

Quebec's language law approved

Bill 101, Quebec's controversial language legislation, was adopted by a vote of 54-32 in the provincial legislature on August 26. (See *Canada Weekly* issues dated July 6, P. 3 and July 27, P. 3.)

While the basic principles in the White Paper tabled by Quebec Cultural Development Minister Camille Laurin on April 27, remain unchanged, several amendments have been made, including: a new section exempting children with serious learning disabilities from restrictions on entrance to English schools in the province; a new section permitting access to English schools by children moving to Quebec from other provinces, if those provinces sign "reciprocity agreements" guaranteeing education in French for those desiring it; and a change that gives corporate head offices which work mainly in English a chance to negotiate individual programs with the French-language office for the promotion of French in their operations.

Basic principles

Included in the new legislation are the following basic principles:

- Future access to English schools will be restricted to children whose mother or father attended English elementary schools in Quebec (with some transitional exceptions).
- Businesses must obtain by 1983 certi-

Pressure for action by Federal Government expected

According to a report by the Canadian Press, the Federal Government can expect increased pressure to take some action on Quebec's new language legislation, now that it has become law.

The report said that Postmaster-General Jean-Jacques Blais stated the Federal Government would discuss the question at a Cabinet meeting scheduled early in September. Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau had said earlier that the Federal Government could take no action until the bill became law and, at that time, constitutionality of the legislation could be investigated.

Canadian Press continued: "The Progressive Conservative opposition has also been pressing for a constitutional challenge of the legislation, as it feels it infringes upon the rights of Quebec's English-speaking minority by limiting enrolment in the province's English schools.

"Provincial politicians across Canada reacted with a mixture of regret and disappointment to the passage of Bill 101.

"David Steuart, Liberal senator for Saskatchewan, said the controversial language legislation would drive a wedge between the French-speaking people of Quebec and the rest of Canada. 'It's a shame, when the rest of Canada is moving to greater recognition of bilingualism and minority-language rights, that Quebec... is turning back the clock,' Steuart said.

"Ontario Liberal Leader Stuart Smith, a native of Montreal, described the bill as a regrettable piece of legislation but Ontario Premier William Davis reacted with more optimism.

"Davis said he hoped Quebec would 're-think... Bill 101, particularly in light of initiatives being taken in French-language education across Canada.'

"Ontario NDP Leader Stephen Lewis said he 'regrets greatly the indecent speed with which the bill was pushed through the assembly.'"

ficates attesting to their efforts to promote the use of French and the employing of French-speaking people.

- French is the only official version of court judgments, arbitration rulings, laws and government regulations.
- French is the language of the public

administration, including government, government agencies, municipal administrations, school boards, health and social services, although English may be used for internal communications for mainly English-speaking boards, city administrations, hospitals and social services.

UN delegates face lively session

Delegates from 149 countries will again meet in the General Assembly Hall of the United Nations in a few days to begin discussions on well over 100 agenda items. While some of these deal with issues that have defied solution for over three decades, the search will continue for ideas and compromises that may point the way to the settlement of seemingly intractable problems.

As is traditional, the thirty-second session will open on the third Tuesday of September. This year, it will be preceded by a brief resumption of the thirty-first session, which will be reconvened on September 13 to consider the results of the Conference on International Economic Co-operation (CIEC). This Conference, which had its origin in a UN resolu-

tion, brought together 27 nations, representing the views of developed as well as developing countries. Canada's representative, Allan MacEachen, President of the Privy Council, was elected Co-Chairman of CIEC, which for 18 months subjected the economic relations between the developed and the developing world to the closest scrutiny. CIEC completed its proceedings in Paris on June 2 with the adoption by consensus of its final report. After this report has been formally received by the thirty-first session, it will undoubtedly be carried over to the subsequent session for detailed consideration in the Economic Committee.

Southern Africa

A further question that will be intensively debated in New York this fall will be the situation in southern Africa. In this

region, three separate, but interrelated issues will occupy the attention of the delegates, and several new developments call for a fresh evaluation of the situation. The Western Security Council members, including Canada, have launched an initiative aimed at bringing about the independence of Namibia (Southwest Africa) on the basis of fair and free elections under UN supervision and control. Prospects for a peaceful, negotiated settlement in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) will also be examined, as well as the current status of *apartheid* in the Republic of South Africa.

Middle East

As in the past years, the situation in the Middle East will be debated under several headings: support for the UN Relief and Works Agency, the Question of Palestine, the Peace Conference on the Middle East,