

## Law 120 might be a window of opportunity

Last month Liberal MNA Russ Williams was in town selling Quebec's new health reform package to English-speaking Townshippers on behalf of Health Minister Marc-Yvan Côté.

Law 120, as the reform is known, reaffirms the right to English-language health-and-social services guaranteed in Law 142. But it goes a step further. It gives anglos a leading role in maintaining these services — as volunteers. Not a role they are unaccustomed to by any means.

The English community has traditionally played an active role in the development and maintenance of their institutions. Indeed, in nearly every Townships community, history will attest to the contribution in both time and money made by English Quebecers.

What's important to remember is that there used to be twice as many English-speaking Townshippers to make that contribution. Remember also it's easier to encourage volunteers to play an active role in maintaining institutions where they feel some sense of ownership and belonging.

That long tradition of benevolence has waned as more and more young people leave Quebec, while those who remain adopt an air of indifference toward institutions which have become structures of government.

"Allowing" anglos to receive services in English in institutions they once built no more conveys a notion of belonging than having a room in a boarding house ensures a boarder will feel at home.

What is worrisome about Law 120 is that this volunteer component has been written into the law as the cornerstone to future guarantees.

Anglophones have been accorded a seat on the boards of each health-and-social-service institution. Their presence on boards at the local, regional and provincial level will be interpreted as the community's interest in maintaining services to the English-speaking community.

The present reality is, unless we move all the grannies and grampas out of their beds upstairs to the boardrooms, the English community risks losing its right to services.

But Law 120 might also be viewed as a window of opportunity. If anglos intend to stay here, they have to begin the process of rebuilding a society they feel a part of. They should occupy those seats not because the government has gratuitously "allowed" them to receive services in the institutions that once belonged to them, but because they intend to regain local control of what goes on in them.

The English- and French-speaking communities must work together to change a health-care system that has become an abomination. Together they have to build a system which will allow hospitals to purchase the equipment necessary to provide the best possible services to the community: a system where beds aren't closed according to provincial norms but according to the needs of the population; a system where a doctor can feel at ease delivering a baby without worrying about a quota.

These concerns — as well as the delivery of services to English Quebecers — must be addressed by the entire community as a whole if the health reform is to work.

And that's the very best reason English-speaking Townshippers should occupy every seat available to them.

SHARON McCULLY

## End ugly war against marijuana

From a letter to NOW, a Toronto arts and entertainment weekly, from J. Lawrence Chanin:

Twenty-three years of smoking grass has weakened neither my intellectual abilities (Employment and Immigration Canada recently found my verbal and mathematical skills to be in the top five per cent of the population) nor my athletic skills.

Alcohol is the killer and, as far as I am concerned, its purveyors should be behind bars.

The peace and creativity of marijuana-smoking is the closest thing I have to a religious ritual and I'm sick to death of being swindled, persecuted and tortured for it by the power-mongering boozers and cocaine hypocrites who spread death, pain and destruction all over the world.

It's high time to end the ugly war against marijuana smokers.

Give me liberty or give me death!

— From "What Canada Thinks", a regular feature of The Canadian Press.

## Today in history

Oct. 6, 1991

Canadian inventor Aubrey Fessenden, sometimes described as the inventor Canada forgot, was born near East Bolton, Que., 125 years ago — in 1866. Fessenden's most important invention is considered the wireless telephone, which preceded modern-day radio. He also invented the first wireless compass.

Also on this day in:

1848 — Austria declared war on Hungary.

1942 — Tim Buck and other Canadian Communists were released from jail.

1981 — Egyptian President Anwar Sadat was assassinated.

## Letters

### A very sick relationship

Dear Editor,

The high suicide rate among young Inuit in Northern Quebec is a testimony of what modern materialistic society does to the human spirit.

Aboriginal people the world over are simply more vulnerable to the powerful and fragmenting realities which come with 'monetized' mechanized high-tech societies. The sacred and secular aspects of our culture are driven by a vision rooted in idealism and our anthropocentric dialectic: our human arrogance. Even New Age spirituality remains very much a part of that tradition.

Traditional native spirituality is varied but what it has in common is that it is not based on idealism nor human arrogance. To a degree our vision is imposed upon native people but they also make the choice to ride our vision. The vision may not be wise but it is so damn convenient.

Spirituality cannot be removed from the manner in which we relate to land. If we consider the bio-indicators, we can only conclude

that our vision has created a very sick relationship. Yet the vision of our world view persists as if it were some sacred golden calf.

And we still celebrate our heritage?

Yours truly,  
JASON KR PAN  
Georgeville

### What a welcome

Sir,

This morning when I walked into my bank (Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce) I noticed that everything was in pristine order — almost overnight every last sign of information in the English language had been removed.

I know we are not allowed to use our language outside — but I must have missed the law that forbids English information signs inside banks.

Maybe we will not only be shopping in the United States — but banking there as well.

What a welcome to tourists.

Sincerely,  
LINDA E. MORRIS  
Sutton

### Troublesome times

Dear Mr. Editor,

We live in troublesome times. On the one hand we find our premier seeking powers under the distinct society clause to enable him to subjugate the anglos of Quebec, while on the other hand we find that the leader of the Opposition has envisioned the establishment of a para-military body to resist anglo disturbances — and our prime minister does not seem to know that we exist.

One is tempted to resurrect the anglo/militia of 1870 which was 280 strong in Brome County — which was far less populated at that time than today (see *Yesterday of Brome County* — volume

five).

Better, however, to express your frustration by joining Option Canada, that new federal party whose main object is to enable French and English to live together in peace without humiliating restrictions (restrictions which, in fact, hurt both races) — as we did in the past, before the politicians — seeking power — thought up the fantasy that the French language was in danger.

Both French and English members are welcome.

For information call 939-5952.  
HANK ROTHERHAM  
Knowlton

### What's it like placing your child for adoption?

Dear Editor,

I'd like to hear from any birth-parents willing to participate in a *Birth-parents Directory* in order to give or receive support with other birth-parents as penpals or phone-friends.

Those interested, please send a one page letter describing your-

self and your experience placing your child for adoption. Also include a picture of yourself (optional), your mailing address, and/or telephone number.

All information will be kept confidential and made available only to other birth-parents and adoption counsellors.

If possible please include \$2 for printing and postage.

Thank you for your help  
GAIL VAN SEVEREN  
Birth-mothers Adoption Support System  
80 Bradford St. Unit 28  
Barrie, Ont.  
L4N 6S7

### By the name of Pattenden

To the Editor,

A relative from England is working on her family tree. He is searching for people by the name of Pattenden who emigrated from the British Isles to the Eastern Townships some years ago.

Any information would be greatly appreciated. Please phone: (819) 566-6385 or write to M. Giroux, 17 Warner St., Lennoxville, Que., J1M 2E4.

M. GIROUX  
Lennoxville



### Inaccurate statements an injustice to CP Rail

Dear Sir:

This refers to Tom Vandermeulen's commentary of Sept. 16 concerning CP Rail's proposed sale of its right-of-way between North Hatley and the Tomfobia River.

As George Bain observed in his Sept. 23 Media Watch column in *McLean's* magazine, "Maybe it is time for the media, ever militant in guardianship of the public interest and aggressive in pursuit of the truth in government, to consider extending the same standards to increasingly influential interest groups, which constitute themselves as virtual extra-parliamentary opposition, while pressing demands of their own which may have little, or nothing, to do with the public interest."

In his commentary, Mr. Vandermeulen, an executive member of Sentier Massawippi, makes a

number of statements about the process of this land disposal that are inaccurate and do an injustice to CP Rail, the Massawippi Landowners Association and government.

He suggests that CP Rail and the landowners are secretly trying to strike a deal, leaving the public with a sense of being "ripped-off".

What he does not make clear is the detailed negotiations in which CP Rail, the provincial government, municipal authorities, potential tourist business operators, adjacent landowners and his own association have been engaged since the summer of 1990.

There has been nothing secret about these negotiations as coverage of these developments in your own newspaper as well as other media outlets will attest.

Mr. Vandermeulen makes no

reference to the many meetings and exchanges or correspondence between CP Rail and his organization going back to July 1990. Nor does he indicate that none of his organization's responses to us provided any indication that they had the financial resources or support required to acquire the land.

While others were making concrete offers or clearly indicating that they had no interest, Sentier Massawippi sought only to delay the process by seeking additional studies of undefined length.

Nor does he note that we have concluded an agreement with the Town of Lennoxville for 10 kilometres of the line from Lennoxville to just north of North Hatley which Lennoxville plans to allow recreational organizations to use.

He also chooses not to mention the many agreements the railway has made with other recreational

groups in both rural and urban areas that have resulted in linear parks. The difference is that these groups had not only an idea but the resources and support with which to realize the idea.

Instead of dealing with the facts of the negotiations and his organization's role in them, he prefers to misinterpret the history of railway land grants and the role they played in uniting and settling the country.

It is precisely this type of approach that has been counter-productive in Sentier Massawippi's discussions with the parties concerned with the land disposal.

Yours truly,  
B.C. SCOTT  
Senior Manager  
Communications & Public Affairs  
CP Rail  
Montreal

## Does Canada's evolving foreign policy have teeth?

OTTAWA (CP) — Canada joins a dramatic international mission to Haiti to order leaders of a bloody military coup to cease and desist.

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney calls on the United Nations to do more global policing — even if it means violating sovereignty.

Canada campaigns for international peacekeepers to put a lid on the civil war in Yugoslavia.

A fresh breeze of activism has been wafting through the dusty hallways of Canadian foreign policy in recent weeks.

The new world order and the growing mood of international cooperation is letting Canada — and other nations — take a hard look at the tenet of sovereignty.

"The way we think about these matters is changing quite rapidly," says Nancy Gordon, public program director at the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security in Ottawa.

A dramatic case is Canada's strong stand in support for the ousted democratic government of Haiti's Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

### CP News Analysis

By Portia Priegert  
The Canadian Press

Mulroney, his eyes flashing with anger, called last week's coup a "bloody disgrace" and warned Canada is considering every option — even military action — to restore the populist priest to power.

Then Barbara McDougall, the external affairs minister, flew to Haiti to deliver a stern warning in person, part of an unprecedented mission by the Organization of American States.

That's quite a change from the

days when Canada simply issued statements expressing regret that a democratic government had fallen.

Caution was paramount then for Canada, when the risk of action was angry accusations of interference in another country's domestic affairs.

But Mulroney summed up the government's latest views in a recent speech at Stanford University in California.

"We also favor re-thinking of the limits of national sovereignty in a world where problems respect no borders," he said.

Nevertheless, some observers question whether real change is afoot.

"It is a new mood of rhetorical activism," says Stephen Lewis, a former ambassador to the United Nations. "We'll wait and see if there is substance to it."

He doubts the UN would endorse military intervention in Yu-

goslavia or Haiti, and says Canada should instead make its mark by helping define a new middle ground that involves actions like sanctions and naval blockades.

"These are terribly ticklish questions and you have to work very carefully to reach a consensus... that will be the test of Canadian foreign policy," he says.

Other experts worry that Canada's seeming readiness to downplay sovereignty concerns might someday come back to haunt us.

"We ourselves are very vulnerable because of the question of Quebec separatism and other countries possibly exploiting that and intervening," says Harold von Riekhoff, a political science professor at Carleton University.

"If I were the government, I would be very cautious not to establish precedents that would make it easy for other countries to intervene in domestic policy."