

# MERCI CANADA

During the recent American "thank-yous" for the escape of the six embassy staff members shown on TV, I noticed frequently the wording "Merci Canada" etc. for the part Canada played in helping their people.

*Why not?*

This I think is an insult to all English speaking Canadians even though it was unintentional on the part of the Americans.

Was it only French Canadians who helped in the escape, or do the Americans think that Canada is a French-speaking country?

This is quite understandable when the Canadian ambassador in Washington speaks broken English, and having returned recently from the Middle East where I was frequently asked why I could not speak French because I was Canadian.

*Why?*

Makes you wonder what kind of propaganda Ottawa puts out to the rest of the world.

*How arrogant!*

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*The French programme is P.C. sponsored*

ARE THESE ENLIGHTENING?

# French drive drawbacks are detailed

*My learning English did not hamper my learning French so excellently.*

*French can study English & often Spanish as well, are they that smart?*

I wonder if those pressing for French immersion in the schools realize it is at the expense of English?

However, French should certainly be a mandatory subject in all schools, from the lowest to the highest grades.

A team of researchers, investigating the writing

ability of secondary school students reported that the achievement in writing ability by these students was "extremely disturbing." Out of 13 skills tested at Grade 12 level, only three earned "satisfactory" marks. Many students going on to university were unable to fulfill satisfactorily their assignments, or even to follow the lectures adequately and had to have special, extra English classes, before they could participate satisfactorily in the university program.

The report by the researchers calls for schools to increase the time for English, particularly for instructions and practice in writing expression. And yet we are pressuring for French immersion!

Have we lost all sense of proportion? Or are we trying to turn this area into another Quebec? All French and no English?

*Paradoxical as it seems*  
I doubt very much if the majority of taxpayers wish their tax dollars to contribute to such a program.

MURIEL POWELL,  
Cowichan Bay.

Bi & Bi stands for tribalism

*Mr. Schlemmer*

## Bilingual problem unsolvable

Gaston Godbout strikes again. In our country, it is of course his right to express his opinion as he wishes but his English/French debate is tiring. The problem (if, indeed it is an actual, rather than political one) is insoluble. Face it, it's not just an "anglophone" versus "francophone" situation—it's a question of how to forcibly get all other Canadians of any other descent to develop a split personality—one French, one Canadian and this will never happen. No matter what Quebec does or the federal/provincial governments do, this idealism will not become a reality. The tiny country of Belgium is a perfect example of this impossibility. So, Gaston, whether Quebec separates or not, the problem for Canada is

insoluble except perhaps in the minds of some people. Cultural heritage and language need not be protected by law or decree as it is handed down in families who care to do so. If they don't care to do so, they are assimilated into the cultural group of their choosing. As far as Canada being a "bilingual" country, this is simply true "on paper" only. The province (presently) of Quebec is French with a small number of other Canadians residing there. The rest of Canada is Canadian and really not trying too hard to classify themselves as anything else.

*He's right!*

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THE COLONIST, Sun., April 15, 1979 5

## The Number 1 election issue should be bilingualism

I am of French background and after reading such letters as G. E. Godbout wrote in the April 6 *Colonist* it does not make me too proud of the fact.

These kind of gentlemen are always quick to use that word, bigot, on any one who attempts to put things as they really are.

I think it is high time we French counted our blessings and dropped this crusade to make Canada a total French speaking nation, and start thinking about all the other ethnic groups that have had difficulty in learning a different language and are not complaining about it.

But now Trudeau and his gang are expecting them to learn French as well, which is not fair. Why not all be Canadians with one working language right across our land, along side of our 230 million neighbors south of the border who all speak English.

This should be the number one issue in the coming election and I would advise people to wake up as it is getting late.

*How ridiculous*  
Bilingualism across Canada will never work. If they would practice it in Quebec it would be great, but they don't do that. Wake up folks and don't listen to fellows like Mr. Godbout. French on

the other side of the package will not improve its contents — it only adds to the price.

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*Retired farmer. Can't speak French. Angliego his name Turncoat.*

*Malicious letters Destructive (except Kuhl)*

## Wisdom in Florida

Recently I was very interested to see in an American paper that when a group of people in a city in Florida asked to have signs in Spanish placed in their city (60 per cent of them being Spanish), they were refused on the grounds that coming to America they must become Americans and have to speak English. To do otherwise the report said would be divisive. What wisdom!

Never have we in Canada been so divided! As James Richardson said on leaving the Liberal party due to the language bill: "This is an English speaking continent, therefore there should be one official language — and that is English." How right he is — how wrong is Pierre Trudeau. But how grateful we are that none of the other ethnic groups find it impossible to read English!

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*They emigrated to the U.S. We bounded Canada 1st.*