

justice. Furthermore, the federal government has given French Canada a large number of effective cultural instruments.

It is also said that the French culture in Quebec is threatened by a demographic situation unfavourable to French Canadians. I am not a doctor and so I cannot assess the contraceptive effect of federalism on the birth rate in Quebec, but I do wish to point out that according to statistics, the Francophone population in Quebec is increasing rather than diminishing.

To say that there will be six million French-speaking inhabitants in Quebec in the year 2,000 and that there are already six and one-half million across Canada today is only one side of the coin. It is not necessary to be born French in order to speak French. In fact, more and more English Canadians are speaking French nowadays, and because of the bilingualism policy of the federal government, this trend will continue. And there is also the fact that the provinces have undertaken to expand the teaching of French.

In addition to its official languages policy, the federal government has established structures to enable artists and cultural groups to express themselves as they wish. It provides them with the means of dissemination, funds, services and facilities necessary for cultural expression. Consider, for example, the role of Radio-Canada, the French counterpart of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the National Film Board, the Canada Council, the National Museums and others as agencies of cultural proliferation. Think about the organizations dedicated to artistic creation, the spread of the French culture in Quebec and the growth of its French-Canadian dimension, and you will soon realize that there is a will in Canada to protect and to strengthen its French culture.

The results of a Gallup Poll published in June 1977 furnished proof of the increased interest among English-speaking Canadians in the French language. Fifty-one per cent of those questioned said they would like to have learned French and twenty per cent said they had learned it, making a total of seventy-one per cent. Compared with this are figures of sixty and thirty-seven per cent - a total of ninety-seven per cent - for French Canadians.

In more general terms, it must be recognized that the present political system is responsible for the economic stability required for the establishment and blossoming of the French fact. Culture cannot be dissociated from the political and economic well-being of the State. If conditions change it may be necessary to revise certain constitutional and other mechanisms to convince Canada's six and one-half million French-speaking inhabitants that the Canadian federation is their best protection against assimilation by the 240 million English-speaking North Americans around them.