with the unhappy result that I found myself isolated, cut off from the possibility of receiving your ponderous publication....your edifying edition....your....ARC!"

What with the hustle-bustle, confusion, and chaos concomitant with tearing up one's roots and heading out, "not knowing whither one goest", it never occurred to me that I ought to have registered a change of address with ARC. One of the antecedents to this onerous omission was undoubtedly the fearful knowledge that I had no new address to give you, and if I were to remove my old address from your registers, I would be delivering myself into that insufferable (but theologically intriguing) state of homelessness. As a result of my temporary state of incommunicado I have missed reading your last two miserable efforts. If it were possible, could you bring me up to date in that regard?

Your humble subscriber,

Terry Samuel"

"Dear M. McLennan,

A colleague and I have just downed two Chinese tea-cups in your honour. The first contained a "PURITAN REVENGE", the second some left-over paint thinner! Now, as we start to contemplate the true meaning of Presbyterian presence in Taiwan, we feel that we would be amiss if we didn't invite you in on this discussion. How would you like to come to Taiwan for a few days and be our evangelist-in-residence? Rumour has it that B. Graham is coming later on, but I have no doubt that your superior intellect will easily outdraw that American upstart. If you can come, please let me know soon, so that I can stock up on the necessary prune juice, lemon juice, and optional Whiskey. If you can't come, please make your own presence doubly-bubbly felt in the next issue of ARC!

Most respectfully yours,

Rev. R. Archer"

"Just came home from a funeral conducted by three Buddhist priests where my "ministry" was to be of some comfort to the family, particularly the one member of it who is seeking to understand the Gospel. Double-ARC was in my mailbox so I immediately delayed a trip to the dentist and devoured its contents (you see, reading ARC is at least more palatable than a dentist visit).

All the talk of ordination and ministry set me thinking about the patterns

that are in operation here in the Korean Church. The title "PASTOR" with a very honorific suffix separates him forever from the "laity" and after several years together the people here are still scandalized to see me help put away the folding chairs, carry in plates of rice for a fellowship dinner, or (heaven forbid) put out the garbage. As deplorable as all this is we are finding out together than an almost unchangeable view of the minister on his "traditional" pedestal does not prevent the "laity" from performing their "ministry".

I want to suggest that the key to effective congregational ministry lies in (1) the minister allowing the laity to minister and (2) the laity allowing the minister to be human, rather than in who is ordained for what function.

I was interested to see Dr. Bean suggesting something which is standard practice here, that is, a one-year training course for elders-elect before ordination. All candidates must pass both a written and an oral examination before being approved for ordination. Could it be that this is what causes our elders here to be so faithful in visiting and discharging their other responsibilities?

I find *ARC* very stimulating, sometimes hilarious, always thought-provoking. If my Canadian bank ever sends me the new cheque book I ordered I promise to send the subscription fee again.

Peace and Joy,

Glen Davis"

Ed. note: Would that all our subscribers would make the same promise as Glen and also follow through!

MONTREAL STYLE

Mayor Drapeau was asked how he would handle the late snowstorm which came after the city's snow removal budget had been used up. He stated: "I leave it to a higher power to clear our streets'. And so it came to pass.

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and postexilic prophets saw beyond that particularism and described a new "land". But the masses, even those of the later dispersion, saw only the palestinian *terra firma*. So when one came as a homeless nomad with a few followers and broke with these localizing constraints, he was rejected and impaled. His Spirit-fired followers were scattered and martyred, but not before their flame had lit an eschatological hope beyond that land or any land.

What do we do not twenty centuries later? Shall we slice our heritage at that wedge of history that fits with our life style? Then our life style is nationalized (in theological terms) rather than being shaped out of our theological perspective. Is the eschatological end point our beginning after so much unexpected (*sic!*) time has elapsed? Have we become so rooted in our rural or urban plots that theology cannot touch us? Has this rootage affected our broader "land claims" along cultural and linguistic lines?

In particular, the land of Québec, how shall we think about it theologically? Does it belong to the French? to the English? to the Indians? partly to each? Is that even the right question? Those who claim a Christian perspective, should be freed by their theology to move beyond "land claims" to people issues, beyond defending personal rights and privileges to social, cultural and economic injustices. And these kinds of issues can be translated.

* * * *

This issue concerns itself with Québec. In general this is because of the importance of our province for the future of Canada. In particular, we note the centennial General Assembly coming to Montréal next month. Besides our lead article and other features, we welcome as contributors Dr. André Poulin of l'Eglise St-Luc, Montréal, and Allen Aicken of the Church of St. Columba by-the-Lake, Pointe Claire.

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