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sdiction, and so to demonstrate com-
ence (or sovereignty), many Québécois,
out publicly admitting it, were at-
pting at the same time to take a step to-
ds state competence (or sovereignty).
This formalistic legal behaviour quick-
ed Ottawa to view such a project as a
rious plot and a dangerous under-
ng that had first of all to be contained
then quickly frozen into the frame-
k of "provincial powers". This was
kly done.
Naturally, the "course of events" is
necessarily the whole story, but it
t be acknowledged that the "jurisdic-
al competence" approach was bound
er or later to cause direct confronta-
s and to trap Quebec and Ottawa in a
of federal and international "conven-
alism" at the time of constitutional
ferences and international conferences
e French-speaking community.

eral response

eral leaders retorted, using the same
alistic methods, resorting to constitu-
al law and international law, alerting
r federal governments, and "making it
" to many young African nations
mselves very sensitive to questions of
idiction and competence, in particular
that had benefited or wished to
fit from Canadian assistance) that
e could never be two official spokesmen
ne international scene — in short, that
ada's external sovereignty was indi-
e. This also was quickly put into
The series of events surrounding
ec's presence at, and Canada's ab-
from, the Libreville conference in
Canada was subsequently cleared up, on one
s who hd by a "new normalization" of co-op-
ve relations with francophone states
stitutions and on the other hand by
establishment of new understandings
cedures at Kinshasa, Niamey and
ec City between 1968 and 1971.
Then there was France. The visit of
Elliott Trudeau to Paris in October
clearly demonstrated that the
ard d'Estaing Government also ac-
ed the principle of the indivisibility
nada's international personality. This
not prevent the French Government
continuing to co-operate directly with
ec; the warm welcome the Prime
ster of Quebec, Robert Bourassa, re-
d two months later was proof of that.
Bourassa became the first foreigner to
ked to participate in a meeting of the
ch Cabinet. In Paris's view, co-opera-
between France and Quebec — insti-
alized since 1964 by a joint commis-

sion — is not incompatible with France-
Canada co-operation, even within the
federal framework. What counts above all
is the positive results of this complemen-
tary co-operation. The same is true of
Canadian and Quebec activity in French-
speaking institutions, provided that
neither side adopts cat-and-mouse habits
or attitudes.

Indeed, it is wholly natural that
Quebec should be better suited and more
inclined than, say, Alberta to develop
cultural ties with Senegal, though this is
not necessarily true technically and
economically speaking. On the other hand,
Quebec cannot and should not confine it-
self to the French-speaking community, to
which some would like to see its influence
and its activity limited.

However, while Quebec's unique char-
acter is now recognized and accepted in
the French-speaking world, this is not al-
ways the case elsewhere, even in countries
where Quebec has appointed attachés for
trade or immigration, or *ad hoc* represen-
tatives to conferences of international
institutions. Since the beginning of the
Seventies, a much larger presence has been
sought for Quebec in areas that until then
had been overlooked — economics, tech-
nology, trade (the GATT negotiations, for
example) —, without seeking to provoke
any constitutional battles.

More positive effects

Quebec began in 1960 to make its presence
felt officially in the world at large. Con-
sidered objectively, this activity has had
many more positive than negative effects
on Canada's international practices. Too
often, however, there has been a tendency
to concentrate on the few deplorable "flag
quarrels", rather than dealing with Que-
bec's positive contributions to the French-
speaking community on the one hand and
to Canada's international activity on the
other. Again, Quebec has undeniably been
much enriched by its participation in in-
ternational life. This movement of opening
up to — and participating in — the world is
only beginning. Now that the bases have
been established, it remains to be planned
and oriented in more meaningful ways.
The outlook for international exchanges
by Quebec is virtually limitless.

While a page of history has been
turned with the coming to power of Prime
Minister Lévesque's Parti québécois gov-
ernment in November 1976, the book
remains wide open. The history of Que-
bec's international relations is richer in
future prospects than in past events, and
this is certainly to the advantage of all
parties involved.

*Relations
not confined to
French-speaking
community*