

a settlement with Indians and Eskimos trying through the courts to halt temporarily the \$5.8 billion James Bay hydro-electric project, heralded by the government as the glittering jewel in its development diadem.

"Economic progress is the basis of social justice," in the philosophy of Mr. Bourassa, who pledged improvement in the quality of life as his first priority in the coming years.

The oil squeeze will likely require fast and flexible action by the government, though the Quebec situation is eased by vast resources of electric power. Mr. Saint-Pierre, the Industry Minister, reported Quebec's 1973 gross national product increase rate at 7.5 per cent compared with the all-Canada figure of 7 per cent. But both the minister and the premier spoke of the coming year with some caution.

Encouraging assets

While the international situation causes concern about exports, Mr. Bourassa lists such encouraging domestic assets as the forthcoming Olympics, numerous investment projects and political and social stability. The province has indicated it still plans to go ahead with a state-owned oil refining and distribution company despite the federal intention to set up its own operation on a national scale. The province also is active in joint state-industry enterprises.

In pursuit of cultural sovereignty, Mr. Bourassa wants constitutional transfer to the province of jurisdiction over communications — radio and television — now exercised by the federal government.

"It is easy to understand that a French minority in Canada cannot leave its cultural future to an English majority," says Mr. Bourassa.

The emotion-charged question of language faces the Bourassa government with one of its greatest challenges. The problem is to give greater status to the French language without damaging the economy or discouraging investment. The government now sees language of work as the key approach, rather than language of school instruction, though that is important too. Apparently the government feels the work aspect can be achieved without coercive legislation.

But legislation has been variously described as "possible" and "probable" to place immigrant children in French rather than English schools. The picture is full of anomalies. Some French-Canadian parents, not only immigrants, want to place their children in English schools. Others show a strange lack of interest in the dominant language of North America. The government is striving to improve second-language schools in the dual system.

Factory Theatre

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unique about themselves in their own Canadian environment.

Gasse puts it this way: "I don't think any writer can escape his environment. George Walker's *Bagdad Saloon*, which was also in the festival, has absolutely no allusions to Canadian symbols, the beaver or whatever, but somehow the play feels very much a part of the country. It is set in a mythical Bagdad, but in fact it's a kind of reflection of Canada in a state of change.

"It's about Canadian inertia. There's an artist trying to accomplish something in impossible surroundings, trying to cope with his own frustrations, living in a desert — and Canada is in fact a desert, a cultural desert, with no roots, no history, no viable literary tradition. Our only traditions are artificial colonial traditions which we are trying to extricate ourselves from. And the artist has this impossible dream of building up a special saloon in the desert and bringing together various famous people — Gertrude Stein, Henry Miller . . . Maybe it's an answer to the Factory itself, that we are trying to achieve the impossible. . . ."

very rare Canadian play. So that in the theatre Canada is still a colony, borrowing from another country for all the major institutions — importing directors from Britain even more than from the United States to give them direction."

Rosemary commented here that everyone in the Canadian theatre was "up in arms" about the recent appointment of Robin Phillips from London to direct the Stratford Festival in 1975. They respect him professionally, but they don't want him.

In its historical context, Ken Gasse's decision in 1970 to perform only Canadian plays was revolutionary — comparable in its rashness to the declaration of Canada's famous coterie of landscape painters, the Group of Seven, that the landscape of their country was as worthy of an artist's attention as a Dutch canal or a misty English hedgerow. Their detractors were legion, but they eventually made their point with a blaze of powerful canvasses. The Factory Theatre in Toronto have had a better start. Perhaps they, too, are at the beginning of a major breakthrough.

The Factory Theatre Workshops



He paused and a cold wind blew over the conversation. It was late and Rosemary was packing for them to fly back to Canada the next day. Everyone was tired. One felt the weight of the mountain these young enthusiasts are trying to shift.

Earlier, they had talked at length about the state of the Canadian theatre in the years before 1970.

"Before the founding of Stratford (Ontario) in 1953 there was nothing to speak of beyond an amateur movement. Then regional theatre developed with a whole chain of play houses and a body of professional actors, but these Canadian playhouses have done little else than British and American hits with a few classics thrown in and the

Our mistake

In the Canada Today Issue Nov/Dec 1973, Simon Jenkins article on Canadian cities goes underground, said that Montreal was the first Canadian city to build a subway. This was an error, Canada's first subway was opened in Toronto in 1954.