

### Ethnic press exhibition at library

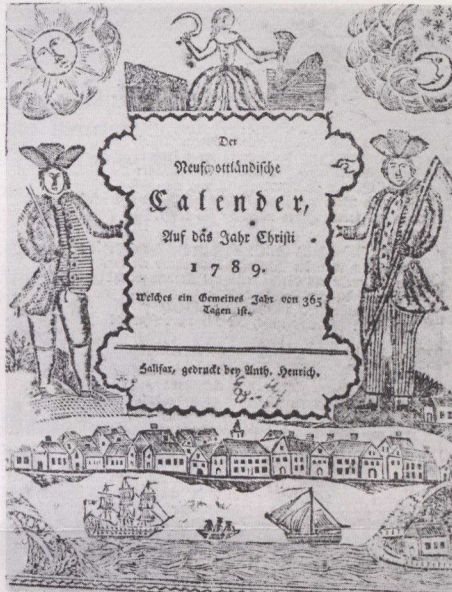
The National Library of Canada has mounted an exhibition of its extensive collection of ethnic newspapers and periodicals entitled, *The Ethnic Press in Canada: Almost 200 years of ethnic journalism*.

The exhibition, which opened June 25 in Ottawa and closes September 12, traces the development and history of what has been called the voice of Canada's "third element", the hundreds and thousands of immigrants who made Canada their home. It features serial publications selected from among the 1,500 titles – approximately 350 are current – in more than 45 languages, which the National Library presently houses. In addition to their news and interest value to the ethnic communities of Canada, these serial publications are an invaluable source of information to historians, demographers, sociologists, political scientists and journalists.

Examples of printing plates, a small hand press, a series of handwritten newspapers, and a "newspaper stand" displaying current ethnic newspapers and a selection of ethnic magazines kept by the National Library, are on display.

### Major resource

In 1973, as part of its contribution to the Indian Government's multicultural pro-



*The first ethnic serial publication in Canada, published in German by Anthony Henry (Anton Heirich) one of the publishers of Canada's first newspapers, the Halifax Gazette.*

gram, the National Library undertook to collect and to preserve all serial publications of Canadian cultural communities. Since that time all known, currently published ethnic newspapers have been ordered on subscription.

The National Library's holdings of ethnic newspapers, both current and retrospective, in the original and on microfilm, number over 400 titles.

### Methylmercury study released

The results of a study on the effects of methylmercury on the health of residents in certain Quebec Indian communities were released recently by McGill University in Montreal.

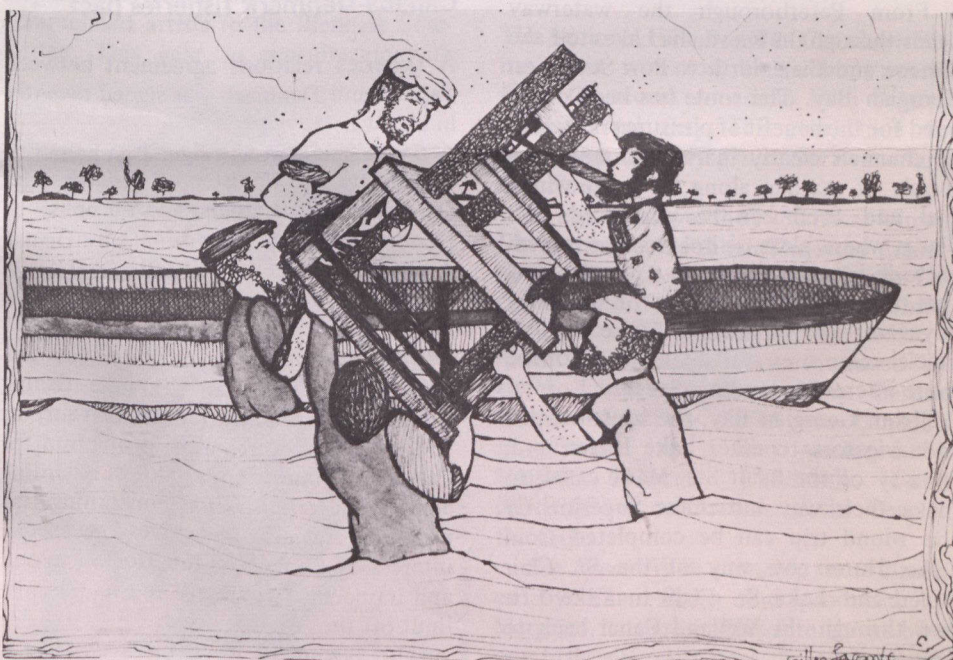
The study was conducted over the past two years by the university at a cost of \$400,000 which was shared equally by the Canadian Government, the Quebec Government and the Donner Canadian Foundation. The Cree communities which participated in the study were also actively involved in its planning and execution.

The purpose of the study was to determine the effects of eating mercury-contaminated fish on the health of residents of the Cree Indian communities of Great Whale, Fort George, Mistassini and Waswanipi and to clarify the scientific debate on the health effects of methylmercury at the levels shown in Canadian native people. The study was also considered important as a basis for providing advice to the Cree communities of northwest Quebec.

The study was undertaken in two parts. The first component was an adult study of all Cree residents over 30 years of age and members of the Mistassini, Waswanipi and Great Whale River bands living in or near their own communities since 1975. Of the 722 eligible adults, 592 were examined. The report concludes that there was an association between some neurological findings and estimated exposure to methylmercury, especially in Mistassini. The degree of abnormality in almost all these cases was assessed as "mild". The data did not permit identification of a threshold level of methylmercury below which no effect was observed and the report makes no estimate of absolute risk in relation to exposure.

The second component was a study of children potentially exposed to mercury prenatally. Two hundred and thirty-four of 247 children between 12 and 30 months of age on July 1, 1978 born to women of the Mistassini, Waswanipi, Great Whale and Fort George Bands were examined.

Some neurological signs were detected in these children but they were so mild, it was difficult to be certain that they represent abnormal functions. Their meaning and importance could only be determined by continued medical surveillance of the children.



*The Arrival of the Press, a drawing by Gilles Lacombe based on an idea by Magnus Einarsson. The press for the first Icelandic newspaper in Canada, Framfari, arrived in 1877.*