

*A Fractured Identity: The 1980 Referendum and the Italians of Montréal*

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### **Abstract**

The city of Montréal has long-served as a hub for political and social change and agitation within Canada. Home to numerous currents of migration in Canada, these waves of migrants exercised their political agency within Montréal to carve out their own form of autonomy and identity. Italian-Canadians had a unique impact on the sociopolitical fabric of Montréal; by contrast, events such as the Quiet Revolution, October Crisis, and the 1980 Québec Referendum split the community regarding Québécois nationalism and their decision to engage with it.

Despite their monolithic perception by the general public, the Italian-Canadian community in Montréal were not as opposed to the 1980 referendum or Québec nationalism as popular sentiment indicates. In fact, generational differences and migration patterns influenced the degrees of support or dissent that arose during debates of Québec nationalism and the idea of sovereignty. The Italians of Montréal had unique ways of propagating their views through community organizations and documents. Italian-language newspapers in particular disparaged Québécois nationalist groups. Despite this prevailing outlook, there was engagement with the separatist movement by Italians, many of them either from earlier generations that had migrated to the city in the interwar period and integrated within Québec society, or the children of those who arrived in the postwar period.

Language legislation was also considered by Italians as part of the sovereigntist project, and the Italian-Canadian community had differing views on the subject of linguistic education. Press outlets clamored against linguistic consolidation through legislation such as Bills 22 and 101, while certain notable members of the community supported these bills as extensions of the sovereigntist project. Overall, the Italian-Canadian community in Montréal was engaged within the referendum both as agents of separatism and federalism, involved both with the Parti Québécois and the Liberal Party of Québec.

La ville de Montréal a longtemps été un centre de changement et d'agitation politique et sociale au Canada. Abritant de nombreux courants migratoires au Canada, ces vagues de migrants ont exercé leur action politique à Montréal pour se tailler une forme d'autonomie et d'identité. Les Italo-Canadiens ont eu un impact unique sur le tissu sociopolitique de Montréal ; par contre, des événements tels que la Révolution Tranquille, la Crise d'octobre et le référendum québécois de 1980 ont divisé la diaspora quant au nationalisme québécois et à sa décision de s'y engager.

Malgré leur perception monolithique par le grand public, la communauté italo-canadienne de Montréal n'était pas aussi opposée au référendum de 1980 ou au nationalisme québécois que l'indique le sentiment populaire. En fait, les différences générationnelles et les modèles de migration ont influencé les degrés de soutien ou de dissidence qui ont surgi lors des débats sur le nationalisme québécois et l'idée de souveraineté. Les Italiens de Montréal avaient des moyens uniques de propager leurs opinions par le biais d'organisations communautaires et de documents. Les journaux italiens, en particulier, dénigraient les groupes nationalistes québécois. Malgré ce point de vue dominant, les Italiens s'engagent dans le mouvement séparatiste, dont beaucoup appartiennent aux générations précédentes qui ont émigré dans la ville dans l'entre-deux-guerres et se sont intégrées à la société québécoise, ou sont les enfants de ceux qui sont arrivés dans l'après-guerre.

La législation linguistique est également considérée par les Italiens comme faisant partie du projet souverainiste, et la communauté italo-canadienne a des opinions divergentes sur le sujet de l'éducation linguistique. Les organes de presse s'opposent à la consolidation linguistique par le biais de lois comme les projets de loi 22 et 101, tandis que certains membres notables de la communauté soutiennent ces projets de loi en tant que prolongement du projet souverainiste. Dans l'ensemble, la communauté italo-canadienne de Montréal s'est engagée dans le référendum à la fois comme agent du séparatisme et du fédéralisme, s'engageant à la fois auprès du Parti québécois et du Parti libéral du Québec.

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I have to thank my family for sticking with me through the research process, and for listening to my endless rambling over the minutiae of Québec linguistic policies, migration, and separatist tendencies. To Mom, Dad, and my older brother Nicholas, thanks for listening to my long-winded (and very caffeinated) self throughout the writing process.

To Mom, thank you for your patience and understanding throughout the process, and your help in making sense of some of the material. To Dad, thank you for your continued interest in the subject and your patience when I would pester you about numerous archival finds. Also, thank you for your help in confirming some of the translations regarding dialect, and for getting a laugh out of my constant theorizing. To Nicholas, thanks for being a pain in the neck throughout my degree and telling me I should have gone into engineering like yourself. We both know you are the smart one, big guy. (We also both know you are proud of me though.)

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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my grandparents, who inspired me to pursue the shared history of our homelands throughout my journey as a scholar, and helped spark my love of history since I was a child from their stories of the Old World and their arrival in Canada. It is my sincerest hope that I was able to live up to their expectations, and honoured their part in this shared history as migrants to this wonderful city we call home; for them who were part of these events, and I as a spectator and historian.

To my late Nonno Nicola, I hope I was able to encapsulate the experience of Italians like yourself who arrived in a strange, unfamiliar land, and that I was able to honour your memory and the stories we shared over the countless meals together when I was a child. I wish I could have had the chance to give this thesis to you and see you laugh about the fact I chose to focus on Montréal as a historian.

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## **Introduction and Historiography**

### **Background:**

The 1980 Québec Referendum was a divisive political event centered on the issue of Québec's sovereignty and its quest to leave Canada and become a separate entity. The referendum, promoted by nationalist political parties such as the Parti Québécois (PQ), can be seen as a logical outcome of the rapid social change in Québec following the Quiet Revolution. The Quiet Revolution led to significant sociocultural shifts after the election of the Liberal Party of Québec (LPQ/PLQ) in 1960 under Premier Jean Lesage. It was a period of major social change, shifting the government from an authoritarian and cronyist institution under the thumb of Maurice Duplessis' Union Nationale to a technocratic institution.<sup>1</sup> Society too became more secular in outlook after generations of strong clerical influence, which had been propagated by the Duplessis government.<sup>2</sup> Lesage's more progressive government following the death of Duplessis signalled the end of "la Grande Noirceur" and led to significant agitation for change.<sup>3</sup> The consequences of the Quiet Revolution, such as Québécois nationalism, can still be felt in the modern day. The resurgence of Québécois nationalism under the Coalition d'Avenir Québec (CAQ) led by François Legault and its recent electoral victory, and the increasingly radical positions taken by separatist parties such as the Parti Québécois (PQ) regarding language, and the integration of immigrants into Québec, prompts a need to comprehend how divisive topics

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<sup>1</sup> Donald Cuccioletta and Martin Lubin, "The Québec Quiet Revolution: A Noisy Evolution," in *Contemporary Québec: Selected Readings and Commentaries*, eds. Michael D Behiels and Matthew Hayday, (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011), 193-4

<sup>2</sup> Jacques Rouillard, "Duplessis: Québec Turns Right," in *Contemporary Québec: Selected Readings and Commentaries*, eds. Michael D Behiels and Matthew Hayday, (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011), 20

<sup>3</sup> John Alexander Dickinson and Brian J Young, *A Short History of Québec*, 4th ed, (Montréal, Québec.: McGill-Queen's University Press), 2008, 305

such as separatism were handled in the past among migrant groups and how Québec nationalism gave birth to the separatist movement in the aftermath of the Quiet Revolution.

While much scholarship has been concerned with English Canada's reception of the referendum and the reaction of the anglophone minority in Québec, little has been written regarding the perspectives of allophone communities, including their political leanings and allegiances. These communities are seen as appendages of the anglophone community and the 'NO' side, given their long association with English-language institutions, and their perceived minimal agency in the political process. This does not explain why opposition to Québécois nationalism existed in the community, nor does it explore social tensions between the majority francophone population and the ethnic Italian community.

Tensions existed in the Italian community in Montréal and proliferated as a result of decades of struggle against the efforts of the francophone majority to forcibly integrate the community within French-language schools and institutions. These tensions had much to do with legislation regarding language of instruction in schools, and led to animosity between the two communities. This thesis aims to explore the impacts of the path to the 1980 Québec Referendum on the Italian ethnic community in Montréal. By analyzing the interplay of community organizations and politicians of Italian origin in Québec with nationalist struggles to introduce linguistic legislation and a referendum on provincial autonomy, I will study the impact of the sovereigntist push and how this drew the community into the question of Québec independence.

This thesis will contextualize the 1980 referendum and the reaction of the Italian ethnic community by exploring past outbursts of Québécois nationalism that shaped the Italian-Canadian community as well. The Saint-Léonard Riots, the October Crisis, and protests against linguistic legislation were formative events for the Italian ethnic community regarding Québec



nationalism. Issues of linguistic tension, decolonial sentiment, and sovereigntist political discourse were forged in the crucible of the Quiet Revolution, and directly affected both Italian-Canadians and Italo- Québécois who resided within the city. Linguistic tension was a major issue for the Italians even prior to the election of the Parti Québécois in 1976, with Bills 63 and 22 solidifying Italian opposition to Québec sovereignty, which coalesced in the Saint-Léonard Riots (1969) and the October Crisis (1970). Language was just as critical an issue towards sovereignty as was the referendum, with the Italian community struggling to find ways to protect their right to English in the province.

The 1980 referendum also complicates the anti-separatist stereotype of the Italian community in Montréal. The Italian ethnic community in the city of Montréal was predominantly anti-separatist, yet there were more contrarian voices than the stereotype suggests. Notable members of the community were staunchly against the idea of sovereignty, including newspaper publishers Nicola Ciamarra and Alfredo Gagliardi, but many others expressed support discreetly and even outwardly for the leaders of the referendum and the Parti Québécois. Artists like poet Marco Micone and singer Serge Fiori, among others were supporters of the idea of sovereignty and expressed their support for separation. Other figures in the community such as John Ciaccia, a member of the National Assembly for the Liberal Party of Québec (LPQ) represented the vast majority of the ethnic community who were against the idea of separatism. Politicians such as René Lévesque and Claude Ryan, the leaders of the Parti Québécois and Liberal Party of Québec, engaged with the community in an attempt to influence their political allegiance through political apparatuses and public appearances within the community.

### Theoretical Framework

This thesis will employ a variety of theoretical frameworks. Edward Said's reading of Foucault's model of power and knowledge is very useful for understanding Italian ethnic community relations to the Québec political world and structures. Said argues that in the modern period; the "unremitting and unstoppable expansion of power favouring the administrators, managers, and technocrats of what [Foucault] calls disciplinary society...[power] is overcoming, co-opting, infinitely detailed, and ineluctable in the growth of its domination."<sup>4</sup> Foucault's view of powers was that it was "an explanatory concept...not all explanations are causal."<sup>5</sup> Foucault also defines how ideology results from distortions through an improper and oppressive exercise of power by the dominant class.<sup>6</sup> For him, power is not a uniquely regressive force, rather it is a positive and productive force that is wielded by individuals or groups of individuals, and is also a reciprocal force involving the dominated as much as the dominating.<sup>7</sup> Law is a central tool of power, "the principle mode of representation of power...[l]aw is neither the truth of power nor its alibi. It is an instrument of power which is at once complex and partial."<sup>8</sup>

The Québécois community and the Italian community in Montréal were entangled in an exercise of power, with the Québécois community as a way to safeguard their own interests and culture, while the Italian community saw it as a domineering force that threatened to forcibly integrate them. The Quiet Revolution and the subsequent outbreak of Québécois nationalism along with an expanding bureaucracy can be understood in a framework of power dynamics

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<sup>4</sup> Edward W. Said, "Foucault and the Imagination of Power," in *Foucault : A Critical Reader*, edited by David Couzens Hoy, (Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 150

<sup>5</sup> David Couzens Hoy, "Power, Repression, Progress: Foucault, Lukes, and the Frankfurt School," in *Foucault : A Critical Reader*, edited by David Couzens Hoy, (Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 128

<sup>6</sup> David Couzens Hoy, "Power, Repression, Progress: Foucault, Lukes, and the Frankfurt School," 131

<sup>7</sup> David Couzens Hoy, "Power, Repression, Progress: Foucault, Lukes, and the Frankfurt School," 134

<sup>8</sup> Michel Foucault and Colin Gordon, "Power and Strategies," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 141

outlined by Said, with the francophone Québécois taking over as the dominant group within the province, and the modernization of government that empowered French Canadians, rather than diminishing them as the Duplessis government did.<sup>9</sup> The question of laws as part of these power dynamics with the Italians is best exemplified through the codification of Bills 22 and 101, which forcibly attempted to impose unilingual French education on the population; this legislation would be fought by ethnic minorities who sought to retain access to bilingual education and exercised their power against the state through their community organizations. These language bills can also be explained in part by historical power dynamics outlined by Foucault, where francophone Québécois were treated as second-class citizens in comparison to anglophone Québécois who ran the economic and political realms of the province. Overall, these theoretical applications by Foucault demonstrate unique power dynamics at play between both ethnic groups in the province, and touch upon past power relations between francophones and anglophones in the province.

Timothy Stanley's work regarding anti-racist theory can fit well into the framework of Italian-Canadians within Québec and Montréal. While Stanley states that the phenomenon of 'white denial' is predominantly widespread in English Canada, it is possible to apply it to Québec as well in linguistic issues and questions of assimilation.<sup>10</sup> While Stanley uses the "grand narrative" of English Canada as a Eurocentric imagination of the state centered on the arrival of European explorers all while ignoring Indigenous peoples, that promotes a peaceful national transition, this same model could be applied, in a modified fashion, to French Canada through

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<sup>9</sup> Sean Mills, *The Empire Within : Postcolonial Thought and Political Activism in Sixties Montréal*, (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), 23

<sup>10</sup> Timothy Stanley, "Why I Killed Canadian History: Towards an Anti-Racist History in Canada," *Social History* 65 (May 2000): 81

what is ignored.<sup>11</sup> As Stanley puts it “[t]hose who have been left out of the grand narrative cannot be included simply by having their stories tacked on as separate chapters in what might be thought of as a multicultural history. For one thing, newly arrived groups will always be left out.”<sup>12</sup> This dynamic can be seen through the persistence of the Italian community in Montréal, who despite their highly significant demographic presence in the city, were often disregarded by governing powers when it came to policies, or in turn policies were created to capitalize on their ethnic status by othering them. This can be seen in part with the promulgation of language legislation such as Bill 22 and Bill 101, both of which disproportionately affected migrant communities and their families. Stanley suggests a way to avoid creating racist narratives that center on ethnic imagination of these communities by the settler population is “to produce a ‘multicentric’ history in which Canada is shaped by multiple diasporas.”<sup>13</sup>

From this anti-racist perspective, it is important to consider how the Italian community in Montréal has been both put to use as a political tool, and vilified by political establishments within Québec, with major parties attempting to court the votes of the community while also airing their grievances with the Italians. This commodification took the forms of scapegoating, outreach, and pandering. The fears of the Italian community becoming second-class citizens also mirrors the fears that they were being ‘othered’ by French-Canadian, and subsequently Québécois, society. The sovereigntist idea postulated by René Lévesque regarding integration and assimilation belies the more unintended consequences of the Québécois nationalist project, in that it ignored the greater fears of a minority group within the city that was worried about their identity becoming lost as a result of a majority wishing to impose their wishes upon them. As

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<sup>11</sup> Stanley "Why 1 Killed Canadian History: Towards an Anti-Racist History in Canada," 82-3

<sup>12</sup> Stanley "Why 1 Killed Canadian History: Towards an Anti-Racist History in Canada," 85

<sup>13</sup> Stanley "Why 1 Killed Canadian History: Towards an Anti-Racist History in Canada," 85

will be seen, however, there are those within the Italian community who would agree with René Lévesque regarding the question of integration, with a majority coming from the earlier prewar and interwar generations, while some from the postwar generation grew to sympathise with the ideals of Québécois nationalism and the sovereigntist project.

Timothy Stanley's anti-racism framework goes far to explain sentiments towards Italian-Canadians in Montréal by both anglophones and francophones during the period of the referendum. Common perceptions that are espoused as being anti-racist within anglophone Canada can be applied to fit within a Québécois framework regarding the integration of immigrant communities and Québécois perceptions of race relations between themselves and ethnic communities; in this case, how Franco-Québécois believed that they were attempting to welcome Italian-Canadians into a culture that, for the community, felt like it was hostile to their perceived rights to linguistic freedoms and a thinly veiled attempt to mask past animosity.

### Methodology and Key Sources

This thesis will employ a variety of methodologies aside from theoretical frameworks. This includes textual analysis of primary sources including newspapers and periodicals found in the Bibliothèque et Archives Nationale du Québec (BanQ), such as *Il Corriere Italiano* and *Il Cittadino Canadese*. These primary sources are critical in that they provide information on the perspectives of the Italian-Canadian community, on the issue of the referendum and language legislation. French-language newspapers and memos from French-language institutions discuss attempts by the Italian community to push back against Québécois nationalism. The *Montreal Gazette* is also a critical English-language source. It is important to keep in mind the biases of both mainstream and community papers, for they each had their own assumptions regarding the Italian community. Primary source analysis of memoirs, university missives, and photos are a

critical piece of the puzzle as they contextualize efforts undertaken by the community and shed light on mainstream society's perspective on their activities.

There are a wealth of sources both from government documents and reports concerning Italians in Québec and Montréal as well as the Italian community, that contextualize their experiences within Québec. The Federal Government commissioned a report under the Bicultural and Bilingual Commission that addressed the Italian community in Montréal by Dutch sociologist Jeremy Boissevain. *The Italians of Montréal: Social Adjustment in a Plural Society* provides an important perspective on how the Italian community developed. Boissevain backed up the previous assertions that the Italian-Canadian community in Montréal was the third-largest ethnic group within the province throughout the Quiet Revolution, behind the French and English.<sup>14</sup> Boissevain's account provided insight into community elites, such as the President of the Order of the Sons of Italy and the publisher of *Il Corriere*, Alfredo Gagliardi.<sup>15</sup> Further, this report highlighted the centrality of family to the Italian-Canadians, and the cohesive nature of this community. The "[p]resence of most Italians in Montréal is due to the help they have received from kinsmen", with 91 per cent of migrants having a close relative sponsor their arrival in the city.<sup>16</sup>

Newspapers are an important source for this thesis. Italian-Canadian community publications, such as *Il Corriere Italiano*, *Il Cittadino Canadese*, and *Insieme*, give us insight into the Italian immigrant sentiments regarding the English and the French, while mainstream English and French publications in Montréal such as *The Montreal Gazette*, *La Presse* and other local publications offered outside perspectives. English and French-language press outlets

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<sup>14</sup> Jeremy Boissevain, and Canada, *The Italians of Montréal: Social Adjustment in a Plural Society*, Studies of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, 7, (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1970), 3

<sup>15</sup> Boissevain, *The Italians of Montréal: Social Adjustment in a Plural Society*, 22

<sup>16</sup> Boissevain, *The Italians of Montréal: Social Adjustment in a Plural Society*, 10

provided a more analytical viewpoint of the Italian community, and interpreted Italian sentiments from either the perspective of an anglophone or francophone community, basing their views of the Italians off of biases and on cultural and political prejudices. The ethnic newspapers, by contrast, were more emotionally charged, offering support more decidedly in favour of the Liberal Party of Québec and served as staunchly federalist voices within the Italian community.

Nicola ‘Nick’ Ciamarra, was the editor of *Il Cittadino Canadese*, while his wife Lucia ran the administration.<sup>17</sup> The director of the newspaper was a lawyer, Michele Pirone, also connected to other Italian periodicals and newspapers, most notably *Insieme*. Ciamarra promoted his own businesses within his newspaper, that being a travel agency that he also ran with Lucia.<sup>18</sup> While not a frequent commentator, there are instances of Ciamarra offering his opinion on Montréal events, including the election of the Parti Québécois in 1976.<sup>19</sup> *Il Cittadino Canadese* was originally founded by Antonino Spada, a prominent antifascist, in 1943.<sup>20</sup> Ciamarra would join the newspaper in 1954, and in the 1960s the newspaper would change its role to serve as a voice for the community.<sup>21</sup>

*Il Corriere Italiano* was run by Alfredo Gagliardi, a long-standing member of the Italian community and the leader of the Order of the Sons of Italy. The Order was created in 1905 in New York, and came to Montréal in 1920. It was originally a nationalist organization, leaning towards fascism in 1926 with the rise of Mussolini.<sup>22</sup> Gagliardi founded *Il Corriere Italiano* in

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<sup>17</sup> Nicola Ciamarra, “Il Partito Quebecchese formera il governo,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, Anno 36, n.45, 18 November 1976, 1; Nicola Ciamarra, “Significato di una vittoria,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, Anno 36 n.45, 2

<sup>18</sup> *Il Cittadino Canadese*, Anno 37 n.21, 26 May 1977, 21

<sup>19</sup> Ciamarra, “Il Partito Quebecchese formera il governo,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 18 November 1976, 1

<sup>20</sup> Ciamarra, “Significato di una vittoria,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 18 November 1976, 2

<sup>21</sup> Tiziana Gaggino, *Il Cittadino Canadese E La Comunità Italiana Di Montréal, 1943-1951*, 1990, 43, 48

<sup>22</sup> Gaggino, *Il Cittadino Canadese E La Comunità Italiana Di Montréal, 1943-1951*, 1990, 61, 63

<sup>22</sup> Boissevain, *The Italians of Montréal: Social Adjustment in a Plural Society*, 22; Painchaud and Poulin, *Les Italiens au Québec*, 69-70

1952.<sup>23</sup> The publication was right-wing in its exposure and news coverage. The newspaper was also inflammatory with its language and prone to controversy, referring to a few female PQ ministers as Snow White and the Seven Dwarves, and in the same breath claiming that men had welcomed “the Trojan Horse of women into politics, and if this continues[, we] will be commanded in a few decades by women in so-called democratic societies...spineless men continuing to spread the news that women in politics is nothing new.”<sup>24</sup> This inflammatory and frankly misogynistic remark was par for the course for *Il Corriere*.

Another important newspaper was *Insieme*, published by the Scalabrinians in Montréal. It informed Italian Montréal church-goers about local and international events. Ermanno La Riccia and Domenico Rodighiero were in charge of the periodical in 1976, but the direction changed by 1982 with Father Giuseppe de Rossi taking over.<sup>25</sup> Frequent contributors to the periodical included Umberto Taccola, a political cartoonist, whose characters included “Ernesto,” an Italian man who spoke in dialect and tackled current events with a mix of satire and sarcasm.<sup>26</sup> *Insieme*, much like *Il Corriere Italiano*, was a more staunchly conservative voice within the Italian community, but an interesting feature about *Insieme* were its advertisements for the Parti Québécois. During the referendum period, its editorial section regularly published letters debating the merits of sovereignty, including letters on the YES side.<sup>27</sup> Another advertisement

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<sup>23</sup> Gaggino, *Il Cittadino Canadese E La Comunità Italiana Di Montréal, 1943-1951*, 1990, 146

<sup>24</sup> Umberto Sgherri, “Le sette fatine ‘e i nani’ del PQ”, *Il Corriere Italiano* Vol. XXIV no.46, 11 November 1976, 11 (Original Italian: “Gli uomini hanno aperto la porta del loro regno al cavallo di Troia delle donne e diverranno, se si va avanti così, comandati da comandanti fra pochi lustre, società cosiddette democratiche, siano pure benvenute le donne...gli uomini invertebrate che circolano attualmente nelle le donne in politica non sono una novità.”)

<sup>25</sup> *Insieme* Anno 4 no. 11, 4; *Insieme* Anno 10 no.16, 4.

<sup>26</sup> *Insieme* Anno 7 no.32, 3

<sup>27</sup> *Insieme* Anno 8 no. 18, 10



pointed to *Insieme*'s toleration of the PQ: a full-page spread of René Lévesque asking the reader if "The Liberal government still deserves your trust?"<sup>28</sup>

One problem with the textual analysis of newspaper sources is the lack of access to issues of both *Il Corriere Italiano* and *Il Cittadino Canadese* beyond 1978. Some details regarding reactions to the sovereignty movement as well as linguistic legislation are unfortunately lost as a result. Another problem is the limited coverage of these papers. While they articulated the predominant view of Italian-Canadians in Montréal, they did not give a representative voice to the separatist contingent within the city. Of the three papers, *Insieme* arguably gave the most coverage to the Parti Québécois, including many advertisements but the paper was staunchly anti-PQ as well, thus the three major newspapers were conservative in outlook.

Periodicals were also of use for the purposes of this research. The *Quaderni Culturali* and *Vice Versa* both provided context regarding Italian-Canadian life in Québec, and some sociocultural analysis as well. *Quaderni Culturali*, a trilingual publication in Montréal, with articles in English, French, and Italian, was published from 1980 until 1983. It discussed issues pertinent to members of the Québec community including an entire volume dedicated to the referendum, which was debated by members of the *Associazione di Cultura Popolare Italo-Quebecchese* (trans. The Italo- Québécois Association of Popular Culture/ ACPIQ).<sup>29</sup> While interviewees were identified by pseudonyms, they provide a series of perspectives regarding the referendum, some identifying with the YES contingent, while others vehemently believing that such a vote was a mistake that would cost the province dearly. *Vice Versa*, also a trilingual publication, succeeded *Quaderni Culturali*. Much like its predecessor, it detailed the goings-on

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<sup>28</sup> *Insieme* Anno 4 no.11, 13 (Translation note: Original Italian was "Il governo liberale merita ancora la tua fiducia?") (Appendix, Figure 4)

<sup>29</sup> "Il Referendum e la Comunità Italiana: Un dibattito tra membri dell' a.c.p.i.q alla vigilia del 20 maggio". "Pubblicazione dell'associazione di cultura popolare italo-quebecchese" *Quaderni Culturali*, Vol.1 no.2, i.

of Italian Montréal from a leftist perspective, and provided historical analysis as well as sociocultural commentary through interviews with important community members such as Marco Micone.<sup>30</sup> Memoirs, such as John Ciaccia's *Call Me Giambattista: A Personal and Political Journey*, provide insight into the political upheaval within Québec, from a member of the Italian community. Overall, textual analysis is critical because it provides us with an 'inside' view of how the Italian community dealt with challenges, both internal and from broader Québec society.

This thesis seeks to answer how the Italian community engaged with Québec society in an effort to maintain their identity and protect their interests, despite attempts by Québécois nationalists to integrate them into a new Québécois identity established by the Quiet Revolution. This thesis will explore how Québec society interacted with the Italian community through political maneuvering by the LPQ and PQ in combination with new decolonial sentiments that emerged following the Quiet Revolution in Québec society. This thesis will also explain Italian Canadian engagement in Québécois nationalism, both in support of and against its promotion.

### Literature Review:

Much of the historiography surrounding the Italian community in Montréal focuses on early migration into the province at the turn of the century, and the migration boom during the 1950s and 60s that saw Italians become an important ethnic group in Montréal. This immigration boom was not the first time Italians emigrated to Québec but rather the most important; records exist that prove that Italians arrived as early as the colonial period of New France in 1700.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Fulvio Caccia, *Vice Versa*, "Marco Micone: Le Travail Sur La Langue," December 1983-January 1984, Vol.1 Number 3, 4-5.

<sup>31</sup> Marcel Fournier, *Les Premiers Italiens Au Québec : 1665-1860*, (Québec, Québec, Canada: Les Éditions GID, 2021), 10-11

Robert Harney and Bruno Ramirez dwelt on the origins of the Italian community within the city of Montréal at the turn of the century. Harney detailed the origins of the community through the means of labour recruitment in North America that exploited, among others, Italian migrants.<sup>32</sup> Work in this system utilized and leveraged family contacts in order to bring over workers.<sup>33</sup> The Padrone System would also pit migrants in competition with each other, with ‘padroni’ labour agents from the same group as the migrant being used to attract more workers.<sup>34</sup> The issue of sojourning labour is critical to understanding Italian sentiments during the Quiet Revolution such as stability and their suspicions of francophones, as they were victimized by them, suffering attacks by French Canadians while sojourning in Montréal.<sup>35</sup> Ramirez also demonstrates how the Italian community has been long-established in Montréal as a result of the cyclical nature of sojourning, and the corrupt padroni labour agents recruiting Italian labourers under fraudulent circumstances.<sup>36</sup> Ramirez refers to this labour migration, dubbed as ‘the commerce of migration’ by Harney, while also explaining their primary place of settlement as surrounding Beaudry, Saint-Urbain, Notre Dame, and rue Ontario, and the construction of Little Italy in the Mile End.<sup>37</sup>

Ramirez continues to explore the interwar migration period by discussing how Italians were depicted socially in Montréal, with sojourners being associated with criminal activity and

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<sup>32</sup> Robert F Harney, “Montréal's King of Italian Labour: A Case Study of Padronism,” *Labour / Le Travail* 4 (1979), 61

<sup>33</sup> Bruno Ramirez, “Workers Without a Cause: Italian Immigrant Labour in Montréal, 1880-1930,” in *Arrangiarsi : The Italian Immigration Experience in Canada*, 2nd ed., Picas Series, 6, eds., Roberto Perin and Franc Sturino, (Toronto: Guernica, 2007), 119

<sup>34</sup> Frank Sturino, “Italian Immigration to Canada and the Farm Labour System through the 1920’s, General Pattern of Immigration,” in *The Italian Immigrant Experience*, eds., John Potestio, Antonio Pucci, and Canadian Italian Historical Association, (Thunder Bay, Ont.: Canadian Italian Historical Association, 1988), 64

<sup>35</sup> Ramirez, “Workers Without a Cause: Italian Immigrant Labour in Montréal, 1880-1930,” 125-6

<sup>36</sup> Bruno Ramirez, *On the Move : French-Canadian and Italian Migrants in the North Atlantic Economy, 1860-1914*, The Canadian Social History Series, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991), 101, 108

<sup>37</sup> Bruno Ramirez, *Les Premiers Italiens De Montréal: L'origine De La Petite Italie Du Québec*, Collection Histoire Et Sociétés, (Montréal, Québec.: Boréal Express, 1984), 37-8, 85

portrayed as hot-tempered and uncivilized.<sup>38</sup> We also glimpse the beginning of the linguistic schooling question that would preoccupy the community, where Italian parents would enroll their children in Protestant anglophone schools due to overcrowding in French Catholic schools.<sup>39</sup> Ramirez's work also examines more contemporary issues such as the Italian-language television channel Teledomenica, providing a perspective on how Italian media served the community, keeping it informed about local businesses and providing local Italian programs for Italian Montréalers.<sup>40</sup> This literature surrounding Italians in Montréal provides a solid background regarding community origins.

Secondary literature analyzing the issue of Québec's decolonization during the Quiet Revolution is plentiful. Henry and Sheilagh Hodgins Milner's monograph approaches Québec's issues from the perspective of decolonization, arguing that Québec society suffered under the domination of the United States and English Canada. Economic domination and the superior station of anglophones is paramount prior to the Quiet Revolution, with only 6.7 per cent of French Canadians forming part of the Canadian economic elite.<sup>41</sup> Quebeckers suffered from a lower standard of living as well, and were disadvantaged by an economy that worked in favour of a small minority of English entrepreneurs.<sup>42</sup> Michael D. Behiels and Matthew Hayday discuss the origins of the Quiet Revolution and the issues of linguistic strife within Québec that would follow in their edited monograph. One important issue regarding the fear of anglophone domination had to do with demographic changes in Québec such as the low birth rates and

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<sup>38</sup> Bruno Ramirez, and Michael Del Balso, *The Italians of Montréal: From Sojourning to Settlement, 1900-1921*, (Montréal: Éditions du Courant, 1980), 6

<sup>39</sup> Ramirez, *The Italians of Montréal*, pp. 32

<sup>40</sup> Bruno Ramirez, "Migration, Settlement, and Television: The Montréal's Teledomenica Experience", *V.I.A. Voices in Italian Americana*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (2010), 84, 89

<sup>41</sup> Henry Milner and Sheilagh Hodgins Milner, *The Decolonization of Québec: An Analysis of Left-Wing Nationalism*, A Carleton Contemporary, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973), 31-2

<sup>42</sup> Milner and Milner, *The Decolonization of Québec: An Analysis of Left-Wing Nationalism*, pp. 42, 61

immigrants integrating into the anglophone community.<sup>43</sup> John Dickinson and Brian Young provide an important synthesis of the Quiet Revolution in their monograph *A Short History of Québec*, providing a background to the rise of the Parti Québécois under René Lévesque.<sup>44</sup> the decline of the Catholic Church in Québec society with regards to the francophone population.<sup>45</sup> These pieces of information from these authors is useful in providing context behind francophone Québécois society and the development of Québécois nationalism that fueled the Quiet Revolution. These sources also point to the attempt at decolonizing Québécois society by its nationalist elements.

While the secondary literature analyzes early Italian settlement in the city, it fails to cover the pivotal moment of the PQ's rise to political power, and Italian reaction to their ascension, and the 1980 Referendum. Secondary literature does discuss how the Quiet Revolution was a formative event that included processes like immigration, political strife, and linguistic issues, which solidified Italian-Canadian and Italo- Québécois identity and integration.

Patrizia Gentile's article regarding the Italian community during the 1970 October Crisis examines the response of the Italian community to Québec nationalism through newspaper analysis. Gentile shifts the focus on the October Crisis, from nationalism to a more nuanced social and cultural examination in the context of a broader decolonial movement. Gentile decries the lack of sociocultural background research on Italians during the Crisis, despite the role that Italian-Canadians, as well as other ethnic groups, like the Jewish community, played in the Quiet

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<sup>43</sup> C. Michael MacMillan, "Rights in Conflict: Contemporary Disputes over Language Policy in Québec," in *Contemporary Québec: Selected Readings and Commentaries*, eds. Michael D Behiels and Matthew Hayday, (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011), 398-399

<sup>44</sup> Dickinson and Young, *A Short History of Québec*, 321; see also: Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher, Jean-Claude Robert, and Ricard François, *Histoire Du Québec Contemporain*, Volume 2, (Boréal Compact, 14, 15. Montréal: Boréal, 1989).

<sup>45</sup> Dickinson and Young, *A Short History of Québec*, 336

Revolution and in decolonisation movements in Québec.<sup>46</sup> Gentile also explains why community newspapers were so critical for Italian-Canadian society, claiming “the primary aim of [these newspapers]...was/is to keep the community informed about political and social events as well as sports.”<sup>47</sup> Gentile relays how the Italian community stayed engaged with the country they were now a part of through the press. This was how they informed their views on these events. More importantly for the purposes of integration into Canadian and Québécois society, “these newspapers facilitated Italians' retention of their linguistic and cultural heritage while still acculturating the community as full-fledged Québec and Canadian citizens.”<sup>48</sup> Gentile goes on to state that these resources would have been considered supplementary for the Italian community at large, as they accessed mainstream Montréal publications such as *The Montreal Gazette*, *La Presse*, and *Le Journal de Montréal* among others.<sup>49</sup>

Gentile notes how the Italian community used the press to paint themselves as loyal Canadians in the midst of the Crisis, and to join broader conversations regarding decolonialism.<sup>50</sup> Integration also seems to have been the goal of these newspapers, in particular for *Il Cittadino* which was founded by Antonino Spada in the 1950s particularly for the express purpose of integrating Italians into Canadian society.<sup>51</sup> By the same token, going against the mainstream Italian-Canadian sentiment, Gentile notes how there is a notable contingent of Italo- Québécois who rallied in support of the FLQ, in the form of the Movimento Progressivo Italo-Quebecchese (MPIQ) and their newspaper, *Il Lavoratore*.<sup>52</sup> The MPIQ was a predominantly leftist group

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<sup>46</sup> Patrizia Gentile, “‘Gli Italiani Non Hanno Paura’: Italian-Language Newspapers and the 1970 October Crisis,” *Québec Studies* 55 (2013): 137

<sup>47</sup> Gentile, “‘Gli Italiani Non Hanno Paura’: Italian-Language Newspapers and the 1970 October Crisis,” 138

<sup>48</sup> Gentile, “‘Gli Italiani Non Hanno Paura’: Italian-Language Newspapers and the 1970 October Crisis,” 138

<sup>49</sup> Gentile, “‘Gli Italiani Non Hanno Paura’: Italian-Language Newspapers and the 1970 October Crisis,” 139

<sup>50</sup> Gentile, “‘Gli Italiani Non Hanno Paura’: Italian-Language Newspapers and the 1970 October Crisis,” 140, 144

<sup>51</sup> Gentile, “‘Gli Italiani Non Hanno Paura’: Italian-Language Newspapers and the 1970 October Crisis,” 145

<sup>52</sup> Translation notes: (MPIQ= The Italo-Québécois Progressive Movement; *Il Lavoratore*= *The Worker*)

centered on labour rights and the defense of Marxist ideology, and supported felquiste desires of anti-anglophone domination through capital and a decolonial perspective on Québécois society. It also portrayed leaders of the FLQ, such as Charles Gagnon in a sympathetic light.<sup>53</sup> Gentile depicts Italian sentiments that ran counter to Québec nationalism towards mainstream community publications, but also through providing evidence of support for Québec nationalism by Italians, even going so far as supporting the goals of the FLQ.

Donat Taddeo, a politician and school commissioner involved with the linguistic debate within Montréal, co-wrote a monograph regarding the issue of linguistic schooling and conflicts within the province along with Ray Taras. This monograph details important aspects of the linguistic debate and general sentiments regarding Québec nationalism in the Italian community in Montréal. Taddeo and Taras trace the origins of the language crisis in Québec back to a secret 1957 language report that detailed increased allophone enrollment in English schools over French schools.<sup>54</sup> The monograph also cites contradictions to the spirit of a post Quiet Revolution Québec in the Italian community, citing the involvement of church institutions within the education of the Italian community.<sup>55</sup>

Jean-Phillipe Croteau would expand on the role of linguistic schools, noting that the schools run by the *Commission des écoles catholiques de Montréal* (CECM) were not primarily concerned with the assimilation of immigrants into francophone society until the 1960s.<sup>56</sup> Croteau also provides a look into the origins of the bilingual schools program, which began at

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<sup>53</sup> Gentile, “‘Gli Italiani Non Hanno Paura’: Italian-Language Newspapers and the 1970 October Crisis,” 146-7

<sup>54</sup> Donat J. Taddeo and Ray Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec : La Communauté Italienne Et La Langue D'enseignement*, Collection Histoire Économique Et Sociale Du Québec, (Montréal: Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1987), 69

<sup>55</sup> Taddeo and Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec...* 83

<sup>56</sup> Jean-Philippe Croteau and Bibliothèque numérique Canadienne, *Les Commissions Scolaires Montréalaises et Torontoises et les Immigrants (1875-1960)*, (Québec, Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 2017), 168

Notre-Dame-de-la-Défense as a program that offered trilingual education in English, French, and Italian to immigrant children.<sup>57</sup> It also explains how immigrants were responsible for the increasing inscriptions in English-language institutions, from 1930 to 1960.<sup>58</sup> Croteau reveals the desire of the Italian-Canadian community to have access to bilingual education, despite the opposition to the system by Anglo-Catholics and Québécois nationalists.<sup>59</sup> Finally, he explains how by the 1970s, the CECM had finally begun to pursue a more integration-focused mission as a result of Bills 22 and 101, arguing for a “conformisme francophone.”<sup>60</sup> Michael D. Behiels in his booklet *Québec and the Question of Immigration: From Ethnocentrism to Ethnic Pluralism, 1900-1985* explains that the CECM enrolled over 50 per cent of Italians in the English sector prior to the Quiet Revolution, demonstrating a long history of anglophone educational association.<sup>61</sup>

Ethnic tensions between the Québécois and the Italians needs to be explored to fully flesh out Italian-Québécois relations. Paul Cappon places a spotlight on ethnic tensions between Québécois nationalists and Italians in the province, calling back to demographic issues suffered by francophones which convinced them that English-language schooling of immigrants was a tool by the minority to continue oppressing them.<sup>62</sup> However, Cappon provides examples of xenophobic views towards immigrants by francophone Québécois which were a result of the enmity between them and the anglophones, where immigrant groups like Italians were

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<sup>57</sup> Croteau and BNC, *Les Commissions Scolaires Montréalaises et Torontoises ...* 200

<sup>58</sup> Croteau and BNC, *Les Commissions Scolaires Montréalaises et Torontoises ...*, 201-2

<sup>59</sup> Croteau and BNC, *Les Commissions Scolaires Montréalaises et Torontoises...*, 206-7

<sup>60</sup> Croteau and BNC, *Les Commissions Scolaires Montréalaises et Torontoises...*, 210

<sup>61</sup> Michael D. Behiels, *Québec and the Question of Immigration: From Ethnocentrism to Ethnic Pluralism, 1900-1985*, Canada's Ethnic Groups, Booklet No. 18, (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1991), 14

<sup>62</sup> Paul Cappon, *Conflit Entre Les Néo-Canadiens et les Francophones de Montréal*, [Publications]-Centre International De Recherche Sur Le Bilinguisme, 8, (Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1974), 13



scapegoated out of economic frustrations and linguistic anxieties.<sup>63</sup> Claudio Antonelli would provide personal experiences of xenophobia felt by the Italians, saying that they were given a tepid welcome in Québec by francophones, and that the Italians frequented English schools because they were refused access to the French schools.<sup>64</sup>

Michiko Aramaki's PhD dissertation and John Fainella's MA thesis explore the lived experience of the Italian-Canadian community in Montréal. Aramaki argues that the schism in Québec between the English and French perpetuates the existence of an Italian ghetto, as well as for other ethnic groups, due to the space the schism creates.<sup>65</sup> Italian culture and identity is considered as critical to the community, a sentiment that continued into the second and third-generations as well.<sup>66</sup> Fainella notes some of the important goals for the Italian-Canadian community, namely that of home-ownership as a successful measure of their immigration.<sup>67</sup> These goals also included socio-cultural gains, such as a rise in status from the working class to middle class and an increased focus on 'presentability.'<sup>68</sup> These two sources provide a better look into the inner workings of the community through how they adapted to the anglophone-francophone conflict and fulfilling their goals for stability.

Amanda Ricci's Master's thesis on the political involvement of the Italian community in Montréal delves into perspectives of both federalist as well as separatist Italians, exploring issues faced by the community in the realm of politics and their integration into Montréal, as well as

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<sup>63</sup> Cappon, , *Conflit Entre Les Néo-Canadiens et les Francophones de Montréal*, 37, 127

<sup>64</sup> Claudio Antonelli, *Fedeli All'Istria, Fiume, Dalmazia : Noi, Profughi-Emigrati*, (Montréal: Lòsna & Tron, 1997), 32, 34

<sup>65</sup> Michiko Aramaki, "Family, Paesani and Networks : Politics and Economy of Montréal Italians," (PhD Diss., McGill University Libraries, 1994), 12

<sup>66</sup> Aramaki, "Family, Paesani and Networks : Politics and Economy of Montréal Italians," 56-7

<sup>67</sup> John G. Fainella, "Destination, Housing and Quality of Life in the Migrant Experience from Larino (Molise, Italy) to Milano and Montréal," MA thesis, (McGill University Libraries, 1996), 22-3

<sup>68</sup> Fainella "Destination, Housing and Quality of Life in the Migrant Experience from Larino (Molise, Italy) to Milano and Montréal," 27, 49

further explaining tensions within the community, such as the humorous feud between Antonino Spada and Alfredo Gagliardi over their newspaper businesses and political aspirations during the 1960s.<sup>69</sup> Ricci's thesis explores many issues in the Italian-Canadian community, including political engagement in the postwar period and acceptance in the broader Québécois and Montréal communities. Importantly, Ricci explores the broader acceptance of Italians politically through the election of Alfredo Gagliardi in municipal politics, as well as socially in Montréal; the community believed that this election marked them as less of a minority group.<sup>70</sup> She also explains political organization, the development of the working class and Italian labour sensibilities within the political realm, discussing Italian involvement in Québécois organizations such as the Fédération des travailleurs québécois (FTQ) and the Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN), to show how community elites were more preoccupied with labour issues in the 1960s and 70s than political issues.<sup>71</sup> At the same time, Ricci also notes how the election of the Parti Québécois and the passing of Bill 101 in 1977 galvanized the Italian-Canadian community, feeling the issue of language had become "unfairly 'Italianized.'"<sup>72</sup>

Finally, Ricci discusses the issues faced by women by analyzing their involvement in community women organizations, both the traditional conservative, as well as more progressive wings, the latter founding the *Centro Donne Italiane*.<sup>73</sup> Ricci refutes the tendency in the literature to highlight the masculine image of the Italian community, and the stereotype of the apolitical Italian woman.<sup>74</sup> Ricci's PhD dissertation, further explores how women were a political force

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<sup>69</sup> Amanda Ricci, "From Acculturation to Integration. The Political Participation of Montréal's Italian-Canadian Community in an Urban Context (1945-1990)," MA thesis, (Université de Montréal, 2009), 45

<sup>70</sup> Ricci, "From Acculturation to Integration..." 34, 36

<sup>71</sup> Ricci, "From Acculturation to Integration..." 49, 50

<sup>72</sup> Ricci, "From Acculturation to Integration..." 68-9

<sup>73</sup> Ricci, "From Acculturation to Integration..." 80 (Translation note: Centro Donne Italiane = Montréal Italian Women's Center)

<sup>74</sup> Ricci, "From Acculturation to Integration..." 80-1

within the Italian-Canadian community. Critically, her dissertation explores how the younger Italian generation was influenced by leftist political ideologies and Québécois nationalism. Assunta Sauro, one of the founders of the *Centro Donne*, was sympathetic towards “French-speaking Marxist Leninists.”<sup>75</sup> Integration is also touched on, with her noting that amongst the younger generation, English-language education was not always a guarantee of success, and in places of higher education these young Italians found themselves “in an extreme minority position...[t]he ‘possibilities of integration’ for Italians at elitist institutions such as McGill ‘were practically non-existent.’”<sup>76</sup> Her analyses provides a clearer image of how they fit into the broader Québécois and Canadian critiques from the margins, as well as how the younger generation engaged with Québécois nationalism and was aware of their status as outsiders. There is also a clear class divide demonstrated through her example of Italian attendance at McGill with regards to other Anglophones, highlighting the fact that Italian Canadians were not truly welcomed in either the anglophone or francophone spheres. Ricci delves into issues regarding anti-racism, social construction of the identity of an ethnic community, feminism, and acculturation of ethnic communities. My thesis will also attempt to rebuke the claim that Italian-Canadians were not concerned with political issues over those of labour.

Paul-André Linteau’s article “Les Italo- Québécois: acteurs et enjeux des débats politiques et linguistiques au Québec,” probes the generational gap in the Montréal Italian community between prewar and postwar cohorts. Linteau explains that prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, ethnic relations in Québec were cast as divided between anglophones and francophones, and ethnicities that diverged from these two groups in broader Québécois society, such as Jews and

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<sup>75</sup> Amanda Ricci, “There's No Place Like Home : Feminist Communities, Social Citizenship and (Un) Belonging in Montreal's Long Women's Movement, 1952-1992.” PhD Dissertation, (McGill University Libraries, 2016), 215

<sup>76</sup> Ricci, “There's No Place Like Home...”, 214

Italians, were treated in an exclusionary manner, which highlights a divide between the Franco-Québécois community and the Italians.<sup>77</sup> Linteau explains that this system would collapse during the Second World War and the Italian community would develop in a manner heavily supported by social cohesion through family units, a shared socio-economic stature with French Canadians, but also institutions such as the Catholic Church and a new burgeoning sense of Québécois nationalism.<sup>78</sup> Critical for my thesis is his delineation of the two separate contingents of Italian migrants in Québec, highlighting how they were separate forces of migration within the city and province with regard to their integration and adaption to Québec society. Linteau explores Italo-Québécois and French Canadian relations by comparing their progress as an ethnic enclave within Montréal racially and linguistically.<sup>79</sup> Overall, Linteau's brief work on the community provides insight into their generational differences, as well as how their interactions with French Canadians shaped their generational perspectives.

Antonella Crudo's monograph, *Identità fluttuanti*, provides further insight into the development of Italian-Canadian identity by defining Italian involvement in the growing movement of Québec sovereignty.<sup>80</sup> Crudo argues that the Quiet Revolution was a neoliberal project anchored in nationalism, with specific objectives to restore francophone control of the state and modernization efforts at the expense of the church.<sup>81</sup> Crudo's Marxist perspective examines how the francophone bourgeoisie developed as a result of the Quiet Revolution, the subsequent rise of unionization and development of class solidarity.<sup>82</sup> Crudo explores the Saint-

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<sup>77</sup> Paul-André Linteau, "Les Italo-Québécois: acteurs et enjeux des débats politiques et linguistiques au Québec," *Studi Emigrazione*, 86 (1987): 190-1

<sup>78</sup> Linteau, "Les Italo-Québécois: acteurs et enjeux des débats politiques et linguistiques au Québec," 192-3

<sup>79</sup> Linteau, "Les Italo-Québécois: acteurs et enjeux des débats politiques et linguistiques au Québec," 187-8

<sup>80</sup> Translation note: *Fluctuating Identity*

<sup>81</sup> Antonella Crudo, *Identità Fluttuanti : Italiani Di Montréal E Politiche Del Pluralismo Culturale in Québec E Canada*, Biblioteca Di Voci, 1, (Cosenza: L. Pellegrini, 2005), 119-120.

<sup>82</sup> Crudo, *Identità Fluttuanti : Italiani Di Montréal E Politiche Del Pluralismo Culturale in Québec E Canada*, 124

Léonard Riots to understand how they changed Italian perspectives on Québécois nationalism: Italian Montréalers were a third pillar in a conflict between anglophones and francophones where they were used as a political bargaining chip to further both aims of linguistic dominance.<sup>83</sup>

Giuliano D'Andrea's MA thesis on the Saint. Léonard Riots discusses linguistic issues in the schooling system. D'Andrea touches on the tensions between francophone Quebecers and the Italian community, along linguistic, territorial, and even economic issues. He also explores what it meant to be a 'Quebecker,' arguing against popular notions of ethnicity as a unifying force for culture and class division, questioning if this extended to those who lived within the province or simply those of their ethnicity.<sup>84</sup> Linguistic rights groups such as the *Association of Parents of St.-Léonard* and the *Mouvement pour l'Integration Scolaire* were formed by minority allophone and majority francophone groups in order to defend perceived attacks on language of instruction.<sup>85</sup> By comparing how different Italian-Canadians were impacted by the events of the Quiet Revolution, D'Andrea accounts for the Montréal Italian-Canadian community's aversion to Québec nationalism.

Sean Mills' work is crucial in understanding the run-up to the referendum through his coverage of various ethnic communities in *The Empire Within*. This examination of the Saint-Léonard Riots and the October Crisis probes the Italian community's underlying difficulties with Québécois nationalism and complements the work of D'Andrea and Ricci, providing a foundation for comprehending the animosity between French and Italian-Canadians. Mills provides us with an important prism to examine ethnic tensions in Québec, that of

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<sup>83</sup> Crudo, *Identità Fluttuanti : Italiani Di Montréal E Politiche Del Pluralismo Culturale in Québec E Canada*, 140-2

<sup>84</sup> Giuliano E. D'Andrea, "When Nationalisms Collide : Montréal's Italian Community and the St. Leonard Crisis, 1967-1969," (Dissertation, McGill University Libraries, 1989), 35

<sup>85</sup> D'Andrea "When Nationalisms Collide : Montréal's Italian Community and the St. Leonard Crisis..." 149-150

decolonialization.<sup>86</sup> He places the period of the Quiet Revolution and the change it brought in a new light and contests the dominant narrative “on the grounds that it describes as a profound rupture what was really just an accelerated period of change.”<sup>87</sup> Mills notes that francophones and Italians faced similar issues such as low wages, linguistic schooling and a history of mingling with each other, demonstrating a link between them.<sup>88</sup>

Finally, John Zucchi provides a look at the Italian enclaves that were present within Montréal through his booklet on ethnic enclaves. The analysis of Montréal’s Little Italy through his study of the city’s ethnic enclaves reveal further background of social structures within the Italian community and how they organized themselves. At the same time, this booklet is useful for identifying monikers that denote ethnicity in the broader context of Québec and Montréal attitudes towards migrants.<sup>89</sup> Zucchi noted how these communities of Italian migrants, these ‘Little Italies’, were predominantly found in North America rather than South America.<sup>90</sup> Zucchi would also note how the origin of Italian communities in Canada in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was more one of convenience, providing cheap labour to the country despite their undesirable status in Canadian immigration policies; the different kinds of migration for these migrants is detailed as well, including both sojourner and familial migration as the main forms undertaken by the Italians.<sup>91</sup> Like Linteau’s article, Zucchi reaffirms the importance of the Catholic clergy within the Italian community, and the importance of women within these ethnic communities, as Ricci does within her thesis.<sup>92</sup> This source is important for my thesis because it helps provide more

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<sup>86</sup> Mills, *The Empire Within : Postcolonial Thought and Political Activism in Sixties Montréal*, 20

<sup>87</sup> Mills, *The Empire Within : Postcolonial Thought and Political Activism in Sixties Montréal*, 19

<sup>88</sup> Mills, *The Empire Within : Postcolonial Thought and Political Activism in Sixties Montréal*, 22, 141-2,

<sup>89</sup> John Zucchi, *A History of Ethnic Enclaves in Canada*, Canada's Ethnic Group Series, Booklet No. 31, (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 2007), 2

<sup>90</sup> Zucchi, *A History of Ethnic Enclaves in Canada*, 5

<sup>91</sup> Zucchi, *A History of Ethnic Enclaves in Canada*, 6

<sup>92</sup> Zucchi, *A History of Ethnic Enclaves in Canada*, 7

evidence for the early development of the Italian community within the city of Montréal through the organization of their ethnic enclaves, and highlights the formative experiences of these communities.

While this brief overview of the most important pieces of historiography within the community details the development of the Italian community up until the election of the Parti Québécois in 1976, the secondary literature on the subject of Italian-Canadians in the context of the referendum is sparse, with few articles and even fewer monographs dedicated to the subject. One significant work is *Les Italiens du Québec* by Richard Poulin and Claude Painchaud. This monograph explores the history of the Italian community in the province of Québec and the city of Montréal from the early days of New France, and into the 1980s, which fits the relevant timeframe of this thesis. It highlights the rapid explosion of the Italian community in Montréal from 30,000 people in 1951 to 163,735 people in 1981, with the majority of the migration taking place from 1945 to 1961.<sup>93</sup> Painchaud and Poulin also examine linguistic retention in the Italian community, both their own native Italian and dialects as well as English and French. They note that the second generation and postwar immigrants generally retain knowledge of the English language over French.<sup>94</sup> Poulin and Painchaud observe that until 1981, even those in the Italian community whose first language aside from Italian was French mostly enrolled their children into English schools.<sup>95</sup> Painchaud and Poulin note that the Italian community was politically biased toward the Liberal Party of Québec through their media consumption.<sup>96</sup> Finally, Painchaud and Poulin argue that the rise of Québécois nationalism impacted the Italian community first and foremost among ethnic groups while at the same time acknowledging how

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<sup>93</sup> Claude Painchaud and Richard Poulin, *Les Italiens au Québec* (Hull: Editions Asticou, 1988), 81

<sup>94</sup> Painchaud and Poulin, *Les Italiens au Québec*, 144-6

<sup>95</sup> Painchaud and Poulin, *Les Italiens au Québec*, 145

<sup>96</sup> Painchaud and Poulin, *Les Italiens au Québec*, 200

the Italian community stereotyped francophone society as antagonistic towards them.<sup>97</sup> While Painchaud and Poulin are correct regarding political support for the LPQ, there were also parts of the Italian community that did not back that party.

Finally, Anthony C. Masi's overview of Italian historiography, *The Italians of Montreal: A Critical Review of the Literature*, explores issues that Masi found lacking in the work of other social scientists regarding the Italian community. He points out aspects that have been ignored in the works of Boissevain, Painchaud and Poulin such as trilingualism, which were not foci of analysis when his overview was written, and criticizes the latter authors for only exploring a small segment of the community.<sup>98</sup> This overview is important to take into account as it synthesizes much of the major works by authors I have explored, such as Ramirez, Harney, and Painchaud and Poulin, exemplifying a continuous buildup of scholarship and an attempt to point out future avenues of research.

#### *How have Italians Participated in Québec Society and Politics?*

Few studies analyze the political impact of the Montréal Italian community. For the purposes of this thesis, it is important to structure their involvement in Québec along several principle angles of analysis.

##### 1) Identity in Québec: Italo-Québécois Vs. Italian-Canadians.

As noted in the literature review, there are distinct generational lines among Italian migrants in Montréal: those who arrived in the interwar period, and those who arrived in the postwar period. The Italo-Québécois generation, as dubbed by Linteau generally, arrived earlier and integrated into francophone society, while the Italian-Canadians, who came in the postwar

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<sup>97</sup> Painchaud and Poulin, *Les Italiens au Québec*, 206

<sup>98</sup> Masi, *The Italians of Montreal: A Critical Review of the Literature...* 10, 13-14



period, settled into the anglophone sphere of influence.<sup>99</sup> The rate of intermarriage with other communities is another important factor to consider when regarding integration. Upon their arrival in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Italians in Montréal tended to intermarry with French Canadians as they both shared a similar social standing within the city as working class citizens, a shared faith in Catholicism with 97 per cent of Italians identifying as Catholic, and their children were sent to French-language institutions as well; conversely the rate of intermarriages amongst Italians and the English remained low.<sup>100</sup>

There was thus a rift between the two generations, the Italo-Québécois and Italian-Canadians, and there was an irony with regards to the second. While English would be chosen as a language of education for the postwar diaspora, they were not predominantly accepted into the English community, nor were they accepted into the francophone community or their institutions.<sup>101</sup> The priority of preserving their ‘Italianness,’ or *Italianità* while attempting to integrate into broader Canadian society, often clashed with Québécois nationalist tendencies.<sup>102</sup> This disconnect between the English and French and nationalist misperception of Italian demands made it to the Québec government level. Jean Bienvenue, the education minister in Premier Robert Bourassa’s cabinet, claimed that the Italian community suffered from a persecution complex resulting from their lack of desire to integrate in Québec society.<sup>103</sup>

Meanwhile, those who originated from the earlier turn of the century immigration were more inclined to support Québécois nationalist movements. Organizations such as the

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<sup>99</sup> Painchaud and Poulin, *Les Italiens au Québec*, 144-6

<sup>100</sup> Linteau, “Les Italo-Québécois: acteurs et enjeux des débats politiques et linguistiques au Québec,” 193; Boissevain, *The Italians of Montréal: Social Adjustment in a Plural Society*, 19

<sup>101</sup> “C’era una volta,” *Quaderni Culturali*, no.1, January-February 1980; Linteau, “Les Italo-Québécois: acteurs et enjeux des débats politiques et linguistiques au Québec,” 193

<sup>102</sup> D’Andrea “When Nationalisms Collide : Montréal’s Italian Community and the St. Leonard Crisis...”, 113-114

<sup>103</sup> Taddeo and Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec...* 142

Movimento Progressivo Italo-Quebecchese (MPIQ) staunchly supported Québécois nationalism, and such organizations as the Front de Libération du Québec (FLQ).<sup>104</sup> The group also founded a newspaper distributed in Montréal known as *Il Lavoratore* (The Worker), which documented labour movements within the city and espoused more radical political views in the province. It viewed the Parti Québécois as an organ of the Québécois bourgeoisie, who were attempting to consolidate their power vis-à-vis the US and Canadian bourgeoisie through sovereignty.<sup>105</sup> This split in perception is just one of the examples that contributes to the idea of two distinct identities between Italo-Québécois and Italo-Canadians.

## 2) Political Alignments

The political alignments of the Italian community in Montréal are important considering pressures they were subjected to as members of both francophone and anglophone segments of society. They were thus expected to support the ideologies of either ethnic group, despite not being part of them. Support for federalist and nationalist parties were split unevenly in the community due to generational origin.

## 3) Sentiments of an ethnic minority

For the Italian community, belonging was a major issue throughout the Quiet Revolution, and continued into the 1980s. As a community who at the turn of the century was considered as undesirable and better suited for farming labour, and whose presence was often disliked in cities, they became a lightning rod during the Quiet Revolution, attracting attention from citizenry and

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<sup>104</sup> Gentile, “‘Gli Italiani Non Hanno Paura’: Italian-Language Newspapers and the 1970 October Crisis,” 146-7

<sup>105</sup> “Congresso Pequista,” *Il Lavoratore*, Marzo 1973, 3

government. Previous attempts by the Italians to integrate into francophone life which had been rebuffed before the Revolution became of the utmost importance to the Québécois.<sup>106</sup>

The behaviour of political leaders towards the Italian community revealed a racial bias that hinted at its incompatibility with Québec culture, and suggested that the integrationist project of the Quiet Revolution was not benevolent. Outbursts by René Lévesque in part points to elements of racist biases towards the Italian community. As John Ciaccia points out in his memoirs surrounding his time in the National Assembly, there was an instance where René Lévesque, after being invited to speak to members of the Italian community used mocking language towards them, calling them boneless, ignorant, childlike, and a myriad of other insults with regards to their views on separatism, despite the Italian community, as Ciaccia notes, being “probably the most francized minority in Québec.”<sup>107</sup> René Lévesque had experience dealing with the Italian community in the past, and on many occasions had a habit of saying exactly what they did not want to hear when talking to them. D’Andrea details his experience as a Liberal MNA during the 1960s, where he told a crowd of Italian-Canadians in his riding of Montréal - Laurier, which was predominantly Italian, that French Canadians were respectful of the origins of Québec citizens who were not from English or French backgrounds, but the nationalism displayed by Italians could not be respected by the French Canadians, and that as they were the majority population in Québec, it gave them the right to sovereignty and that Italians thus had to integrate into the majority population.<sup>108</sup> This remark by René Lévesque did not go unchallenged by his audience, who heckled him for his statement and expressed their fears that Québec would

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<sup>106</sup> Taddeo and Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec...* 80-1

<sup>107</sup> John Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, Footprints Series, 21, (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015), 120-1

<sup>108</sup> D’Andrea “When Nationalisms Collide : Montréal's Italian Community and the St. Leonard Crisis...”, 135

go on to treat the Italians as mere second-class citizens.<sup>109</sup> However, associations such as the MPIQ and ACPIQ demonstrated support for Québécois nationalism. Amanda Ricci notes that these more progressive youth organizations aligned with socialist principles, supported unionization, worker solidarity regardless of language or ethnicity, and support for Québécois nationalism, while maintaining that Italians and immigrants were victims of oppression.<sup>110</sup> The MPIQ supported language legislation and recognized it as an appropriate measure for Québécois independence, and blamed discrimination towards Italians on Montréal economic elites.<sup>111</sup> This demonstrates that while support for Québec nationalism amongst members of the Italian-Canadian community existed, the Italian experience of discrimination remained.

#### 4) Narrative of Decolonialism

The Quiet Revolution was born out of the spirit of decolonialism and an attempt to propagate Québécois identity, and forms the backbone of a number of works in the secondary literature, Gentile, Ricci and Mills most notable among them. In some ways, the Italians might have argued that the pushing of Québécois nationalism during this era was one of the ways in which the francophone Québécois attempted to perpetuate their own form of neo-colonialism onto ethnic communities in the postwar eras.

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<sup>109</sup> D'Andrea "When Nationalisms Collide : Montréal's Italian Community and the St. Leonard Crisis...", 135-6

<sup>110</sup> Ricci, "There's No Place Like Home...", 212

<sup>111</sup> Ricci, "There's No Place Like Home...", 213

## **CHAPTER 1: The Not-So-Quiet Revolution and its Rupture: 1960-76**

### *How Quiet was the Revolution?*

The Quiet Revolution as a whole transformed and overhauled Québécois identity into its current form, and elevated the status of French-Canadians in Québec society. The Quiet Revolution, which began with the election of Jean Lesage's Liberal government in 1960, began a transformative process of political modernization, economic nationalism, and accessible education, which both expressed and stimulated a new Québec nationalism so often summarized in slogans such as "il faut que ça change" and "Maîtres chez nous."<sup>112</sup> The Quiet Revolution's outbreak in the 1960s shifted the balance of social standing and power from Québec anglophones to francophones.<sup>113</sup> The Quiet Revolution was a liberalizing but nationalist force in Québec that emphasized Francophone dominance in the province.

While the advancement of Québec society and the rise of nationalism during the Quiet Revolution was predominantly focused on the ideals of a French nation within Canada, this conception excluded minority groups such as Indigenous peoples and allophones within the conception of the Québec nation. Mills notes that Indigenous peoples in the eyes of Québécois politicians were nuisances, obstacles to progress.<sup>114</sup> This fits into the theoretical framework of anti-racism in the context of the Québécois narrative of the Quiet Revolution and the idea of a Québec nation focused on a Québécois people, at the expense of other minority groups.

How did the Italian-Canadian community fit into this new Québécois identity? The Italians seemed to contradict every point that the Quiet Revolution stood for; the desires of the postwar Italian-Canadian community in Montréal as the Revolution took hold seemed contrary to

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<sup>112</sup> Cuccioletta and Lubin, "The Québec Quiet Revolution: A Noisy Evolution," 183-4,

<sup>113</sup> Dickinson and Young, *A Short History of Québec*, 316

<sup>114</sup> Mills, *The Empire Within : Postcolonial Thought and Political Activism in Sixties Montréal*, 22

those of the francophone elite. The Québécois desired the expansion of the state, the modernization of the economy, and the right to be ‘masters of their own house’ on economic matters.<sup>115</sup> The prioritization of French-language legislation as an attempt to safeguard their culture was critical to Québécois nationalism during the Quiet Revolution as well.<sup>116</sup>

Linguistic schooling and the desire for linguistic choice also challenged Québécois nationalist aims for the primacy of the French language. Language was pivotal to the Italians, who saw English as the language of business, but at the same time desired that their children might also be educated in the language of Québec; trilingualism was pursued by members of the community.<sup>117</sup> Prior to the Quiet Revolution, as Paul-André Linteau has written, the interwar generation was educated in French-language institutions, though this changed with the rise of the postwar cohort. Linguistic legislation was seen to be as an effort specifically targeting the Italian community, with their integration into Montréal society, as they saw both languages as an advantage for their children to learn. As will be explored later, these issues came to a head as a result of the Saint-Léonard Riots.

Italians did not buy into the secularization project of the Québec government. If anything, the Italian community rallied around the clergy, and the Catholic Church served as a main form of social organization within the community. Jeremy Boissevain notes the importance of the clergy within his study, saying “the structure of the Italian ethnic church provides the territorial framework of the Italian community.”<sup>118</sup> Bruno Villata supplements Boissevain’s claim, citing the long history of Italian parishes in Montréal that stretched back to 1905, and its importance as

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<sup>115</sup> Crudo, *Identità Fluttuanti : Italiani Di Montréal E Politiche Del Pluralismo Culturale in Québec E Canada*, 120

<sup>116</sup> Crudo, *Identità Fluttuanti : Italiani Di Montréal E Politiche Del Pluralismo Culturale in Québec E Canada*, 128

<sup>117</sup> Taddeo and Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec...* 33

<sup>118</sup> Boissevain, *The Italians of Montréal: Social Adjustment in a Plural Society*, 18-9

a way to maintain cultural identity.<sup>119</sup> Taddeo and Taras referred to strong clerical influence in Italian education. During the Quiet Revolution, the Italian clergy promoted most of the English-language schools through their parishes.<sup>120</sup> Italian parents organized protests in support of their national parish, and asked them to create a bilingual program, but the Commission des Écoles Catholiques de Montréal (CÉCM) ignored their pleas. In 1964, five Italian priests petitioned Cardinal Léger to help them create new parochial schools in English, even if they could not be placed in Italian-dominated areas, but this too was denied.<sup>121</sup>

The desire to maintain English schooling bled into religious conversion, which would shift the school boards the children would attend. A small minority of Italians converted to Protestantism -about three per cent- early on in order to easily access English language education, as the Protestant school boards in Montréal offered predominantly English education.<sup>122</sup> Protestant schools within Québec were predominantly institutions which provided English-language education, and nothing technically stopped religious conversion for the goal of education. Guy Deshaies of *Le Devoir* would report on such a phenomenon, writing that “Vingt-quatre familles canadiennes-italiennes de Saint-Léonard ont abjuré leur foi au catholicisme et sont devenues protestantes de manière que leurs enfants (de 50 à 60) reçoivent gratuitement l’enseignement en anglais...aux écoles de la Commission scolaire protestante de Montréal.”<sup>123</sup>

This apostasy demonstrates what would become a recurring theme for the community: the issue

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<sup>119</sup> Bruno Villata, *Bilinguisme et problématique des langues. ethniques: enquête sur le comportement linguistique des jeunes Montréalais d'origine italienne*, (Québec: Centre international de recherche sur le bilinguisme, 1985), 24-5

<sup>120</sup> Taddeo and Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec...* 83

<sup>121</sup> Taddeo and Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec...* 83

<sup>122</sup> Guy Deshaies, “Vingt-quatre familles ont abjuré leur foi au catholicisme,” *Le Devoir*, 15 September 1969, p. 3, Boissevain, *The Italians of Montréal: Social Adjustment in a Plural Society*, 33

<sup>123</sup> Guy Deshaies, “Vingt-quatre familles ont abjuré leur foi au catholicisme,” p. 3

of linguistic choice in education, as the Italian community wanted to be able to retain the freedom to choose their language of instruction.

*Communal Interactions: Franco-Italian Relations*

Relations between the predominantly francophone community of Montréal and the Italian-Canadian community center on a variety of factors; namely, integration and language, and attempts by the Italian community to safeguard minority rights. Paul-André Linteau explains that in Québec, the strategy of migrant settlement did not initially focus on integration or interculturalism, but rather on “closionnement ethnique”.<sup>124</sup> This approach made migrants set down roots and form their own communities, rather than integrate into society.<sup>125</sup> In the case of the Italians, this led to their reliance on the Catholic Church and Italian parishes as a focal point of social organization and cohesion, with the clergy serving as community leaders up until the Quiet Revolution.<sup>126</sup>

The early acceptance of Italians within French-Canadian enclaves did not last, with acceptance giving way to animosity. Upon their arrival early in the twentieth century, Italian-Canadians shared the same social status as French-Canadians, and their children were originally incorporated into French Catholic schools as a result, and intermarriage between the two communities was common whereas intermarriage with English-Canadians was not.<sup>127</sup> Thus despite their attempts to maintain their own form of identity, Italians were to some extent being integrated into the broader Québec society: Québec nationalist beliefs of a deep English-Italian alliance was simplistic at best.

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<sup>124</sup> Linteau, “Les Italo-Québécois: acteurs et enjeux des débats politiques et linguistiques au Québec,” 191

<sup>125</sup> Linteau, “Les Italo-Québécois: acteurs et enjeux des débats politiques et linguistiques au Québec,” 191

<sup>126</sup> Linteau, “Les Italo-Québécois: acteurs et enjeux des débats politiques et linguistiques au Québec,” 193

<sup>127</sup> Linteau, “Les Italo-Québécois: acteurs et enjeux des débats politiques et linguistiques au Québec,” 193



As Paul-André Linteau notes this old generation of Italians was “provoquée par le nouveau nationalisme québécois et par l’attitude différente des nouveaux immigrants italiens de l’après-guerre.”<sup>128</sup> The postwar generation created new issues, and social cohesion reliant on the broader Italian community to counter the rise of Québécois nationalism that sought to integrate minority groups under a Québécois identity.<sup>129</sup> The new postwar cohort also experienced resentment towards the older generation that had already established roots in the city, believing them to be unwilling to help them with their issues and patronizing.<sup>130</sup> These perceived slights pushed the postwar community more towards the anglophone sphere.

While the two generations had coexisted, tensions and conflicts with Québécois nationalism would center on linguistic education, Québec separatism, and integration. One example of a disconnect can be seen in a 1972 interaction between the *Canadian Italian Business and Professional Men’s Association* (CIBPA) and Jean Bienvenue, an education minister in Robert Bourassa’s cabinet, who claimed that the Italian community was suffering from a persecution complex resulting from their lack of desire to integrate in Québec society by continually engaging within anglophone society.<sup>131</sup> This off-hand comment indicates a lack of understanding of the Italian community. The Italian-Canadian community took seriously the issue of Québécois nationalism, seeing it as an attempt to erase their culture. They were concerned with retaining their ‘italianità’, or ‘Italianness’ while desiring to integrate in Canadian society.<sup>132</sup> The idea of multiculturalism also appealed to them because the policy afforded them a

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<sup>128</sup> Linteau, “Les Italo-Québécois: acteurs et enjeux des débats politiques et linguistiques au Québec,” 193

<sup>129</sup> Linteau, “Les Italo-Québécois: acteurs et enjeux des débats politiques et linguistiques au Québec,” 195, 197

<sup>130</sup> Boissevain, *The Italians of Montréal: Social Adjustment in a Plural Society*, 30

<sup>131</sup> Taddeo and Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec...* 142

<sup>132</sup> D’Andrea “When Nationalisms Collide : Montréal’s Italian Community and the St. Leonard Crisis...” 113-114

means to preserve their heritage, as many within the community had maintained close ethnic ties to the homeland.<sup>133</sup>

The Italian community too was confused by the animosity that was directed towards them, in part because of their support for linguistic education. An interview with an Italian Montréaler conducted by Antonella Crudo revealed Italian receptiveness to the idea of French language education, and confusion regarding animosity aimed at them by Québécois nationalists:

“Italians were not against francophones, in fact even then, their rate of bilingualism was among the highest of all groups. They quietly learned French, it was easy; they did not oppose the teaching of French but were also in favor of teaching English.”<sup>134</sup>

Tensions also existed regarding the restructuring of Québec society as a result of the Quiet Revolution, and Italian desires in the community ran counter to those of Québec nationalists. The latter boasted the expansion of the state, the modernization of the economy, the right to be ‘masters in their own house’ on economic matters, and to prioritize French-language legislation as an attempt to safeguard their culture.<sup>135</sup> These nationalist goals appeared to be undermined in some way by the goals of the Italian community; their desire to educate their children in English or bilingual schools, for example, appeared to endanger the French language’s viability. The project of secularization in the restructuring of Québec society might also come under threat due to the strong influence of the Italian clergy on the Italian community, compounded with their involvement in linguistic education. These functions that ran counter to Québécois nationalism within a growing Italian community were directly challenging the

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<sup>133</sup> D’Andrea “When Nationalisms Collide : Montréal’s Italian Community and the St. Leonard Crisis...” 113-114

<sup>134</sup> Crudo, *Identità Fluttuanti : Italiani Di Montréal E Politiche Del Pluralismo Culturale in Québec E Canada*, 141 (Original language quote: “Gli Italiani non erano contro I francofoni, anzi già da allora, il loro tasso di bilinguismo era fra il più alto tra tutti i gruppi. Imparavano tranquillamente il francese, era facile; non si opponevano all’insegnamento del francese ma erano anche a favore dell’insegnamento dell’inglese.”)

<sup>135</sup> Crudo, *Identità Fluttuanti : Italiani Di Montréal E Politiche Del Pluralismo Culturale in Québec E Canada*, 120, 128

demographic weight of the francophone population, and threatened the Québécois nationalist vision for the province.

The Italian-Canadian community faced a slew of issues that resulted from the explosion of nationalism that was the Quiet Revolution. The question of separatism, already coloured by the issues of the Quiet Revolution and linguistic education, came to the forefront with the Saint-Léonard Riots and the October Crisis. Sovereignty association as a form of Québec autonomy had been proposed since 1967, and strongly promoted by René Lévesque, but it proved anathema to the desires of the Italian community.<sup>136</sup>

The Italian community in Montréal was deeply affected by the impact of the Quiet Revolution, feeling at odds with the broader sentiments of both French and English co-citizens. To a degree, they resisted francization into the broader Québécois community and instead kept to their proper communities, fostering a sense of ‘italianità’.<sup>137</sup> ‘Italianità’s focus on cultural retention was sustained partly by organizations such as the *Congresso Nazionale degli Italo-Canadesi* (National Congress of Italian Canadians/ CNIC), which heavily promoted English-Italian bilingualism while realistically recognizing the importance of the French language.<sup>138</sup> The CNIC also claimed to represent Italian-Canadians at all levels of government, and advocated for their social and political advancement.<sup>139</sup> Other professional organizations did so as well. The *Canadian Italian Business and Professional Men’s Association* (CIBPA) was founded in 1949 by figures like Alfredo Gagliardi, the publisher and editor of *Il Corriere Italiano*, and city

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<sup>136</sup> Crudo, *Identità Fluttuanti : Italiani Di Montréal E Politiche Del Pluralismo Culturale in Québec E Canada*, 130

<sup>137</sup> Claude Painchaud and Richard Poulin, "Italianité, conflit linguistique et structure de pouvoir dans la communauté italo-québécoise," *Sociologie et Sociétés* 24, no.2 (1983): 89

<sup>138</sup> Ricci, "From Acculturation to Integration..." 68

<sup>139</sup> Ricci, "From Acculturation to Integration..." 72

councillor.<sup>140</sup> The *Association of Italo-Canadian Professional Men* (APIC) would also be founded by more well to-do members of the community.<sup>141</sup> Both of these organizations were created by the growing Italo-Canadian bourgeoisie that created business ties amongst Italian-Canadian parties, and promoted their interests. This Italian-Canadian middle class was largely formed by Italians who arrived in the second post-war wave of migration, and the second generation.<sup>142</sup> The impact of the Quiet Revolution was not limited to just the formation of community organizations as a way of combatting them. Language rights deeply impacted the Italian community, imbuing them with pessimism towards the idea of a separatist Québec.

The fear of separatism grew out of linguistic tensions. Italians were wary of separatism, arguing that despite their integration into Montréal, their community was neither completely Québécois nor completely Canadian. An article in *The Montreal Gazette* stated that the Italians' fear of separatism for Italians stemmed from the sense that an independent Québec would result in their becoming second-class citizens.<sup>143</sup> René Lévesque, a pivotal figure of the sovereignty movement, was demonized for his lackadaisical comments to the Italian community that sovereignty would have little impact on their lives.<sup>144</sup> Finally, the article explained that the average Italian viewed language more as a means to an end for their children to advance economically, an instrument for deeper integration than a cultural expression of nationalism to be engaged.<sup>145</sup> In an article in Québec's *Le Soleil*, Lévesque was also criticized by Angelo Montini, a CEGEP professor, as using the Parti Québécois (PQ) to exploit immigrants who wished to establish themselves more within the anglophone sphere, using them as a political scapegoat for

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<sup>140</sup> D'Andrea "When Nationalisms Collide : Montréal's Italian Community and the St. Leonard Crisis..." 22

<sup>141</sup> Boissevain, *The Italians of Montréal: Social Adjustment in a Plural Society*, 23

<sup>142</sup> Painchaud and Poulin, "Italianité, conflit linguistique et structure de pouvoir dans la communauté italo-québécoise," 101

<sup>143</sup> Arthur Blakely, "Montréal's Italians overwhelmingly anti-separatist," *The Montreal Gazette*, 26 March 1970, p. 1

<sup>144</sup> Blakely, "Montréal's Italians overwhelmingly anti-separatist", p. 1.

<sup>145</sup> Blakely, "Montréal's Italians overwhelmingly anti-separatist", p.1

linguistic issues.<sup>146</sup> Furthermore, separatism was seen as integral to the school issues and the Saint-Léonard Riots, with *The Association des Parents de Saint-Léonard* viewing the *Movement pour l'Integration Scolaire* as a core sovereigntist organization.<sup>147</sup> The perception of sovereignty and separatism amongst Italians exemplify a distaste by most of the community towards the idea, though not all of it; figures such as Marco Micone supported the idea of a French, unilingual Québec.

The Italian community's generational gap coloured the perspectives on linguistic and sovereigntist tensions based on which generation they belonged to. The generational acceptance of Italians within French-Canadian enclaves and environments, which shifted over time into animosity as a result of the divide over linguistic education and sovereignty, ignored the community's level of integration. Upon their arrival early in the twentieth century, Italo-Québécois shared the same social status as French-Canadians, that of the lower-level working class, their children were originally incorporated into French Catholic schools, and intermarriages between the two communities were common whereas intermarriages with English-Canadians remained uncommon, as we have noted.<sup>148</sup> This co-existence and incorporation within the community demonstrate that despite attempts to maintain their own form of identity, the community was clearly capable of integration within broader Québec society, despite challenges from their desire to maintain a form of autonomy.

The generational gap between the interwar and postwar generation, as Paul-André Linteau notes, was “provoquée par le nouveau nationalisme québécois et par l’attitude différente

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<sup>146</sup> “Le PQ accusé de se servir des Italiens comme “bouc émissaire,” *Le Soleil*, 21 December 1976, B1

<sup>147</sup> D’Andrea “When Nationalisms Collide : Montréal's Italian Community and the St. Leonard Crisis...,” 153

<sup>148</sup> Linteau, “Les Italo-Québécois: acteurs et enjeux des débats politiques et linguistiques au Québec,” 193

des nouveaux immigrants italiens de l'après-guerre.”<sup>149</sup> This postwar generation rested upon and fostered social cohesion, which relied on the broader Italian community to deal with the rising specter of Québécois nationalism that wished to integrate migrants and existing anglophones into a broader Québécois identity.<sup>150</sup> The new postwar diasporic cohort resented the older generation and saw them as patronizing.<sup>151</sup> What were perceived as slights by the postwar diaspora pushed them towards the anglophone sphere, and they chose to integrate more in the anglophone sphere than the dominant francophone one, though they would never fully settle into one or the other. The Italian community pursued integration largely within four models during the Quiet Revolution, including integration through cultural, economic, structural, and identification means; the highest form of integration they accomplished was on an economic level, whereas the identity they adopted into depended on their language of instruction.<sup>152</sup> In some instances, the generation gap would even lead to Italian adults using French as a primary language, while their children would be using English.<sup>153</sup> These anomalies would lead to further tensions with francophones in the province, which would take on forms of protest against linguistic integration but also sociocultural integration. The degree of these protests would vary, however, depending on the situation.

Tensions also occurred as a result of socioeconomic status, and perceived slights against the francophone community at the hands of the Italians. Italian-Canadians were largely from the unskilled working-class. Following the migration boom of the postwar period, education was seen as an avenue to upward social mobility for the second-generation, but the first generation focused on home ownership as a sign of status which by the 1980s held the highest rate of home-

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<sup>149</sup> Linteau, “Les Italo-Québécois: acteurs et enjeux des débats politiques et linguistiques au Québec,” 193

<sup>150</sup> Linteau, “Les Italo-Québécois: acteurs et enjeux des débats politiques et linguistiques au Québec,” 195, 197

<sup>151</sup> Boissevain, *The Italians of Montréal: Social Adjustment in a Plural Society*, 30

<sup>152</sup> Taddeo and Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec...* 31

<sup>153</sup> Taddeo and Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec...* 32

ownership among ethnic groups nationwide.<sup>154</sup> The social mobility they had achieved by the 1980s is contrasted with their lot of the 1960s, when Italians were amongst the poorest groups within the city, behind French-Canadians.<sup>155</sup> The rise in homeownership and greater prosperity in the Italian community would fuel discontent between the Italians and the Québécois. D'Andrea notes that francophone Québécois felt slighted by the fact that the new arrivals in Italian immigrants became their landlords. In Saint-Léonard, Ville St. Michel, and Montréal North, landlords of duplexes and triplexes were typically Italian-Canadians, while the tenants were of French-Canadian descent; as he puts it, “[f]igures released by the city of St. Leonard suggested that the majority of properties owned in the municipality were in Italian hands.”<sup>156</sup> This led to tensions between the francophone and Italian communities.<sup>157</sup>

These tensions would help colour the perspectives of the community regarding Québec nationalism. These tensions provided an opening for members of the community to step up as its representatives, and gave a voice to community leaders, whether they preached for Québec nationalism and sovereignty or against it.

*Notable Voices: A ‘who’s who’ of Pro and Anti-Sovereignists:*

A number of key figures in the Italian community coalesced the rank and file in the cause of federalism. Others urged support for sovereignty and argued in favor of linguistic legislation that was tied to Québécois nationalism such as Bills 22 and 101.

One such community leader was John Ciaccia. Ciaccia emigrated to Canada in 1937 with his family and settled in St. Denis Street, a predominantly French-speaking quarter of

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<sup>154</sup> Sonia Cancian and Bruno Ramirez, "Post-Migration 'Italo-Canada': New Perspectives on Its Past, Present and Future," *Studi Emigrazione* 44 (2007): 261

<sup>155</sup> Mills, *The Empire Within : Postcolonial Thought and Political Activism in Sixties Montréal*, 36, 22

<sup>156</sup> D’Andrea “When Nationalisms Collide : Montréal's Italian Community and the St. Leonard Crisis...”, 167

<sup>157</sup> D’Andrea “When Nationalisms Collide : Montréal's Italian Community and the St. Leonard Crisis...”, 167

Montréal.<sup>158</sup> Ciaccia has the notable distinction of being the first MNA to be elected in for the riding of Mount Royal with a plurality of 83 per cent of the vote.<sup>159</sup> His contributions to the sovereignty debate cannot be overlooked, as he was only one of six members of the party to vote against Bill 22 during the negotiation process, and was suspended from the Liberal caucus as a result.<sup>160</sup> Ciaccia also served in pivotal moments in Québec history, and was appointed as Robert Bourassa's special representative for the Cree and Inuit<sup>161</sup> as well as chief negotiator for the James Bay hydroelectric project under Bourassa's government.<sup>162</sup> His political acumen in Québec shone through his significant role in the community. Ciaccia, while not worried about the *idea* of separatism, was concerned with its consequences and the injustices it might bring upon minority populations in the province.<sup>163</sup> Ciaccia noted the psychological impact of the referendum on minority groups in his memoir, saying that "With the emphasis by the Péquistes on French, minority groups felt that the definition of a Québécois did not include them... This only added to the feeling of alienation among minority groups."<sup>164</sup>

Outside of the community, critical figures who fought for Québec nationalism counted René Lévesque among their ranks, founder and leader of the PQ during the 1980 Referendum vote and among the foundational voices for separatism. Claude Ryan, the leader of the Liberal Party of Québec during the lead-up to the referendum was staunchly federalist within the rapidly polarized political scene of Québec. Both political leaders are notable for their interactions with the Italian community, as both Lévesque and Ryan were interested in courting them.

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<sup>158</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 3, 5

<sup>159</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 43, 46

<sup>160</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 48, 53

<sup>161</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 47

<sup>162</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 57

<sup>163</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 117

<sup>164</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 120



René Lévesque's perspective is critical to understand his motivation to court the vote of Italian Montréalers following the Quiet Revolution, from the election of the PQ in 1976 up to the referendum campaign. While he committed blunders with the community - namely an incident recalled by Ciaccia in his memoirs that detail Lévesque ridiculing the Italian community in a meeting with them on the eve of the referendum - he genuinely attempted to get close to the community. The Italian attendants of the meeting, not friendly themselves, were asking questions about how sovereignty association would work, resulting over time in Lévesque becoming irritated and lashing out at the community, calling them hypocritical, ignorant, and spineless.<sup>165</sup> Despite this incident, he chased after Italian support for the referendum and his party. *The Montreal Gazette* reported on another of Lévesque's meetings with the Italian community in Saint-Léonard. In a gathering of about 100 members of the community, Lévesque praised those who were voting 'yes', arguing that "ethnic minorities are being exposed to propaganda which is insulting to all Quebecers because it implies that supporters of sovereignty-association are racist."<sup>166</sup> While a list of only 27 Italians who were planning on voting 'yes' were published at this meeting, the sense of support was there for Lévesque nonetheless, giving him further incentive to get closer to the community.<sup>167</sup>

Following the referendum, he would continue to court the community, announcing an integration program for ethnic groups while being hosted at an Italian banquet in Saint-Léonard.<sup>168</sup> This program was aimed at securing votes for the PQ and a future sovereigntist project, aiming to develop equal access to public service for ethnic minorities, an increase in cultural education, improvement of government assistance to ethnic minorities, more substantial

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<sup>165</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 120-1

<sup>166</sup> Canadian Press, "Premier praises courage of ethnic voters for a Yes", *The Montreal Gazette*, 9 May 1980, 9

<sup>167</sup> "Premier praises courage of ethnic voters for a Yes", *The Montreal Gazette*, 9

<sup>168</sup> "Promesse du gouvernement Lévesque: programme d'intégration des communautés ethniques," *Le Quotidien du Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean*, 2 March 1981, A5

financial assistance to cultural events of minority groups, and an information campaign designed to bring together both ethnic minorities and people already deeply steeped in Québécois culture.<sup>169</sup> An amusing detail regarding René Lévesque's attempts to win over the community is his personal congratulations to the Italian Prime Minister, Giovanni Spadolini, on Italy's victory in the World Cup.<sup>170</sup> Lévesque's personal approach demonstrates a genuine, if flawed attempt to win over the Italian community, despite the abrasive comments towards them. The community meetings signal a willingness to understand and influence the community as much as possible, and even some interactions are tinged by a real connection between the Premier and the community at large.

Marco Micone, a poet, playwright and professor, espoused the goals of separatism and Québécois linguistic policy. Micone was part of those postwar migrants who were enrolled in an English-language school, but supported Québécois nationalism and argued for integration in the French milieu.<sup>171</sup> Micone referred to the struggle of Italian and Québécois identities as linked, arguing that "I don't think you can dissociate the two."<sup>172</sup> He would also support the idea of Québec sovereignty, claiming that "for [him], Québec is an autonomous entity."<sup>173</sup> Micone, while still a member of the community and though he would support the PQ and Bill 101, he maintained his links to the community through his plays, which portrayed the realities of Italian Montréal, and his interaction with the community through newspapers.<sup>174</sup> Micone demonstrates the other angle of the community along with Serge Fiori, and point to discord in the community regarding the issue of linguistic nationalism in Québec.

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<sup>169</sup> "Promesse du gouvernement Lévesque," *Le Quotidien du Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean*, A5

<sup>170</sup> "Lévesque félicite les Italiens," *La Presse*, 13 July 1982, p. A8.

<sup>171</sup> Fulvio Caccia, *Interviews with the Phoenix : Interviews with Fifteen Italian-Québécois Artists*, Essay Series, 37, (Toronto: Guernica, 1998), 189-190

<sup>172</sup> Caccia, *Interviews with the Phoenix : Interviews with Fifteen Italian-Québécois Artists*, 193

<sup>173</sup> Caccia, *Interviews with the Phoenix : Interviews with Fifteen Italian-Québécois Artists*, 193

<sup>174</sup> Ricci, "From Acculturation to Integration ..." 78

These community figures in a certain sense were the face of the Italian community in interactions with the Québécois. The two communities came into conversation regarding sovereignty and ethnic demand. While Ciaccia represented the community in the National Assembly and voiced the postwar community's desire to maintain their 'Italianità', artists such as Micone and Fiori provide a more nuanced perspective on the issue of Québec nationalism. Political leaders such as Lévesque and Ryan also had different approaches to the Italians. While both leaders sought some kind of rapport with the community, they also treated them as a means to political ends, appealing to them but at the same time upsetting the community through their remarks. These political approaches also carried over from previous linguistic and social issues within the province, demonstrating that neither Ryan nor Lévesque were the first entities to perpetuate the issues of language and sovereignty.

*It's a Riot: The Saint-Léonard Crisis, October Crisis, Language Issues, and the rise of Québec Nationalism*

Linguistic education became a central issue that intertwined with sovereignty as a result of the Saint-Léonard Crisis of 1967-9, and subsequent nativistic Riots of 1969. The Crisis crystalized linguistic issues as critical both for the Italians but Québécois nationalists, and unleashed a slew of legislative attempts to safeguard the French language. Saint-Léonard, a suburb in the east end of Montréal, was notable for its sizeable Italian minority, constituting up to 30 per cent of its population, with francophones making up to 60 per cent.<sup>175</sup> This significant Italian minority, combined with its preference for English or bilingual education, helped create a significant minority of English-speakers in the predominantly French-speaking borough. Claudio Antonelli recalls that this high concentration of Italians in English schools made the

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<sup>175</sup> Mills, *The Empire Within : Postcolonial Thought and Political Activism in Sixties Montréal*, 142

francophones view the Italians as “the mercenary troops of a war waged by the British, aimed at the linguistic extermination of the French.”<sup>176</sup> The first traces of the crisis arose with these bilingual schools which were adopted as a result of the secret language report.<sup>177</sup> The Jerome-Le-Royer School Board was the other catalyst.

In 1967, the Jerome-Le-Royer School Board in Saint-Léonard replaced bilingual education with unilingual French schooling. The *Association des Parents de Saint-Léonard* was organized by Italians to fight against unilingual schooling and to preserve bilingual schooling.<sup>178</sup> It was at odds with the nationalist *Mouvement pour L'Integration Scolaire* (MIS), later the *Ligue pour l'Integration Scolaire* (LIS), an organization focused on integrating the ethnic community into unilingual French schools.<sup>179</sup> The *Association* challenged the school board's decision and encouraged the Italian community to protest by keeping children home from school, while the MIS would counter-protest by barricading themselves within schools and proclaiming them as unilingual French language institutions.<sup>180</sup>

The Saint-Léonard Riots were sparked by a march organized by the MIS into the borough. When a rock thrown by one of their members shattered a police car, a riot erupted, leading to the mass vandalization of Jean Talon Street.<sup>181</sup> These riots were also ethnically charged, with the MIS protestors hurling racial and nativist remarks and slurs at the Italians, such as “Le Québec aux Québécois,” and “Pas des Wops anglais.”<sup>182</sup> The vitriol spewed against the Québécois by the Italians was equally ugly, with an Italian responding to a quip by an MIS

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<sup>176</sup> Claudio Antonelli, *Sradicamento, Appartenenza, Identità : Pisino, Napoli, Montréal E Altrove*, (Montréal: Lòsna & Tron, 2002), pp. 101 (Original Italian: “le truppe mercenarie di una guerra condotta dagli inglesi, volta allo sterminio linguistico dei francesi.”)

<sup>177</sup> Taddeo and Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec....* 69

<sup>178</sup> Taddeo and Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec...* 93

<sup>179</sup> Taddeo and Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec...* 93

<sup>180</sup> D'Andrea “When Nationalisms Collide : Montréal's Italian Community and the St. Leonard Crisis...” 161

<sup>181</sup> D'Andrea “When Nationalisms Collide : Montréal's Italian Community and the St. Leonard Crisis...” 175-6

<sup>182</sup> D'Andrea “When Nationalisms Collide : Montréal's Italian Community and the St. Leonard Crisis...” 176-7

member that they should learn French that “[w]e speak French and English and Italian. We're civilized, not like you!”<sup>183</sup> Photos from the period reveal how nativistic the event was. The riots took on an overtly Québécois nationalist character as members of the MIS protested throughout the borough. Figures 1 and 2 in the Appendix show the overwhelmingly Québécois nationalist sentiment prevalent within the riot, with signs proclaiming “Québec: Notre seule patrie!”<sup>184</sup>

The photos display a disdain towards anglophones and by extension, the allophones who chose to ally with them. Figure 2 contains a sign decrying The Conquest of 1760 by the British, while Figure 3 depicts a wall with a crude scrawling of “À Mort Les Anglais.”<sup>185</sup> These demonstrations escalated into violence, with *La Presse* reporting on the Saint-Léonard Riots in the following days. The cover photo of their report on the riot shows members of the Italian community beating a member of the MIS, with the article explaining that the MIS protestor was attacked only after breaching the barrier erected by the Saint-Léonard police.<sup>186</sup> The author, Lucien Rivard, bluntly attacked the MIS, deriding them for attempting to force the Québec government to resolve linguistic issues through violence.<sup>187</sup> John Ciaccia visited the site of the riot, saying “Perhaps drawn by my Italian roots, I went to see the commotion on Jean Talon Street where it formed a border between St Léonard and Montréal ... The scene was ugly. It was sad.”<sup>188</sup> These photos from the BanQ are evidence of a very racially and linguistically charged movement that boiled over as a specific action against the community. The Saint-Léonard Riots held major implications for linguistic education in the province, and sparked the drive for linguistic educational choice and separatism for both Italian Montréalers and the broader

<sup>183</sup> D’Andrea “When Nationalisms Collide : Montréal's Italian Community and the St. Leonard Crisis...” 170

<sup>184</sup> Saint-Léonard, manifestation de 1969, 1969, BANQ Vieux-Montréal, Fonds Antoine Desilets, (06M,P697,S1,SS1,SSS18,D107), Antoine Desilets. Figures 1 and 2, Appendix.

<sup>185</sup> Fonds Antoine Desilets, Figure 2 and 3, Appendix.

<sup>186</sup> Lucien Rivard, “C’est la loi de l’emeute,” *La Presse*, 11 Septembre 1969, 1

<sup>187</sup> Rivard, “C’est la loi de l’emeute,” 1

<sup>188</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 42

Québécois majority population. Bills 63 and 22 were proposed as a result of the Riots in order to try and prevent another outbreak of violence within these communities, and these efforts at legislating language continued into the rule of the PQ and their proposed Bill One which would later become Bill 101.

The October Crisis further widened the Québec nationalist gap, with the kidnapping of Pierre Laporte and James Cross by the FLQ energizing the Italian-Canadian community of Montréal. These abductions and the ensuing institution of martial law by the federal government split the community into two camps; those who supported the actions of the federal government and believed that Québec nationalism was being spearheaded by criminals such as the FLQ, while the other camp saw the October Crisis as a way of using language and Québec nationalism as an avenue to divide the working class. *The Montreal Gazette* interviewed Nicola Ciamarra, editor of Italian-language newspaper *Il Cittadino Canadese* during the Crisis. When asked about the opinion of the Italians regarding the violence caused by the FLQ, he remarked that “Not many of them will leave because of the violence. They know it is a very small group carrying out the violence, and they accept that.”<sup>189</sup>

The October Crisis, much like the debate regarding language of education, entrenched the generational gap within the Italian-Canadian community. The press was one facet that exemplified this gap. City newspapers such as *The Montreal Gazette* engaged with the Italian-Canadian community, while Italian-language newspapers kept the community informed of city events.<sup>190</sup> *Il Corriere* and *Il Cittadino* both supported the federal government, and condoned the invocation of the War Measures Act by Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau.<sup>191</sup> They also saw

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<sup>189</sup> James Ferrabee, “Italian Citizens Upset,” *The Montreal Gazette*, 20 October 1970, 11

<sup>190</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista: A Personal and Political Journey*, 43

<sup>191</sup> Gentile, “‘Gli Italiani Non Hanno Paura’: Italian-Language Newspapers and the 1970 October Crisis,” 142

attempted negotiations with the FLQ by Premier Robert Bourassa as caving into their demands.<sup>192</sup> The FLQ despised the Italian underworld as well, with their manifesto decrying Italian-Canadian criminals like Vic Cotroni for their alleged funding of the Liberal Party of Québec.<sup>193</sup> There did exist a contingent of support for the FLQ through community organizations such as the *Movimento Progressivo Italo-Quebecchese* (MPIQ), a labour organization intent on providing a different view on the FLQ for Italo-Quebecers through interviews with members such as Charles Gagnon, aligning themselves more along Québec nationalist lines.<sup>194</sup>

The reaction to the October Crisis highlighted how the generational schism affected community sentiments regarding the onset of Québécois nationalism. The Italian community was certainly victimized in some respects. The manifesto of the Front de Libération du Québec (FLQ) alluded to Italian Canadians in a non-flattering way, painting a picture of them as lawbreakers by calling them “Simard-Cotroni election-riggers;” despite Cotroni being an exception and not representative of the community.<sup>195</sup> The portrayal of the federal government, and in particular Pierre Trudeau, in the press began a pattern of support for the federal government, which later extended into a support for multiculturalism among the Italian-Canadian community.

Those sympathetic to separatism and the aims of the FLQ, though a minority, exemplified the division within the Italian Canadian community. Newspapers such as *Il Lavoratore*, a divergent voice from the dominant narratives of *Il Corriere Italiano* and *Il Cittadino Canadese*, promoting a viewpoint more in line with ideas of sovereignty. Their support for felquistes such as Gagnon through interviews created representations of sovereigntist Italians

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<sup>192</sup> Gentile, “‘Gli Italiani Non Hanno Paura’: Italian-Language Newspapers and the 1970 October Crisis,” 141-2

<sup>193</sup> *Manifesto of FLQ*, Edited by Damien-Claude Belanger, 1970, 3-4

<sup>194</sup> Gentile, “‘Gli Italiani Non Hanno Paura’: Italian-Language Newspapers and the 1970 October Crisis,” 146-7

<sup>195</sup> *Manifesto of FLQ*, Edited by Damien-Claude Belanger, 1970, 3

and provided them with the means to voice their opinions in support of Québec nationalism. They raised criticism about other Italian media, in particular *Il Corriere*, calling it “one of the most effective instruments of the ruling class for the oppression of Italian immigrants.”<sup>196</sup> Here, *Il Lavoratore* ties into the framework of anti-racism by trying to paint a picture of a community cannibalizing itself for the image of respectability amongst more bourgeois francophone and anglophone Canadians, claiming that

“[t]he other Italian weeklies in Montréal try to make people believe they ‘fight’ for the interests of the community...[b]ut with their interviews of notables and community ‘bigwigs’ they only manage to pull the wool over people’s eyes...., on the other hand, does not even pretend to provide these modest illusions. The editor and owner of this newspaper, who often gives its praise without restraint to English television, is not ashamed to confess what the real role of the newspaper is.”<sup>197</sup>

*Il Lavoratore*’s criticism of *Il Corriere* was based on class criteria. The comment regarding English television paints *Il Corriere* in a collaborationist light, as against the working class and francophones in favour of the dominating class. The claim is not incorrect, nor the political insinuations regarding Gagliardi, who was a proponent of the Union Nationale and even a close advisor of Maurice Duplessis.<sup>198</sup>

The alternative views on the Saint-Léonard Riots and the October Crisis would have a bearing on other key political events such as the 1976 political election of the PQ and the 1980 referendum campaign. In 1980 only 2 per cent of Italians would vote in favor of sovereignty,

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<sup>196</sup> “Il Corriere Italiano,” *Il Lavoratore*, Volume 1 No. 1, 16 May 1970, 6 (Original Italian: “il Corriere Italiano serve come uno degli strumenti più efficaci della classe dirigente per l’oppressione degli immigrati italiani.”)

<sup>197</sup> “Il Corriere Italiano,” *Il Lavoratore*, 6 (Translation note, original Italian text of which segments are cited are as follows: “Gli altri settimanali italiani di Montréal cercano di far credere alla gente che ‘combattono’ per gli interessi della comunità oppure che ‘difendono’ i diritti degli operai immigrati italiani. Ma con le loro interviste di notabili e di ‘pezzi grossi’ della comunità riescono solo a gettare fumo negli occhi. Il Corriere Italiano, invece, non ha neppure la pretesa di fornire queste modeste illusioni. il redattore e proprietario di questa giornale, che spesso ne fa le lodi senza ritegno alla televisione inglese, non si vergogna di confessare quale sia il vero ruolo del giornale”

<sup>198</sup> “Il Corriere Italiano,” *Il Lavoratore*, 6; Ricci, “From Acculturation to Integration...” 35; Ramirez, “Migration, Settlement, and Television: The Montréal’s Teledomenica Experience,” 86



when compared to 51 per cent of francophones.<sup>199</sup> This mediocre showing of support for ‘YES’ votes corroborates the high level of support for the ‘NO’ vote amongst Italian-Canadians, and the general distaste for sovereignty. Painchaud and Poulin note that the October Crisis and the Saint-Léonard Riots were formative for the Italian community. They helped shape them into an ethnic group that predominantly rejected Québécois nationalism, finding themselves a target of French-Canadians regarding linguistic education and freedom of choice.<sup>200</sup> When presented with sovereignty association, the Italian community, concerned with their previous treatment by Québécois society, chose to remain within Canada over a sovereign Québec. This choice was not the sole response, however. Community leaders and figures in the Italian community helped dictate support for both sovereignty and federalism.

*Bill 22 and Bill 101: The Centrality of Language both Before and After the Referendum*

The imposition of language legislation further drove the Italian community towards a predominantly anti-separatist camp.<sup>201</sup> In the next chapter, we will examine this legislation in more detail. For now, English was seen as critical to the community, providing them further avenues for economic integration.<sup>202</sup> Even figures such as Angelo Montini acknowledged that Québec was in the process of protecting its language and culture through legislation, but desired that English be treated in French schools much the same way that French was in English schools; where students were expected to have a proficiency within the language.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> Taddeo and Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec...* 32

<sup>200</sup> Painchaud and Poulin, "Italianité, conflit linguistique et structure de pouvoir dans la communauté italo-québécoise," 100

<sup>201</sup> Fulvio Caccia, *Interviews with the Phoenix : Interviews with Fifteen Italian-Québécois Artists*, Essay Series, 37, (Toronto: Guernica, 1998), 193

<sup>202</sup> Ricci, "From Acculturation to Integration..." 59

<sup>203</sup> "Le PQ accusé de se servir des Italiens comme "bouc émissaire," *Le Soleil*, 21 December 1976, B1

Attempts to control linguistic education leading up to the referendum were reported in *The Montreal Gazette*. In early June 1977, Maurice Bigio highlighted Italian community efforts to safeguard access to English and bilingual education as a condition of integration. Angelo Montini, the president of the *Consiglio Educativo Italo-Canadese* a linguistic rights group, would claim that “we are ready to become fully integrated into Québec society if we have a guarantee our children can become bilingual... [s]o far all we've had from the government is formal promises and that's not enough.”<sup>204</sup> Montini would point out the hypocrisy of the current structure of linguistic education, in that English students had to demonstrate a proficiency in French whereas those attending French schools did not have to do the same for English.<sup>205</sup> By forcing children in English-language institutions to undergo these specific exams for proficiency in French but not demanding the reverse for French institutions signalled a disconnect between the ruling government and those that had to deal with the laws.

Linguistic legislation such as Bill One, subsequently Bill 101, was perceived as part of the sovereigntist project by the Italian community in Montréal. Attempts by both the Liberals and PQ to stymie linguistic education through the implementation of Bill 22 by the PLQ and now Bill One was seen as an attack on their freedom of educational choice within the province and an attempt at forced assimilation to the francophone sector of society.<sup>206</sup> This desire not to be assimilated and to retain some choice in education resembles Foucauldian measures of power and knowledge through the use of discourse. Access to bilingual education allowed Italian children access to both sectors of society and afforded them better opportunities within Québec and Canada as a whole.<sup>207</sup> The community itself acknowledged this on occasion, with a brief sent

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<sup>204</sup> Maurice Bigio, “Italians Ask Bilingualism Guarantee,” *The Montreal Gazette*, 1 June, 1977, p. 1

<sup>205</sup> Bigio, “Italians Ask Bilingualism Guarantee,” 1

<sup>206</sup> Jacques Hamilton, “Language Gap Hits Italian Community” *The Montreal Gazette*, 3 September 1974, p.3

<sup>207</sup> Robert Nola, ed. *Foucault*, (Oxfordshire, England: Routledge, 2013), 111

to the Québec government following the deliberation process on Bill One, stating that in the language debate the community did not wish to pick sides despite often choosing English as their language of instruction, for economic reasons.<sup>208</sup> Following the referendum, the project of soft sovereignty continued through linguistic legislation, which Italians became increasingly opposed to following its implementation by the PQ. In 1981, 1200-1600 Italian children were being educated in the English sector despite the requirements of Bill 101 that they should be enrolled in the French sector.<sup>209</sup> Alfredo Gagliardi wryly observed that the francophone community had been trying to draw the Italian community into French-language institutions despite denying them admittance in the past when they had attempted to integrate into the community.<sup>210</sup>

Summary:

While these are just a few examples of how the Quiet Revolution impacted the Italian community, its resulting issues will be further explored in subsequent chapters. The Italian community overall resolved against the idea of separatism and activities undertaken by community organization will be further compounded and explored on in further chapters of the thesis. The linguistic issues of Bill 101 and the idea of sovereignty were seen as intertwined in the Italian-Canadian community, as both promoted Québécois nationalist goals. The former would accomplish the goal of integration through legislated coercion on the language question, while the latter pushed the Italians to fear the treatment they would receive within an independent Québec. They saw the referendum as harming the agency of their community and worried that it would further turn the community into scapegoats for the francophone majority regarding linguistic educational issues.

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<sup>208</sup> Bigio, "Italians Ask Bilingualism Guarantee," 1

<sup>209</sup> Anne Peniketh, "How those Bill 101 Schoolchildren are Coping," *The Montreal Gazette*, 5 December, 1981, 51

<sup>210</sup> Peniketh, "How those Bill 101 Schoolchildren are Coping," 51

While community organizations such as the *Consiglio* have only been touched upon, further chapters will explore their impact on both the educational impact of Bill 101 on the migrant communities and how this relationship between migrant communities and language legislation were connected to sovereigntist issues. Organizations that will be expanded upon include the Centro Donne Italiane di Montréal to demonstrate how women's organizations within the community reacted to the issue of sovereignty and language during the process of the 1980 referendum. Press outlets for the community such as *Il Corriere* and *Il Cittadino Canadese* will also be scrutinized as arms and mouthpieces for the Italian community through their reports on the referendum as well as editorials and opinions on the issue of sovereignty and linguistic rights within Québec.

## **Chapter 2: Run-Up to the Referendum (1976-80)**

### *Language Legislation: PELO, Bills 22, One, and 101.*

The Quiet Revolution and its aftermath were formative for the Montréal Italian community's sense of belonging to Québec, both the interwar and postwar generations. The 1969 Saint-Léonard Riots and the language question pointed to strong political and ethnic tensions between the francophone population and the broader community. The Union Nationale and Liberal governments created legislation in the wake of these riots to quell the unrest. These resulted in the language laws Bills 63 and 22, which strove to balance access to English education while upholding the Québécois nationalist project.

Immigration was part of the language question, with statistics demonstrating close to 75 per cent of immigrant children registered at English schools within Montréal.<sup>211</sup> Bill 63 followed the Saint-Léonard Riots by the Union Nationale government as an attempt to ease linguistic tensions and correct the imbalance of English speakers in the province.. Proposed by Premier Jean-Jacques Bertrand on 23 October 1969, this piece of linguistic legislation was intended to promote the French language through the creation of an “Office de la langue française,” but what angered Québécois nationalists was that Bill 63 allowed parents to choose the language of education for their children, thus perpetuating the perceived privilege of the dominant anglophone class and its colonial trappings, and proving to be deeply unpopular with Québécois nationalists.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> Dickinson and Young, *A Short History of Québec*, 323

<sup>212</sup> Mills, *The Empire Within : Postcolonial Thought and Political Activism in Sixties Montréal*, 154, 156; Matthew Hayday, “Bilingualism versus Unilingualism: Federal and Provincial Language Education Policies in Québec, 1960-85” in *Contemporary Québec: Selected Readings and Commentaries*, eds. Michael D Behiels and Matthew Hayday, (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011), 427

Bill 22 in comparison to its predecessor was more complicated. Bill 22 was tabled on 21 May 1974 by Robert Bourassa, and it made French the official language of Québec and of the government, and also regulated services in French in public institutions. The most important change was the education overhaul regarding language, which forced enrolment in English schools to be limited to those who possessed a sufficient understanding of English to be determined through examinations. Those who failed would be sent to French school.<sup>213</sup> The law no longer operated on the principle of integration by persuasion as its predecessor did.<sup>214</sup> Bill 22 had also eliminated most of the bilingual schools following its adoption, with only three remaining, and all of them had begun the process of phasing English out of their programs.<sup>215</sup> Despite this attempt at placating Québécois nationalists, it became clear that Bill 22 would also become unpopular with Québec society.<sup>216</sup> Italians vilified the language examination most of all, and figured out ways to circumvent it. Ciaccia described it as having “been rejected by both the English-speaking and French-speaking communities...allophones in Québec, were divided and forced to choose between the French and English, with most going to the English side on language and education matters.”<sup>217</sup> An organization called the *Consiglio Educativo Italo-Canadese*, was created with CEGEP professor Angelo Montini serving as president, William Cusano as secretary, Anthony Marciano as treasurer, and Pietro Rizzuto as a consultant for its organization.<sup>218</sup> Angelo Montini would voice his disgust with the linguistic exams in *Insieme*, saying:

“How can one remain indifferent to such a purely political and nationalist situation? How can we not react when we learn that our children had a 60 percent higher score comparatively to the

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<sup>213</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 47-8

<sup>214</sup> Taddeo and Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec...* 72

<sup>215</sup> Taddeo and Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec...* 86

<sup>216</sup> Hayday, “Bilingualism versus Unilingualism...” 428

<sup>217</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 90

<sup>218</sup> Taddeo and Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec...* 149-150

previous year on the same exams? How can we accept this attitude of blatant and provocative discrimination?”<sup>219</sup>

This disgust was a motivator for the Consiglio, who focused on helping to prepare children for the linguistic exam, along with specialists from McGill University.<sup>220</sup> The *Consiglio* also accused the Ministry of Education both of applying Bill 22’s examinations unevenly depending on the school, and of manipulating the test scores in order to limit admissions into English schools.<sup>221</sup> The creation of the Consiglio under Montini shows that the Italian community took umbrage by this legislation, viewing it as wholly discriminatory for the sake of perpetuating the Québécois nationalist project.

Even Liberal MNA’s were against Bill 22 while it was being debated in Parliament. John Ciaccia, one of the MNA’s mentioned in a previous chapter, believed that Bill 22 was overzealous in its implementation, and while he supported making French the official language of Québec, Ciaccia felt that the bill encroached on the rights of linguistic minorities in the province.<sup>222</sup> He would state his opposition in a parliamentary speech, arguing “I am against a *régie* [government board] making the final decisions on essential rights and taking away any legal recourse by the individual when his rights would be affected. I uphold the rule of law.”<sup>223</sup> Ciaccia proposed three solutions to amend Bill 22 to be more inclusive and respectful of linguistic minorities in Québec:

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<sup>219</sup> Angelo Montini, “Esami Linguistici: Discriminazione-Bambini bocciati ingiustamente-reazione della comunità,” *Insieme* Anno 4 no. 7, July 1976, 11 (Original Italian: Come rimanere indifferenti di fronte a tale situazione prettamente politica e nazionalista? Come non reagire quando si apprende che i nostri bambini ebbero uno scacco superiore del 60% comparativamente all'anno precedente nei confronti degli stessi esami? Come poter accettare questa attitudine di discriminazione evidente e provocatoria?”)

<sup>220</sup> Montini, “Esami Linguistici: Discriminazione-Bambini bocciati ingiustamente-reazione della comunità,” *Insieme* Anno 4 no. 7, 11

<sup>221</sup> Taddeo and Taras, *Le Débat Linguistique Au Québec*.... 180

<sup>222</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 50-1

<sup>223</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 52

“(1) Withdraw those articles in the bill that are not constitutional; (2) eliminate the discretionary powers given to the bureaucrats; (3) guarantee the existence of English schools and assure that English will be taught as a second language in French schools. “It is possible,” I said, “to protect the French language and have a spirit of harmony in the law.” It was not a vociferous attack on the legislation – more of an accommodation and a demand for clarification and protection of certain rights.”<sup>224</sup>

Ciaccia’s proposals were not considered, and he was subsequently suspended from the Liberal caucus after he voted ‘No’ for Bill 22.<sup>225</sup> Despite his protests against the law during its debates, following its passage Ciaccia took on an attitude akin to letting bygones be bygones, pleading with anglophones that speaking French in Québec was to their benefit and would maintain a social peace, and argued against using the courts to fight the bill.<sup>226</sup> Ciaccia, despite agreeing with those wanting to protect the right to English-language education, would also give a speech at Sir George Williams University, now Concordia, urging cooperation with French-Canadians despite his opposition to Bill 22.<sup>227</sup> Ciaccia’s attempts to improve Bill 22 and make it a more protective legislation can be credited to his position in the Italian community. As a member of an ethnic minority himself and having worked with Indigenous peoples in the James Bay, he understood how easily legislation could be used against minority groups. While his proposals, concessions to anglophones in the administration of education which Bill 22 sought to eliminate, were rejected, they emphasize the spirit of bilingualism that the Italians in Montréal had embraced.

The opposition to Bill 22 ironically counted René Lévesque amongst its ranks as well, and Ciaccia notes in his memoir that Lévesque believed “[t]he bill is unacceptable because it gives arbitrary and discretionary powers to the government, which is potentially dangerous to

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<sup>224</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 53

<sup>225</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 53

<sup>226</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 90.

<sup>227</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 90



democracy.”<sup>228</sup> Ciaccia saw Lévesque’s opposition as an attempt to sway those who would traditionally be opposed to the PQ by championing their cause of a right to linguistic education.<sup>229</sup> Bourassa in response would tell the English community that the PQ would provide a worse piece of legislation than their own.<sup>230</sup> Italian opposition to Bill 22 was rooted in the desire for access to bilingual education, a desire that bled into these negotiations.

Languages other than French would come under the microscope of the Québec government. In the 1970s the PELO program was created. PELO, which stood for ‘Programme d’enseignement de langue origine,’ was created by the PQ and touted as a conciliatory attempt towards integration into Québec society, offering mother tongue instruction at the schools the children of immigrants attended.<sup>231</sup> A key issue with PELO, was its unavailability at the schools Italian children attended.<sup>232</sup> The irony of PELO was its aim to integrate children into Québec society through education of minority languages under the aegis of the Québec government. This program was created in spite of the linguistic issues raised by Bills 22 and 101 which restricted freedom of education, further highlighting the irony that the PQ government was attempting to push an integrationist vision for the province under the umbrella of the French language, while promoting a program that pushed for the retention of ethnic languages.

Robert Bourassa came under fire from the Italian community in the lead-up to the election of the PQ. Ermanno la Riccia, the chief editor of *Insieme*, wrote in September 1976 that

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<sup>228</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 49

<sup>229</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 49

<sup>230</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 49

<sup>231</sup> Painchaud and Poulin, *Les Italiens au Québec*, 122-3

<sup>232</sup> Painchaud and Poulin, *Les Italiens au Québec*, 123

Bourassa's star was beginning to fade, in part due to the unpopularity of Bill 22, as well as the mounting debt of the 1976 Olympics and the James Bay Hydroelectric Dam.<sup>233</sup>

The language question persisted as the 1976 election drew near. In *Insieme*, Ermanno la Riccia, claimed that Bill 22 was intrinsically tied to the elections. The Union Nationale had pledged to abolish it in the debates, the Liberals promised to amend it, and the PQ wished to change it.<sup>234</sup> La Riccia observed that no one was content with Bill 22, including the nationalist parties, and that they were "of the opinion that the survival of French culture in Québec is entrusted to the will of all citizens to whatever race they belong...only a healthy and thought-out bilingualism can bring peace back to our province."<sup>235</sup> This perspective showed that the Italian community was not opposed to the French language and understood that it was important to maintain it, but at the same time saw that the efforts to legislate it were dangerous and championed bilingualism over unilingualism.

### Sovereignty and Identity

During the 1970s, identity became a critical issue for the Montréal Italian community. *Insieme* released an editorial titled "Who Deserves to be a Quebecker?" where the author, going by the pseudonym Astarotte, assesses Québec identity, going down the list of different ethnic groups and asking the reader if they should be considered Quebeckers, just as French-Canadians are. In one passage, Astarotte states:

"[p]erhaps some anglophones, such as for example Molson and other major families that have lived in Montréal for over two centuries, do they merit the title of Quebecker? Perhaps the Jews

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<sup>233</sup> Ermanno la Riccia, "Le Priorita' dell'on. Bourassa," *Insieme*, Anno 4 no.9, September 1976, 4

<sup>234</sup> Ermanno la Riccia, "Il Bill 22 al Centro della Campagna Elettorale," *Insieme*, Anno 4 no. 11, November 1976, 4

<sup>235</sup> la Riccia, "Il Bill 22 al Centro della Campagna Elettorale," *Insieme*, (Original Italian: Noi siamo del parere che la sopravvivenza della cultura francese nel Québec è affidata alla volontà di tutti i cittadini a qualsiasi razza essi appartengano... solo un sano e ponderato bilinguismo potrà riportare la pace nella nostra provincia.)

Note: (Neo-Canadians was the common term for immigrant Canadians at the time this article was written.)

of the province are Quebecers? And do all Neo-Canadians, Italians, Ukrainians, Germans, Haitians, Chinese, etc., deserve this title? We have no official response, but it would be naive on the part of those who do not hear how all of them are considered 'imported.' Perhaps then only francophones born in Québec are Quebecers? We are getting closer to the truth, but we still have some reservations.”<sup>236</sup>

In this editorial, it is clear that the scepticism of the Italian community shone through in the midst of the debate over sovereignty. By openly questioning which ethnic groups might even be considered Quebecers, including francophones, they threw doubt on the idea of integration and assimilation, especially given their fears of separatism, socialism, and anarchy, which they associated with Québécois nationalism.<sup>237</sup> They went on to decry francophone hypocrisy towards immigrants, saying that francophones were no better, as their ancestors themselves were deportees and they took the land without the approval of the Indigenous people, and therefore have no right to stay either.<sup>238</sup> This ire was not limited only to francophones, however. The editorial lashed out against the anglophones as well, warning them not to attempt to bamboozle immigrants as they did the French, and by the same token that they could benefit both from learning French and to abandon their “colonizer air.”<sup>239</sup> This jab at the English signified that the Italians did not belong in either camp, despite their adherence to English-language education. Their rebuff of English haughtiness towards the French also exemplifies their understanding of the plight of the French community regarding the importance of their language. This opinion piece in *Insieme* provides insight into the Italian community of the time, showing its clear dissatisfaction with both of the majority groups within the province.

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<sup>236</sup> Astarotte, “Chi Merita di essere Quebecchese?” *Insieme* Anno 4 no.4, April 1976, 3 (Translation note: Original quote for context is as following: Forse i Giudei della Provincia sono Quebecchesi? E tutti i neo canadesi, italiani, ucraini, tedeschi, Haitiani, cinesi, ecc... meritano questo titolo? Non disponiamo di nessuna risposta ufficiale, ma sarebbe ingenuo colui che non sentisse come tutti costoro sono considerati 'importati.' Forse allora solo i Francofoni nati in Québec sono quebecchese? Ci avviciniamo alla verità, ma rimane qualche riserva ancora.)

<sup>237</sup> Astarotte, “Chi Merita di essere Quebecchese?” *Insieme* Anno 4 no.4, 3

<sup>238</sup> Astarotte, “Chi Merita di essere Quebecchese?” *Insieme* Anno 4 no.4, 3

<sup>239</sup> Astarotte, “Chi Merita di essere Quebecchese?” *Insieme* Anno 4 no.4, 3 (Translation note: “quell’aria da colonizzatori”)

The importance of the clergy during this era cannot be understated, even if in the midst of the Quiet Revolution. Despite the secularization of society, the Catholic Church remained very important to the Italian community of Montréal. Boissevain pointed out in his report that “the structure of the Italian ethnic church provides the territorial framework of the Italian community.”<sup>240</sup> With five national parishes and two mission areas linked to the Italian community, as well as the overwhelmingly high rate of Roman Catholic Italians at 97% in the city, religion was critical to communal organization at the time.<sup>241</sup> The clerical reach extended into the organization of linguistic schooling during the debate over Bill 22, with the Catholic Church indirectly impacting the administration of English schools which were targeted as a result of this legislation.

The Italian church periodical *Insieme* published an article by Angelo Montini titled “Linguistic Exams: Discrimination: Children Failed Unjustly-The Community Reacts,” calling Bill 22’s linguistic examinations as a “purely political and nationalist situation.”<sup>242</sup> A political cartoon by Umberto Taccola in the same paper crudely depicted an Italian man being forcefed a mix of castor oil (a common torture tactic by fascists in Italy), a bottle of ‘joual’, referring to the dialect of French spoken within Québec, and from a nozzle marked “goût du Québec”. The liquids are being poured into a funnel which states “Canadian citizenship.” The men force-feeding the victim are dressed rather crudely and are holding him down, with the one on the left depicted as a Nazi soldier, a swastika adorning his chest and sporting an armband bearing the inscription “defense of the race.” The other man sports an armband claiming “defense of culture,” and is wearing a fleur de lis along with a mockery of stereotypical Indigenous

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<sup>240</sup> Boissevain, *The Italians of Montréal: Social Adjustment in a Plural Society*, 18-9

<sup>241</sup> Boissevain, *The Italians of Montréal: Social Adjustment in a Plural Society*, 19

<sup>242</sup> Montini, “Esami Linguistici: Discriminazione-Bambini bocciati ingiustamente-reazione della comunita,” *Insieme* Anno 4 no. 7, 11 (Note: Original name is “Esami linguistici: Discriminazione: Bambini Bocciati Ingiustamente-Reazione della Comunita,” Translation is done by the author)

headdress, sporting only one feather. Finally, as if giving his assent to this process of ‘Québecization,’ there is a priest in the background, his hat emblazoned with a fleur de lis, holding his hand as if to give a blessing. As if mocking this idea, the priest appears to be none other than René Lévesque.<sup>243</sup> The cartoon suggests that a sizeable segment of the Italian-Canadian population was against forced integration into Québec society.

The question of sovereignty was also not one that appealed to the Italian-Canadian community at large. In *Il Cittadino*, a contributor named Antonio Sciascia penned an article titled “Siamo Quebecchese, ma anche Canadesi”, which detailed the Italian experience regarding the question of separatism.<sup>244</sup> Sciascia describes his concern for the question of separatism, arguing that while anglophones were in favour of federalism, the question of national unity had to be answered by francophone Québécois, as they had to decide whether sovereignty or federalism was the path they wished to pursue.<sup>245</sup> Returning to the question of Québécois nationalism and language, Sciascia also remarked that the Italian community did not refuse to speak or learn French, but wanted to learn it alongside the English language, an aspiration he noted was shared with the francophone majority, as 70 per cent of them spoke it as their second language.<sup>246</sup> Sciascia said that it was important for Quebecers to understand that “we are no longer a community of immigrants as we have long since settled and established roots in Québec. We are Quebecers by birth or by choice we have made Québec our own country, but at the same time we are also Canadians.”<sup>247</sup> Sciascia’s opinion piece demonstrates a clear perspective from Italian

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<sup>243</sup> Umberto Taccola, Political Cartoon, *Insieme*, Anno 4 no.10, October 1976, 5 (See Figure 5 in the Appendix)

<sup>244</sup> Antonio Sciascia, “Siamo Quebecchese, ma anche Canadesi,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, Anno 37 no. 38, 22 September 1977, 4 (Translation of article title: “We’re Québécois, but also Canadian.”)

<sup>245</sup> Sciascia, “Siamo Quebecchese, ma anche Canadesi,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 4

<sup>246</sup> Sciascia, “Siamo Quebecchese, ma anche Canadesi,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 4

<sup>247</sup> Sciascia, “Siamo Quebecchese, ma anche Canadesi,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 4 (Original Italian: Dobbiamo anche far comprendere lor oche noi non siamo più una comunità di immigrati poichè da lungo tempo siamo stabiliti e

Montréalers about their beliefs on sovereignty and federalism, identifying more with the latter than the former. Sciascia acts as the proxy of the community, saying the Italians are proud to live in Québec but they did not embrace the facets of Québécois nationalism.

Standing in contrast to the sentiments proposed by Sciascia, Marco Micone was a community leader who did not conform to the general political sentiments of the Italian community. Micone was a professor of Italian at Vanier College.<sup>248</sup> Unlike his contemporaries, he was a staunch supporter of language legislation since the 1970s, who emphasized the socio-economic similarities between both French and Italian Canadians.<sup>249</sup> While Micone supported the Italians, he critiqued what he saw as an overattachment to a domineering power that sought to exercise its influence over those of a different ethnic background. While Italian Montréalers arguably saw the French in this light, Micone saw the English and the primacy of the English language as the true domineering power, aligning himself with the Québécois nationalists.

Micone would call out the Italian-Canadian community as being driven by a desire for status, stating that they were avoiding the question of language that could not be fixed, until the ruling party, at the time the Liberals under Bourassa, was no longer beholden to monied interests.<sup>250</sup> He was sceptical about the *Consiglio* and Angelo Montini, citing that this organization did not speak for the broader Québec society regarding language, and that language was not in the purview of anglophone professors alone.<sup>251</sup> He blamed these issues on the manipulation of immigrants, blaming leaders of dubious intent as helping to perpetuate

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radicati nel Québec. Noi siamo dei quebecchesi da nascita o per la libera scelta di fare del Québec il nostro paese; ma nello stesso tempo noi siamo anche dei Canadesi.”)

<sup>248</sup> Marco Micone, “Le ghetto italien de Saint-Léonard et ses chefs,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, Anno 36, no.20, 5 August 1976, 12

<sup>249</sup> Ricci, “From Acculturation to Integration...” 67

<sup>250</sup> Micone, “Le ghetto italien de Saint-Léonard et ses chefs,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 12

<sup>251</sup> Micone, “Le ghetto italien de Saint-Léonard et ses chefs,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 12

unresolved issues in Québec.<sup>252</sup> Here, Micone indirectly criticizes media figures in Italian society such as Gagliardi and Ciamarra, arguing that their ignorance in promoting the interests of the English community was only continuing to perpetuate the very issues they saw within Québec society by appeasing the anglophone minority in Montréal.

Micone also pointed to problems he saw regarding language in the borough of Saint-Léonard, in an opinion piece titled “Les Italiens de Saint-Léonard veulent-ils perpétuer le ghetto?” He asks why bilingualism was not a force of integration but rather francophone assimilation, arguing that “[d]és l’instant où le peuple Québécois serait entièrement bilingue, et bien avant, ce qui est de plus en plus en plus probable, il n’aura plus besoin de parler français. Il sera déjà assimilé.”<sup>253</sup> Micone believed that by continuing to choose English school for their children, the Italian community was pushing itself into a corner and a linguistic ghetto as well.<sup>254</sup> Micone’s arguments ran counter to the beliefs of the broader Italian-Canadian community in Montréal, who believed that bilingual education would expand the opportunities for their children, Micone believed just the opposite, that this would harm them and relegate them to the margins of society.

Micone provides a contrast to the desires of the Italian community, as his sympathies to the Québécois nationalist project ran counter to their desires of bilingualism and federalism. Micone was a pequiste through and through, supporting the ideal of a pluralistic francophone Québec, marking him as different from his peers who supported the Liberal Party of Québec.<sup>255</sup> The Italian community generally was not supportive of Micone, and he felt threatened by it

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<sup>252</sup> Micone, “Le ghetto italien de Saint-Léonard et ses chefs,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 12

<sup>253</sup> Marco Micone, “Les Italiens de Saint-Léonard veulent-ils perpétuer le ghetto?” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, Anno 36, no.20, 5 August 1976, 13

<sup>254</sup> Micone, “Les Italiens de Saint-Léonard veulent-ils perpétuer le ghetto?” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 13

<sup>255</sup> Ricci, “From Acculturation to Integration...” 107

following its harsh reaction to his criticisms.<sup>256</sup> His future support of Bill 101, the Parti Québécois' language bill, would earn him further criticism.<sup>257</sup> The criticism that would surround Micone was relatively minor compared to the fear that would consume the community following the 1976 election.

### *The 1976 Election and its Aftermath*

Both political parties were aware of the influence they could wield on the Italian-Canadian population. Italian newspapers were seen by both the LPQ and the PQ as ways in which they could spread their messages and sway voters. This was done through electoral advertisements and political statements placed in the pages of *Il Corriere*, *Il Cittadino*, and *Insieme*. Bourassa's Liberals placed an advertisement in *Il Corriere Italiano* guaranteeing the rights of Quebecers through the repatriation of the constitution and arguing for federalism.<sup>258</sup> This sort of advertisement appealed to the Italian-Canadian mainstream, as it championed causes of federalism that they supported and portrayed the Liberals as protectors of the rights of citizens.

The ethnic press was also the perfect avenue for the politically inclined in the community to get involved in the Québec government. Donat Taddeo attempted to do so, running as a PLQ candidate in St. Henri as a school commissioner, and one of his taglines states he was fighting for "a saner administration" to eliminate linguistic exams from Bill 22, and allow immigrant children to attend English school so long as a sibling of theirs was already enrolled in the same

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<sup>256</sup> Ricci, "From Acculturation to Integration..." 67

<sup>257</sup> Rima Elkouri, "Speak White, Speak What," *La Presse*, 3 February 2008, 5

<sup>258</sup> *Il Corriere Italiano*, Vol XXIV no.46, 11 November 1976, 63 (Appendix, Figure 6)



school.<sup>259</sup> While Taddeo did not get elected, it demonstrated attempts by Italians to use their means of public discourse to effectuate change within the province that served their needs.<sup>260</sup>

Prior to the elections, *Insieme* provided a brief of each party in an article written by Ermanno la Riccia, helping to inform members of the community about the alignment and priorities of each party.<sup>261</sup> La Riccia minced no words with the Liberal Party, claiming that they had burned many bridges with the electorate and remained too focused on the linguistic question, defending Bill 22 at the start of the campaign, and thus turning Bourassa against all immigrants.<sup>262</sup> The Parti Québécois was called “the number one antagonist of the Liberal Party.”<sup>263</sup> La Riccia also notes that the PQ represented the only major alternative to the Liberal Party, but only if they abandoned the separatist quest, referring to Lévesque’s party as a social-democratic force.<sup>264</sup> The Union Nationale was the other alternative of note touted by *Insieme*, explaining that they were willing to abolish Bill 22, an action which la Riccia said would win the approval of the English and other immigrants.<sup>265</sup> This brief by *Insieme* provides a glance at the Italian mainstream’s views of the parties, with la Riccia throwing his support to the Union Nationale over the LPQ and PQ.

Michele Pirone wrote in *Il Cittadino* about the results of the 1976 election, with his article succinctly titled “The Slaughter of the Liberals.”<sup>266</sup> His article would show the disbelief felt by the community as to the PQ’s victory, stating that “The possibility of a pequiste victory

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<sup>259</sup> *Il Corriere Italiano*, Vol XXIV no.46, 11 November 1976, 14 (Appendix, Figure 7)

<sup>260</sup> Nunzio Chillemi, “René Lévesque Primo Ministro del Québec,” *Il Corriere Italiano*, Vol XXIV no.47, 18 November 1976, 2

<sup>261</sup> Ermanno la Riccia, “Il 15 Novembre si Vota,” *Insieme* Anno 4, no. 11, November 1976, 1

<sup>262</sup> la Riccia, “Il 15 Novembre si Vota,” *Insieme*, 1

<sup>263</sup> la Riccia, “Il 15 Novembre si Vota,” *Insieme*, 5 (Original Italian: ‘l’antagonista numero uno del Partito Liberale.’)

<sup>264</sup> la Riccia, “Il 15 Novembre si Vota,” *Insieme*, 5

<sup>265</sup> la Riccia, “Il 15 Novembre si Vota,” *Insieme*, 5

<sup>266</sup> Michele Pirone, “L’eccidio dei Liberali,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, Anno 36 no.45, 18 November 1976, 1

was predictable; what was not predictable was the Parti Québécois succeeding at forming a majority government.”<sup>267</sup> Pirone also explains that the promises of Robert Bourassa and Jean Bienvenue to amend Bill 22 were now no longer possible, as both men had lost their seats in the National Assembly, their defeat Pirone attributed to Bourassa’s hubris in calling an early election.<sup>268</sup> Pirone addressed Liberal hubris by saying:

“The entire Liberal election campaign was in fact, marked by the fear of separatism, which- obviously-constituted a profound disdain for the intelligence of the voter, who asked: ‘If there is a danger in the separatist idea; why does this danger continue to exist with an entirely Liberal government and chamber? If separatism replaces a real and effective danger, why do we seem to be facing this danger with early elections? Why try to infuse us with an untimely fear of separatism, when with 102 out of 110 deputies the present government could still remain in power for another two years?’”<sup>269</sup>

By voluntarily calling an early election, Pirone criticized Bourassa for handing the government to the Parti Québécois as a result of his overconfidence, with the PQ now holding a clear majority in the National Assembly with 70 seats to the Liberal Party’s 27, decimating their previous majority.

Nick Ciamarra chimed in on the results as well, saying that Lévesque’s victory was due in part to the electorate’s faith in him.<sup>270</sup> Ciamarra describes his personal experience with René Lévesque, saying:

“I know Lévesque personally from having worked with him from 1960-when he began his political activity-until 1966, when he broke away from the Liberals; and so we can say of him that he is a serious, prepared, and loyal man. We are convinced, therefore, that -despite the fact

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<sup>267</sup> Pirone, “L’eccidio dei Liberali,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 1 (original Italian: “La possibilità di una vittoria pequista era prevedibile; ci oche non era prevedibile è che il parti québécois riuscisse a formare un governo maggioritario.”)

<sup>268</sup> Pirone, “L’eccidio dei Liberali,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 5

<sup>269</sup> Pirone, “L’eccidio dei Liberali,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 5 (Original Italian: Tutta la campagna elettorale Liberale è stata infatti, improntata alla paura del separatismo, il che-ovviamente-costituiva una profonda disistima per l'intelligenza dell'elettore, il quale si domandava: "Se c'è un pericolo nell'idea separatista; perché questo pericolo contuna a sussistere con un governo ed una camera interamente liberali? Se il separatismo sostituisce un pericoliolo reale ed effettivo, perche parci correre questo pericolo con elezioni anticipate? Perche cercare d'infoderci uno intempestivo timor panico del separatismo, allorché con 102 deputati su 110 l'attuale governo potrebbe rimanere ancora al potere per altri due anni?"")

<sup>270</sup> Nick Ciamarra, “Significato di una vittoria,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, Anno 36 no.45, 18 November 1976, 1

that politics lends itself to compromise- when he makes a commitment he keeps it. His honesty should not be doubted, even if his fervor to give French-Canadians the dignity due to one of Canada's founding groups could push him-in a certain sense and within certain limits-to be partisan... So we believe that the victory achieved by the Parti Québécois does not mean exclusively the victory of the French-Canadians, but also the victory of all the people of Québec.”<sup>271</sup>

Ciamarra's commentary shows an attempt to reassure the Italian community following Lévesque's election by describing his personal characteristics as a man of his word. Ciamarra takes an optimistic view of the PQ's victory by arguing that it would not only serve the whims of the majority French-Canadian population but also the interests of minority groups within the province. Ciamarra provides a more stable and level-headed perspective through his personal experiences with Lévesque that show a side of Italian community leaders that were more willing to compromise and see the perspective of Québécois nationalists.

*Il Corriere* was not as kind as Ciamarra to the Parti Québécois. Nunzio Chillemi, its director who in the future ran as a Liberal Party member, wrote acerbically “Now what? The “Belle Province” has emerged from its state of electoral neurosis. Voters have thrown the doors wide open to the Parti Québécois, to a Trojan horse in which harbors an ideology diametrically opposed to the concept of ‘federalism’ that binds Canada and the provinces.”<sup>272</sup> Chillemi's comments reveal a pessimistic view of the PQ's rise, seeing the party as a destabilizing force within Canadian society that would work to destabilize federalism.

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<sup>271</sup> Ciamarra, “Significato di una vittoria,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 2 (Original Italian: Conosciamo personalmente Lévesque per aver collaborato con lui dal 1960- quando ha iniziato la sua attività politica- fino al 1966, allorché si è distaccato dai liberali; e perciò possiamo dire di lui che è un uomo serio, preparato, e leale. Siamo convinti, perciò, che -malgrado la politica si presti a compromessi- quando assume un impegno egli lo mantenga. La sua onestà non va messa in dubbio, anche se il suo fervore di dare ai francocanadesi la dignità che compete ad uno dei gruppi fondatori del Canada, posso spingerlo -in un certo senso ed entro certi limiti-ad essere partigiano... Perciò noi crediamo che la vittoria riportata dal parti québécois non significhi esclusivamente la vittoria dei francocanadesi, ben sì anche la vittoria di tutto il popolo del Québec.”)

<sup>272</sup> Chillemi, “René Lévesque Primo Ministro del Québec,” *Il Corriere Italiano*, 1 (original Italian: E adesso? La “Belle Province” è uscita dallo stato di nevrosi elettorale. Gli elettori hanno spalancato le porte al Parti Québécois, ad un ‘cavallo di Troia nel quale alberga un’ideologia diametralmente opposta al concetto di ‘federalismo’ che lega il Canada e le Province.)

*Insieme* provided a more measured view of the results, lacking the wit that Chillemi brought to his reporting. Ermanno la Riccia would once again provide a voice to the Québec political scene, and he echoed the worries of *Il Corriere*, saying “Québec independence signifies the dismemberment of the Canada’s Confederation, and perhaps, its complete dissolution.”<sup>273</sup> However, like *Il Cittadino*, they emphasize a cautious outlook on the PQ’s goals, especially regarding sovereignty. La Riccia would explain that “[f]or his part, the leader of the separatists, René Lévesque, reiterated that only a ‘properly prepared’ referendum will determine whether Québec should remain in the Confederation or should separate.”<sup>274</sup> This caution was tempered with pessimism, with la Riccia remarking that the PQ and Lévesque were using this excuse to stall the sovereignty referendum, a disaster waiting to happen..<sup>275</sup>

Angelo Montini, president of *The Consiglio* and a contributor to *Insieme*, was surprisingly more optimistic, given his opposition to Québécois nationalist measures of the past such as Bill 22. His article was pensive but optimistic, arguing that separatism did not mean that English could no longer be spoken, short of a Berlin Wall being erected between Québec and Canada, and deriding those who would argue that the PQ was a party of revolutionaries and communists.<sup>276</sup> Montini would go on to say “I seriously pose the question: what will happen in a few years in Québec? Is independence really the bogeyman of misery and economic recession that Liberals have told us so much about? The answer is hypothetical, but it is at the same time

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<sup>273</sup> Ermanno la Riccia, “La Situazione Dopo le Elezioni,” *Insieme*, Anno 4 no. 12, December 1976, 4 (Original Italian: Un Québec indipendente significa lo smembramento della Confederazione Canadese e, forse, la sua complete dissoluzione.”)

<sup>274</sup> la Riccia, “La Situazione Dopo le Elezioni,” *Insieme*, 4 (Original Italian quote: Dal canto suo il capo dei separatisti, René Lévesque, ha ribadito che solo un referendum “opportunamente preparato” stabilirà se il Québec dovrà rimanere nella Confederazione oppure dovrà separarsi.”)

<sup>275</sup> la Riccia, “La Situazione Dopo le Elezioni,” *Insieme*, 4

<sup>276</sup> Angelo Montini, “Lévesque: Il Nazionalismo è “Rentable,”” *Insieme*, Anno 4 no. 12, 16 November, 1976, 5

based on current facts.”<sup>277</sup> Montini, while not putting too much stock into the possibility of sovereignty, citing economic issues in Québec, did not outright dismiss it either if it could provide the qualities of life to nations that followed a similar social democratic political plan to the PQ’s.<sup>278</sup> This is an interesting twist for Montini, who as leader of The Consiglio that fought for the right of linguistic choice, was asking readers if the election of a nationalist party would cause so much trouble to Québec’s sociopolitical order. This is not to say that Montini was not still skeptical; he was all the same. However, his defense of the nationalists, along with Ciamarra’s softer stance indicate a willingness to understand the position of nationalists amongst the Italian mainstream.

The election, while a surprise to many Italians in Montréal, did not immediately create cause for despair. While *Il Corriere* and *Insieme* were much more cautious and suspicious of the intentions of the PQ, *Il Cittadino* surprisingly gave a more tempered and optimistic view of the election of the PQ and Lévesque’s ascension.

### Bill 101: The New Nationalist Project

The election of the PQ in 1976 brought with it a new piece of language legislation; Bill One or the *Charter of the French Language*, which would later evolve into Bill 101, was the PQ’s answer to Bill 22 and the linguistic question in Québec. Michele Pirone commented on the issue of the “White Book” on Bill 1 deposited by Camille Laurin, the architect of the law. He condemned the coercive efforts of the PQ to try and impose the French language on minorities,

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<sup>277</sup> Montini, “Lévesque: Il Nazionalismo è “Rentable,”” *Insieme*, 5 (Original Italian: Poniamoci seriamente la domanda: cosa avverrà fra alcuni anni nel Québec? L’indipendenza e veramente lo spauracchio di miseria e recessione economica di cui i liberali ci hanno tanto parlato? La risposta è ipotetica, ma si basa nello stesso tempo sui fatti attuali.”)

<sup>278</sup> Montini, “Lévesque: Il Nazionalismo è “Rentable,”” *Insieme*, 5

viewing the ‘white book’ as the francophone vendetta against the anglophones.<sup>279</sup> Pirone also called for attempts to soften the Bill and encourage immigrants to learn French willingly, rather than using coercive legislation.<sup>280</sup>

*Il Cittadino* argued that Bill 101 was a dangerous law that threatened the rights of English speakers and emboldened Québécois nationalists. At the same time, the understanding that began with Nick Ciamarra’s article regarding the election of the PQ shines through as well, with Italian Canadians understanding francophone fears as a minority group. Claudio Antonelli, a writer for *Il Cittadino*, observed that Bill 101 was driven by a fear of Québécois nationalists becoming minorities in their own province, with the increasing threat of English speakers in the province.<sup>281</sup> He would go on to say that Bill 101 was impossible to understand without comprehending that francophones in Québec have felt underappreciated, with Minister Camille Laurin claiming that they were being treated within their province as a “sham people.”<sup>282</sup>

With regard to Italian immigrants and the community, Antonelli acknowledged that they historically favoured the anglophones in Québec, but that Franco- Québécois have made their own attempts to attract Italians to their culture, saying “[w]e Italians are the ethnic group over which the Franco-Québécois’ power of attraction has been exercised to the greatest extent.”<sup>283</sup> Antonelli argued that Bill 101’s nationalism came from two mindsets, a tendency for isolationism, and a competitive impulse, both of which are in conflict with the other.<sup>284</sup> Antonelli

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<sup>279</sup> Michele Pirone, “Un libro bianco” per I Quebecchesi,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, Anno 37 n.14, 7 April 1977, 9-10

<sup>280</sup> Pirone, “Un libro bianco” per I Quebecchesi,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 9

<sup>281</sup> Claudio Antonelli, “La Battaglia delle Cifre e il Disegno di Legge N.1,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, Anno 37 no. 28, 14 July 1977, 1

<sup>282</sup> Antonelli, “La Battaglia delle Cifre e il Disegno di Legge N.1,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 1 (Original Italian: “finto popolo.”)

<sup>283</sup> Antonelli, “La Battaglia delle Cifre e il Disegno di Legge N.1,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 1 (Original Italian: “Noi italiani siamo il gruppo etnico sul quale il potere di attrazione dei franco- québécois si è esercitato in maggior misura.”)

<sup>284</sup> Antonelli, “La Battaglia delle Cifre e il Disegno di Legge N.1,” *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 2

also states that Bill 101 provided a bridge to Italians who desired to integrate in Québécois society, due to the attention the Italian community reaped as a result of the law.<sup>285</sup> This is a balanced take from *Il Cittadino*, providing examples why French Québécois desired such a law, while acknowledging the biases of the Italian community. Antonelli's perspective is more sympathetic than one would expect from the Italian as he attempted to understand the mindset of Québécois nationalists regarding the legislation. He also acknowledged the camp of Italians who sought to integrate into Québécois society, arguing that Bill 101 permitted just that.

Summary:

The late 1970s was a period of intense social change and adjustment for those in the Italian community. The fallout from the Saint-Léonard Riots led to disruptions in their linguistic freedoms, with three separate language bills emerging as a result of Québec nationalist desires to ensure the primacy of the French language. These laws did little to satisfy the community, leading to the creation of community organizations to combat the legislation and its harmful effects.

The fallout from Bill 22 and the dissatisfaction with Bourassa's government in the Italian community did not immediately translate into relief when the Parti Québécois was elected, but one of caution. Their unexpected victory led to a slew of responses, ranging from cautiously optimistic to pessimistic. *Il Corriere's* in particular was written in a more bitter and acerbic tone than *Insieme* and *Il Cittadino*. Lévesque's victory, though a sign of the rise of more nationalist policies and soft sovereignty in the form of Bill 101, did not immediately signal alarm within the Italian community. Those bells would only begin to ring in 1980.

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<sup>285</sup> Antonelli, "La Battaglia delle Cifre e il Disegno di Legge N.1," *Il Cittadino Canadese*, 2

### **Chapter 3: The 1980 Referendum**

The 1980 referendum drew on the uncertainty of the Italian community in Montréal in the midst of an explosion of nationalism that threatened their homes and identities. Divisions were to be expected within the community. As established in previous chapters, the Italian community in Montréal did not exist in a vacuum and support only one vision of Québec over others. Figures like Marco Micone were proponents of Québécois nationalism and understandings had begun to form following the election of the Parti Québécois in 1976, showing a success in approaching the Italian community by those who pushed for sovereignty. As part of René Lévesque's philosophy on sovereignty, he believed that the people of Québec had to decide whether it was the appropriate time, through negotiations.<sup>286</sup> A sovereignty referendum was just such the method to negotiate Québec's potential exit from Canada. The Italians as Quebecers themselves would subsequently be thrust into this debate.

#### **Divisions and Disrespect:**

The divisions between those supporting federalism and those who were ardent sovereigntists, while lopsided, were stark. Umberto Taccola expressed the community's ambivalence with a cartoon titled 'The dilemma continues...' It depicted 'Ernesto,' the bumbling fool in his cartoons, holding two scepters, one capped with a maple leaf, and the other a fleur de lis. An angel is grasping the maple leaf scepter and a devil the scepter of the fleur de lis, and both are winking at Ernesto, who states in dialectic Italian that "these two appear to keep me walking on eggshells...but how to know which one is the real demon..?"<sup>287</sup> Further cartoons by Taccola

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<sup>286</sup> René Lévesque, "For an Independent Québec," in *Québec Since 1945 : Selected Readings*, ed. Michael D. Behiels, New Canadian Readings, (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1987), 270.

<sup>287</sup> Umberto Taccola, "...The Dilemma Continues," *Insieme* Anno 8 no.45, 12 November 1980, 4 (Appendix, Figure 10)



as the referendum drew near show Ernesto measuring himself, with a caption stating “The anatomy of a referendum.”<sup>288</sup> The cartoon highlighted the absurdity of the referendum, combining the Italian words for YES and NO (Sì and No) to correspond to Ernesto’s body, translating as: “Head: No + Heart: Yes + Stomach: No + Limbs: Yes = Total: Nes.”<sup>289</sup> Another cartoon featuring Ernesto depicts him under the Union Jack with a caption saying ‘English Québec,’ bashing his reflection in the head with a bat; his reflection is depicted under the flag of Québec, captioned with ‘Québec Français,’ and the reflection is depicted in shadow.<sup>290</sup> These musings by Ernesto convey an attitude of indifference surrounding the referendum among the predominantly federalist Italian population in Montréal, one that depicted an ambivalent viewpoint that the political event would be anything but an improvement for those who lived within the city, least of all migrants of whom Ernesto was a caricature.

These cartoons ridiculed the idea of sovereignty, but at the same time they also spoke to a larger sentiment within the Italian community that had an effect on the francophone Québécois community: a sentiment of disesteem that ran both ways. Minister Camille Laurin, architect of Bill 101, would speak to this disrespect at a meeting organized by FILEF where they were invited to speak at on 20 April 1980. At this event, Laurin levelled an accusation against the Italian press, arguing that they were “playing a terrible and harmful role by hiding true information, systematically distorting and deforming sovereignty-association.”<sup>291</sup> Minister Laurin would go on to say that these lies were made in the name of special interests who are trying to keep their grip on the Italian community, to which Domenico Rodighiero, the

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<sup>288</sup> Umberto Taccola, “The Anatomy of a Referendum,” *Insieme* Anno 8 no. 19, 7 May 1980, 4 (Appendix, Figure 8)

<sup>289</sup> Taccola, “The Anatomy of a Referendum,” *Insieme*, 4.

<sup>290</sup> Umberto Taccola, “And Now, Like Before,” *Insieme* Anno 8 no.20, 14 May 1980, 4 (Appendix, Figure 9)

<sup>291</sup> Domenico Rodighiero, “La Nostra comunità e il referendum,” *Insieme* Anno 8 no. 17, 23 April 1980, 4 (Original Italian: svolgere un ruolo terribile e nocivo nascondendo la vera informazione, snaturando e deformando sistematicamente la sovranità-associazione.”)

newspaper's director, would argue that "[w]e here at *INSIEME* think this is a generalization unworthy of the lips of a minister."<sup>292</sup> He argued that if the PQ government wished to acknowledge that 150 people at Minister Laurin's speech constituted a prominent event, or if an article written by Québécois nationalist Marco Micone appeared in the pages of *Le Devoir* as a significant event, why then were the 1500 people who supported Claude Ryan deemed "alienated and mentally retarded?" Why then did the government only acknowledge the demonstrations of the minority, and not what the majority of the community supported?<sup>293</sup> Inflammatory language of Domenico Rodighiero aside, this article points to the still-standing animosity between federalist Italians and Québécois nationalists. Umberto Taccola's cartoons channel this animosity but also a cynicism behind them, that they were still being ridiculed by Québécois nationalists for not conforming to their ideals.

The question of sovereignty association and the involvement of the Italian community in the referendum did not stop at mere barbs and insulting political cartoons. While Rodighiero was right in that the majority of the community were not in the sovereigntist camp, there still existed a sizeable contingent supporting Québécois nationalism. While federalism held the minds of Italian-Canadians, the Parti Québécois did its best to cultivate links to Italo- Québécois sovereigntists.

### *Sovereignty Association? But who Associated with Sovereignty?*

The referendum process saw a number of figures trying to convince the Italian

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<sup>292</sup> Rodighiero, "La Nostra comunità e il referendum," *Insieme*, 4 (Original Italian: Noi, responsabili di *INSIEME* pensiamo si tratti di una generalizzazione indegna per le labbra di un ministro.")

<sup>293</sup> Rodighiero, "La Nostra comunità e il referendum," *Insieme*, 4 (Original Italian: Se appare un articolo di Marco Micone su *Le Devoir* si ritiene che questo abbia valore; se 150 persone danno il benvenuto a Camille Laurin si dà il massimo rilievo, un significato altamente positivo. Al contrario se 15000 persone applaudono Claude Ryan, si spiega che si tratta di alienati e di ritardati mentali. Quale percentuale della comunità rappresentano questi portaparola...E allora perché i rappresentanti del governo danno credito solo a questi elementi e nessun riconoscimento ai mezzi di comunicazione che servono assai meglio la comunità e ne riflettono il pensiero?")

community to vote YES, but also to vote NO. These figures ranged from political titans within the Italian-Canadian community, Prime Minister Trudeau, and even notable artists who tried to argue in favour of sovereignty and campaigned alongside members of the PQ, promoting their agenda. René Lévesque himself campaigned and met with Italians to try and convince them of the merits of the sovereigntist project. Another interesting figure of the community was the Italo-Québécois music artist Serge Fiori, who had connections with René Lévesque and the sovereigntist movement. This connection can be seen through a poster printed by the Université du Québec à Rimouski, announcing a visit by Fiori's popular band *Harmonium*, along with René Lévesque as part of a campaign event.<sup>294</sup> This political campaigning alongside a member of the community helps provide evidence of community support for Québec nationalist objectives, while at the same time highlighted personal relationships between members of the community and important members of Québec political society, such as Lévesque.

*Insieme* wasted no time covering the sovereignty debate, and published an article describing Lévesque's belief that the Italian community supported the Parti Québécois. 1500 Italians gathered at the Rizzo Hall in Montréal to hear Premier Lévesque give a speech about sovereignty association and the advantages of voting YES.<sup>295</sup> This was not a case of history repeating itself for the premier, he was not heckled on stage but actually invited to speak by the CNIC's Québec branch. (*Congresso degli Italo-Canadesi*). Ermanno la Riccia notes that "More than a speech, his was a friendly conversation with the Italian community."<sup>296</sup> Lévesque told the community that the francophone Québécois felt themselves threatened by the English

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<sup>294</sup> *UQAR-information HEBDOMADAIRE DE L'UNIVERSITE DU QUÉBEC A RIMOUSKI*, "Cinéma", 11e année, numéro 19, Lundi, 28 janvier 1980, 6

<sup>295</sup> Ermanno la Riccia, "Lévesque ha definite "straordinario l'apporto della comunità italiana", *Insieme* Anno 8 no.9, 27 February 1980, 1

<sup>296</sup> la Riccia, "Lévesque ha definite "straordinario l'apporto della comunità italiana", *Insieme*, 1 (Original Italian: "Più che un discorso, il suo è stato un amichevole colloquio con la comunità italiana")

community, who they believed would absorb them despite only forming ten per cent of the population; this disparity thus necessitated Bills 63, 22, and 101.<sup>297</sup> Lévesque also told the Italian community how sovereignty-association would make the province a partner with Canada, rather than a subordinate.<sup>298</sup> La Riccia wrote that it was “a lucid speech, with no frills and, dare we say, even without demagoguery.”<sup>299</sup> Despite not being welcomed as warmly as he hoped by the Italians, Lévesque was not treated as harshly as in past interactions, and he lauded the economic contributions that Italians made to the province, calling the community “truly ‘extraordinary.’”<sup>300</sup>

The fact that René Lévesque was invited by the community to speak attests to, while not open acceptance of sovereignty, a willingness to listen and understand where the PQ was coming from and why it pursued its goals. Lévesque’s praise for the community and his willingness to speak plainly to them about the desires of Québec nationalism also points to a change in his perspective from earlier days. A cynical argument might be made that the premier was pandering to the community during this meeting by praising them, but the Rizzo meeting signals a new tolerance between Québécois nationalism and Italian Montréalers. Recall the Lévesque considered the Italians as part of the English community just 4 years prior to the referendum.<sup>301</sup> To visit a community that he had previously viewed as static indicates that Lévesque saw an opportunity to sway the Italians and that their opinions on the PQ had begun to change. Support for sovereignty amongst the Italians had been growing, and the meeting was one example of how the PQ wished to manage this.

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<sup>297</sup> la Riccia, “Lévesque ha definite “straordinario l’apporto della comunità italiana”, *Insieme*, 1

<sup>298</sup> la Riccia, “Lévesque ha definite “straordinario l’apporto della comunità italiana”, *Insieme*, 1

<sup>299</sup> la Riccia, “Lévesque ha definite “straordinario l’apporto della comunità italiana”, *Insieme*, 10 (Original Italian: “un discorso lucido, spoglio di fronzoli e, osiamo dire, anche senza demagogia”)

<sup>300</sup> la Riccia, “Lévesque ha definite “straordinario l’apporto della comunità italiana”, *Insieme*, 10

<sup>301</sup> René Lévesque, “For an Independent Québec,” in *Québec Since 1945 : Selected Readings*, ed. Michael D. Behiels, New Canadian Readings, (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1987), 266

The *Quaderni Culturali* also dedicated an issue of their publication to the 1980 referendum. Their publication, titled “Il Referendum e la Comunità Italiana,” was dedicated to an interview between members of the Association of Italo-Québécois Popular Culture (ACPIQ) that all used pseudonyms.<sup>302</sup> This publication details a significant contingent of Italian-Canadian Parti Québécois supporters, but a striking aspect of these interviews is the degrees of support they express for the Parti Québécois. Some members of the ACPIQ are cynical in their outlook, supporting the PQ for their socialist principles but seeing the referendum as a simple attempt to maintain their power.<sup>303</sup> Others reflected the common fear among the youth about the outcome of the referendum, and argued that a NO vote is a reactionary one designed to uphold the status quo despite Québec’s right to hold a referendum.<sup>304</sup>

Perspectives fluctuate between cynicism and idealism, but the publication discussed the impacts the referendum would have on the community through the interviewees. One of them, Renato, believed that the worry Italians faced did not come from the community but rather that they were instilled by the English.<sup>305</sup> Renato also wished that the Italians would critique the current model of federalism, and while he understood the hesitance of the community to support the referendum, he saw it as unfounded.<sup>306</sup> Paolo, meanwhile, offered a rebuttal that minorities were right to worry about their possible treatment in a sovereign Québec, bringing up Indigenous people’s demands for self-determination from the PQ in the event of separation and the latter’s denial of it.<sup>307</sup> Renato and Paolo both agreed that the 1980 referendum was launched by the PQ as a way to try and maintain power, belying a sense of cynicism that even those interviewed

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<sup>302</sup> “Il Referendum e la Comunità Italiana,” *Quaderni Culturali*, Issue n.2, May 1980, ii

<sup>303</sup> “Il Referendum e la Comunità Italiana,” *Quaderni Culturali*, 1-2, 4

<sup>304</sup> “Il Referendum e la Comunità Italiana,” *Quaderni Culturali*, 8-9

<sup>305</sup> “Il Referendum e la Comunità Italiana,” *Quaderni Culturali*, 11

<sup>306</sup> “Il Referendum e la Comunità Italiana,” *Quaderni Culturali*, 14

<sup>307</sup> “Il Referendum e la Comunità Italiana,” *Quaderni Culturali*, 13

knew in part that the referendum would most likely end up as a meaningless political spectacle.<sup>308</sup>

Renato predicted that 60 per cent of the francophone community would vote YES and the other 40 per cent would vote NO, while the Italian community held a much wider margin with 20 per cent YES and 80 per cent NO.<sup>309</sup> Finally, Renato brings up the issue of media, specifically the newspapers which he called propaganda, painting the francophone Québécois community in the worst possible light, ignoring the concerns of the Québécois community in pursuit of money.<sup>310</sup> These arguments made by Paolo and Renato speak to the concerns of the Italian community and the youth vote, but also refer to another aspect the community had been associated with: anglophone influence. While Renato argued that Italians were being influenced by English propaganda to vote against the referendum, other interviewees did not concur. Gino, another interviewee, would state “When we talk about Italians heading towards the anglophone world, I don't think that implies a conscious cultural choice. Rather, the preference for English seems to me to be motivated by economic convenience: it does not mean that they reject one culture to embrace another.”<sup>311</sup> Gino's statement demonstrates that despite a large amount of Italian support for the anglophone community, they were not necessarily being influenced by it as Renato would claim.

One important perspective brought up by the interviewees echoes an Italian concern that had prevailed since their arrival: stability. Nadia, another interviewee, would claim “[for my

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<sup>308</sup> “Il Referendum e la Comunita Italiana,” *Quaderni Culturali*, 1-2

<sup>309</sup> “Il Referendum e la Comunita Italiana,” *Quaderni Culturali*, 15

<sup>310</sup> “Il Referendum e la Comunita Italiana,” *Quaderni Culturali*, 16-17

<sup>311</sup> “Il Referendum e la Comunita Italiana,” *Quaderni Culturali*, 19-20 (original Italian: "Quando parliamo del fatto che gli italiani si dirigono verso l'anglofonia non credo che cio implichi una scelta culturale cosciente. La preferenza per l'inglese mi sembra piuttosto motivata della convenienza economica: non significa che essi rigettano una cultura per abbracciarne un'altra.")

father] it's not about being anti-francophone or anti-anglophone. His main concern is his and his family's stability.”<sup>312</sup> This desire of stability echoes the support for the more traditional institutions the Italians held in high regard, such as linguistic choice and support for the Liberal Party of Québec over the perceived radicalism in the Parti Québécois. Predictability and stability coloured the community's decisions, explaining the low divergence into Québécois nationalism, despite the more open perspectives held by those interviewed by the ACPIQ. It also highlights a split between the younger and older Italians, with those interviewed espousing support for sovereignty while also portraying their family as more hesitant.

The perspective of those interviewed also saw the referendum as a classist struggle between two rival bourgeois powers, the English and French communities, and that Québécois nationalists desired some form of reparations or a sense of national identity as a result of this referendum.<sup>313</sup> Another interviewee, Lucia, argued that a YES vote would awaken the class consciousness of the people, while a NO vote would continue to see them exploited by the English bourgeoisie.<sup>314</sup> In this sense, the publication tackled the referendum from a Marxist angle, arguing how the referendum was just a continued series of class struggle realigning itself to favour the French Québécois community.

The referendum took place on 20 May 1980. *Insieme* reported a 58 per cent win in favour of the NO side, with 42 per cent voting for the YES side.<sup>315</sup> The Italian newspaper did not take the time to gloat, or celebrate the win in the moment. Rather, they somberly called the moment

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<sup>312</sup> “Il Referendum e la Comunità Italiana,” *Quaderni Culturali*, 19 (original Italian: “[Per mio padre] non si tratta di essere anti-francofono o anti-anglofono. La sua preoccupazione principale è la stabilità sua e della sua famiglia.”)

<sup>313</sup> “Il Referendum e la Comunità Italiana,” *Quaderni Culturali*, 2

<sup>314</sup> “Il Referendum e la Comunità Italiana,” *Quaderni Culturali*, 4

<sup>315</sup> “Il popolo risponde: NO alla separazione,” *Insieme*, Anno 8 no.21, 21 May 1980, 1

one of the darkest days in Premier Lévesque's life, and ended it by saying that "[t]he 20 May 1980 also teaches us all to have a profound respect for others."<sup>316</sup>

### Summary

In this chapter, Italian reception to the referendum was marked by cynicism and debate. While the animosity between the Italian and French Québécois had abated when compared to the early Quiet Revolution, insulting comments nevertheless abounded. The Parti Québécois still attempted to reach out to the Italian community, but their attempts were spotty at best, as the Italians predominantly did not identify with their goals. Passive-aggressive comments from the likes of Camille Laurin regarding the community pointed to deep-seated prejudices between the two communities, ones which the community responded to in kind. Notable artists that supported the referendum such as Serge Fiori pointed to a less monolithic federalist image of the Italian community. This was aided by the *Quaderni Culturali*'s publication regarding the referendum, in which members of the ACPIQ debated the idea of sovereignty to varying degrees of support, and the impacts of sovereignty by basing them on Marxist and socialist theory. René Lévesque's willingness to meet and discuss the ideals of sovereignty association become all the more important when considering his notorious habit of misspeaking with the community, and the Italian's tendency to treat the Premier like a punching bag. While not the warmest of meetings, it points to a further understanding of Québec nationalism by the Italian community.

The failure of the 1980 referendum was celebrated in the pages of *Insieme* by Domenico Rodighiero. In his editorial, he stated "Just as the pequiste option has exacerbated divisions and resentments in Québec society, so the division between *founding peoples* and *immigrants* (almost

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<sup>316</sup> "Il popolo risponde: NO alla separazione," *Insieme*, 1 (Original Italian: Il 20 maggio 1980, inoltre, insegna a tutti un profondo rispetto per gli altri.)"



opposites and inferiors to each other) generates unnecessary categories and divisions that only cause harm. We are all Canadians. And that should be enough.”<sup>317</sup> The politics of the referendum did not stop there however. Despite the failure of the 1980 Québec Referendum, this did not mark the end of the Parti Québécois’ attempts to court the Italian community. Interestingly, the outreach only expanded following the referendum. The Parti Québécois saw their increasing support amongst the Italians in Montréal as an opportunity to further their vision of Québécois nationalism, but to create a more inclusive one that counted Italians amongst its ranks.

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<sup>317</sup> Domenico Rodighiero, “Dopo il 20 maggio: siamo tutti canadese,” *Insieme* Anno 8 no.22, 28 May, 1980, 4 (Original Italian: “Come l'opzione pequista ha acuito le divisioni e i risentimenti nella società quebecchese, così la divisione tra *popoli fondatori* e *immigrati* (quasi opposti e inferiori agli altri) genera categorie e divisioni inutili che fanno solo del male. Siamo tutti canadesi. E dovrebbe bastare.”)

#### **Chapter 4: Political Parties and the Italian Community Post-Referendum**

The 1980 Québec referendum did not yield the results sought by Québec nationalists. However, the referendum revealed further support amongst Italians for the sovereigntist project, which the Parti Québécois sought to take advantage of, even if the referendum failed, through attempts at community outreach and creating PQ Italian organizations. The Liberals also sought to take advantage of this, creating their own organizations but not attempting the same form of outreach.

##### ***Referendum Post-Mortem: Everyone wants a Slice of the Italian Community.***

An unexpected result of both the referendum and the ascension of the Parti Québécois in 1976 were the attempts to grow closer to the Italian community. René Lévesque in particular is an interesting figure to view with regards to this outreach, as he both claimed to support the Italians, while at the same time disparaging them when it came to their stance on sovereignty. While Lévesque at times suffered from a condition where he undoubtedly put his foot in his mouth when speaking about the Italian community, events which have been explained in earlier chapters by John Ciaccia's memoir, the outreach of the Parti Québécois merits further scrutiny following the referendum, as the party had learned from its earlier mistakes and began to change their messaging to better suit the Italian community as a result.

Liberal leader Claude Ryan in particular had an advantage in reaching out to the Italian community. For one, a prominent member of the Italian-Canadian community, John Ciaccia was a high-ranking member of the Liberal Party. This name recognition amongst the Italians, despite the party's prior support of Bill 22 (and Ciaccia's lack of support for the Bill) gave a boost to the party's reputation in the eyes of the Italian community.

Claude Ryan was a notable figure both for his staunch religiosity, but also his education in Rome and his knowledge of the Italian language.<sup>318</sup> Ryan was known for engaging with the Italian community in their own language, creating an interesting Liberal Party tie to the Italian community. In a meeting, Ryan would tell the community in Italian that the Liberals would not vote to support the referendum, earning the admiration of the community through this personal appeal.<sup>319</sup> His approach was not foolproof, and Ryan, like Lévesque, had a habit of putting his foot in his mouth when attempting to reach the Italian community. But, Ryan also misread his audience when he would inform them in their own language that a Liberal victory in 1980 following the referendum still meant that their children would have to attend French school; this revelation is all the more shocking when one considers he had been personally invited to speak to the community by the *Council of Italian-Canadians*.<sup>320</sup> This attempt by Ryan to solidify ties to the Italian community through personal appeals had its uses, though much like Lévesque, he failed to grasp the desires of the community completely. While the Italian community was wholly against the sovereignty movement, much as the LPQ was, Ryan miscalculated when confirming that unilingual French education would remain a requirement. Despite this, Italians remained a political force within the Liberal Party of Québec, with an Italian Canadian committee of the PLQ formed in 1982 to determine their members. Notable members included John Ciaccia, Bill Cusano, and Cosimo Maciocia, and Nunzio Chillemi, a former writer of *Il Corriere*.<sup>321</sup> Despite Ryan's gaffes with the community, the Italian presence within the Liberals

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<sup>318</sup> Ciaccia, *Call Me Giambattista : A Personal and Political Journey*, 124-5; "Medium Helps the Message," *The Montreal Gazette*, 11 July 1978, 6

<sup>319</sup> L. Ian Macdonald, "Claude Ryan Gives the Liberal Party Something to Sell," *The Montreal Gazette*, 3 March 1980, 9

<sup>320</sup> "Italians can't budge Ryan on language of education," *The Montreal Gazette*, 24 March 1980, 11

<sup>321</sup> "Elezione del comitato Italo-Canadese del PLQ," *Insieme* Anno 10, no.37, 22 September 1982, 6

was strong and established by long-standing members of the community, such as Ciaccia and Chillemi.

One hugely critical factor of the post-referendum era is that one party attempted community outreach far more than the other. While the Liberal Party of Québec enjoyed steady, if not growing support amongst the Italian community, the Parti Québécois showed startling growth during this era. While Painchaud and Poulin would note that likely Italian-Canadian support for the YES side was an extremely small 4%, the percentage of Italian voters for the Parti Québécois in the 1981 jumped to about 10%, a small but notable minority all the same.<sup>322</sup> This growth demonstrated a shift in political alignment amongst Italian Montréalers.

Outreach by both the PQ and LPQ was also criticized in Italian media. The *Quaderni Culturali* in their April-June 1981 issue poke fun at these attempts by the PQ and the LPQ. In a political cartoon, they portray Claude Ryan towering over René Lévesque with his customary cigarette, asking him “Where did you learn Italian?” Lévesque responds by saying “Watching Teledomenica!”, which was a popular Italian TV station at the time.<sup>323</sup> Teledomenica was founded by Alfredo Gagliardi through his political and business connections, and he purchased airtime on a local Montréal television CFCF in order to use their studios.<sup>324</sup> This cartoon is notable in the post-referendum period because it points out pandering to the Italians by the political hegemonies of the PQ and LPQ. Both parties attempted to make overtures to the community following a period, but what the comic highlights is that these gestures were only

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<sup>322</sup> Painchaud and Poulin, *Les Italiens au Québec*, 208

<sup>323</sup> *Quaderni Culturali* Anno 1 n. 2, Aprile-Giugno 1981, 12 (Appendix, Figure 11)

<sup>324</sup> Ramirez, “Migration, Settlement, and Television: The Montréal’s Teledomenica Experience”, 86-7

surface-level, much like how Lévesque learned Italian in this comic through a TV station, which he also had appeared on as a guest.<sup>325</sup>

Despite the increase in support for the PQ among the community, many Italians of the time believed that this support would make a small dent on the political landscape. Writer Michael del Balso would note in an issue of *Quaderni Culturali* that “[w]hatever support the PQ may have had in some sectors of the Italian electorate, the political weight of this support is entirely insignificant...to the hegemony that the Liberal party traditionally maintains in the Italian community.”<sup>326</sup> When combined with further evidence that will be shown in this chapter, it casts the intentions of these parties in a different light. While the journal pokes fun at them for trying to pander to the community, this outreach went beyond simple pandering. The Parti Québécois seemed interested in maintaining ties to the Italian-Canadian community, and pursued it through their Immigration Minister, Gérald Godin.

*Minister Gérald Godin: Outreach and a New Québécois Nationalism*

Attempts to communicate with the Italian community following the referendum continued even into the 1981 Québec election, with PQ leader René Lévesque attempting to form a network of Italo- Québécois who desired a form of independence for Québec. Given René Lévesque’s proven history of providing controversial statements for the Italian community at large, he was seldom at the forefront of these outreach efforts; rather, this goal was assigned to Gérald Godin, the Minister of Cultural Communities and Immigration. Godin, who had won Robert Bourassa’s riding in the 1976 election, undertook a massive outreach effort to the Italian

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<sup>325</sup> Michele del Balso, “Dove va il Parti Québécois?” *Quaderni Culturali* Anno 1 n. 2, Aprile-Giugno 1981, 13

<sup>326</sup> del Balso, “Dove va il Parti Québécois?” *Quaderni Culturali* Anno 1 n. 2, Aprile-Giugno 1981, 14 (Original Italian Excerpt: Qualsiasi appoggio che il PQ possa aver avuto in alcuni settori dell’elettorato italiano, il peso politico di quest’appoggio è del tutto insignificante... all’egemonia che il partito Liberale mantiene tradizionalmente nella comunità italiana.”)

community.<sup>327</sup> While Lévesque was the figurehead in this effort, Godin would forge more tangible relations with the Italian-Canadians. Outreach into the community extended into invitations to Québécois holidays and cultural events, notably by the PQ. These attempts by the PQ at reaching out to the community came close to pandering in some cases. In one instance, Minister Godin, would place an advertisement in *Insieme* inviting the Italian community to join in celebrating la Fête Nationale, saying

“Par désir du peuple et par l’action du Gouvernement du Parti Québécois, la Saint-Jean est désormais la Fête Nationale de tous les Québécois. C’est pourquoi en vous souhaitant BONNE FÊTE, je vous invite tous à être présents aux différentes activités et, ce 24 juin 1981, à vous sentir plus fiers d’être Québécois.”<sup>328</sup>

Minister Godin was also interviewed within the pages of the *Quaderni Culturali* regarding his plans as Immigration Minister.<sup>329</sup> Godin admitted that there were few things in the Québec government that responded to the desires of Québécois of immigrant origins, being the retention of their ethnic culture, languages, and other aspects of their homeland.<sup>330</sup> Godin raised the subject of René Lévesque’s ‘livre blanc’, which sought to determine precise ways to integrate immigrants within Québécois society.<sup>331</sup> Paradoxically, Godin also explains that the ministries were not interested regarding populations not of French Canadian origin, and only the Ministry of Immigration was focusing on a plan of action regarding ethnic populations.<sup>332</sup> Godin also used his position to define who was considered a Québec citizen. This included immigrants not born in Québec or Canada, the ‘Souche Moyenne,’ which were second or third generation Canadians,

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<sup>327</sup> Raymond Hudon, “The 1976 Québec Election,” in *Québec Since 1945 : Selected Readings*, ed. Michael D. Behiels, New Canadian Readings, (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1987), pp 285

<sup>328</sup> *Insieme* Anno 9 n.25, 24 June 1981, p.15

<sup>329</sup> Sylvie Taschereau, “Un ministère en quête d’identité,” *Quaderni Culturali*, anno 2 n. 1, 1

<sup>330</sup> Taschereau, “Un ministère en quête d’identité,” *Quaderni Culturali*, 1

<sup>331</sup> Taschereau, “Un ministère en quête d’identité,” *Quaderni Culturali*, 1

<sup>332</sup> Taschereau, “Un ministère en quête d’identité,” *Quaderni Culturali*, 2

and descendants of non-French Canadians.<sup>333</sup> Godin's definition regarding who could be considered a Québec citizen redefined how Québécois nationalism applied to those within the province and those who could thus identify with it. This redefinition pointed to a more inclusive form of Québécois nationalism that included more than just those of French origin.

Godin's interview marks a divergence from previous iterations of Québécois nationalism, one that was more inclusive than previous and sought to integrate ethnic communities within its fold. This idea was not just paid lip-service, but programs to support the community and initiatives such as PELO in previous chapters that led to ethnic integration signal a more inclusive attempt at Québécois nationalism. This more inclusive definition opened the doors for Italians to contribute to the PQ's project of nationalism, one in which Godin collaborated with extensively through his post. Godin would meet with various Italian organizations during his tenure as Minister of Immigration, and leave messages for the community through the Italian press. On Christmas Eve of 1981, Godin would meet with members of the CIBPA in Québec City, and gave them a tour of 'Complex G' where they discussed Québec history and Italian contributions to it.<sup>334</sup> The funding of PICAL, an organization that offered Italian-language courses, was also given a boost by the Parti Québécois. An article published by *Insieme* highlighted how Godin's ministry provided grants that would contribute to funding for PICAL under the umbrella of the PELO program, raising the fund from 32,314\$ to 41,736\$.<sup>335</sup> Through this act of funding however, Minister Godin sent a message through his spokesperson to the Italian community and the teachers at PICAL, saying that the provincial government appreciated

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<sup>333</sup> Taschereau, "Un ministère en quête d'identité," *Quaderni Culturali*, 4

<sup>334</sup> "Il Ministro Godin e la CIBPA," *Insieme* Anno 10 no.4, 27 January 1982, 25

<sup>335</sup> "Il Québec aumenta il suo aiuto al PICAL," *Insieme* Anno 10 no.21, 26 May 1982, 7

what they did for the Italian youth and that “[t]he best Italians will be the best Quebecers.”<sup>336</sup>

These meetings and salutations to the Italian community were not mere attempts at pandering as the Teledomenica appearance was, but genuine attempts to extend an olive branch to the Italian community and reach an understanding between two cultures that has a tenuous history.

This outreach did not only extend to Minister Godin. An association of Italian pequistes was also created to show support for the Parti Québécois, in the form of the *Associazione Italiana del Partito Quebecchese*, which was advertised in Italian periodicals such as *Insieme*, and made overtures to the community. In one advertisement, René Lévesque appears to be speaking to the readers, advocating the qualities of the PQ in a personal approach to the Italian community, claiming that “there is an important place for you in the Parti Québécois...many Italians share our social and cultural programs.”<sup>337</sup> In this advertisement, Lévesque would go on to explain that following the 1981 provincial election, more Italians than ever before had decided to vote for the PQ and he believed that now more than ever, the vision of the PQ was reflected not only in the desires of francophones but the Italian community as well.<sup>338</sup> Finally, he ends the advertisement by saying “Let us work together for a better future for Québec.”<sup>339</sup> This simple, but effective advertisement demonstrated a willingness to reach out and cooperate with what was, at the time, the third-largest voting bloc in the city of Montréal. While the approach can be considered cynical in that it was only attempted once the PQ had already secured themselves a new session at the National Assembly, there was a genuine outpouring of support amongst the Italian Canadian community in the lead-up to the 1981 Québec election.

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<sup>336</sup> “Il Québec aumenta il suo aiuto al PICAI,” *Insieme*, 7 (original Italian: “I migliori Italiani saranno i migliori Quebecchesi.”)

<sup>337</sup> *Insieme*, Anno 9 n.25, 24 June 1981, 31 (Appendix, Figure 12)

<sup>338</sup> *Insieme*, Anno 9 n.25, 31

<sup>339</sup> *Insieme*, Anno 9 n.25, 31



Italian support for the Parti Québécois after the referendum and following into the 1981 referendum extended to hosting meetings for important PQ members such as René Lévesque. On 28 February 1981, the Italian community hosted René Lévesque in a banquet and ball held at the Le Baron Hall in Saint-Léonard, which was led by a doctor named Antonello Iavicolo.<sup>340</sup> This banquet ball was an important stepping point for René Lévesque in determining future policies towards the integration of migrant and ethnic communities that resided within Québec, as he announced that the PQ would begin to create social programs of integration for ethnic communities. Lévesque would outline a series of programs that would be offered to these ethnic communities, and the program would comprise of five main measures, these being equal political access to public service for ethnic minorities, an increase in educational programs regarding cultural origins, improvement of communication services with regards to allophones, a more substantial financial assistance program for cultural events of minority groups, and an information campaign created to help with rapprochement of Québécois identity regarding these immigrants.<sup>341</sup>

By advertising such a campaign, Lévesque was attempting to speak to the concerns of the Italian community regarding the fear of assimilation, while at the same time providing a form of support for the further development of ethnic identity while acting as a softer form of integration into Québec society. Lévesque himself would acknowledge that while the program looked like a political maneuver designed to benefit the PQ, he would state that “[q]uelle que soit éventuellement l’attitude électorale dans telle ou telle communauté, nous irons de l’avant avec ce projet.”<sup>342</sup> In addition to this, Lévesque acknowledged the shortcomings of defining Québécois

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<sup>340</sup> Jacques Bouchard, “Lévesque fêté par les Italiens,” *La Presse*, 19 February 1981, p. C7

<sup>341</sup> “Promesse du gouvernement Lévesque,” *Le Quotidien du Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean*, A5

<sup>342</sup> “Promesse du gouvernement Lévesque,” *Le Quotidien du Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean*, A5

identity vis-à-vis immigrants and minority communities, and admitted that the government needed to improve communication efforts with minority groups to realize this vision of Québec identity and unity.<sup>343</sup>

The image of the PQ amongst the Italian-Canadian community was definitely affected following their first provincial government in 1976 and into their new one in 1981. The *Quaderni Culturali* released an article titled “Dove Va il Parti Québécois?” by Michael Del Balso where the political approach of the PQ is put under a microscope both regarding the Italian community and their political strategies and accomplishments. Tying back into the political comic within this same issue, del Balso mentions how René Lévesque appeared on Tele-Domenica, but even spoke to the audience in Italian.<sup>344</sup> This pandering to the Italian community by Lévesque continued into the night of the 1981 Québec election, where in front of a group waving Italian flags, thanked them in English for providing support for his party and helping him to secure a new mandate; as Del Balso would explain “the P.Q. needed the votes to return to power.”<sup>345</sup>

Support for the PQ amongst the Italians grew to the point that an Italian association developed within the political party. It was known as the *Associazione Italiana del Partito Quebecchese* and mention of it was made within the pages of *Insieme*. In one issue, an advertisement featuring René Lévesque took up half of a page, with the premier staring out at the reader and saying “There is an important place for you in the Parti Québécois.”<sup>346</sup> The advertisement points to a rise in support from the Italian community and highlights legislation

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<sup>343</sup> “Promesse du gouvernement Lévesque,” *Le Quotidien du Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean*, A5

<sup>344</sup> del Balso, “Dove va il Parti Québécois?” *Quaderni Culturali* Anno 1 n. 2, Aprile-Giugno 1981, 14

<sup>345</sup> del Balso, “Dove va il Parti Québécois?” *Quaderni Culturali* Anno 1 n. 2, Aprile-Giugno 1981, 14 (Original Quote in Italian: “Detto in parole piu' povere, il P.Q aveva bisogno dei voti per ritornare al potere.”)

<sup>346</sup> *Insieme* Anno 9 no.25, 31 (Appendix, Figure 12) (Original Italian: “C’è un posto importante per voi nel Partito Quebecchese.”)

passed by the PQ, inviting the community to “join our party and make it your own.”<sup>347</sup> In another issue, an advertisement for the *Associazione* would claim that “The Parti Québécois belonged to all Québécois.”<sup>348</sup>

Another association known as the *Amitié-Québec-Italie* was a more Québécois-oriented group that formed on 9 November 1981 at the *Société St. Jean-Baptiste*. The organization had the mandate of promoting and conserving the ties of friendship between the Québécois community and the Italian community in the province as well as favour cultural exchange between the two groups.<sup>349</sup> An information bulletin from the organization reveals that its inauguration was attended by Québec government officials, as well as important members of the Italian clergy such as Monsignor Andrea Cimichella.<sup>350</sup> The bulletin advertised events that would be held of note to the Italian community, such as a speech by PQ Vice-Minister Jean Martucci to the Italian press, art exhibitions by Italian artist Giacomo Manzù at the Saidye Bronfman Center, and advertisements for Italian language courses.<sup>351</sup> The group was designed around bringing the French Québécois and Italian communities together in civil society, rather than the *Associazione* which did so through the political realm.

### Summary

Italian- Québécois relations became significantly less tense in the years following the referendum. Outreach towards the Italians by the Parti Québécois caused a shift in the ideology of Québécois nationalism to one that accepted a far broader community than it did previously. Minister Godin’s definition of who could be a Québec citizen expanded the understanding of a

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<sup>347</sup> *Insieme* Anno 9 no.25, 31 (Original Italian: “entrare nel nostro partito e di farlo vostro.”)

<sup>348</sup> *Insieme* Anno 9 no.3, 21 January 1981, 21 (Appendix, Figure 13) (Original Italian: “Il Parti Québécois appartiene a tutti I Quebecchesi.”)

<sup>349</sup> “Amitié Québec-Italie,” *Insieme*, Anno 9 no.45, 18 November 1981, 28

<sup>350</sup> “Des Nouvelles de l’association,” *Amitié Québec-Italie*, Bulletin d’information, Vol.1, N.1, December 1981, 1

<sup>351</sup> *Amitié Québec-Italie*, Bulletin d’information, Vol.1, N.1, December 1981, 1-2

Québécois national identity to include these minority ethnic groups within them. Outreach took place within both the Liberals and the Parti Québécois, but the most significant growth in outreach was with the Parti Québécois, where the attitude had shifted from regarding the Italian community as an afterthought towards active attempts to court them. René Lévesque did attempt to do so through television interviews, but also with direct meetings within the community. The presence of an Italian-Canadian in the PQ cabinet with Jean Martucci as vice-premier also speaks to the broader acceptance of ethnic minorities within the Parti Québécois, and fits with a willingness by the party to expand the definition of Québécois nationalism which Godin spearheaded. The creation of organizations such as the *Associazione Italiana del Partito Quebecchese* and *Amitié Québec-Italie* highlight an acceptance of these organizations under an arm of Québécois nationalism as well, fitting the wider reach of the phenomenon.

## **Conclusion**

The Italian community of Montréal and the French Québécois community saw relations between themselves change from the Quiet Revolution to the aftermath of the 1980 Québec Referendum. These community relations were touched by issues of immigration that began at the turn of the century and intensified in the postwar period, where the influx of Italian-Canadians grew.

Their receptiveness towards Québécois nationalism was shaped in part by their formative years in the Quiet Revolution, both embodying certain aspects of the nationalist project while espousing other aspects, such as religion, that ran contrarian to them. The language issue shaped much of their understanding of Québécois nationalism during the early years, and events such as the Saint-Léonard Riots and the October Crisis contributed in developing a resistance towards Québécois nationalist ideals such as separatism and integrationist linguistic legislation, and exacerbated the rift between Italian-Canadians and the Québécois community.

The election of the Parti Québécois in 1976 and the issues posed by Bills 22 and 101 continued to widen the gap between the two communities, with the Italians attempting to circumvent these integrationist language laws by forming organizations such as the *Consiglio* to prepare their children for the exams. Bill 101 was also viewed by Italians as a sign of soft integration and sovereignty. Italians openly questioned the idea of Québécois nationalism and who should be included within this conception, mocking this exclusivity in their newspapers. The election of the Parti Québécois in 1976 stoked the fears of the Italian-Canadian community, whose reactions ranged from cynicism to cautious optimism, but most importantly, surprise.

The referendum exposed Québécois nationalist issues pitted against minority and ethnic communities such as the Italians, including the inflexibility of the idea of Québécois nationalism when regarding ethnic minorities, and an overestimation of support for Québécois nationalist ideals amongst ethnic communities like the Italians. Ridicule for the referendum abounded within the Italian press, and the Parti Québécois was not excluded from it. Despite this, René Lévesque made an attempt at outreach towards the community, giving a speech in Saint-Léonard to the community to explain sovereignty-association clearly to them, and he was accommodated relatively warmly. There was also a contingent of Italians who supported the Parti Québécois and the sovereignty project, such as members of the ACPIQ and figures like Serge Fiori and Marco Micone. The overwhelming majority would still vote NO, however.

Following the referendum, the Parti Québécois appears to have taken these criticisms from the Italian community into account, further defining who could be part of the Québécois community, and providing support for the Italian community through PELO and continued their outreach initiatives towards the Italian community. Immigration Minister Gérald Godin played an important role in this outreach, and made efforts to reach out to Italian community organizations and speak on a more personal level with the community through interviews. René Lévesque partook in this initiative as well, appearing at banquets hosted by the Italian community and appearing onto their television networks in order to forge a more personal connection. Despite the fact that this could be seen as pandering, this was a genuine attempt at outreach by important figures in the Québécois nationalist movement that wished to include the Italian-Canadian community amongst their ranks.

While overall the Italian-Canadian community in Montréal remained an ethnic community that found itself sandwiched between the goals of the English and French, and

borrowed demands and behaviours from both, they were not monolithic, and became less so following the Quiet Revolution. Figures like Marco Micone is a foil to the monolith of the Italian-Canadian community, who even in 2008 still advocated for the defense of Bill 101, but came to realize that in recent years, the alarmist worries over the French language were concentrated on Montréal, despite 95 per cent of Québécois understanding French.<sup>352</sup>

In conclusion, the Italian-Canadian community in Montréal was subjected to various social and political influences in the run-up to both the referendum of 1980, and its aftermath. They carved out their own path during the Quiet Revolution in an attempt to resist the whims of the Québécois government.

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<sup>352</sup> Rima Elkouri, "Speak White, Speak What," *La Presse*, 3 February 2008, 5

Appendix



Figure 1: Demonstration of the MIS in Saint-Léonard.

*Saint-Léonard, manifestation de 1969, 1969, BanQ Vieux-Montréal, Fonds Antoine Desilets, (06M,P697,S1,SS1,SSS18,D107), Antoine Desilets.*





Figure 2: Protestors with signs promoting Québec nationalism

*Saint-Léonard, manifestation de 1969, 1969, BanQ Vieux-Montréal, Fonds Antoine Desilets, (06M,P697,S1,SS1,SSS18,D107), Antoine Desilets.*

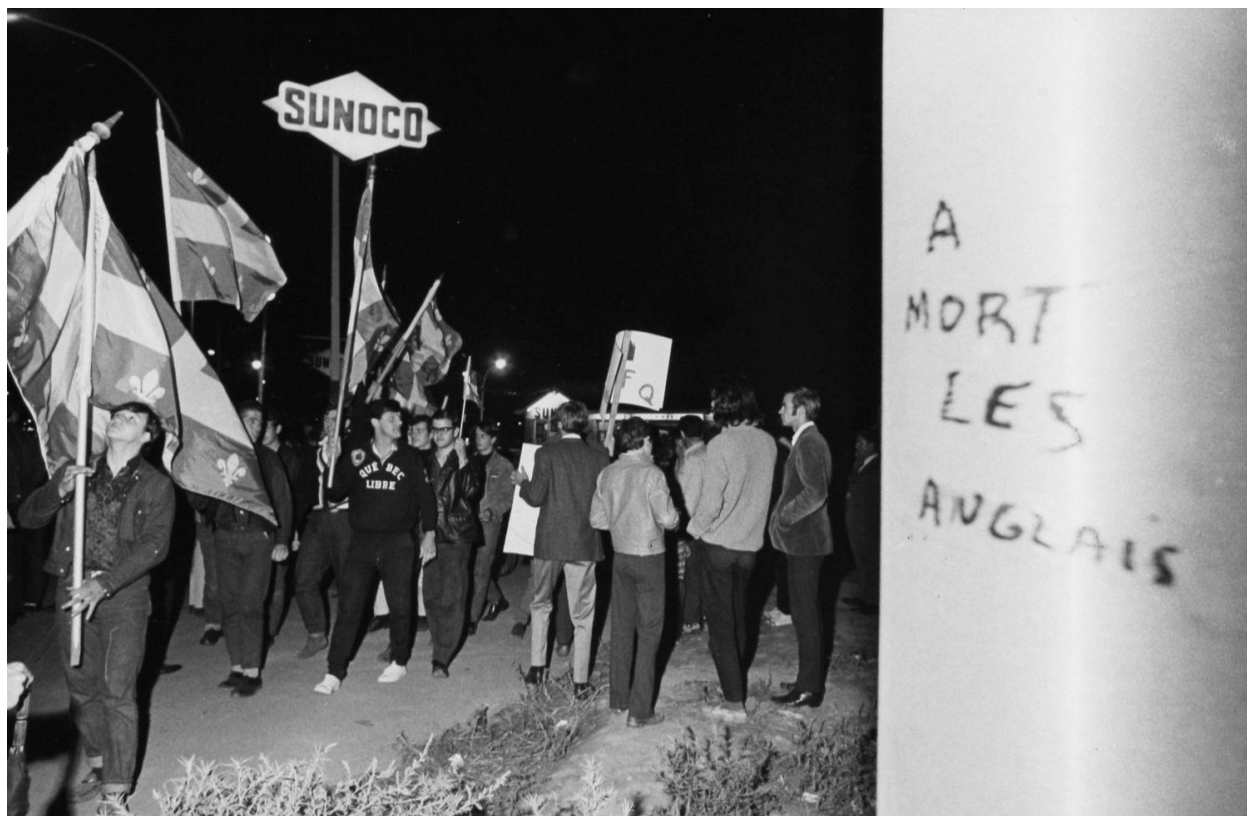


Figure 3

Continued MIS protest at night.

*Saint-Léonard, manifestation de 1969, 1969, BanQ Vieux-Montréal, Fonds Antoine Desilets, (06M,P697,S1,SS1,SSS18,D107), Antoine Desilets.*



**Il governo liberale merita  
ancora la tua fiducia?**

Un governo che si rispetta non può prendere in giro i suoi elettori né prendere come ostaggio una comunità intera come quella italiana. Una politica ambigua e umiliante espressa dal bill 22 non può che sviluppare i rancori tra i quebecchesi di lingua materna francese ed i quebecchesi d'altra lingua materna.

**La posizione dei partiti quebecchese è chiara:**

- tutti gli immigranti che arriveranno nel Quebec, dovranno iscrivere i loro figli alle scuole che

diano l'insegnamento in francese;

- gli alunni già iscritti al settore anglofono potranno continuare gli studi in inglese;
- l'omogeneità della famiglia sarà rispettata: non separeremo i vostri figli a causa della lingua d'insegnamento: tutti o da una parte o tutti dall'altra!

**Se non vuoi che si prenda ancora, vota Partito quebecchese.**



**Parti Québécois**  
Le parti des Québécois

Payé et réservé par Robert St-Jean,  
agent officiel du Parti Québécois,  
8785 Ave du Parc

INSIEME, Novembre 1976/13

Figure 4

Political Advertisement by the Parti Québécois, which asks the reader if “The Liberal government still deserves your trust?”

*Insieme* Anno 4 no.11, 13 (Translation note: Original Italian was “Il governo liberale merita ancora la tua fiducia?”)

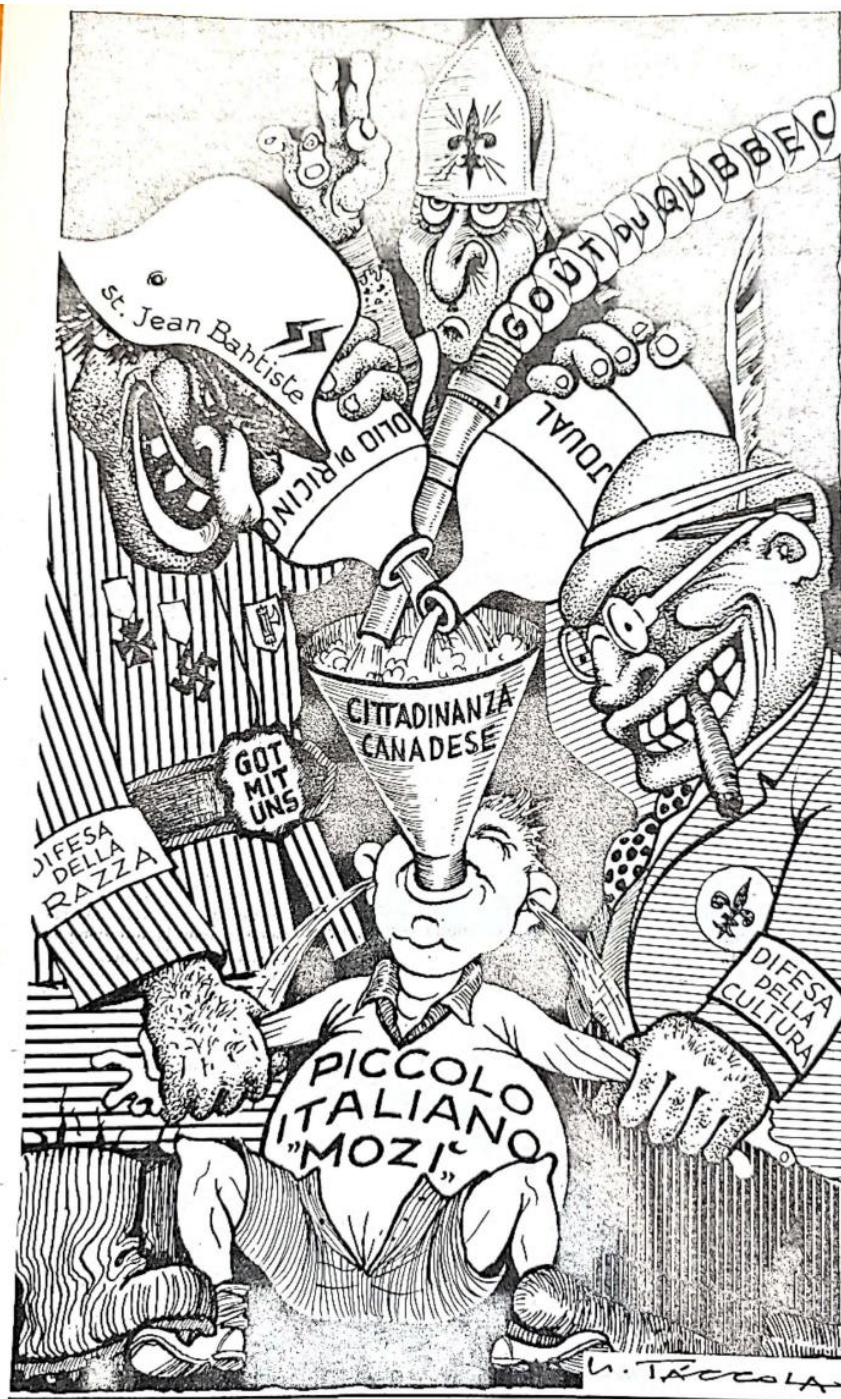



Figure 5

Political cartoon by Umberto Taccola in reference to Bill 22 and the perceived discrimination felt by the Italian-Canadian community.

(Umberto Taccola, Political Cartoon, *Insieme*, Anno 4 no.10, October 1976, 5)





# PENSATECI BENE!

## Le garanzie culturali dei Quebecchesi...

Siamo Quebecchesi.  
Milioni, fieri d'esser Canadesi.  
Il Canada "rimpatierà" la sua Costituzione.  
E' il momento di far garantire i nostri diritti.

La storia del Paese ci dimostra che il federalismo canadese deve permettere al Quebec di assicurare la protezione dei diritti del francese. Tali poteri devono essere esercitati in un quadro politico realista e tenendo conto del contesto economico e sociale nordamericano.

**Il Quebec è d'accordo sul "rimpatio" della Costituzione. E' normale che il Quebec approfitti di questa occasione storica per far valere i suoi diritti.**

Il diritto del Quebec di avere il potere ed i mezzi necessari per garantire l'espansione della cultura quebecchese nel campo delle arti, del patrimonio, delle comunicazioni e dell'immigrazione.

**Il federalismo è una forma di organizzazione efficace ed elastico.**


**E' importante che i Canadesi cerchino di adattare il federalismo all'evoluzione del Paese.**

Bisogna preoccuparsi di mantenere un giusto equilibrio fra i poteri del governo federale e quelli delle province. Decidere fra Canadesi quale livello di governo può, nella maniera più efficace, occuparsi di questo o quel problema dei cittadini.

**I grandi obiettivi del Quebec essendo così raggiunti, ve lo garantisco io, il separatismo perde ogni ragion d'essere.**

Siamo venuti a vivere in terra quebecchese perché questa provincia rispetta le libertà individuali e collettive; perché il clima sociale ed economico è propizio al nostro progresso armonioso e soprattutto perché i nostri figli abbiano per il futuro migliori possibilità dei padri...

Solo il Partito Liberale, se lo appoggerete, vi dà la garanzia di far valere i VOSTRI DIRITTI di cittadini a parte intera in un Paese che si chiamerà sempre Canada.

 Ordinato e pagato da Jean-Pierre Roy,  
agente ufficiale, 10555 rue Hogues, Mtl.

## Il risanamento del clima delle relazioni di lavoro

**Il Partito del Quebec ne fa la sua priorità assoluta.**

**Il problema:**  
Lo sviluppo economico. Gli investimenti. I posti di lavoro. Il clima sociale. La motivazione al lavoro.

**La chiave:**  
Gli stessi lavoratori quebecchesi:  
I professori hanno detto no a Charbonneau!  
Gli operai della costruzione hanno detto no a Laberge!  
Le decisioni devono appartenere ai lavoratori della base.  
I Sindacati agli iscritti!  
NO agli establishments sindacali!

**I mezzi:**  
Per sanare il clima delle relazioni di lavoro, una revisione completa, seria e responsabile del Codice del lavoro del Québec.  
Per evitare gli scioperi e i lock-outs.

1. La mediazione preventiva durante il cammino della convenzione collettiva.
2. Un meccanismo paritario per convenire in anticipo i termini obiettivi del problema della negoziazione.
3. La semplificazione delle strutture d'organizzazione da parte padronale e sindacale nel settore pubblico.
4. La regolamentazione del diritto di sciopero.
  - a) Dire chiaramente, ove quando e come il voto sarà preso e favorire la partecipazione di un più gran numero di iscritti al sindacato presenti all'assemblea.
  - b) Fornire ai lavoratori tutte le informazioni sullo stato delle negoziazioni facendo veramente conoscere le offerte padronali e le richieste sindacali.
  - c) Imporre, all'occorrenza, la tenuta di un voto segreto.
  - d) Istituire una commissione imparziale di sorveglianza del voto munito di tutti i poteri necessari.
5. La garanzia che siano gli iscritti a controllare le finanze del sindacato.
6. Una revisione della Legge sui servizi essenziali per assicurare l'efficacia, perché non si ripetano mai più gli scioperi selvaggi che il Québec ha conosciuto negli ospedali.

**Una questione maggiore:**  
La sicurezza e la salubrità dei luoghi di lavoro per garantire la salute dei lavoratori.

Il nostro avvenire, è il 15 novembre che lo decide  
Votate per il Québec, votate per il Canada, votate liberale.


**No ai separatisti**  
**Bourassa**  **è la nostra garanzia**  
**Votiamo Liberale**

Figure 6

Robert Bourassa's Election Advertisement.

*Il Corriere Italiano*, Vol XXIV no.46, 11 November 1976, 63



**DONATO TADDEO**

## ELEGGIAMO IL 15 NOVEMBRE DONATO TADDEO

*Candidato Liberale  
nella Contea St- Henri*

- Come commissario scolastico
- Come membro della Commissione di sorveglianza

- Perche' il capitolo V della Legge 22 sia abolito.
- Le famiglie non saranno piu' divise. Tutti i figli d'emigranti potranno frequentare una scuola inglese, a condizione che abbiano di gia' un fratello o sorella maggiore, che frequentino questa scuola.

**SI PRESENTA**

- Per una amministrazione piu' sana

**VOTATE LIBERALE, UN VOTO PER  
UN ALTRO PARTITO SIGNIFICA  
FAVORIRE I SEPARATISTI**

Per informazioni, telefonate al 766-1920.

Autorizzato da Michel Barland, agente ufficiale 5523 rue Laurendeau, St-Henri

Figure 7

Donat Taddeo's election poster, *Il Corriere*, 1976

*Il Corriere Italiano*, Vol XXIV no.46, 11 November 1976, 14



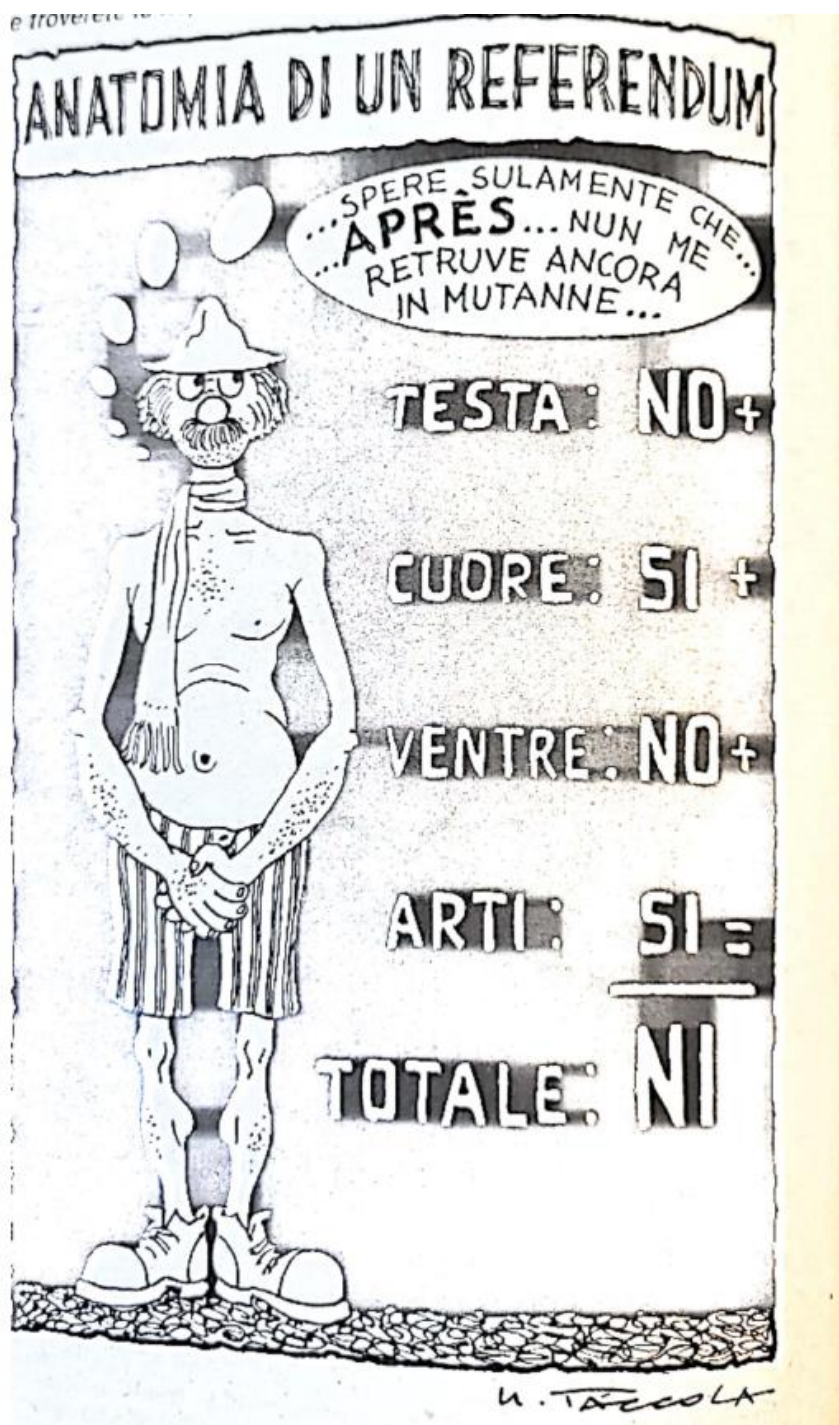


Figure 8

Umberto Taccola, "Anatomy of a Referendum," *Insieme* Anno 8 no. 19, 7 May 1980, 4

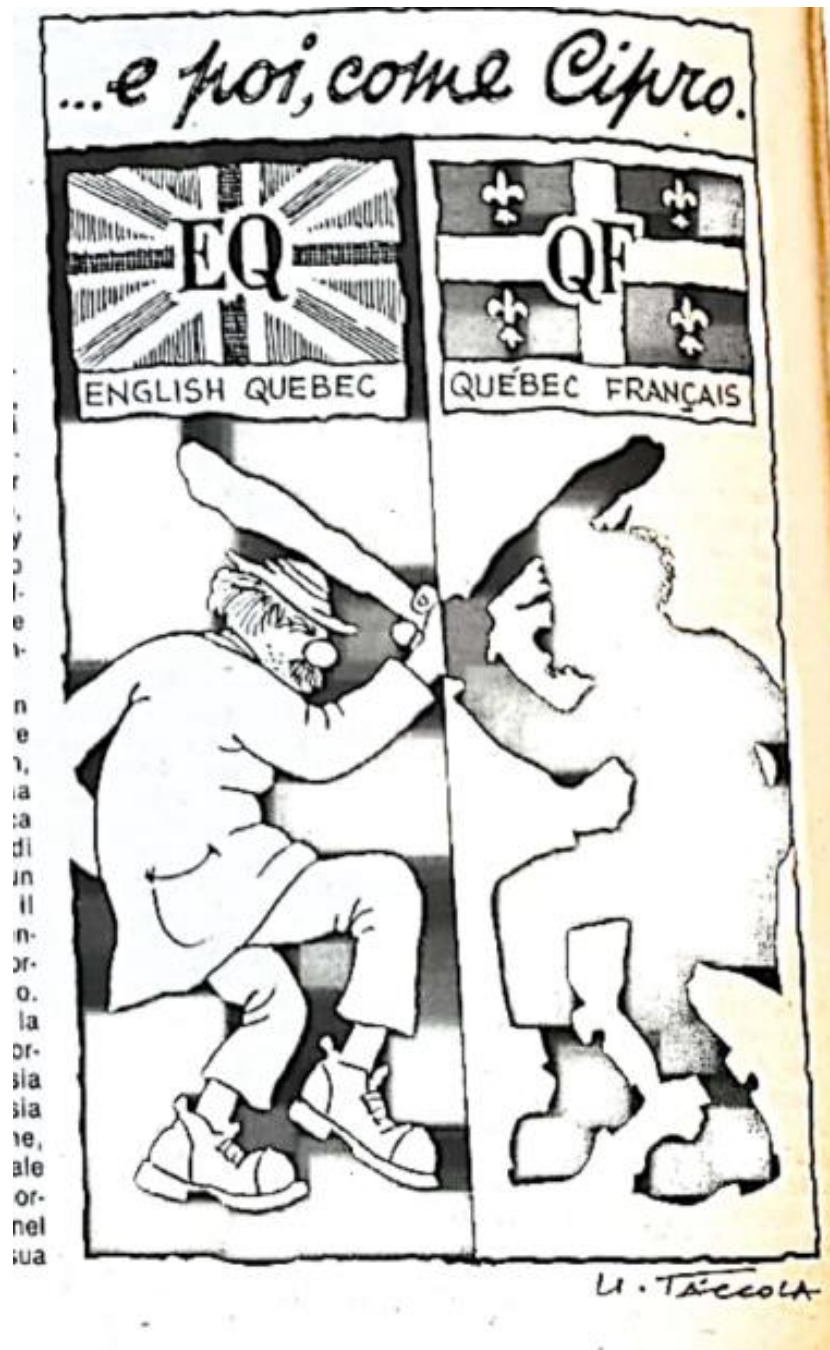


Figure 9

Umberto Taccola, "And Now, Like Before," *Insieme* Anno 8 no.20, 14 May 1980, 4





Figure 10

Political cartoon by Umberto Taccola describing the pressures faced by Italians in regards to their choices in the referendum.


Umberto Taccola, "...The Dilemma Continues," *Insieme*, Anno 8 n.45, 12 November 1980, 4



Figure 11

Claude Ryan questioning René Lévesque about his knowledge of Italian.

*Quaderni Culturali* Anno 1 n. 2, Aprile-Giugno 1981, 12



Carissimi amici!

C'è un posto importante per voi nel Partito Quebecchese.  
Il Partito Quebecchese è composto da 300,000 membri di ogni ceto sociale, fra i quali vi è una rappresentanza della comunità italiana.

Molti Italiani condividono il nostro programma sociale e culturale. Come altri quebecchesi, essi hanno accolto favorevolmente le leggi sulle assicurazioni automobilistiche, la gratuità delle medicine e autoambulanza per gli anziani, il Centro Cure Assistenziali Dante, la legge su finanziamento dei partiti, la legge sulla salute e sicurezza al lavoro, lo scambio Italia-Québec sulle pensioni, il piano d'azione verso le comunità culturali e la protezione delle terre agricole.

Il Québec possiede risorse umane e naturali per farne una società più giusta, più democratica, più aperta, in seno alla quale tutti i cittadini di ogni origine saranno lieti di vivere.


Il 13 aprile la popolazione del Québec ha rinnovato il mandato al Governo. Molti italo-quebecchesi più che nel passato hanno votato per il «Parti Québécois».

Noi ringraziamo tutti coloro che ci hanno appoggiato, convinti più che mai che la nostra visione riflette non solo quella dei francofoni ma pure quella degli italiani. Noi vi chiediamo di entrare nel nostro partito e di farlo vostro.

Tutti quelli che vogliono aderire oppure avere delle informazioni possono rivolgersi al comitato italiano del partito.

LAVORIAMO INSIEME PER UN MIGLIORE AVVENIRE DEL QUÉBEC!

*René Lévesque*



Nome \_\_\_\_\_

Indirizzo \_\_\_\_\_

No. tel.: \_\_\_\_\_

Associazione Italiana del Partito Quebecchese  
2301 est, rue Bélanger, suite 101  
tel.: 376-5223


INSIEME, 24 giugno 1981—31

Figure 12

Advertisement for the Associazione Italiana del Partito Quebecchesse.

*Insieme*. Anno 9, no.25. 24 June 1981, 31.





**«Quebecchesi di origine italiana, c'è posto per voi in seno al PARTI QUÉBÉCOIS»**

**C'è posto per voi...**


Il «PARTI QUEBÉCOIS» è un partito politico dinamico ed aperto che raggruppa oltre 250,000 uomini e donne di ogni origine etnica e sociale.

Durante gli ultimi 4 anni, il Governo formato dal nostro partito s'è avverato il più pulito ed il più progressista che il Québec abbia mai avuto. Numerose misure sociali varate dal nostro governo hanno migliorato le condizioni di vita dei cittadini più poveri. Basti pensare all'aumento del salario minimo a \$3.65 l'ora, oppure alla politica delle porte aperte per i rifugiati e altri immigranti.

Poco importa la ragione che vi ha fatto scegliere il Québec come patria d'adozione, voi condividete con noi il disegno di costruire per i nostri figli un Québec prospero, forte e armonioso.

Il Parti Québécois appartiene a tutti i Quebecchesi. Fatene parte, occupate lo spazio ch'è vostro. Aderite alla sezione italiana del partito facendo parvenire il tagliando qui sotto al:

**COMITE NATIONAL DE LIAISON  
AVEC LES GROUPES ETHNIQUES  
Parti Québécois  
8790, avenue du Parc  
Montréal, Québec H2N 1Y6 (514) 384-7110**



**Parti Québécois**  
au service des Québécois

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Data

Figure 13

Advertisement by the PQ targeting Italians..

*Insieme* Anno 9 no.3, 21 January 1981, 21

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