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There's promise. But the days of oil and gas are not yet past

Something new under the sun

by Dick Brown / Illustrations by Mike Cook

Ric Symmes is standing in front of the solar heater out behind his house, which is about 20 miles northwest of Toronto, and he's explaining its pros and cons. The cloud bank is fairly thick on this particular day, but there's the occasional hole in it and every so often the sun, or a bit of sun, pops through and a couple of things happen: first, the thermometer that measures the heat on the face of the collector takes an immediate jump. The thermometer is behind the unit's glass cover and the rise is so rapid you can see the needle move. And, second, Symmes himself gets an obvious lift in spirits. As the sun bursts through, he glances up in what obviously has become a reflex action, and his practised eye automatically gauges the probable duration of sunlight. "It was so clear this morning," he says, "but then this cloud came along." There's a trace of disappointment in his voice, but then he laughs and adds, "You think about the weather all the time with this solar heating. It's a bore." But he knows, of course, that it's not a bore at all. Anything but.

Symmes built his solar heater himself and there have been many stories about it in newspapers, magazines, and on TV. They've proven without doubt that people are very interested
in solar energy; the stories touched off a rush of visitors to the Symmes' home. "We get as many as 20 people on a weekend," he says. "One evening we were having dinner and my wife locked out and said, "Who's that, out there on the lawn?" That sort of thing happens." It's no wonder there's so much interest. Solar energy seems, at first glance, to be such a marvel. So plentiful! So cheap! Cheap? Why, it's free! Isn't it? Well, as a matter of fact, the reason solar energy is not heating all our homes right now and providing an abundance of power to run our cities is — basically — that for widespread, general use it is so very, very expensive. The trouble is that it costs so much to collect and, because you have to allow for days when the sun doesn't shine, it costs another big bundle to store it for a rainy day, as they say. But there's progress and a good deal of optimism about solar energy and, as fossil fuels become more expensive, there's no doubt that the solar field will seem more and more attractive. Imperial Oil and one of its subsidiaries, Building Products of Canada Limited, are both carefully examining the future of solar energy. Jim Cameron is manager of planning and development for Imperial's department of new energy resources and he says, "We are an energy company and we feel that we have a responsibility to use the resources in the future — oil, gas, coal, nuclear, solar, all of these. We see the solar business as a possible opportunity. What solar energy is, really, is an idea whose time has been long in coming. Back in the 1800s, inventors were working on solar basics — furnaces, heat collectors, and mirrors to concentrate heat. In the early 1900s, people were building "sun machines" that focused the sun's rays on pipes or containers of water and produced steam to turn wheels. The most notable venture along these lines was a massive sun machine built along the banks of the Nile River in Egypt. It was planned to provide irrigation, but its designer, an American named Frank Shuman, let the idea languish when World War I came along, turning to other inventions (such as an incredible military tank whose wheels were 200 feet in diameter). There have been a lot of predictions for solar energy since then, most of them more enthusiastic than accurate. One, for example, in the early fifties, estimated that 13-million homes in the United States would be heated by solar heat by 1975. But the number turned out to be something like a hundred and, for the most part, solar efforts continued to be rare and unusual. During the past few years, as the prices of oil and gas have risen, solar energy has received more attention. There are two basic ways of using sunlight directly for heat, by gathering it in collectors or by using mirrors to concentrate it and to warm the air or some fluid, often water, and for electricity, by using photovoltaic cells to produce positive and negative charges. There's an ever-growing number of solar projects today, both private and commercial. Most of them are at least partly experimental, and they're everywhere . . . well, under the sun. Solar heating units are available commercially. Toronto's Victoria Wood Development Corporation has built a model home that uses solar energy. The solar heater, which costs about $17,000 more than a traditional system, is used for the home's swimming pool, about 80 percent of the hot water, and almost half the house heating. The heater's designer, Solatherm Engineering Inc., estimates that the solar system in the house would pay for itself in seven to nine years. At present, on a large scale, there's an experimental power plant fueled by the sun high in France's Pyrenees. It was built originally to test materials at very high temperatures — in the range of 3,300 degrees Celsius — but is now being converted to produce electricity. When converted, the plant will have a capacity of 70 to 100 kilowatts; in comparison, the nuclear plant at Pickering, Ont., has a capacity of two million kilowatts. The key factor in the French installation — a solar furnace — consists of 63 mirrors, each one 500 feet square. The mirrors direct the sunlight onto a reflector (131 feet high and 177 feet wide) so that it is concentrated for conversion into electric power. In the Gulf of Mexico, Exxon Corporation uses photovoltaic cells to generate electricity; it's stored in batteries and used to power a foghorn mounted on a production platform. In Georgia, solar energy is used to run warning lights and a bell at a railway crossing. In New Mexico, sunlight generates steam that's used by industry. And in Smyrna, in Greece, there's a solar system that converts sea water to fresh water. In both Europe and North America, a number of swimming pools are heated by solar energy and some U.S. states even stipulate that new pool construction must provide for the installation of solar systems. In Toronto, there's a firm called Environ Systems Ltd. that takes pool heating a step further. It uses the heat from a pool to warm a house. The system has a heat pump that steps up the heat from the water and this means a pool temperature of only seven degrees Celsius can heat a house to 21 degrees. And there is a wide variety of research into solar energy. The United States announced in 1974 that it planned to spend a billion dollars on solar development over a five-year period. In Canada last year, the federal government spent less than a million dollars on solar heating research. This year, it plans to spend about $3 million. In the United States, a couple of Exxon subsidiaries are involved actively in solar energy. One company, Solar Power Corporation of North Billerica, Mass., has produced solar cell combinations that are powering communications devices in the United States and overseas in Italy, Ethiopia, Australia, and New Guinea. And battery and solar-cell groupings are powering navigational aids in such areas as the Gulf of Mexico, the English Channel, and Auckland Harbor. Now, Solar Power Corporation, in cooperation with a French partner, is furnishing solar systems for television stations in a number of African countries. Another company in which Exxon has an interest is marketing collectors that can supplement heating needs. The company is Daystar Corporation of Burlington, Mass., and the initial users of its collectors are likely to be shopping centres and schools. In Canada, Imperial Oil has started looking into the solar

Harvesting sunbeams has long been a dream of scientists, but in the French Pyrenees it has already become a reality. There, a solar-power plant soon will become the first to generate electricity from sunlight for commercial use.
water heating on display. This year when I attended the same exhibition there were about a dozen, and the price had dropped to about half."

Incidentally, one of Building Products' engineers, Chris Ives, has installed a solar-heating system in his new home through a grant from the National Research Council (NRC). Ives' home, in Hudson, Que., about 20 miles from downtown Montreal, seemed ideal for a solar system because it has a large area of roof that faces south and catches the sun. NRC provided $12,500, which covered everything, including labor. In return, he reports to NRC on the system's installation and operation. Ives has two 1,000-gallon water tanks for heat storage and he hopes the system will give him roughly 50 percent of his heat.

Ric Symmes' system, outside Toronto, has been working since November, 1975, and it offers a reasonably complete picture of costs, savings, and so on. Symmes, an executive with a meat-packing company, is an engineer and has kept meticulous records of his solar venture. He built the system himself at a cost of $1,300 and reckons it supplies about 30 percent of his heating needs. It saved him about $158 over his first full heating season. His storage unit is 20 tons of gravel; the sun heats an aluminum plate covered in black paint and a fan draws the heat through the gravel. When the gravel gets too hot, it moves to the top using a fan and circulates to the house. Another fan pushes the warmer air into Symmes' home. In the summer he shuts off the air conditioner and the fans and covers the solar collector so the whole thing looks like a garden shed.

Symmes is very happy with the way it's working, but he has a few words of caution for people who may be looking into solar systems. He has prepared a fact sheet about his own solar setup and, under a heading of "First Things First," he says, "before going out to get more energy from the sun or any other source, the first priority is to cut down waste and losses within the house. This means more insulation."

And most people who have seriously considered solar energy mention problems. How would you use solar heating in a city centre? What would happen if somebody built a high rise beside you and cut off your sun? What rights do you have to the sun? What about the aesthetics? Would there be making of collectors everywhere? What would they look like, all facing south? Where would you put the storage units? And what about supplementary heat supports? If it was sizable number of people relied on electricity as their backup, there would be an increased need for peak loads of electricity, when the sun wasn't shining. As a result, electrical facilities would be idle a lot of the time, so electricity would cost more (or, to put another way, the solar savings would be much less).

Well then, what can we expect to see solar energy in wider use? And what will it cost? At the moment, there aren't really any sure answers. Dr. E.P. Cocksheath is energy project coordinator at the National Research Council in Ottawa and he says it is neither unlikely there will be any large-scale use of solar energy before 1985. He says the cost per home probably will be at least $12,500 and that's not taking inflation into account. There are just too many questions to answer and problems to solve before the experts can make accurate predictions.

The Symmes themselves had a special problem: the top of one of their favorite trees, a pretty, bushy cedar, was blocking the sun from the collector. It was not a good thing. They lopped it off.
Welcome back, partner

There's fresh appeal to an old understanding

by Peter Barta

Privatization is not an attractive word. It is, however, the simplest way to express an attractive idea. The idea is that the public interest could be better served if business and government respectively took on the roles for which they are best suited: government to set the rules of the game and business to efficiently produce goods and services. This, of course, reflects an old Canadian tradition: a partnership between government and industry based on a simple division-of-labor plan acceptable to both. The principle apparently got lost in the shuffle of the last two decades or so, but it appears to be making a real comeback these days.

Under the partnership idea of the distant past, the government's role was to create an overall framework conducive to economic growth, giving assistance to private industry and providing backup services where needed. Industry in turn undertook to promote business activity, build wealth, and generate a variety of employment opportunities. This motif, which predates 1867, became considerably stronger in the immediate post-Confederation period, particularly with the emergence of the national policy of Sir John A. Macdonald in 1873. From the start, business and government learned in accord that the basic objective for Canada — indeed, the prerequisite of national survival — was economic growth. Given this common ground, an implicit understanding was reached about their roles.

In Macdonald's time, keeping people in Canada was considered to be one of the paramount concerns. In the 1870s, for example, the economy of the United States had already developed into a giant, while Canada was still a completely undeveloped nation. People worried about the limited range of opportunities in Canada. There was a fear that only the "hewers of wood and drawers of water," as Sir John A. called them, would stay here, while everybody else would migrate to the United States. There was the threat of Canada becoming little more than a railway station where people — even immigrants — stopped on their way to the land of real opportunity.

That was also a period when Canadians worried about being nothing more than a captive market for the industrial wares of England and the United States. The spirit of industrial development was strong; the art of the period always associated development with the wheel, the partially nude worker holding a large hammer, or smokestacks belching. It is amazing how these images have changed. In earlier days, a belching smokestack conjured up the thought of growth and progress, and that was just fine, because there was general agreement that machines meant progress and that growth was the main objective. Today the smokestack brings to mind pollution.

Government and business were going to do what each could do best: government creating policies helpful to growth and industry actually doing the job. There was no concern over what we would consider today to be less desirable attributes of industrial development; there was very little concern, for example, about regional issues, the environment, or ownership. What was important was a plant located in Canada, no matter who owned it, at an English, French, or American investor.

Periodicals of that era reflected a rather pragmatic dividing line between "good Yankees" and "bad Yankees." The bad Yankees were those whose plants were located in Buffalo, N.Y. On the other hand, the good Yankees were those who were building factories in Hamilton, Ont.

The national policy of 1879 was designed to encourage manufacturing activity in Canada. Tariffs provided a high level of protection for goods produced in Canada, forcing the American — if he wanted to do business in Canada — to manufacture here, not just dump his products. Sir John A. Macdonald's policy also included the trans-Canada railway system, opening up the country, the markets, the resources, and giving people transportation from coast to coast. So the opening up of east-west linkages by the railway and the closing of north-south linkages by the tariff helped Canadian industry to develop. "Canadian" in this context meant "in Canada." Canadian-owned or not — that just wasn't the issue.

No doubt, in this framework business grew and prospered and so did Canada. Industry was relatively free of detailed government intervention. Government was not concerned, as it is today, with patterns of regional development, the degree of competition between industries, or — initially — specific employment standards. After the turn of the century, these became issues. Throughout the 1890s, however, it was assumed that all economic problems would be taken care of quite naturally and automatically by the market system. The "invisible hand" of competition that economist Adam Smith wrote about in 1776 was seen to be at work.

Confidence in the invisible hand started to wane and the government started to take a more detailed role, especially in emergencies like World War I and the Great Depression. The expansion of government involvement in the economy served as a temporary inter-vention for the duration of the emergency, to subsidize when the difficulties passed. The standard practice was for the government to bring experts from industry into its operations. So Canada had the phenomenon, especially during World War II, of senior people of industry being drafted into government service (it did it voluntarily) as administrators running industrial or price committees in Ottawa.

They were acting on behalf of the government, regulating business activity in great detail, but it was always assumed that when the emergency was over they would return to industry and the system would give back the framework in which business took care of its own concerns. But depression and war planted seeds in the generation that experienced them. The United States had already given notice in Roosevelt's "New Deal" that the state was prepared to take on a direct, active role in the economy. At the end of World War II, Canadians were a bit wary about what the economy held in store for them. Would the veterans have jobs? Would the strenuous efforts of war be followed by a slump? Parliament heeded the mood of this "once burned" generation by passing the Reconstruction Act and there seems little doubt that, had the economy not turned in a satisfactory performance, Canadians would have wanted their government to be assertive about relieving what had grown to be a psychological trauma for the nation.

But the country's development had been thrown off course for too long. Wanes to changed to enthusiasm as Canadians tuned, not only to looking after their deferred needs for housing and the requirements of a rapidly expanding number of new families, but also to some Paul Bunyanesque projects — Labrador iron, St. Lawrence seaway, western Canadian oil, Kitimat aluminum. Directly or indirectly, the government played a major role in these projects. But the expansion of government activities paralleled and supported business activities; it was a continuation of the historical relationship and no one seemed to express any misgivings. These were the days of the Louis St. Laurent government, when the prime minister came close to being seen as the chairman of a board of directors, who was setting policy for the enterprise called Canada.

That was a change with taking place, particularly in social expectations, became apparent in the 1960s. For almost a century, large-scale economic concerns had dominated the country and the annual percentage increases in the gross national product had served as accepted milestones of progress. However, during the latter part of the 1960s a new idea came to the forefront with a passion: distributive justice. Overall economic achievements were no longer the source of everyone's satisfaction; people looked behind the national averages and found vast inequalities in incomes, educational opportunities, health care, housing standards, and so on. Redistribution was in. And the federal and provincial governments moved in a big way to redress income and equalize the well-being of individuals and regions.

The thrust was so powerful that traditional economic considerations fell by the wayside. No one was going to admit that redistribution in a hurry might also bring about major inefficiencies and that some form of trade-off was required between the often conflicting goals of social equity and economic efficiency. Many businessmen interpreted the latter part of the 1960s as a period in which the government served notice, so to speak, that it was bent to disrupt the historical partnership. At any rate, the terrain on the other side of the watershed was different by the early 1970s. Governments in Ottawa and the provinces had to be reconstituted in a form dedicated to increasing the size of the economic pie. Indeed, they showed increasing interest in how the pie was cut and who was to receive which slice.

With such considerations in mind, governments moved deeply inside the economic system, involving themselves with specific, detailed direction of industrial activity. They were going to be concerned about who owned things — the foreign-ownership question. They were going to have a say in the way they were to go about it, where they purchase supplies, and who they employ. They were going to be prepared to take on ownership of business concerns. Above all, they were going to be in control of a good portion of the national income and redirect more and more funds to socially desirable projects and socially desirable regions and individuals.
By developments such as regional economic programs, Ottawa inevitably became involved in which were selective and discriminating. It would not operate in a detached way, allowing the market system to interpret the values of business civilization, with its weak government. The government wanted to be where the action was, ready to overtake or bypass the market altogether. And there was no shortage of social action to point out that the market had its faults. The government was ready to move by regulation, intervention, or — in some cases — taxation.

It isn't easy to make governments abandoned their earlier, more remote position. A response to a need? Possibly. Governments do react in some fashion to public demands, though we hear less often than we should about the majority. The advice that impinges most directly on the legislators comes from small, articulate groups in society — governments, academics, the leaders of business and labor, the writers on influential newspapers, and the like.

Politicians are concerned about how their actions are seen by the public. They usually respect the range of options set for them by public opinion. The closer an election, the greater the respect for views.

At any rate, the change entailed a rapid growth by governments at all levels, federal, provincial, local. Governments took on more and more responsibilities in wider and wider areas and the bigger job, of course, called for a bigger government establishment. To be sure, the government is not alone in its tendency to become obese. Business firms can also grow fat. For corporations, however, there is a tendency to spread out the consequences of inefficiency, the danger of uneasiness, and a lowered capacity to face competition. Like an obese person, a fat corporation is soon out of breath in the competition race and will have to drop out.

Fifteen years ago, out of income generated by the Canadian economy, governments spent less than a third. Today governments and their agencies control the spending of 40 cents out of each dollar.

Impressive as this growth might seem, that figure is conservative as an indicator of the extent of the government's advance into what had been the private sector. The statistical reports of expenditures do not include spending by government-owned enterprises such as Canadian National at Railways, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Hydro-Quebec, and the British Columbia Ferry Authority. By a 1974 count there were 32 business enterprises owned by the federal government and 82 by provinces. Since that time both Ottawa and the provincial governments have hastily added to the list, which now includes aircraft builders and airlines, petroleum companies, business-equipment manufacturers, furniture-making plants, and even a luxury cruise ship, among many other ventures. If these were shown, the share of national income controlled by governments would probably exceed 40 per cent.

When the government annexes economic territory on this scale, it raises important philosophical questions, but this is only now beginning to be reflected in the political debate of the day. There has been great agreement about the sharing between federal and provincial governments, but no real debate about how much they should have to share — 20, 30, 50 percent of the gross national product.

There are signs of public dissatisfaction; people begin to inquire about the government's credentials for its massive involvement in the economy. To some people the very word "government" conveys an image of inefficiency and bureaucracy. Business, however, has retained a reputation for efficiency — even among those who distrust the market system.

The wealth-creating aspect of business may have been instinctively recognized — and liked — by people in North America. A small part of business success is economic activity creating many of the values that society respects. The Horatio Alger myth has not lost its grip. The idea of wealth and ethic of the day, it also expressed the aspirations and hopes of people who set out and worked to "make good." But, even in the heyday of the dominant ethic of economic expansion, other ideas were germinating. The intellectual was becoming the spokesman for a new set of ideas, the ideas of equality and ideas and values that had nothing to do with economics. By 1965 or so the new thrust was dominant in the government and we were into the era of a bureaucratic civilization. In business, "the bottom line" is the most important consideration. So business civilization is based on the expectation of rewards for success and penalties for failure. In bureaucratic civilization there is seldom any measurable and product. So it is often the mere fact of doing something that is judged. It rewards the bureaucrat who has the mind and the ideas.

It's worth noting that people born in 1945 — the vanguard of the postwar "baby boom" — were at about the university-graduation level in 1965. They took with them, as they were moving up in the middle-management levels of government, the ideas and values to which they were exposed during their undergraduate years of the early 1960s. They believed that the public interest could best be served by increasing the role of government.

The process illustrates the tremendous power of ideas. What the academic scribbler says now may become the accepted, conventional wisdom in 10 years. The concept of pollution, for example, is so widespread today that it's difficult to believe it scarcely existed 20 years ago. Consider the interest we now have in ecology, few people knew what the word meant until after publication of Rachel Carson's book, Silent Spring, in 1962.

The adjustments we make are sometimes unseen, but later we're astonished by the distance we have come. My daughter showed me a picture on a record-album cover recently — some next-looking, clean-cut young men. The Beatles. It's difficult to believe that their wild appearance generated shock less than 15 years ago.

Every Canadian was touched in some way by the surge of ideas in those yeasty 1960s, but the young men and women who went into government service were in a position to give practical expression to the new philosophy. To see their situation involves looking at another element in government's adoption of a more directive stance with business: the development of a middle-management echelon within government that was acquiring a personality, life, and growth of its own. This group exerted a policy influence from a recommending — rather than a decision-making — position. Its confidence had been developing throughout the preceding decade, as young men and women headed for Ottawa, attracted by the intellectual calibre of the "man- darin" group in evidence there for a dozen-odd years after the war.

This subject has interested Douglas Harle, a professor of economics at the University of Toronto, who was assistant secretary to the Treasury Board in the late 1960s. He has written about the internal reasons for government growth, about the curious self-propelling phenomenon in which, once a program is launched and staffed, the need for expansion inevitably follows, with a consequent need for more staff. This in turn poses the program for another leap forward.

The gathering momentum of government expansion released enormous amounts of energy. These emergences swept aside any protesting murmurs that arose about the cavalier dismissal of the old alliance between business and government. Or about the government's loss of confidence in the ability of industry to bring us all the good life. The government was galloping in pursuit of its ideals, and it needed lots of manpower and money.

If there were limits on either, the government betrayed no great anxiety. The comforting assumption may have been that there were unlimited resources to call upon and that the entire operation served the "public good," not some narrow monetary interest.

Combined with a sense of moral justification, government employees could look forward to personal satisfaction in what they were trying to achieve and to the promise of vertically extended opportunities to help them attain their objective. An intoxicating potion — and certainly one that never touched the lips of Sir John A., a leader whose view of government was that of a group of administrators anxious to bring about a maximum of gain.

However, some of the steam may be going out of this headlong government dash. Recently misgivings have appeared in the more moderate and perhaps more realistic phase that is expected to follow. One can attribute these misgivings to a decline in bureaucratic morale.

The sensitive politician's antenna is beginning to pick up messages from the public: get back in control of the bureaucracy and somehow reduce the cost without making the service vanish. The message is being heard very clearly and government strategy appears to be shifting in that direction. The politician is attempting to reassert himself and, as part of the plan, he's booking at the fractured business-government relationship. There is increasing reluctance to let the government plunge into jobs it can't do very well.

Paradoxical as it may be, this represents a return to the original pattern in Canada. However, that's not the new partnership — if it emerges — will be different. It's not just a question of economic growth anymore because a whole range of other considerations has entered the picture.

Some indications of the government's emerging thoughts may be found in the words of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau last October, when he spoke of his government's intention to examine the "possibility of transferring to the private sector the opportunity to provide some goods and services now provided by government."

More specific still were the words a few days later in the speech from the throne: "In a further effort to reduce the size of government as well as expand the range of opportunities for private enterprise, all federal programs will be reviewed to identify those government activities which could be transferred to the private sector without reducing the quality of service to the public."

The change appears to be set for some steps toward a new system, modeled on the partnership that served Canada well for most of its history. A fresh look at the old partnership might help us in designing a new national policy.
Steps on the way to here

THE NEWCOMERS is more than a boost to understanding, says a man who ought to know

by Mayor Moore

This sequence is about beginning to wonder where you’ve come from; then beginning to wonder where you’re going.
— James Reaney, Colours in the Dark

It seems to me that the Canadian sensibility . . . is less perplexed by the question “Who am I?” than by some such riddle as “Where is here?”
— Northrop Frye, The Bush Garden

The more we Canadians worry about where we’re going, the clearer it becomes that we should have paid more attention to how we got this far together. Our watches have not been synchronized. More a collection of people than a People, we have taken lightly those shared activities that normally define and chronicle a united society: our arts and letters. Small wonder we cannot find our national bearings.

While the rest of us hyphenate each other, the Quebecers — concentrated...
in one place and sharing a common culture — disdain the label French-Canadian. The rear-view motto, "Je me souviens," speaks of an established sense of self, sense of place, and an awareness of time. The cultural foundation of Quebec's threat to withdraw from Confederation is a priority incomprehensible to those Canadians who think of culture as a trill — when they think of it at all.

The subject in hand, however, is not Quebec separatism, but a remarkable new series of films about Canadian beginnings, about steps on the way to "here." It's THE NEWCOMERS: Inhabiting a New Land on CBC-TV commencing in November. The originality and magnitude of its thrust and its importance for our times can perhaps best be appreciated if we look first at why Canadians have been so reluctant to celebrate their history.

When immigrants arrived in the United States, they joined an already constituted nation with a heady grasp of its own "manifest destiny." From wherever they had come, they hastened to don their past and get on with the joint pursuit of happiness in "the land of the free and home of the brave." Everybody knew where that was.

However, those who came to Canada were more emigrant than immigrant — pioneers in the colonial sticks, edging their way toward the most dispersed, disjointed, and bastardized nationhood known to political science.

Making a virtue of necessity, each embraced and then worshipped his cultural baggage, commemorated the history of others, and regarded federalism as an outrageously expensive but inevitable protection racket. They joined in singing, "We stand on guard for thee" — although nobody seemed to know who "thee" was.

If variety is the spice of life, the whole unlikely Canadian story of cooperative diversity ought to be not least but more interesting than the American saga of homogenization. But historians have until very recently ignored our social evolution and concentrated instead on military and political events — departments of history in which the affairs of Canada were indeed piquaques and boring.

And yet, all this time, we were collectively involved in a massive social experiment of the greatest consequence — the success or failure of which will speak cogently to the future of the whole world. In a universe that appears to be fragmenting even as fate draws it closer together, does cultural pluralism offer a more workable solution than the melting pot?

Far from being a local issue, this choice now confronts governments everywhere. And Canada's ways of coping with it are studied seriously because this country lies like a wheel hub between the power centres of the world: the United States, the U.S.S.R., Europe, and Asia. Our social evolution, long despised as irrelevant, has become a sought-after text in the schools of mankind. If the world is to find some sort of unity in diversity, the Canadian experience is not only relevant but possibly crucial. The backwater has become the front line.

But if they were slow to grasp the full significance of their situation, Canadians learned early the best way of coping with it: communications.

It was no accident that Canadians built one of the world's great railway systems and were in the vanguard of the development of the telephone, telegraphy, broadcasting, and film. Our television network, the longest single one on earth, is perhaps our chief instrument in holding together a nation of proudly regional cultures, among whom tension rides high at the best of times. At the worst of times — and this is one of them — television offers what may be our last best hope.

Enter a corporate patron followed by two producers, able and dedicated. There is a meeting of minds, from which emerges THE NEWCOMERS: Inhabiting a New Land.

Now when I tell you that the patron is the same Imperial Oil Limited that for 25 years (since Canadian television began) had been content to bring us Hockey Night in Canada, and that it has hired as producers a couple of Galahads formerly with CBC's public-affairs department, who in turn hired playwrights as antistablishment as the West's George Ryga, the coincidence might seem incredible to the uneasy and opportunistic to the cynical. The occasion is Imperial's 100th birthday in 1980, and Maclean's called it: . . . a massive step into the culture field by one of the country's most image-conscious corporations.

Culture-vultures were quick to note that Imperial Oil was following the lead of its U.S. sister company, EXXON, which last year spent four million dollars in support of the arts and which has been called a modern-day Medici.

This is to look through the wrong end of the telescope. For one thing, Exxon may well have taken its lead from Imperial Oil, which more than 30 years ago quietly began to undertake nonin-
inustrial films, the first was Budge Crawley’s internationally celebrated The Loon’s Nose Face. But that aside, the motive for taking such a “massive step into the culture field” in Canada can only be vastly different from Exxon’s in the United States, a country that at last report was not in danger of coming apart at the seams. On the other hand, Imperial Oil’s image will not be worth a snapshot if there is no Canadian public to show it to.

Gordon Hincht, Imperial Oil’s executive producer for the series, put it this way: “Any successful organization must sense and respond to changes in the world around it. Imperial is part of its community and must face the same challenges as everyone else; we’re all in the same boat. The company could have erected a university building or set up a hundred scholarships to celebrate its centennial, but we felt strongly that social history, a sense of our heritage, is an urgent need at the moment. And we thought a series of films was the best way to meet that need.”

Richard Nielsen and Pat Iorns, whose production company developed the eventual series plan, had independently come to the same conclusion, but lacked the financial resources (unprecedented in Canada) to implement their ideas on the necessary scale. The alliance was possible because, in Iorns’ words, “We had the concept that most perfectly fitted Imperial’s mandate. It was a series we were both anxious to see realized.” Added Nielsen: “Imperial’s criteria are enlightened. It is interested in making a new

(top left) Michel Côté takes leave of Louise Lambert in 1740

(top middle) Linda Goranson, bound for Montreal in 1847

(top right) Peter McNeil: a defender of the “true” faith

(bottom left) Tina Hamilton: in love but cannot marry

(bottom middle) Donald Davis as the teacher in 1832

(bottom right) Susan Hogan and Ken Welsh visit the graves of their children
and original contribution to the Canadian community, one that will be first-rate." It was clearly less a marriage of convenience than a partnership of belief.

For Nielsen, born in New Brunswick, it was a challenge. "The Canadian bond is this: we all have a continuing common experience of having come from somewhere else and never really severing ourselves from it. My father tended to reject his Danish culture and suffered from it; my mother kept both cultures alive. What matters is not who came or when they came or who ticked whom, but how they were able to cope with Canada. That's the story -- or stories -- we want to tell." There are to be seven programs in the series, starting with the native peoples, and including such newcomers as the French, the British, the Irish, the western Europeans, the eastern Europeans and, in the final program, the postwar immigrants. A mixture of dramatic recreation and factual documentary, the films will have no connecting narrative link, only the common ground of experience in and with this country.

"These are human stories," said Pat Fents, "stories of success and failure -- not great events like episodes in some self-congratulating pageant."

This emphasis on how different human beings have coped with life here is apparent in the first film, Prologue, which deals with aboriginal society as the European newcomers found it.

In a Pacific northwest Indian tribe, a young girl of the Raven clan falls in love with the nephew of the chief. He's also a Raven and cannot marry someone of the same clan. The old chief falls ill and nominates his nephew to succeed him. The boy ends up sacrificing his love for the girl by becoming chief and marrying someone from another tribe who has been chosen for him.

Round this simple story, writer Charles Israel has woven an astonishingly telling evocation of native life on the west coast, where it was filmed. Story, action, and dialogue were all worked out with the Gitksan people of the Kispiox reservation near Hazelton, B.C., who also played their ancestors. Great care was taken to achieve authenticity of settings and costumes, but the impact of the result is less factual than spiritual.

George Clutesi, a B.C. authority on native people, who is one of the series' 11 scholarly consultants, said afterward: "I feared the worst; I was delighted with the film." What he feared, of course, was either another condescending view of primitive savages by white people or another well-meaning but cheerless anthropological lesson. Israel and director Eric Tilt and their colleagues (the camera work is breathtaking) have persuaded these Canadians to tell their own story in their own way. To avoid the usual embarrassing translation into phoney English or French, they have the participants speak in their native Shuswap while a voices-over technique tells us what little we need explained. What comes across is the common humanity beneath the cultural differences.

"Our spirit is different," said the play's medical man during rehearsal. "What is the spirit of your weddings?" asked director Tilt.

"Not like yours," came the reply. "We chat it up a lot. With us the ceremony isn't important; what happens before it is what matters." And so they shot and reshoot until the spirit was right.

Another first-season program, dealing with 18th-century life in French Canada, was filmed near Montreal, with Claude Fournier directing from a script by his brother, Guy. The production company has signed up a first-class crew of designers and technicians on long-term contracts. As each film is completed, it will be shown on both English and French networks of the CBC and made available to schools, colleges, and libraries. Then in 1980 all seven will be repeated as a series on the CBC.

But I must add that THE NEWCOMERS is more than a timely boost to Canadian understanding. Whatever happens in this country in the immediate future, the series should stand for some time to come as a model of how to go about achieving understanding between people — any people — of differing cultures. It demonstrates that cultural differences are best bridged by cultural means. A sensitive and compelling film may succeed where stick-and-carrot appeals to material self-interest fail.
Conservation asks how much

The federal government may, as the prime minister has avowed, have no business in the bedrooms of the nation but it's bent on getting into the attics a big way. In fact, it has just embarked on a seven-year, billion-dollar-plus scheme to do just that. The money is to go in grants to Canadian homeowners to encourage them to insulate their houses in the cause of energy saving, and is part of a mammoth proposal of the federal department of energy, mines, and resources aimed at reducing Canada's per-capita energy growth to zero by 1985.

For a country that, on a population basis, has traditionally been one of the world's most prolific users of energy — total consumption has doubled during the past 15 years — that is an astonishingly ambitious target and an affirmation of the government's commitment to conservation. In fact, all the evidence points to the conclusion that the government has become increasingly interested during the past two years in the contribution that conservation can make toward solving Canada's energy problems.

Last year the federal government's policy paper, An Energy Strategy for Canada, established a 1985 conservation target of cutting the country's average energy growth rate to less than three-and-a-half percent from the five- and-a-half percent that it had averaged during the previous 15 years. Subsequently the federal department of energy, mines, and resources took a look at some of the government's conservation measures either in place or imminent, including the imposition of new building codes and constraints on the purchase and operation of automobiles, and decided that an annual growth rate of about two percent was attainable.

In February of this year Energy Minister Allan MacEachen, referring to the government's earlier target of reducing growth to under three- and-a-half percent by 1985, was even more hopeful. "We expect to do better than that," he told an audience of businessmen, "possibly approaching a zero rate by 1990 if we receive the cooperation of provincial leaders and other Canadians."

It should be noted that, because of Canada's expanding population, a target of zero per-capita growth is not the same thing as zero total growth. A zero per-capita energy growth in 1985 would, in fact, mean an estimated one- and-a-half percent growth annually in total terms. Even that, of course, would represent a remarkable achievement for a country that has, on occasion, increased its energy demand by more than seven percent annually, and a number of observers feel that the government is expecting too much too soon of conservation. In fact, the government itself is far from unambitious and some officials think we'll be doing well if we manage to reduce our annual total energy growth to about the two-percent mark by 1985, even with stringent conservation methods.

However, both government and industry are agreed on one point and that is that conservation alone cannot solve Canada's energy problems. It simply cannot save enough to offset the growing gap between the demand for oil and gas, on which we will have to rely for most of our energy beyond the next decade, and domestic supply. Thus, even if we do manage to reduce our total national energy growth to zero, we'll still have to develop additional domestic supplies or face the alternative of becoming increasingly dependent on imported oil — a course of action attended by many hazards, not the least of which is the effect it would have on our international balance of payments. Current estimates suggest that, unless new supplies of frontier hydrocarbons can be brought to market, imported oil will be costing us, at today's prices, about $5 billion per year by 1985.

The real solution to our energy problems, therefore, lies in a combination of actions: in conservation, in the development of all our existing sources of energy, and in bringing into commercial production as soon as economically and technologi- cally feasible the various forms of renewable resources upon which Canada, like the rest of the world, will ultimately have to depend. Conserva- tion, Gillespie has said, "is not an acceptable policy; it is an essential element to complement our other energy policies."

But if conservation is in its proper perspective in the total energy picture is not to downplay its impor- tance. Indeed, it is indeed conservation an "essential element" but in a number of respects it offers some unique advantages. Clearly, one is cost. Lining your attic with heat-con- taining material may insulate not only your house but also your pocket- book. The government estimates that full insulation of the average Canadian home by 1980 would reduce the heating the average Canadian home by $10 per year at present fuel prices. In total, that could save an amount of energy equivalent to 50 million barrels of oil per year and also be equivalent to whittling nearly a billion dollars off the country's bill for imported oil from abroad.

And conservation also offers some other cost advantages. While conserva- tion measures in themselves cost money (the federal government has budgeted nearly $15 million for re- search and development in the conserva- tion area this year), they may well turn out to be cheaper than the cost of the energy that would otherwise have been consumed. Gillespie figures that efficient conservation saves one-half of equivalent energy costs and, if he's right, it's the only way you get a barrel of oil for about $6 these days.

Then, of course, there are the side benefits that can accrue from conserva- tion by way of less pollution, less damage to the natural environment, and a slower depletion of nonrenewable resources.

Measured by such yardsticks, conserva- tion has considerable appeal and most Canadians would, as soon ques- tion the sanctity of motherhood as oppose this kind of economic and social prudence. But the trouble with yardsticks, as Lewis Carroll has re- minded us, is that they come in many lengths, and energy conservation means different things to different people. Some view it in a wider and more stringent context: not only as a requirement for economic sustainability, but as a tool for achieving social change. Dr. Ursula Franklin, of the Science Council of Canada, has maintained your furnace properly and keep a watchful eye on the ther- mostat.

Since what economists call the price mechanism is a major motivator at this stage of conservation, it requires little or no interference with the market as we know it today. A consum- er's choice of actions continues to be governed by a combination of his inclinations and his pocketbook. But oil fuel prices will undoubtedly make you think twice before installing a heated swimming pool, and you may far from unanimity on the specific conservation measures that are ap- propriate to each category, sufficient general agreement has been reached on the three-stage concept for the idea to have gained acceptance among those concerned with the topic, including the federal government's office of energy conservation.

The first category, "doing more with less," aims at reducing consump- tion by putting energy to more effi- cient use and essentially represents the thrust of present government conserv- eration policies. While all conservation measures obviously have the potential to impinge on lifestyles, "doing more with less" does not require drastic changes and need not, in fact, threaten one's standard of living.

It urges thrift rather than reflec- tion. It seeks to avoid prolonging in- energy use by ensuring that the energy we require to maintain our current lifestyle is used with maximum economy: that our houses are ade- quately insulated, that our automo- biles are properly maintained to ensure maximum performance, and that our electrical appliances work properly. In this phase of conservation your electric dishwasher need not prey on your conscience so long as you use not only it is energy efficiently and keep it in top operating shape. You don't need to move to a smaller house but you may install efficient furnaces properly and keep a watchful eye on the ther-mostat.

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decide that you have to cut back on those weekend drives into the country, but the choice is still yours to make. You pay your money and you take your choice.

And the system works in precisely the same way with industry. Most industrial plants in Canada were built in the bale-hoey days when energy cost a lot less here than it did in other parts of the world, and energy efficiency was frequently not of prime importance. But as fuel prices increase it becomes not only environmentally desirable but economically vital for business to find ways to use energy more efficiently. Studies conducted in the United States suggest that the average after tax return on energy conservation investments is between 20 and 50 percent and such arithmetic holds considerable appeal for industries that find themselves in a severe energy-cost squeeze.

Imperial Oil, for example, discovered some years ago that one of its major replacement claims was the largest single operating cost in refining. Particularly after all, that it's perfectly feasible to live in a smaller house, even though you have to make do with one or two fewer appliances.

Energy conservation practised on such a scale clearly has an effect on lifestyle. It doesn't deny a person's privilege to choose between alternative courses of action but it limits his range of choices. It's probably not what the average Canadian, given an option, would choose. But if one doesn't have a choice, if it is necessary to conserve energy on such a scale, it's a lifestyle to which one can adjust, but adjust oneself, could not be adjusted.

Do we have to face the necessity of "doing less with less"? The quality of life in our third stage of energy conservation, really means doing a lot less with a lot less. We don't worry too much about the price of gasoline because we are not so dependent on the automobile any more, travel is not as important as it used to be because we're living in a decentralized society, and those of us who still have to get to the office are probably on a three-day week.

We're saving lots of energy because many factories are closed and some of us have learned to conserve when it comes to heating. We're heaving into cottage industries and organic agriculture.

We've come to accept a considerable degree of government control over our activity and to stop thinking of the structure of our society cannot be accomplished within the terms of the market system.

A fanciful concept? Perhaps. Many people who find their present way of life reasonably tolerable turn down the prospect of adopting another way of life. But is it not possible that not only energy but all of our natural and national resources should be conserved in the interests of achieving a lifestyle radically different from the one we know today? A kind of Thoreauvian ideal that resources industrialism in favor of a new pastoral society that lives happily ever after in a wind-diesel operated, pollution-free landscape.

In 1974 Gamma, an interdisciplinary group composed of faculty members from the University of Montreal and McGill University, was awarded a contract by the federal government to investigate the policy implications of a "conserving society." Two years later the group, known then as the "conservers," published their proposals for the adoption of a selective conservers society in Canada. (This group is now known as the Science Council of Canada.)

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The books of Quebec join the wide world of the seventies

by Georges-Hébert Germain

The prose is strong. It looks at old values. And sees a new vision

Nice, France —
A fine Sunday morning in May. The sun is bright and the wind is strong as I stroll along the Promenade des Anglais, beside the Mediterranean, on my way to the celebrated Marché des Fleurs, whose fragrance makes my heart beat a little faster.

At nine o'clock I go into the Palais des Expositions, where the perfume comes from pulp and paper and printer's ink. There are tons and tons of books from the four corners of the French-speaking world — and the rest of the world as well. They're all part of the Festival International du Livre in Nice, in which Quebec — represented in the past by Canada — is participating for the first time this year. For the first time I have the opportunity to see Quebec books out in "the wide world."

As I go inside, I spot the giants of French publishing houses: Gallimard, le Seuil, Grasset, Albin Michel, Robert Laffont. In the very centre of the Palais is the display by the enormous paperback publisher, Livre de Poche. It contains most of the best-sellers from all literature throughout the ages, from Homer to Mao, with Racine, Joyce, Mailer, Segal, and Sagan in between. There are Chinese writers, Russians, North Africans, South Americans, Belgians, Italians, and Japanese.

But I look in vain for a single writer from Quebec or anywhere else in Canada in this famous and prestigious collection. Suddenly I remember a comment by Robert Laffont, one of the largest French publishers, at the Montreal International Book Fair last March: "You have a few talented and skillful writers, but not one of them can claim to have written a book of international calibre."

More than one Canadian listener was shocked by Laffont's assessment of our literature. He was reproaching us, in effect, for spending too much time contemplating our navels. He criticized our writers for speaking and writing for their own Quebec world, the five or six million "happy few." And generally he rebuked us for often talking to ourselves and rambbling. It wasn't pleasant to hear. But perhaps he wasn't completely wrong.

Things are changing though. The province's department of industry and commerce has undertaken to encourage the production and distribution of Quebec books. This department was responsible for the showing at Nice, and it sponsored and encouraged the Montreal International Book Fair, as well as such bodies as the Conseil Superieur du Livre, the umbrella organization that pulls together most of Quebec's French-language publishers.

I went over to the Quebec stand where some 800 titles were being
offered by 37 publishers, under the aegis of the provincial government, which had launched a strong publicity campaign in conjunction with the International Festival in an attempt to interest the literary press, foreign publishers, and the French-reading public in Quebec books.

There were concerts by Quebec pop singer Louise Forestier at the Théâtre de la Ville, exhibitions of photographs, audiovisual presentations on Quebec, a mini-festival of Quebec films at the NTC cinématheque, radio interviews, posters, slogans, and Quebec flags. A veritable avalanche.

I looked at the books and read the familiar titles and authors’ names. I flipped through some of the novels, books of poems, and plays I had read or seen during the past few years. Together those 800 books were a kind of portrait of Quebec in the 1970s, an indication of present-day preoccupations. There were a great many academic studies, reports on teaching language and history, and many books dealing with our folklore, traditions, and collective destiny.

Quebec writers—like her chansonniers and filmmakers—have had a lot to say during the past decade. In their writing they have sought and invented and described their country. For this is the first task of any young literature. "Reading out our novels is like reading the world in which we live," says Gilles Marcotte, professor of French literature at the Université de Montréal and literary critic at the influential Quebec newspaper, Le Devoir.

When I read Louis Hémon, Félix-Antoine Savard, Rinquet, or Claude-Henri Grignon, I discover the world of my grandfather: the terror or preoccupation with the land, the countryways of my ancestors. With Gabrielle Roy and Roger Lemelin, I read about my father’s world, the end of a traditional rural civilization and the painful entry into urban civilization.

My father and grandfather didn’t read novels. They read their newspapers, L’Action Catholique, and their missals. They didn’t read the rare French-Canadian authors of their time. Rather, they listened to them on the radio. They listened regularly to serialized novels such as Un Homme et son Pech, Le Coeur du Village, Je vous ai tant aimé, and others.

In the fifties (and even now), French-Canadian novels became popular through television, which in a way fulfilled the same role as the "livre de poche" in France and American paperbacks. It was television that made the works of our novelists accessible to everyone. And it was largely through television that the heroes of our novels became popular: Germanque Gervenoux’s "Suvanent," Claude-Henri Grignon’s Négroni, Podmar, Roger Lemelin’s Pleiade Family, Robert Choquette’s Madame Wedler. Even today, the most popular (and destitute) Quebec authors are those who write principally for television. I think of Réginald Boivin or Claude Jasmin. For the last 25 years the French network of the CBC has, by producing quantities of Quebec plays and serialized novels, made an important contribution to the evolution of a certain popular Quebec literature.

Until the early 1960s, however, French-Canadian literature occupied an extremely marginal place in our culture. At many classical colleges in Quebec the teaching was heavily weighted in favor of the traditional or modern French authors: Corneille and Racine, Hugo and Musset, Balzac and Flaubert, Flaubert and, most of all, the 18th-century Catholic writers (Claudel, Bloy, Maupassant, and company.) When I received my BA in 1961, at the age of 20, I had never "officially" heard of Émile Nelligan, Gabrielle Roy, or Yves Thériault—although the latter’s novel, Agatha, had four years earlier been translated into several languages, including German, Portuguese, and Japanese.

But all that would change with dazzling speed. We had entered into the quiet revolution. And we had left what was already being called "the great darkness" of the Dugaldes era. The famous "quête de bonheur"—the dynamic team of Jean Lesage, Paul Gérard Lapointe, and René Lévesque—had just come to power, to cries of "masters in our own house." The talk now was of rationalization, independence, quebecitude. And Quebec literature, like the province’s songs and cinema, became fashionable.

Some important social changes occurred in Quebec in the sixties, including the restructuring of the school system and the reorganization of the teaching profession. A book by teaching brother Jean-Paul Desharnais, Les Impertinences de Brother Anonyme, laid the foundation for a massive rethinking of our old, small, religious, and academic structures. It was biting humor and it attacked the shortcomings of the province’s educational system, among other things. Sales of the book were unprecedented. Everything started to move at once—

in the church, the schools, and politics. And Quebec writers began to be studied with greater fervor in colleges and universities.

A new generation of the province’s novelists came into prominence in the late 70s. In 1979, Hubert Aquin, who died last March, published his stunning political novel, Prochaine Episode, in 1985, Réjean Ducharme published Le Sac à dos, a fantastic novel in 1966. The same year, Marie-Claire Blais won France’s Prix Médard for Au Bateau Lointain, about childhood poverty. Jacques Godbout’s Leaf Galagon came out the following year and in 1987 Roch Carrier published La Guerre, Yes Sir! All these novels have been translated into English, incidentally. Quebec literature was off and running, with star authors and critics, academic specialists, and an even-growing public. Poets such as Claude Pelletier, Gaston Miron, and Gilles Vigneault became popular heroes, like Ginsberg and Dylan in the United States.

In the sixties poets continued to write (Paul-Marie Lajoie, Fernand Ouellette, and Alphonse Piché), but it was fiction that became the dominant literary form of the decade. It seemed obvious that the social function and literary space occupied by fiction was considerably more important than poetry, which was often criticized for being cut off from the majority of the public, becoming coldly hermetic, and concerned with formal exercises of interest only to academic specialists.

For 15 years, then, the novel has given the best “reading” of Quebec, to paraphrase critic Gilles Marquis, and it is the province’s novels that are the most popular reading matter. It is a different novel from the ones our fathers listened to on the radio. It is a product of the quiet revolution too, and has undergone profound transformations.

In the past, the novels of Gabrielle Roy or Rinquet, for example, reflected quite naturally into the history and social reality of the depression and the postwar period. They recounted what was real, known, and widely experienced. But during the historic and social tempest of the sixties, in the twenties, when old values were exploding and being re-created, the novel ceased to fit into history, because history was being created daily and, like the rest of Quebec society, it was at one in question. Novels no longer simply recounted: they lived and experienced the same anguish and revolt as society.
For example, the heroes of Gérard Bessette (the bookseller in Not for Every Eye, the office clerk in La Comprendre, and Jules Leboué in Le Baggare), like all Quebecers, are uncomfortable in their own history. The heroes of Marie-Claire Blais, Réjean Ducharme, Anne Hébert, Victor-Lévy Beaulieu, André Major, and those in the early novels of Jules Leboué and Roger Fournier are at a loss, rootless and incomplete — in the image of the society they created them.

"Something happened, something we hadn't expected and still haven't completely assimilated today," writes Marie-Claire Blais in her novel Le Roman d’L’imparfait. Quebec novels are richer, better written, more historically more 'signified' than they've ever been; but at the same time they seem far more removed from the task of being assimilated to them, to provide an accounting, in the style of the Conscience humaine, of the essential conditions in our history. We were willing, after some hesitation, to recognize ourselves in Kingué's They Have No Name, in Gabrielle Roy's The Tin Flute, and even in André Langevin's Dust Over the City. But it is harder to accept so wholeheartedly such overstated — even outrageous — works as Ducharme's The Swallowing Nosebleed or Bliss A Season in the Life of Emmanuel.

Within a society that has been shaken profoundly by identity crises and the independence notion, (e.g.) the novelists' tales could not produce the impression of solidarity, security, and truth that characterized the works of their predecessors.

Recent political events and social changes from the last few years have brought about changes in our literature just as the coming to power of the Parti Québécois will in the future. At the Montreal International Book Fair, organizer of the Montreal International Book Fair, remarked, "Now our authors are in power.

Indeed, several members of the government side in the National Assembly are established and well-known writers: poet Gérard Gaudron, economist Guy Joron, and historian Denis Vaugeois, among others. In addition, the vast majority of Quebec's writers, chansonniers, poets, and novelists have been active politically — on the opposition side. Now they are aligned with the power in power; for better or worse, with all the dangers and all the advantages this new position implies. But one thing is certain: once again the tone of the discussion is going to change.

Certain transformations can already be spotted. Since the election last Nov. 15 a number of publications on the Quebec society have appeared — on the notions of political independence and the role the new society might eventually play within a broader North American community or in the French-speaking world at large. A remarkable feature of these reflections is the tone, which is more moderate than in the past, and the analyses, which are less predetermined and aggressive than those of the polemists of the fifties. It would seem that the crisis is past; the time for reflection has come.

Pierre Turgeon, director of Les Editions Quirinus, one of the dynamic younger publishers, has pointed out another phenomenon: "Josal [the debased French-Canadian slang] is disappearing. Most of the manuscripts that were submitted to us last season were written in international French. People have tired of the slang, which was useful politically at first but has ceased to be as meaningful.

A new type of hero is appearing in Quebec fiction as well. I think of Jacques Godbout's latest novel, L'Homme au Dragon, and of Roger Fournier's latest, Les Cornes Sacrées. Both belong to a different period, another world from the "anti-novels" of Bessette or even Ducharme. "In my first novels," Fournier told me, "I always ended up killing off my heroes. It seemed natural, inevitable. But Les Cornes Sacrées is a story about conquerors. I came to feel the need for a mythical hero, a superman, so I created one of the kind you run into in classical literature: Les Cornes Sacrées, a poetic parable of a novel — joyous, pagan, and terribly alive."

But I didn't find Fournier's novel, or those of Ducharme or Godbout, at the Quebec bookstand in Nice. All three are self-published by European houses. "It has a number of advantages," Fournier says. "First of all in terms of distribution and marketing. Fifty million readers instead of five million makes quite a difference. And I have to admit that American and British publishers have more experience and more money than publishers here in Quebec. They know how to make the public's tastes and needs. As [France's] Albin Michel, for instance, they can work for years on a novel by a hundred pages, and rewrite certain sections. I did it and I'm glad. It was too long and too heavy before. Here in Quebec when you submit a manuscript the publisher accepts it or rejects it outright. And if it's accepted it's usually published as is, without copy editing. So I publish in France, even though I live and write in Quebec."

But despite tremendous competition from France, Quebec publishing is flourishing as never before. In this respect its problems are similar to those of English-Canadian publishers, who must compete with the tremendous number of books from Britain and the United States.

The province's publishers are also becoming active in another important literary activity — the translation of American and English-Canadian books into French. This year Alain Stanké International bought the world French-language rights for Howard Hughes: The Hidden Years, by James Phelan, and has an option on the same rights for the memoirs of former U.S. president Richard Nixon. Editions Quirine recently published the French version of Rocky, which has had considerable success both here and in France. In addition, Le Cercle des Livres de France is publishing "Collection Deux Solidarités" translation of Classics of Canadian literature by authors such as Robertson Davies, Morley Callaghan, and W.O. Mitchell.

"It's practically impossible for a Quebec publisher to produce literary books exclusively," Pierre Turgeon says. "We absolutely have to diversify. Practical guides and cookbooks always sell well, and profits from their sales allow publishers to take risks and publish young creative writers.

In purely financial terms, literary publishing is backed up by the publication of best-sellers of a practical nature. But in terms of creativity, Quebec literature has acquired its independence and is beginning to be recognized in the rest of the French-speaking world. Thanks to translation, the works of an increasing number of Quebec novelists and poets are becoming known in English Canada. Quebec literature is preparing to take its place in the sun, a place that will be in French-Canada's image: that of a small people — five million people — placed by history in the very midst of the American and European giants. This vastage point gives an original and privileged point of view within the great cultures of the West.

Translated by Sheila Fischman

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in Closing

A friend who is given to worrying a lot was saying recently that unless there is a new respect for authority in human affairs we are in for a social disaster. What is needed, she insisted, is more deference to those she called “authori-
ty figures” — teachers, magistrates, clergymen, and police officers. Her opinion, which is neither new nor rare, seems to be gaining ground in our time, not just among those we often dismiss as reactionary but among the young, the academics, and those liberals who now worry that the fash-
ionable wisdom of the sixties — “Do your own thing” — led less to maturity than to infantilism.

According to the experts the search for authority has led some people, particularly some young people, into religious groups that are authoritative in their approach and style. “It is understandable,” says Martin Marty, the theologian, “that when the political order seems to be not working, when the economy seems to be not working, when marriage seems to be not working, people long for the authority they sense in such groups.”

Maybe so, but there are others, deeply suspicious of authority, who assume it is abused by all who wield it — politicians, policemen, or priests. Or else they are so jealous of their personal freedom that any idea of bowing to authority seems an affront to conscience.

This rejection brings several dangers, one of which is its discouraging influence upon those with ambitions to become leaders. What sense in such ambition if, when leadership is conferred, it is simultaneously made impossible because so many simply refuse to recognize it, whether it is the leadership of a party or a corporation. For in a democratic community leadership depends upon the people. It is given not seized. Yet, as the Columbia University historian Robert Nisbet writes in Twilight of Authority, “We live in an epoch of decline of authority, of profoundly diminished confidence in political and social structures, not to mention political and social leaders, and everything we have learned from comparative history tells us that such a period is ripe for both war and for military dominance.”

It is not hard to agree that we need a renewed respect for the idea of authority in society. But beyond that it becomes difficult to define what authority we mean, to decide who should exert it, and to determine the ways in which it should be applied.

In the broadest sense, there are two different kinds of authority, each one applying in ways that are quite distinct from the other. One kind — we might call it Type A — relies on persuasion; the other — Type B — has the power of the law behind it. Part of what now is being called the crisis of authority may derive from the fact that we have come to confuse the two — regarding all authority in the same light.

Consider Type A, which represents the kind of authority held, say, by an economist. She may have a full understanding of economics and a fine imagination in applying its principles but she commands no obedience. (In fact she is not even seeking obedience toward her views but acceptance of them.) She is an authority on economi-

The man on the street or the student in the class. In fact, as the sixties showed, many students did just that, refusing the authority that was implicit in what Professor Harry Crowe of Toronto’s York University used to call the master-apprentice relationship between the professor and the student.

The other kind of authority — Type B — is revealed most clearly in the police officer. He is not an authority in the same sense as the economist seeking assent for a point of view. But he carries authority, seeking compliance toward a set of laws. He is not appealing to the mind, indeed he has little interest in it. He is interested only in external actions — specifically those acts that break the law. For, where the economist seeks assent to a point of view, the policeman requires obedience to the rule of law.

In a liberal democracy, the first authority can be rejected at will; the second authority must not be. It is to be obeyed for the larger good, whether it is the policeman directing traffic on main street or the federal government enacting wage and price controls. It is not just desirable that this style of authority be obeyed but necessary; the alternative is social disorder and eventual anarchy.

In recent years the rejection of the former style of authority has become a common practice — the teacher no longer is looked up to for wisdom, the policeman no longer is esteemed for leadership, the businessperson no longer is looked up to for achievement. Healthy skepticism of such authority now is becoming a firm rejection or outright opposition, and along with it is a fear in society that both forms of authority are being rejected, not just what we have described as Type A but Type B as well. In fact, this fear is probably unfounded, a product of the confusion surrounding the use of the word authority. We may be giving our leaders a bad time but we haven’t tossed out the rule of law — not yet anyway. Terms such as “the break-
down of authority,” therefore, strike us as an example of loose talk that is too broad, too imposing, and a little out of line.

Nonetheless, the style of our day, with its tendency to dismiss minds that are more wise, or opinions that are more founded, all in the name of some new and better sense of self, seems a bit much. “Give me that scatol,” a teenager said to a surgeon about to perform an operation in a recent cartoon, “After all, this is a democ-

cracy.” Most Canadian university presi-

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