

# What of French culture in Alberta? College St. Jean struggles with burden

Rene Levesque once said that the Canadian Federation would be the graveyard of the French Canadian nation. Immigrants to the Province of Quebec now have the option of having their children taught in either English or French. Overwhelmingly these new Canadians have chosen the language of commerce — English. The Government of Quebec is disturbed by this trend. For Quebec to remain as the "bastion" of French culture in North America it seems that the National Assembly will have to pass legislation to force newcomers to learn French. This problem of cultural survival seems to have been particularly exaggerated when one realizes that these fears of extinction exist in a province that is eighty percent French speaking. To the Québécois however this issue is a reality.

If Quebec is having difficulty maintaining a thriving society what of those French Canadians outside of that province? Since they have little power or influence in the decision making processes, it becomes increasingly the burden of educational institutions to promote the French culture. In Edmonton, College Saint Jean works to maintain and stimulate the "other" Canadian culture.

Established as a seminary in 1907, the College catered to aspiring priests from France. Along the way there have been changes in the curriculum and aims of the institution. Along with its university programme, the College offers grades 7 through 12.

Relations between the University of Alberta and the Corporation du College Saint Jean became more intimate in 1968. The endorsement by the University of the recommendations of the "B and B" report led to communications between the two institutions. A final agreement was reached in November, 1970 that affiliated the two bodies. Students may now enroll in courses at Saint Jean and receive credit for them at the U of A. Basically the College serves the needs of Arts, Science and Education students. Most junior laboratory courses are taught in English while the senior courses such as French, sociology, philosophy, psychology, chemistry, genetics, history and geography are given in French.

Frank MacMahon, Dean of College St. Jean, noted that "one of the things that attracts students to the College is that everybody that comes gets to know each other". This is inevitable since there are only 186 students.

The College has representation on General Faculties Council and Dean's Council while the students are associate members of the U of A Students' Union. MacMahon pointed out that through affiliation with the U of A Saint Jean has access to "high powered talent", publications, and audio visual equipment previously difficult to attain. He added that salaries of the staff are now much improved.

"As a private institution austerity was a fact of life. The present austerity of the

University of Alberta means comparative affluence for College Saint Jean."

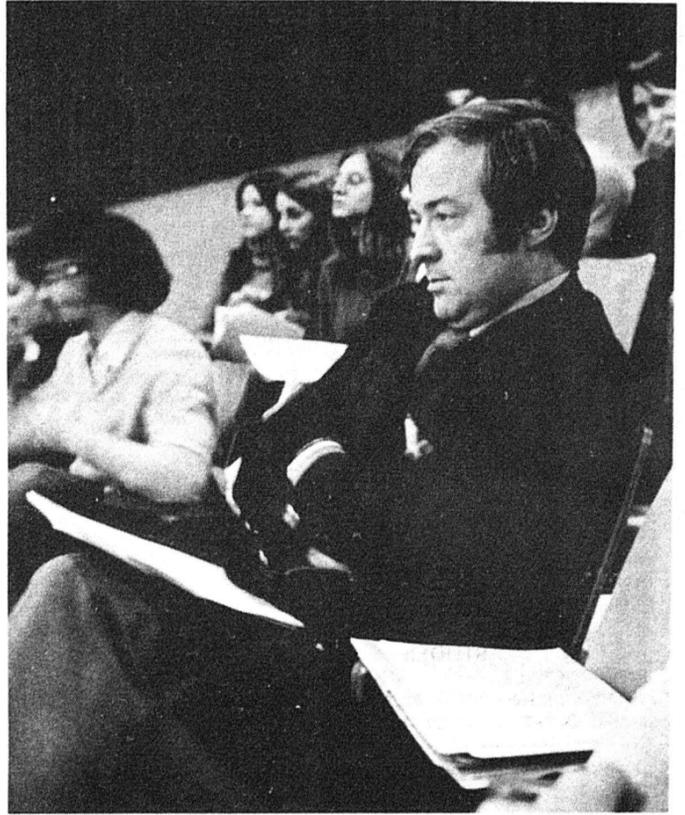
But what of the disadvantages? Decisions that used to take weeks now linger on for months at a time. But it takes time to "fit into the machinery".

College Saint Jean faces internal problems as well. A general meeting of students, staff and administration took place on January 26. Their difficulties and frustrations were put down on paper by Jean-Pierre Lamonde, a specialist in group relations, and discussed at that meeting. Among the problems listed were:

- that while the College depends on the University materially; it must not depend upon it culturally
- That a French atmosphere does not exist at the College
- students are not united
- lack of communication between professors and administration
- the goals of the College are poorly defined
- a lack of participation.

MacMahon attributed the lack of French atmosphere in part to the drop in population at the residence, which is located on the College's tract of land. In the past, the occupants at the residence formed the spear-head of activity. They created the rural areas and now it seems they can find cheaper accommodation than the \$85 per month the College charges for room and board.

To maintain an identity is difficult in a large urban centre but there is still a vitality and a social identity that is miles ahead of Western Canadian "culture" dominated by American culture and the idea of the melting pot said MacMahon. It is in this that bilingual educational institutions could play an important role but the grants to them are inadequate he feels. While a \$2,000 per capita provincial grant was given for students in universities there is only an additional \$130 provided for students learning in both English and French.



Frank MacMahon.....Dean of College St. Jean photo Ken Mah

The future of the French language seems to be a bit more secure, however, than formerly as the federal government promotes its policy of bilingualism. The regulations of the Alberta Department of Education still state that the public schools in Alberta may not teach more than fifty per cent of their courses in French. Apparently the government fears that if this limit were exceeded the result would be French Canadian ghettos across the province. Until two years ago teachers were allowed to teach in French for only one hour a

day. This would in part explain why French Canadians feel as though they are treated as part of an ethnic minority and not as one of the founding cultures of Canada.

MacMahon however links the future of small French communities and educational institutions in the West to the province of Quebec. The main pavilion at the College in fact was constructed with the aid of a \$100,000 grant from the Quebec government.

"If Quebec becomes a strong social unit then she will support us. If Quebec is not capable of evolving a French identity then we are finished", he said.

## New Abortion Brief

Comprehensive briefs favoring the expansion of abortion facilities which had been presented to the Social Credit Government but not acted upon were discussed at an Edmonton Coalition for the Repeal of Abortion Laws meeting, Monday.

Ideas were formulated on what should be placed in the Coalition's brief is to be presented to Health Minister Neil Crawford and Minister Without Portfolio Helen Hunley February 17.

A committee was chosen at Monday's meeting to draw-up the brief and to compile a folder of pertinent information regarding the urgent need for

an education program of expanding abortion facilities and contraception to all ages.

The challenge to the group was stressed by the fact that two briefs compiled by Alberta medical personnel and recently presented to the Provincial Progressive Conservative Government were to no avail.

The next meeting held in connection with the February 17th meeting with the provincial ministers will be held in the Wauneta Lounge February 14 where the brief will be presented for the group's approval and the following day forwarded with the information folder to each minister.

## What does sex lead to?

Sex is a reality of life. What do we do with it? Does sex lead to intimate communication or is it intimacy needed before sex takes on value?

A teach-in labelled "Sexuality and the Search for Intimacy" which will take place Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, Feb. 13, 14, and 15, at 7:30 on the 14 floor of Tory, will try to help people to view and experience their personal relationships and their needs for human sharing and intimacy within a framework of meaning and significance.

The teach-in is co-ordinated by the university Chaplains with assistance from various faculty members and the Students' Union. Dr. and Mrs. Arthur Foster of Chicago are the primary resource persons.

They will co-lead each of the evening workshop communication seminars.

Each evening session will develop a theme of the topic "Communication Between Persons" is designed to explore the elements of good communication between human beings and to develop an atmosphere of openness and trust and to examine the nature of sexual identity in interpersonal relationships.

Monday the topic will be "Communication Between Persons". "Can sexuality be separated from emotional sharing?" and "intimacy and how is sexual expression related to widespread social alienation and anomie" will be the subjects examined.

Tuesday the final session on "Communication and Life Style Alternatives" will explore the institutionalization of sexual relationships and examine the utility of various patterns of courtship, marriage, and the family.

## Seventeen

minus

five

When the dust cleared over the Students' Union Tuesday there were 17 candidates in the running for five positions in the upcoming Students' Union elections.

Ann McRae and Saffron Shandro; Mark Priegert and Chris Bearchell; Gerry Riskin and Rob Spragins; and Dave Biltek and Doug Black are slates that will contest the offices of President and Executive Vice-president.

In the running for Vice-president (Academic) are Patrick Delaney, Linda Gadbourey, and Wayne Madden.

Beth Kuhnke, Barry McLaren, Kirk Mitchell, and Larry Panych are trying out for Vice-president (Services) which is roughly equivalent to the present position of co-ordinator.

Gerry West and Donald Wiley are running for Vice-president (Administration). This new position under reorganization will encompass the duties of the treasurer as well as other administrative duties.

## STUDENT AND STAFF VACANCIES ON GENERAL

### FACULTIES COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Over the next few months vacancies will occur for academic and administrative staff, graduate and undergraduate students on the standing and *ad hoc* committees of General Faculties Council. The standing committees where student vacancies will occur are listed below:

- Academic Development Committee
- Admission Requirements Committee
- Calendars Committee
- Campus Development Committee
- Campus Security Services Policy Committee
- Course Registration Procedures Committee
- Housing and Food Services Committee
- Library Committee
- Parking Appeals Committee
- Committee on Research
- Investigation of Teaching Committee
- Timetabling Policy Committee
- Undergraduate Scholarships Committee
- Committee to Administer the Purchase and Placement of Works of Art

The GFC Nominating Committee will be pleased to hear from staff members and students who have suggestions for nominations or who would be interested in serving on the GFC Committees. Interested persons should contact the Secretary of the Nominating Committee, Miss P. Howlett, 200 University Hall, Phone: 432 - 4965.