



Josh Darsa
National Public Radio

English-speaking) evolved to a great degree in response to what was going on south of the 49th parallel.

This view was developed somewhat (Confederation is seen as engendered by a fear of Yankee invasions)—but the major and most successful portion of the program was devoted to recent events in Quebec. There were a dozen lively interviews with a variety of Quebecers and other Canadians.

The first person quoted was the late British historian Arnold Toynbee, who once said, *Whatever the future of mankind in North America, I feel pretty confident that these French-speaking Canadians will be there at the end of the story.*

Some of the persons interviewed seemed to have a similar certainty, but others, both French-speakers and English-speakers, felt that the survival, intact, of the traditional culture cannot be taken for granted.

Most interviewees focused on the emergence of the French speakers as the dominant group.

Quebec historian Michel Brunet said that before the Quiet Revolution of the 1960's, they were a majority by numbers but a minority by thinking. He recounted that when a reporter for an English-language newspaper asked him in 1961 how the English speakers in Quebec could contribute to the new Quebec, he replied, *By learning*

to become a minority.

Joan Dougherty of the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal told Mr. Darsa: *We now know very well that we're a minority, and we're beginning to act like it. We're beginning to stick up for our rights and to behave in ways we never did before. We never had to assert ourselves and we had a kind of majority habit.*

Several people discussed the effects of Bill 101, the Quebec law that makes French the official language of the province, provides for its use in business, and limits access to English language schools.

It was pointed out that immigrants from other countries have been significantly affected by one provision of the language law. At one time, almost all chose to have their children educated in English, but they no longer have that option. The prevailing assumption was that immigrants will be assimilated into the French-speaking majority.

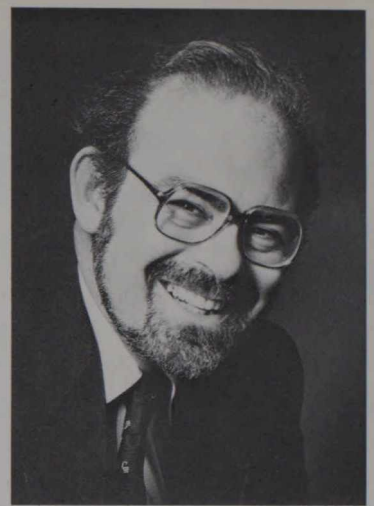
View of Another Province

The *Los Angeles Times* has had consistently good coverage of Canada. Its focus, however, differs from that of many other papers. Stanley Meisler, the Toronto-based correspondent who provides most of the coverage, deals almost exclusively in interpretive and analytical "features." He recently had, for example, a thoughtful piece about the prevailing state of mind in British Columbia. British Columbia, like Quebec, frequently feels singular.

The headline, *British Columbia Nurses Alienation from Canada*, was a shade stronger than the article itself. Below are excerpts:

"The people out here," provincial Premier William Bennett said in his office in the stately legislative building facing Victoria harbor, "feel a hundred years of resentment that they were a colony within a country."

"We don't matter," said Jack Webster, Vancouver's popular tele-



Stanley Meisler
Los Angeles Times

vision newsmen. "We just don't matter." Webster, who came to British Columbia from Scotland in 1947, says, "The political alienation here is total and complete."

"The fever has always been there," said Iona Campagnolo, a former member of the Trudeau cabinet. . . . "But the [recent] election [when the Liberals failed to win a single seat in the three westernmost provinces] acted like a switch setting it off."

Some British Columbians find all this talk exaggerated. David Barrett, the socialist leader of the opposition in the provincial legislature, . . . described the talk as nonsense . . . irresponsible."

"Anyone who talks about western alienation," he said, "is a fruitcake, a nut-ball, a tinkertoy, a jerk, you name it. Alienation is a typical media fascination. . . . Sure B.C. is different. Every part of the country is different."

The Canadian Identity

In a June issue of the *New York Review of Books*, J.M. Cameron noted that the [Quebec] referendum of May 20 has directed the world's attention to Canada and has prompted questions about its political integrity.

He then reviewed two books about Canada, one written by an