

## Managing interdependence in southern Africa

his premiership P.W. Botha issued a dramatic call to white South Africans: "Adapt or die!" While that ringing rhetoric has failed to be followed up by "great gestures," fundamental change has started in South Africa and powerful forces within the political arena and the private sector will ensure it develops apace. Thus the time is past for assessments such as "too little too late," "no longer meaningful," and "cosmetic." Conversely, the time is ripe for a dialogue between South Africa and her immediate neighbors on the hard realities of life in southern Africa. Such contact is vital to make the region understand that time is running out.

## Quebec in the US

Through the eyes of anglophones

# How America sees Quebec

by Stephen Banker

Virtually everything the United States hears about French Canada comes from English Canadians. This has led to an unbalanced perspective, which is further distorted by scholarly studies that fail to take the real world into account, by the peculiar habits of wire service and broadcast news-gathering, and by the clumsy efforts of the Quebec government to rectify the situation.

The result is that with the exception of special interest groups, America is largely ignorant of events and conditions in Quebec. In mid-1981, Henry Giniger, then the Ottawa correspondent of *The New York Times* told a Quebec audience that the Parti Québécois had aroused hostility among such important US institutions as the government, the business community and the military. "Yes," said a member of his audience, "but what do the workers think?" Giniger replied that American workers don't think about Quebec at all. "Quebec is the furthest thing from their minds," he explained. "They don't read about it in whatever papers they read. And they certainly don't get much on television, which is where they get most of their information." This, Giniger remembers, "shocked the hell out of the audience."

Perhaps the surprise was because Quebecers are conscious of their cultural specialness in North America. Yet, I hope to show here, coverage of French Canada in the US media is hit with a double whammy: not only are both sides of the arguments presented by one of the disputants, but overall attention suffers from the "just like us" fallacy

that only slightly more justifiably diminishes consideration of the rest of Canada.

### Few US reporters in Canada

There are about a dozen staff reporters for US publications stationed in Canada. Of these, only Alan Freeman of *Dow Jones/Wall Street Journal* and Leo Ryan of *The Journal of Commerce* are based in Quebec. It is no coincidence that both publications are business-oriented and the information their reporters gather is not always for publication. Freeman and Ryan are both bilingual Quebecers with anglo roots (Ryan's mother is French-Canadian) who are hostile to the independence movement. Ryan says he reflects "the point of view of the majority of the business community in Montreal."

Many organizations have stringers (freelancers, sometimes on retainers) in Quebec. Because of the informal nature of these arrangements, the personnel changes

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