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**“How could this happen to us?”
French Community and Sault Ste. Marie’s English Resolution**

Michael Graydon, Celia Ross, Joel Muto

One could be forgiven for thinking Sault Ste. Marie Mayor Joe Fratesi was disingenuous in his repeated denials that neither he nor the city aldermen were anti-French. Denials necessitated after a successful petition drive moved Sault city council to pass a resolution declaring the city unilingual English in January 1990. However, the Mayor’s repeated denials and the resolution’s timing undermined his credibility. The move to affirm English as the working language was altogether needless; it already was, legislatively and in practise. Something Fratesi acknowledged when he stated, “people are misinterpreting . . . we simply reaffirmed what the law now provides—that English is the working language of the municipality.”¹ However, the resolution passed during a period of intense anti-Québec sentiment and resistance to bilingualism in Ontario. To believe that it was not anti-French is to believe the resolution was not a product of these very forces.

Therefore, one could reasonably ask why would a municipal government which provided no French services, with no plans to do so, act to preclude their having to do so? Here Mayor Fratesi clarified that the resolution had “everything to do with economics.”² This seemed plausible enough, given legislative changes in Ontario. Namely, how two years earlier the province’s Bill 8 had expanded French language services at provincial government offices. A move which Fratesi and others believed was a precursor to the province requiring municipalities to provide—costly—French services. Ergo the Sault’s resolution acted to preclude this. Yet Fratesi and others were completely wrong. Bill 8 clearly stated it was up to municipalities alone,

to decide to provide French services. Mayor Fratesi came to believe exactly the opposite, through the efforts of the anti-bilingualism group, Alliance for the Protection of English Canada (APEC). Originally formed in response to Québec's Bill 101, APEC's fear-based and nonsensical interpretation of Bill 8, proved popular in parts of Ontario and was the rationale for the Sault's language resolution. So even though Mayor Fratesi denied the resolution represented neither the political debate of the day nor anti-French feeling, it assuredly did. Affirming for Fratesi, that in a country with two distinct cultures—you really could have it both ways.

The actions of the Sault council, led by their plain speaking 'Trumpesque' Mayor, drew sharp rebukes. In extensive media coverage, the resolution was positioned as symptomatic of the debate over Québec's place in the Canadian confederation and anxieties over French language rights. Yet for an event media and politicians portrayed as greatly threatening to the country's constitutional well being, it has garnered scant attention. Aside from a few passing references in works by the Commission of the Official Languages, 1991; Monahan 1991; Heller, 1994; Stevenson and Gilbert, 2009, the resolution has not been a major focus of research.³ In Hayday's 2015, *So They Want Us to Learn French*, a historical account of pro- and anti-bilingual forces in Canada, the resolution is not mentioned. The most extensive account is found in Sims' 2001, *The Best Man for the Job*, profile of Mayor Joe Fratesi. However, given his focus on Fratesi, Sims writes little about Francophone community reactions. For example, Citizens Addressing the Language Motion (CALM), an organization key to resisting and overturning the resolution is only briefly noted.⁴

Existing accounts either highlight the character of Mayor Fratesi or frame events within national debates about language, obscure how for those in the Sault the resolution was a *local* not national issue. It involved multiple actors and elicited a range of reactions. This paper combines

interviews and archival research with existing accounts to create a fuller narrative. Here we situate the Sault at the intersection of multiple forces. As the site of a local struggle over language, interpreted by outsiders, as a proxy battle between pro- and anti-French forces in Canada. We draw on the findings of two qualitative inquiries.⁵ The first conducted interviews to consider French identity and the preservation of culture and language. Interviews which also touched on reactions to the resolution. That first enquiry provided the rationale for a second issue, focused exclusively on the resolution. Here we draw on four key interviews and the archival records of CALM, donated by Dr. Francis Guth to Algoma University. These inquiries when combined with existing accounts provide a richer narrative, attesting to the local character of the resolution by adding the varied perspectives and tensions within the French community.

On a day to day basis the presence of French language and/or culture in the Sault is limited. One could easily remain unaware of the two centuries-long contribution by the French in the area. It is unusual to hear French spoken in public or see French signage. In addition, there is some residual reticence, even fear, because of the resolution. In the words of one interviewee, "a lot of people were turned off, a lot of people were afraid" after the resolution. Another remarked, "I noticed [the French] were a very small group . . . we are scared of identifying ourselves."⁶

Broadly speaking the Sault's French population, a mix of Francophones, Franco-Ontarians and French-speakers, is the legacy of three distinct waves of emigration moving westward from the province of Québec. The first owing to the development of the fur trade in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Then a second in the first half of the nineteenth century, as people left Québec due to overpopulation in some rural areas of Québec. And finally, after a general lack of employment opportunity in parts of Québec's economy, motivated some to move into Ontario.⁷ More specifically, in the 1880s during the expansion of settlements in northern

Ontario, French-speakers (largely from Québec) moved to the region to farm. In the early 20th century, work in forestry and mining replaced farming as the prime occupation. Situated within a French-speaking belt running through north-western Ontario, the Sault has a smaller French-speaking population than most of the region's centers. For example, in 1994, nearby Hearst and Sturgeon Falls had Francophone majorities while in Cochrane, Kapuskasing and Timmins, Franco-Ontarians made up half the population with strong Francophone minorities found in Elliot Lake and Sudbury.⁸ When the resolution passed, between four and five percent of the Sault's population spoke French. Regardless of their number, locals have a strong sense of culture and connection to a larger Ontario community. One interviewee claimed:

“You're a part of a French community in Ontario. And you belong to a group that has similar culture and traditions. It means a lot to me to identify myself as Franco-Ontarian because I was born and I was raised en Française, it's a pride thing, I am proud of being French and want others to realize the importance of it...”

This keen sense of a culture and an identity, coupled with their historical roots, made the overt declaration of English as the language of municipal government, deeply troubling. However, none anticipated or imagined the actions of Mayor Fratesi and the Council. And nor should they have. The resolution was the culmination of efforts *outside* the Sault. Without this influence a home-grown resolution was unlikely. Yet in media accounts and in interviews Mayor Joe Fratesi emerges as the driving force; ‘the one pulling the strings.’ And certainly, once the resolution came to council, Fratesi occupied the spotlight. Yet he is better understood as a product of external forces. Albeit one with personal ambitions who maximized opportunities to advance them. In D's estimation, “the man is arrogant . . . he jumped on [the resolution] as something that would give him political advantage. I don't feel that he actually initiated or pushed people into getting this going but once it did . . .” Once Fratesi saw, “there were 25,000 signatures [on a petition] . . . that was an indication. ‘Here I can really gain some political points

in moving this forward.”¹⁰ In fact the Sault’s resolution was but one of many passed in Ontario, albeit it was the largest city to do so. It and similar Ontario municipal initiatives were the products of a sustained anti-bilingual campaign orchestrated by APEC.

APEC, SAPELR, Bilingual Education and Petitioning for a Resolution

The Sault’s resolution was firmly grounded in rationales espoused by APEC. While not the puppet masters, it was they who indicated which strings to pull. Formed in 1977 in reaction to Québec’s Bill 101, APEC’s message was simple. Bill 101 limited English language rights within Québec, therefore Canada must protect English rights outside it. According to Heller, APEC believed social equality between ethnolinguistic groups was possible only, “through the use of one language.”¹¹ Therefore, to ensure linguistic equality APEC sought to limit and/or stop the expansion of French in Canada, by resisting bilingualism. Founded in 1977 by Irene Hitchie and six others in Nova Scotia, APEC had 6,000 members within two years; 3,500 of them in Ontario. And it was in Ontario that APEC had the most influence.

Irene Hitchie was a disgruntled civil servant who believed federal bilingual policies had stalled her career.¹² Although personally aggrieved, Hitchie’s anti-bilingualism and APEC, were given form by Jack Andrew, author of the 1977, anti-bilingual, anti-French, language-conspiracy fuelled, *Bilingual Today, French Tomorrow: Trudeau’s Master Plan and How It Can Be Stopped*. A Canadian bestseller with 120,000 copies sold, the book revealed Pierre Trudeau’s secret, ‘master plan’ for Canada. This entailed the emigration of Québec French-speakers across the country, generating increased demand for French services. This was followed by the federal civil service becoming French-speaking, followed by provincial and municipal governments and finally businesses working with the federal government.¹³ In a follow up book, *Enough!*

(*Enough French, Enough Québec*), Andrew described how the federal Official Languages Act and Ontario's French Language Services Act worked together, bringing Trudeau's Plan to fruition. Namely, the 'Frenchification' of every provincial, city and town government; all businesses, unions, courts and enterprises; and every school and workplace.¹⁴

Andrew declared, nothing from Québec or French Canada was "particularly distinctive or particularly desirable." He opposed being "governed, taxed and taken over by individuals and a race . . . [the] French-Canada race." According to him, Québec, was a "breeding pen and marshalling yard for the colonization of the rest of Canada." With a goal of making every government job and eventually all jobs, open only to those speaking English *and* French. Naturally this would lead to civil war. Heralding this linguistic apocalypse was bilingualism which for Andrew was, "nothing but a smoke screen" obscuring the "takeover of Canada." Here Ontario's tax-funded French language education turned schools into "racist propaganda mills, concerned only with the advancement of the French-Canadian race." Quixotically, while Andrew believed French education equaled French domination, he had real doubts about the capacities of Canadian students. "Furthermore, most Canadian kids can't get serious enough to make it through school in one language, imagine them trying to do it in two."¹⁵

One could dismiss Andrew's book as a down market, linguistic version of the *Protocols of Zion*. However, if one ignores its repellant racism and attends to its critique of bilingualism's costs, Andrew's ideas fit comfortably on the mainstream Canadian right. Similar critiques were made by people like CBC's Don Cherry and members of the Reform Party. Actors who capitalized on nativist elements in Canadian politics that were neither easily ignored nor unique to western Canada. All of which attests to the spread of Andrew's perspective. For APEC, he was their ideological father figure; a tactician for the language wars. In 1990, when interviewed

about the Sault resolution, APEC president Ron Leitch was clear: Andrew’s book was “a major catalyst for forming APEC.”¹⁶

When Ontario unanimously passed Bill 8, the French Language Services Act in 1986, Andrew’s book must have seemed prophetic. The Act guaranteed access to services in French, at provincial head offices, and in local offices within twenty-two designated districts with 10% or more French-speakers or in urban centres with a least 5,000 French-speakers. Anti-bilingual groups promoted the baseless fear that Bill 8 would require municipal tax payers to pay for expanded French services. Having embraced Andrew’s erroneous critique, APEC claimed Bill 8 would force bilingualism—and its costs—upon all municipalities; urging supporters to attend meetings whenever municipalities discussed French services. Anxieties about Bill 8’s dire potential was central to a campaign by APEC and Alliance Ontario to have municipalities preemptively declare themselves unilingual English.¹⁷

In 1988, APEC interpreted provincial events as providing proof that its calls to action should be heeded. That year Canada’s Supreme Court declared sections of Québec’s Charter of the French Language unconstitutional, striking them down. In response Québec Premier Bourassa used the Constitution’s ‘notwithstanding clause’ to override the Court’s decision. Thus, Québec’s language Charter, legislation designed to promote and protect French, remained in effect. This added a national dimension to APEC’s Ontario efforts. For APEC, Bourassa’s action confirmed “Québec was anti-English . . . English Canada needed to push back.” Writing to 792 Ontario municipalities, APEC urged they hold referenda on becoming unilingual. Initially approximately forty municipalities favored action but come November, most declined to act. In the fall, *Globe and Mail* editors stated that only by “willfully misreading” Bill 8, had APEC convinced municipalities that “unless they condemn bilingualism today” Ontario would force

their provision of French services tomorrow. The organization Canadian Parents for French contacted Ontario municipalities, to correct this misreading of Bill 8.¹⁸

That same year, in Sault Ste. Marie, retired Canadian navy lieutenant, Richard Pearman inspired by Andrew's book and APEC's Ron Leitch, formed the Sault Ste. Marie Association for the Preservation of the English Language (SAPELR). Like Hitchie in Nova Scotia, Pearman felt impacted by official bilingualism, albeit less directly. He believed that when the federal Official Languages Act (1969) came into effect, it had ended a long-standing practice of applying the merit principle to promotions within the Navy. In the name of bilingualism, it "allowed French-speaking officers to be leap-frogged over those who had more skills" putting seaman and ships at risk. Pearman spoke to this at SAPELR's first public meeting in January 1989; warning of the "continual erosion of the use of English" in the civil service. Parroting Andrew's views, a SAPELR newsletter portrayed Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, a champion of bilingualism, as a dangerous sophisticate, playing on Canadian's ignorance, to entrench the Charter of Rights, with its language protections, in the constitution *without* a mandate.¹⁹

SAPELR also shared Andrew's and APEC's criticism of French language education. After Bill 8's initial passage, APEC had forcefully announced its opposition to bilingual education. A SAPELR 1986 newsletter had labelled it "special education," with "extremely detrimental effects on our English-speaking schools and costing untold millions." In another newsletter, it accused Ottawa's Carleton Board of Education of Social Darwinism after the Board concluded that those with serious learning disabilities were unsuitable for French immersion programming. SAPELR feared such children would be "forever branded as [disabled] if they cannot cope with a second language in early immersion." As obvious evidence of the influence of Trudeau's 'master plan,' SAPELR noted that the Board's "hectic desire to become bilingual,"

fulfilled a goal to have “graduates . . . employed by the government.” Such was the anti-French education environment that SAPELR created in 1988. However, it was efforts in 1987 by Sault Ste. Marie parents to improve French education that proved most advantageous for Pearman. The fierce opposition parents faced, would ultimately fuel SAPELR’s petitioning for the English-only resolution.

In 1987, the Sault’s Separate School Board had made a policy change. As a result, only children whose mother tongue was French or who had been educated in French, could enroll in its immersion programs. At the time, local lawyer, Yvon Renaud held one of the three French-language positions on the Board. Yvon and the other two members had pushed for this change. This to address the concerns of some Francophone parents who worried their children attended schools with 50% Anglophone students. Meaning that Francophone students were in classes designed for those learning French, not maintaining or improving it. Additionally, the Separate Board had designated one of four elementary schools, fully French. Finally, it endorsed the creation of a joint French school and Francophone community centre. Decisions which were furiously opposed by Anglophone (and some Francophone) parents. And during the 1988 school board elections, those opposed to this won the seats. The newly elected board reaffirmed that one school *would* be designated fully French but reversed the other policy changes and withdrew support for the community center. Yvon Renaud lost his seat and recalls being shocked at the hostility directed at him. “They called us all kinds of things, including segregationists, racists and purists.”²⁰

In response to the Separate Board’s change of heart, French parents withdrew dozens of children, moving them to the public system along with their municipal taxes. Where parents demanded the Public Board, provide French language instruction to their children. When the

Board balked at having to do so, the parents initiated a Charter challenge in the courts.²¹ Additionally these parents and other Francophones remained angry that the newly elected Separate Board had reneged on supporting a Francophone community center. A joint project between Separate and Public boards, the Public board had also reversed its decision to participate. As a result, early in 1990 Daniel St. Jean, manager of the existing Francophone centre and a member of the Public Board's French Language Advisory Committee, resigned. He indicated this marked a "refusal to live in a place where you have no place for me in French and no place for the development of this community." The conflict over demands for enhanced French education, heightened by resentments about the millions a French centre would have cost, emboldened SAPELR. President Pearman later credited this as "the catalyst behind [the] organization's petition" drive to declare the Sault unilingual English.²²

Some interviewees supported the Separate Board's original policy change to improve French classes. In general, they agreed; French parents did have a valid concern about bilingual schools. As P., saw it, "I mean, you can understand the parents—so my child already speaks French and has to—slow down so that [an English-speaking] child can catch up." A teacher at that time, D. "could sympathize with the idea. I could see where certain families felt that their children were losing their French because they didn't have the opportunity to be in a strictly French environment within the French schools." However, D. also understood why these demands met with resistance. As to the process behind initiating original policy change, D. stated, "I think they did it in an insulting way to the Anglophone community. The group that wanted to do this could have done it in a different way."

In fact, the desire for an exclusively French school had not been universally supported by the French community. One interviewee thought what some French parents wanted, "was too

avant-garde, too exclusive." As J.P. put it, "we wanted to have a French school . . . wanted the quality." However, English parents "were not included [in the decision] and that created friction." And it did not help when as P. recalled, "it hit the newspapers that there was a privileged [French] group that wanted special rights and all that. And they wanted segregation and all this." P. noted how, "some of the parents wanted their children following the Trudeau-era bilingualism and all that." As D. remembered "a lot in the French community said, "hey, we've got three or four vibrant schools here that are really working. Why are you trying to reduce us to one? 'Hey, we have good schools why are you dividing us?'" Of the French-only school, one interviewee declared, "I hate it . . . in a little corner, in a little corner of Sault Ste. Marie."²³

Cost had been highlighted by the media and interviewees also expressed misgivings as to the potential costs of French parents' demands. In M's. estimation "the Francophone community made a mistake in that it supported this Francophone community center which cost, I don't know five or eleven million. Regardless, it was way too much." As for demanding the Public Board provide French, J. believed, "anyone that looks at this ten or twenty years from now would say it was stupid to ask for that kind of money for fifty-two students." Within D.'s family anxieties as to the (erroneously) anticipated costs of Bill 8's municipal French services, surfaced. "I had members of my family sign [SAPELR's] petition . . . in fact my mother signed it." He was shocked. "My mother who years ago when she was in school was fighting to have French language in schools." Now, "for economic reasons she felt there wasn't a great necessity for the city government to be fully bilingual. We don't really need to spend all that money on these services." Such was the success of SAPELR's campaign; harnessing anger over changes in French education to argue "there's no need for [French services] in the Soo with such a small population."²⁴ Perhaps too D's. experience reflects within minority community struggles; an

earlier generation may regard its successes in accruing rights and services as sufficient. When the subsequent generation asks for more, their parents may rationalize as D's. mother did, they asked for 'too much.'

For SAPELR's Pearman, resistance to French parents demands and Bill 8 created the right conditions for its petition drive. Beginning in September 1989 and run with "military precision," its petition drive collected approximately 25,000 signatures—one third of the Sault's population. This precision no doubt reflected Pearman's military background. In addition, P. noted, "a lot of [Pearman's] apostles . . . some of those apostles were former retirees of the air service that I used to see come through during work hours to collect [their pensions]." The campaign's organizational strength was acknowledged by M. who noted they used computers, to "inform all of their supporters . . . they had communications . . . we had nothing." Petition drive volunteers warned of the "fundamental wickedness and incalculable costs of bilingualism," pillaring the demands of "dissident Francophone" parents. Those not-in-the-know never knew the ideological debt the petition campaign owed to the likes of Andrew and APEC. In the aftermath, many stated they had been misled by campaign volunteers as to its actual effect.

Other's decried not getting a chance to sign it. Richard Pearman subsequently mused that had volunteers spent more time in the Sault's West End—Mayor Fratesi's ward—a further 10,000 signatures were possible. The West End was predominantly Italian stemming from immigration in the early 1900's. And Joe Fratesi was its favoured son. It should not be assumed however, that everyone in the Italian community were supportive. As J.P. recalled "the Italian association was really against that Joe Fratesi." Within the community, "not all the Italians [agreed] . . . some were against." Therefore, within the French community, "We don't like Joe Fratesi maybe, but not the Italians."²⁵

The Mayor

Drawing a direct link between Mayor Fratesi and SAPELR’s initiating the petition drive is difficult but his failure to intervene spoke volumes, as did the ‘assistance’ he provided. Before the petition’s resolution came before Council, Fratesi re-wrote some of its text. Instead of ‘promoting English’ it now emphasized the city’s ‘use of English.’ For the Mayor, moving forward with a resolution was an easy political calculation; “as Mayor I must respond to the majority of my constituents.” As he informed the Fifth Estate’s Linden MacIntyre, how he handled the resolution reflected his personal credo. When elected, “you’re there to represent the views and the best interests of the majority of your community.”²⁶

While Fratesi was popular, even massively so after the resolution passed, he had greater ambitions. To realize these, the man who had become an anti-bilingualism hero, just prior to the resolution’s passage—was taking French lessons. Fratesi said he did so, “to better equip himself for the day he hopes to be appointed a [provincial] judge.” Fratesi’s judicial aspirations were widely known; many interviewees commented on it. M. recalled “. . . Fratesi had a reputation of being very ambitious, he wanted to get places and be a lawyer . . . Generally, people heard he wanted to become a judge.” However, J.P., pointed out that “he couldn’t speak French so that hurt him.” According to P., “Joe’s focus in life was to become a Superior Court Justice. And I know one French community strategy . . . [was] to make sure that—because he was biased against Francophones—[this] got quashed.” After the resolution passed, “we heard through the grapevine that there’s no way” he would be a judge. It was during his first term as Mayor, that

Fratesi wrote (using city stationery), to Ontario's Attorney General seeking a judgeship. At the time, there were no openings on the three-member Algoma District Provincial Bench, so Fratesi suggested the Attorney General create a fourth seat. Sims suggests that it was the province's failure to do so in 1988, that motivated Fratesi to run for a second mayoral term.²⁷

In 1989, a vacancy opened on Ontario's provincial court bench. The Attorney General designated it a bilingual seat, in keeping with efforts underway since the mid-70's, to improve French-speakers' access. This infuriated Joe Fratesi, furthering his resentment of bilingualism's impact on the job market. Specifically, Fratesi resented its favouring "some at the expense of others, such as himself and his children." Such direct, unvarnished talk provided fuel for his detractors. All too easily he became a caricature; an ignorant, parochial, anti-French caveman. However, this was too simplistic. He was also a Mayor worried about the growing demands on the budget resulting from provincial downloading. Unfortunately, Fratesi's plain-spoken tactics in defence of the Sault, revealed a deep naïveté and poor strategic choices. He verbally attacked his future employer and thereby demonstrated lack of judgment required for this job?²⁸

Mayor Fratesi claimed the language Resolution was not anti-French but a reflection of economic matters. As Mayor, he led a one industry (steel) town who had seen better days.²⁹ The city's infrastructure was crumbling. Recently the Province had downloaded costs for court house security, shifted more transit costs onto the city; and payed for new environmental measures. Finally, there was the new pay equity legislation which Fratesi declared, "good legislation but pricey." The city faced these burdens without a provincial grants increase. Just two weeks before the resolution's passage, Fratesi wrote Premiere Peterson on behalf of northern Ontario communities about these matters but received no response. The Mayor's phone calls were generally not answered. For Fratesi the resolution symbolized a problematic relationship with

Queen's Park. As Fratesi also believed, Bill 8 would require municipalities to provide costly French services. SAPELR's petition provided a means to proactively signal displeasure with the provincial government. "This was one way of getting their attention."³⁰

Another complex element of Fratesi, were the views of Canadian citizenship and history that he shared with SAPELR and APEC. Views that were incompatible with the goals of Ontario's Bill 8 and Canada's larger bilingualism aspirations. Fratesi, like SAPELR's Pearman, rejected the conception of Canada as a dual language nation. Rejecting too, the notion of linguistic identity. For Fratesi the French were but one of many ethnic groups. He was proudly Italian; part of those ethnic communities that made up the "grander scheme of Canada." Fratesi believed the French were welcome to their associations, groups and schools—funded by their own money. The French and other ethnicities should "work towards being Canadian and celebrating that." He expressed his resentment of linguistic labels saying, "if you were Italian, no one would call you an Anglo anything . . . now if you're not French you're an Anglophone." Fratesi and Pearman espoused an American 'melting pot' view of citizenship. Pearman noted, "One of the things about the Americans, they all know one thing. They're all American, no matter where they come from. It would be fantastic if we could do the same thing in Canada." Perhaps this is why Fratesi and Pearman failed to grasp Francophones' intense fear of assimilation.³¹ They regarded assimilation as the *goal*; the resolution being a means to this end.

Petitioning for a Resolution

The speed with which the resolution came to Council astonished many. After the petition drive the resulting resolution came before Council at the end of January 1990. The Francophone community had little or no prior knowledge of this. Largely precluding their organizing

opposition or appearing before the Council to speak against it. Those unable to attend could watch a video taken of the meeting. One only need watch a few minutes to get a sense of the triumphant mood of SAPELR supporters.

Wearing a Bon Soo winter festival sweatshirt, a grinning, ebullient Mayor Joe Fratesi chaired the meeting with none of the gravitas one might expect owing to the tensions the resolution had evoked. Then again, only politicians outside the Sault and those in the media foresaw disaster. City hall's council chamber, meeting rooms and hallways were full. Fratesi remarked (to loud applause) "It's fair to say that we have a delegation that probably is the largest delegation we've had down in our city hall." The video reveals an audience dominated by those of an older vintage. Something interviewees noted. In D.'s view, petition supporters, "were an older generation . . . these very staunch Englishmen . . . felt that they would be—their rights would be diminished by the fact that Francophones would gain rights." M. recalled how among some elderly people, talk of French rights made them fear an effect on "their medical services." An older generation of Italian immigrants worried new immigrants "will have to learn a new language in order to get jobs . . . that Algoma Steel would ask them to speak French." P. said, "I would say at the time those that were post-retired, retirees, seemed the ones most vociferous" in their support.³²

That night Richard Pearman presented before council, his "concerns about language rights." For SAPELR "the vision of truly bilingual country, entrenched in the Constitution, is no more a reality today than when it was first proposed and debated in the 1960s." Pearman rejected the vision of "Canada as a nation of nine bilingual provinces and Québec as the centre of French language and culture." Something Bill 8 fostered. SAPELR wanted a "return to the historic linguistic . . . make up of this country which was nine primarily English speaking provinces with

numerous minorities equally welcome to maintain their language and culture within their own communities." Here Pearman inadvertently suggests multiculturalism was a concept first envisioned by the Father's of Confederation. Bill 8 represented the "development and expansion of French language rights" in service of "four-point six percent" of Ontario's population. From a "provincial government that valued the linguistic and cultural duality of our history." SAPELR too valued "the linguistic heritage of Canada . . . one which evolved over 200 hundred years, not one manipulated by politicians for political ends." He warned Bill 8 would eventually "force municipal councils to confront the issue of bilingual services." In summation, he decried how supporting bilingualism, Canada's three traditional political parties were, "effectively denying objectors any real access to the decision-making process." That the Sault's Francophone population had been largely denied a part in SAPELR's process was an irony Pearman ignored.³³

Mayor Fratesi then asked if any one wished to speak. No one came forward so he invited aldermen to speak. When asked by Alderman Szczepanick, Pearman assured him, those signing the petition were "fully aware of the issues at hand and how it would be used." Szczepanik then asked the Mayor for reassurances that people had an opportunity to speak. Fratesi replied, "I would think that the advance notice of this issue coming to council was of notice to anyone . . ."

As to the resolution, Szczepanick's comments summarized well, the views of the other ten aldermen supporting it. Citizens had ample opportunity to speak. The "resolution does not violate or center out or sequester a group or minority." Signatories understood its intent. Szczepanick endorsed the resolution "as a lobbying tool for the Provincial government." The resolution was "a statement of multi-culturalism, of the mosaic that we have in Sault Ste. Marie . . . a simple statement of commonality, of unity, of promotion, of effective communication."³⁴

Arguing against the resolution, Alderman Hurndon like all the alderman, feared bilingualism's costs. His objection was procedural. Based on his reading of the Ontario Municipal Act, Ontario municipalities were to conduct business in English, unless they had passed by-law—not a resolution—that allowed them to work in French. Therefore, the resolution merely reaffirmed “what we've been directed to do by the Province,” ergo it had no effect. Hurndon concluded, “I can't support this resolution because I have very deep concerns about the feelings and the divisiveness that this kind of resolution can generate when it's open to interpretation by all members of our community.” Here his fellow aldermen laugh. When Alderman Thomas Angus spoke, he too worried about bilingualism's costs. Like Hurndon he believed the resolution “solved a problem that doesn't exist.” After each alderman spoke, Mayor Fratesi addressed the chamber, speaking of his dismay over the language quarrels that had “torn us apart.” For him, the source of this quarrel was the French Language Services Act, demands for a French-only school, and the French-community centre. These had “fueled arguments and spawned divisions.”³⁵ The Council then voted eleven to two for the resolution, to enthusiastic applause.

In retrospect, J.P., offered a charitable analysis, suggesting councillors felt ‘trapped,’ “caught up in this and they had to vote” given that scale support for the petition. “I think the night before they were made aware of [their situation] . . . I'm sure Fratesi must have drilled them.” The vote “came up so easy in favour.” Regardless J.P. believed, a municipality “should never vote rights away without giving the other group a chance to express their views. I'm sure if [Francophones] would have expressed their views . . . I don't know how they would have voted.” That councillors had been trapped, is why J.P., believes that in the next election cycle, resolution opponents targeted “not the councillors but Fratesi, yes.”³⁶

Media and Political Reactions

Days after the vote, *The Sault Star*'s columnist Fred Loader wrote, “Whatever other claim to fame Mayor Joe Fratesi may make . . . [he] gave this city the worst black eyes in its history.” The *Globe and Mail* editors described the resolution as something “placed under their noses by the SSM Association for the Preservation of English Language Rights.” Unclear as to “which rights have been placed in peril” by Bill 8, editors then established the dominant interpretation of the resolution for those outside the Sault. The resolutions, “intent was to tell the Francophone minority to mind its lowly place in the scheme of things.” Days later the *Globe and Mail* pointed out how a resolution rooted in resistance to French parent’s education demands, had no impact on education.³⁷

Concerns that the resolution struck a jarring note to Québec’s place in the confederation, the *Globe* editors suggested “Mayor Fratesi and others . . . in their small corner of Canada . . . are playing chicken with national unity.” Québec’s Minister’s of Justice and Education, and Prime Minister Mulroney condemned the resolution’s impact. The Parti Québécoise went further. The resolution revealed the failure of Canada’s bilingual project. Better *now*—to engage in “trying to build bridges between two distinct societies and two neighboring countries—Québec and Canada.” Québec’s Jacques Parizeau agreed. The resolution was, “nothing more than fanaticism and an insult to Francophones” and an “indication that the dream of a bilingual society can never be achieved.” In response Mayor Fratesi repeated the *real* issue was a possible future requirement that the city provide French services, “we simply cannot afford.”³⁸

While provincial and national politicians and the national media, worried about the impact on the confederation, condemned the Mayor and council, interviewees rarely raise this. Ontario's Bill 8 was relevant legislative issue and even it is rarely mentioned. Locally the resolution was not linked to national politics. Possibly this reflects Mougeon's conclusion that during the 1960s and 1970s Francophones in Québec had developed a keen sense of a distinct national identity, as Québécoise. However, Francophone minorities outside Québec had developed distinct identities, i.e., Franco-Ontariens. Therefore, perhaps local Sault Francophones did not emphasize links between the resolution and Québec because they were not Québécoise. As one interviewee put it; "I find my roots as a Francophone are here in Ontario. I do not identify with the Franco-Québécoise other than the language."³⁹

By February, 1990 thirty other Ontario municipalities declared themselves unilingual English. Niagara Falls had taken its cue from the Sault. A Niagara Falls Alderman argued bilingual services would soon be required of all municipalities. Resistance to this grew; ". . . a lot of people have been silent over the years. Sault Ste. Marie really set things off." In Thunder Bay where French education was also an issue, the city council responded with a similar resolution, passed by a nine to three vote. As in the Sault, some parents had insisted the Public Board provide French instruction. Addressing events in Thunder Bay, the *Globe and Mail's* Jeffery Simpson, labelled links drawn between Ontario's French education act, Bill 75 and Bill 8 as "irrational and dangerous." Irrational as Bill 8 did not impact Thunder Bay. The city's actions were "dangerous because of the signal of gratuitous intolerance sent across the entire country."⁴⁰

By March 1990, the media introduced a links between SAPELR, APEC and the ultra-right. Reporting on an exposé originally published in Toronto's *Now* magazine, the *Toronto Star's* Gerald Caplan, reported APEC's Ron Leitch met with several ultra-right groups in 1982.

Groups known for promoting anti-Semitic views, hosting Holocaust deniers, and believing French culture undermined “White, Christian Civilization.” In 1982 APEC had met with the anti-immigrant and anti-foreign aid group, Citizens for Foreign Aid Reform and the anti-Semitic, Holocaust denying-leadership of the Canadian League of Rights. Leitch also had ties to League of Rights member, Ron Gostick who had spoken at APEC meetings in 1989. When asked, Leitch confirmed Gostick had been allowed to sell Holocaust-denial literature but was restricted to speaking only on matters of language. Of Gostick’s views, Leitch declared, “I don’t know what his philosophy is.” Finally, Leitch was revealed to have ties to Peter Brimelow, a US-based ultra-conservative believing bilingualism to be part of “Canada’s repellent package of leftist social and human rights policies.” He was honorary chair of the Canadian reactionary group, Northern Foundation, formed to counter Mulroney’s ‘appeasement of Québec and the Left.’ On Foundation’s board was SAPELR’s Richard Pearman. Weeks before the *Now* story appeared—perhaps knowing it was coming—Pearman publicly denied formal links between SAPELR and APEC. They were not unaffiliated; “we parallel groups.” He even downplayed APEC’s influence. In fact, APEC was “caught off guard by the Sault Ste. Marie resolution.” Yet because as a result, “anti-French feeling is starting to domino all across the country.”⁴¹

Reactions and Resistance Within the French Community

For interviewees, the Resolution was a local matter driven by local education concerns and SAPELR’s views on Bill 8.⁴² Yet when council passed the resolution, few Francophones had been present. *The Sault Star* gave notice of the meeting two days prior, which alerted the national media but not local Francophones.⁴³ When D. heard, “First of all, I was insulted . . . this was a public demonstration against the Francophone community.” And “as a teacher within the French

schools . . . I felt somewhat attacked.” J.P. said, “I couldn’t believe it. Sault Ste. Marie is a French name. I knew the history of Sault Ste. Marie . . . how could this happen to us.” He learned of the petition when campaigners came to his house. He heard of the council vote the evening it occurred. “I went to get dressed up, turned on the TV and it was too late.” M. heard of the petition “indirectly, I hardly knew about it . . . when I found out I was mortified, shocked.” The campaign had “been going on for a while but obviously kept for the people that were supporting it.”⁴⁴ Here M. hints the petition had been kept under wraps, directed only at supporters. This seems unlikely as petition-drive tables were regularly set up in area shopping malls.

After the resolution’s passage the Coalition Against the Language Motion (CALM) formed in April 1990. It argued that the city had not issued a formal notice of its meeting. Being unable and/or prevented from appearing at Council heightened French community anger. Days after the vote, hundreds demonstrated at city hall, urging the Council to reconsider.

By all accounts the demonstration was quiet and thoughtful. D. believes the initial demonstration was organized by the Centre Francophone.⁴⁵ “I went to demonstrate . . . to show that there were Francophones in this city that do feel hurt by this. My personal reason . . . [the resolution] was presented in a way that diminished the value of Francophones.” He recalled it was generally peaceful but there were, “English people making comments and so forth. Nothing became violent.” However, J.P., recalls, “We were hit by quite a few people and a lot of Francophones were told to speak English or to speak ‘white.’” At the demonstration, M. remembers “they had police, they wouldn’t let us march above the steps.” P. saw a co-worker observing the protest and he approached him. “I should have done it in private but I mentioned that I had seen him. ‘That he had graced my living room last night on the news . . . ’I saw you with all the bigots at the [council] meeting’ . . . So that didn’t go quite well.”⁴⁶

Mayor Fratesi, unhappy with protestors' complaints, reassured the *Globe and Mail*, that when the resolution was debated more than the usual number of presenters spoke. He then reviewed his rationale for the resolution. It came about because of Bill 8; "political attempts" by parents to have public schools to deliver French classes; and SAPELR's "24,700 signature" petition. Yet two weeks later, Council agreed to a special meeting so that Francophones could be heard. Here the overall tone ranged from indifferent to hostile. J.P., recalled, "when I hear the way the people talked . . . the city fathers the way they talked, I couldn't believe it." At one point a doctor who had survived Hitler's Europe spoke, describing how the resolution, evoked some of his darkest memories. Mayor Fratesi, suggested that he should go back to Europe.

Stung by media portrayals of the Mayor, Council and Sault citizens as racist bigoted Neanderthals, the Council passed a second resolution on February 19, 1990. It read, the Sault "very proudly recognizes the important role which French Canadians have played . . . in our community and our country over the past four centuries." Francophones were "heartily encouraged to continue in the celebration of their important history, ancestry and culture." This "clarifying" resolution reflected Council's growing anxiety about impacts on tourism. In the *Sault Star*, the local Centre francophone rejected the resolution's invitation to "celebrate [French] culture in a folkloric manner," thereby ignoring the official language status of French.⁴⁷

On April 29, 1990, CALM held its first public meeting, and while not the only group resisting the resolution, its efforts were the most substantive. Minutes from this first meeting reveal it was already well organized and accepted reports from nine working sub-committees. At the meeting, CALM president, Dr. Frances Guth, Professor of Philosophy, Algoma University-College, agreed to write Mayor Fratesi and the aldermen. Algoma's Faculty Association President, Robert d'Amato had already written Fratesi. Doing so after a high school declined to

hold events at the Sault's Water Tower Inn. The Inn had received a bomb threat after proprietor, J. J. Hilsinger publicly opposed the resolution. D'Amato warned the Mayor that such threats, "acquire a bizarre sort of legitimacy when city leaders" do not speak out against them. D. had "some discussions with Jim Hilsinger . . . who was definitely opposed. Whether he was just for the French-Canadians or saw financial difficulties with his business . . . he was at least public in his expression of being against it. He saw it as an insult too." Sims reported on a press conference where Hilsinger rather than attacking the Mayor directly, appealed to citizens to push their aldermen to rescind the resolution. In response Mayor Fratesi publicly attacked Hilsinger, saying, "He's insulted the community, he's insulted me and he's insulted the council."⁴⁸

In his letter to the Mayor and Aldermen, Frances Guth made clear CALM wanted the resolution rescinded and offered to meet with the Mayor and Alderman. Guth was concerned about Fratesi's role in altering the language of SAPELR's resolution, making it "less obviously racist;" the Council's disregard for Canada's constitutional recognition of French as an official language, and the wisdom addressing Bill 8 via the "politics by pre-emptive strike." Ultimately only Alderman Swift met with CALM. Alderman, Ed Szczepanik, agreed to meet with the caveat that at a meeting, they view the video of the council meeting. In his letter Szczepanik stated that only the "recorded comments made by myself at the public meeting will form the basis for the discussion."⁴⁹

After meeting Swift, CALM provided an account to the Mayor and Alderman, describing it as "cordial" but not productive. Swift had emphasized the economic case for the resolution, necessary when the Mayor had failed to "get the ear of government" about provincial downloading. Swift saw as "potentially attention-grabbing . . . [it] certainly forced the government to sit up and listen. So, Council used it to send a message." This 'message' was the

only "benefit of the resolution to the city" that Swift could point to. He disagreed with CALM's assessment of the economic and reputational impacts but "was unable to refute any of them." Months before meeting with Swift, the Chamber of Commerce reported on multiple resolution-related cancellations at local hotels and receiving letters refusing to ever visit the Sault again. Additionally, three Francophone educator conventions had been relocated, with the hospitality sector anticipating hundreds of thousands of dollars in losses.⁵⁰

Attempts by CALM to work with the Mayor and Alderman went nowhere even as it updated them on the resolution's impacts. For example, in December 1990, CALM informed the *Sault Star*, it had learned that Strathcona Mineral Services Ltd., had informed the city it would "no longer be doing business with any resident in your city." This "so as long as such bigoted legislation is in effect." Responding to CALM's revelation, Fratesi taunted the group, saying "it was obvious that you were hoping that your 'discovery' might embarrass me." The Mayor described Strathcona's letter as one of "several thousands of pieces of correspondence" he and the city received "with approximately nine out of ten in support" of the Council. "Sorry to disappoint you."⁵¹

Mayor Fratesi's dismissal of Strathconas's letter reflected his defiant tone. Earlier in November he declared the resolution "had no measurable financial impact." There would be an impact however, "if a few persistent citizens do not stop bothering him about the Council's resolution." Deeply put out by opponents, Fratesi threatened to hold a referendum to reaffirm the resolution and "the wishes of the majority of voters." Voicing his support for Fratesi, SAPELR's Pearman reiterated, "We're not anti-French. We're fighting official bilingualism."⁵² By this point though, those critics from outside the Sault had largely moved on. The national media, provincial

and federal politicians said little after the end of March 1990. Fears that the resolution had dramatically undermined the linguistic aspirations of the county, were unfounded.

Overall the Resolution's impact remained local. A reality which CALM conveyed through a press release issued at the resolution's one year anniversary. Here it noted the public-school board's director of education reported difficulty in attracting Francophone teachers and eighty percent of Chamber of Commerce members opposed to the resolution. Additionally, communities from northern Ontario and Québec had declined invitations to attend the Sault's Winter Cities Forum '91. Less verifiable was CALM's claim that based on a "private confirmation from highly placed provincial government sources," the Liberal government had chosen not to move Ministry of Natural Resources offices to the Sault. Resulting in a loss of "300 – 400 permanent government jobs." True or not, CALM's claim captured the mood at Queen's Park. After Joe Fratesi was massively re-elected in the fall of 1990, he began lobbying Queen's Park and Ottawa for a "big government project" in the Sault. Around this time, Sault MPP Tony Martin told the *Sault Star* that because of the resolution, provincial and federal governments "banished any thoughts of more government projects for the Sault." Former Sault MP Steve Butland, told the media that the resolution had "caused me nothing but grief when I was in Ottawa."⁵³

In the fall of 1992 the local law firm Harry and Renaud wrote to Mayor Fratesi and the Council. They argued that after elections had constituted a new Council, the resolution was no longer in effect. They offered a legal opinion wherein resolutions unlike by-laws, were regarded as "declarative . . . a matter of a temporary character." Resolutions did "not prescribe a permanent rule of government." Therefore, would the Mayor and Council agree the resolution had "no force and effect?" Mayor Fratesi, wrote back to say, "he did not." The resolution stood.

He informed Harry and Renaud that changing it required a "simple resolution properly moved and seconded and supported by a majority of City Council." However, "to date, the Council has not been presented with such a resolution."⁵⁴

In response, two applicants, one of them CALM President, Frances Guth, asked the court to declare the resolution illegal, having addressed a matter "outside of the jurisdictional competence of municipalities." Mayor Fratesi ordered the city's legal team to defend the resolution. In a letter in which he referred indirectly to Fratesi as 'Il Duce,' former Sault Mayor James McIntyre, urged the city to not take this action. In response Fratesi sent a hand-written note to McIntyre's home. In it Fratesi wrote of past Sault mayors: "Some of the mayors, I am told were strong. Some were wimpy. I'm just wondering what category you fit in" (signed) "Il Duce." After a brief trial in June 1994, Justice Loukidelis ruled that Council had exceeded its competence and struck down the resolution. Mayor Fratesi regarded the decision as evidence that "a judicial system which constrained governments such as Sault Ste. Marie's to act within the law . . . was dysfunctional." Sims notes that, "these comments would have made surprising additions to [Fratesi's] judicial application."⁵⁵

The Mayor remained defiant, so the court decision did not result in a hoped-for apology. In 1999 Mayor Steve Butland presided over a council meeting that formally rescinded the resolution. Former MP Butland had become mayor in a 1996 by-election, necessary after Joe Fratesi had been forced to resign. The courts ruled Fratesi had been in a conflict of interest when he orchestrated his taking over the position as the city's chief administrative officer. This led to his being banned from holding office for six years. At the council meeting Butland accepted a motion from the floor by Councillor Peter Vaudry to rescind the resolution. Mayor Butland could have ruled Vaudry out of order as there had been no prior 'notice of motion. However, fearing a

delay might give “opponents time to organize” he accepted it and the council unanimously rescinded the resolution. He told Simpson at the *Globe and Mail* that the city had received some negative responses “but we have not been deluged.” The city of Thunder Bay also dealt with a motion to rescind its resolution but this was defeated.⁵⁶

An actual apology came ten years later, brought to fruition by Mayor John Rowsell. First elected in 2000, Rowsell issued an apology just prior to his death while in office, in 2010. The Mayor made his apology on local French public television but few Francophones saw or heard it. Many watched it later on video tape. This is how M. learned of it. He felt “the mayor at the time was a good man. [Roswell] would never have gone along with what Fratesi did.” For J.P., it was problematic that the apology only appeared on French television because “I don’t think too many English heard.” When he heard it, P. felt it provided “some relief. But . . . was it going to be the remedy? It’s hard to push people back.” After all, “if there’s 25,000 signatures we still have to respect them . . . in a free democratic society.” However, “was [the petition] presented to them in a way that they understood the consequences? What were the options?” Finally, D. recalled “when Mayor Rowsell came out with the apology . . . a lot of [French people] felt vindicated and a lot of them felt relieved. At least the city in some way had recognized that this was not a proper method in which to deal with the situation.”⁵⁷

Resolved to Move Forward

Within months of the resolution’s passage, media and politicians realized Canada’s bilingualism project— ‘dream’ if you will—would not flounder on the shores of the Sault’s St. Mary’s river. Andrew’s bilingual apocalypse was not nigh. All in all, the country had moved on to other things and much of the vitriol about bilingualism would slowly ebb from the public

sphere. Those who remain opposed to bilingualism found no comfort in recently released 2016 national census data. *Stats Canada* reported eighteen percent of Canadians were now bilingual, up from twelve-point two percent in 1961. The same period that SAPELR’s Richard Pearman indicated as the start of Canada’s *unrealistic* bilingualism project. Even more disturbing for people like Pearman would be the news that almost a quarter of Canadians reported having a mother tongue that was neither English nor French. At home, 7.6 million Canadians spoke neither of the two official languages.⁵⁸ Those still fearing a bilingual apocalypse now confronted a multi-lingual end-of-days. Of course, there was and is no such disaster looming. The experience of Sault Ste. Marie is testament to that.

Not long after the resolution’s passing a sense of resignation but not defeat, took hold within the community. As J.P., said, “Well after the hurt . . . for a while there was talk about what can we do?” There was a realization that Fratesi “won’t change his mind . . . let’s live the life we can in Sault Ste. Marie and do the best we can . . . we had to accept that.” Years later when the resolution was rescinded, D. remembers it as “another cog in the wheel . . . just move forward. We continued as we were and whatever struggles we had, we still had struggles.”⁵⁹ As to the present-day Sault, P. said, “Everything is, for the most part, most things are resilient.” Perhaps M. describes best how the French in Sault Ste. Marie moved forward even as Mayor Fratesi and city council were determined to stay put. As M. said, “the situations we went through was due to the fact there were a bunch of cowards, the people that followed Fratesi.” Today, “I think there are more fighting spirits” in the French community. And “I think a lot of the people in the rest of the community realized—Joe was no prize.”⁶⁰

¹ K. Sepkowski, “Soo Language Vote Puts Mayor in the Spotlight,” *Globe and Mail*, February 3, 1990, A10.

² Sepkowski, “Soo Language Vote,” A10.

³ Canada, Ontario, *Commission of Official Languages, Annual Report – 1991* [Ottawa, ON], 1991; Patrick Monahan, *MeechLake: The Inside Story* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1991); Monica Heller, *Crosswords: Language, Education and Ethnicity in French Ontario* (New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1994); Don Stevenson and Richard Gilbert, “Municipal Associations” in *Language Matters: How Canadian Voluntary Associations Manage French and English*, eds. D. Cameron and R. Simeon, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2009).

⁴ Harvey Sims, *The Best Man for the Job: Joe Fratesi and the Politics of Sault Ste. Marie* (Toronto: ECW, 2001). Simpson’s journalistic account of Canadian language politics, devoted a chapter to Fratesi but contained little about community reactions (Jeffery Simpson, *Faultlines: Struggling for a Canadian Vision* (Toronto: Harper Collins, 1993).

⁵ This research was approved by the Algoma University Review Ethics Board. Interviews were conducted in either English or French and later transcribed.

⁶ Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 2, interview by Joel Muto, Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, Winter 2014, transcript, offices of Dr. Michael Graydon, Dept. of Sociology, Algoma University, Sault Ste Marie, Ontario.

⁷ Raymond Mougeon, “French Outside New Brunswick and Québec,” in *Language in Canada*, ed. John Edwards (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 226-261, 227.

⁸ Raymond, Mougeon and Edouard, Beniak, “Bilingualism, Language Shift, and Institutional Support for French: the case of the Franco-Ontarians,” *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 105/106, (1994): 99-126, 99-100, 103.

⁹ Interviewee 10, interview by Joel Muto, Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, Winter 2014, transcript, Dr. Michael Graydon, Dept. of Sociology, Algoma University, Sault Ste Marie, Ontario.

¹⁰ D. interviewed by Dr. Michael Graydon, Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, April 2017, transcript, offices of Dr. Michael Graydon, Dept. of Sociology, Algoma University, Sault Ste Marie, Ontario.

¹¹ Heller, *Crosswords*, 83-84.

¹² Matthew Hayday, *So They Want Us to Learn French: Promoting and Opposing bilingualism in English-Speaking Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015), 111.

¹³ Jock, V. Andrew, *Bilingual Today, French Tomorrow: Trudeau’s Master Plan and How It Can Be Stopped* (Richmond Hill: BMG Publishing, 1977), 109-112. Andrew’s publication was part of a trend in conspiracy-based thinking about federal language policies. See also, David Somerville, *Trudeau Revealed by His Words and Actions*, (Richmond Hill: BMG Publishing, 1978) and Sam Allison, *French Power: The Francisation of Canada*, (Richmond Hill: BMG Publishing, 1978). Neither works, nor did APEC efforts generate a significant anti-bilingualism backlash. They did however, prove a significant challenge to those promoting bilingualism (Hayday, *So They*, 135).

¹⁴ Jock V. Andrew, *Enough! (Enough French, Enough Québec) – Wake up English Canada! Enough of this Absurdity* (Toronto: Andrew Books, 1988).

¹⁵ Andrew, *Bilingual Today*, 108; 37; 18. *Globe and Mail*, K. Byrne, “Soo English Lobby Denies Link to the ‘Racist’ Group,” February 12, 1990; Andrew, *Bilingual Today*, 89; 94; Hayday, *So They*, 110.

¹⁶ Dallaire & Denis, 418-419, highlight a common tactic of those opposing bilingualism, such as APEC, Don Cherry and the Reform Party of Canada. Namely inflating the costs of French services and/or support for French culture. Such as Don Cherry’s claim that the federal government spent millions on the 1997 Albert Francophone Games, when it contributed approximately \$10,000 (Christine Dallaire and Claude Denis, “If you don’t Speak French, you’re out”: Don Cherry, the Alberta Francophone Games, and the Discursive Construction of Canada’s Francophones,” *The Canadian Journal of Sociology / Cahiers Canadiens de Sociologie* 25, no. 4, (Autumn 2000): 415-440, 418-19; *Globe and Mail*, K. Byrne, “Soo English Lobby Denies Link to the ‘Racist’ Group,” February 12, 1990, A1; Hayday (*So They* 198) reports that Andrew often spoke at APEC meetings.

¹⁷ Baseless, because Bill 8 allowed municipalities to choose to increase taxes for such services. B. Bergman, “Taking Sides on Language,” *MacLean’s*, February 19, 1990, 14. Hayday (*So They*, 174). Hayday (135) concluded Bill 8 galvanized other anti-bilingual actors, specifically the National Association for English Rights, Alliance Ontario and the Confederation of Regions Party.

¹⁸ *Globe and Mail*, M. Bourrie, “Anti-Francophone Body’s Crusade for Billing Plebiscite Fails,” November 2, 1988, A4. In the end, more than two dozen municipalities went ahead with many later reversing the results (Hayday, *So They*, 109); *Globe and Mail*, “The Fearful Anglophones,” September 19, 1988, A6; M. Bourrie, “Counterattack started by French Rights Group,” *Globe and Mail*, September 17, 1988, A20. Augmenting municipal-level efforts, APEC members called radio talk shows, picketed school board meetings and ran anti-French education ads during school board elections (Hayday, *So They*, 191).

¹⁹ *Globe and Mail*, Michael Valpy, “Looking at the Leaders of Antibilingualism,” February 7, 1990, A8. Ultimately Pearman believed Canada’s 1968 unification of its three armed forces had undermined the Navy but “it was official bilingualism that delivered the mortal torpedo,” (A8); Sims, *The Best Man*, 22; At the close of 1989, SAPELR had 1,200 members (Newsletter, SAPELR NEWS 2, No. 5, 1990. 2009-018/007 (022), Francis Guth Fonds, Wishart Library, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada. The charge of ‘no mandate’ was also levelled at Prime Minister Mulroney. SAPELR (2) stated Mulroney “had no mandate to bring the rest of the country to its knees to accommodate Bourassa’s demands.”

²⁰ Simpson, *Faultlines*, 25; Sims, *The Best Man*, 20-21; Simpson, *Faultlines*, 251.

²¹ *Globe and Mail*, “Language Rights Focus of Parent’s Court Action,” May 9, 1989, A11. Sims (*The Best Man*, 21) puts the number at fifty-three. Ultimately French parents launched three court actions, angering SAPELR supporters who subsequently disrupted school board meetings and orchestrated an anti-French letter campaign directed to the editors of *The Sault Star* (23-43). In mid summer 1989, the Separate Board agreed to provide French language classes for a limited period (*Globe and Mail*, “Catholic Board to Help French Students,” July 5, 1989, A4.)

²² *The Sault Star*, D. Olinger, “St. Jean Resigns from Positions with FLAC, Francophone Centre,” March 24, 1990, B2; *Globe and Mail*, G. Allen, “Soo French Speakers Feel Future is at Stake,” February 10, 1990 A10.

²³ P. interviewed by Dr. Michael Graydon, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, April 2017, transcript, offices of Dr. Michael Graydon, Dept. of Sociology, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario; D. interviewed by Dr. Michael Graydon, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, April 2017, transcript, offices of Dr. Michael Graydon, Dept. of Sociology, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario; Interviewee 11, interview by Joel Muto, Winter 2014, transcript, office of Dr. Michael Graydon, Dept. of Sociology, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario; Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario; J. P., interviewed by Dr. Michael Graydon, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, April 2017, transcript, offices of Dr. Michael Graydon, Dept. of Sociology, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario; Interviewee 5, interview by Joel, Winter 2014, transcript, offices of Dr. Michael Graydon, Dept. of Sociology, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

²⁴ M. interview by Dr. Michael Graydon, March 2016, transcript, office of Dr. Michael Graydon, Dept. of Sociology, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario; D. interview.

²⁵ *Globe and Mail*, “Standing on Guard for...What?” February 1, 1990, A6; Sims, *The Best Man*, 25-27; J. P., Interview. See also, G. Moroni, “The Italian Colony at Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario,” *Upper Country: A Journal of the Lake Superior Region*, 2, (2014), <https://www.nmu.edu/upperpeninsulastudies>.

²⁶ Sims, *The Best Man*, 28. Simpson (*Faultlines*, 232) reported Fratesi met with Pearman days before the vote at which he “suggested minor modifications” to the document that was put before the council; Sepkowski, “*Soo Language*,” A10; Linden, McIntyre, “One Tough Cookie.” *The Fifth Estate*, CBC, 1991.

²⁷ Sepkowski, “*Soo Language*,” A10; M., Interview; J. P., Interview; P., Interview; Sims, *The Best Man*, 13. During his run for a second term, *The Sault Star* criticized Fratesi for suggesting he be acclaimed, as “more serious candidates did not present themselves” *The Sault Star*, “The Mayoralty Contest,” November 17, 1988. A4.

²⁸ Sims, “*The Best Man*,” 13-14. Sims (34-41) speaks at length of the impact of Fratesi’s actions on his judicial aspirations, suggesting Fratesi believed the Resolution would garner positive attention from the province and/or remain a local affair. When in fact Fratesi’s anti-bilingualism efforts were a “stupendous miscalculation,” causing “bitter conflict” with very the politicians in charge of judicial appointments (36).

²⁹ Fears of NAFTA’s impact on English Canada’s economy added to anti-bilingual sentiments after Québec voted for NAFTA. See: J. F., Conway, “Reflections on Canada in the Year 1994,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 29, no. 3 (Fall 1994): 146-158. Shortly after SSM’s Resolution passed, editors of Québec’s *La Presse* newspaper suggested the anti-French backlash seen in Ontario and in the West, was “because Québécois [had] voted massively for the Progress Conservatives and free trade with the US.” *Globe and Mail*, P. Poirier, “Québécois Condemn Decision by the Soo,” February 7, 1990. A10.

³⁰ *Globe and Mail*, Michael Valpy, “Finding Scapegoats in Hard Times,” February 9, 1990, A8.

³¹ *Globe and Mail*, Michael Valpy, “A Revisionist View of Canada’s History,” February 8, 1990, A8. Simpson (“*Faultlines*,” 248) noted Fratesi’s council was dominated by the sons of non-English speaking immigrants. A population that opposed special treatment for any group, whose forebears who had established cultural centers and communities without government help; *Globe and Mail*, G. Allen, “Francophone, Loaded Term on Debate,” February 10, 1990, A10. Simpson (*Faultlines*, 245) argued earlier generations of immigrants had followed a melting pot model of assimilation, therefore learning English was essential. Immigrants like Joe Fratesi’s grandparents, who along with thousands of other Italians, came to the Sault between 1893 and 1903.

³² *Meeting of the Council of Corporation of Sault Ste. Marie*, January 29, 1990. Videotape; M., Interview; P., Interview.

³³ *Meeting of the Council of Corporation of Sault Ste. Marie*, January 29, 1990. Videotape.

³⁴ *Meeting of the Council of Corporation of Sault Ste. Marie*, January 29, 1990. Videotape.

³⁵ *Meeting of the Council of Corporation of Sault Ste. Marie*, January 29, 1990. Videotape.

³⁶ J. P., Interview.

³⁷ *The Sault Star*, Fred Loader, "Comment," February 3, 1990, A4; *Globe and Mail*, "Standing on Guard," A6; "The Sad resolution of Sault Ste. Marie," February 7, 1990, A6.

³⁸ *Globe and Mail*, "The Sad Resolution," A6; Poirier, "Québecers Condemn," A10; R. Seguin, "Parizeau Says Uproar Shows Bilingualism Can't Work," February 8, 1990, A14; "Québec Minister Assail Soo council Language Ruling," February 7, 1990, A16. When responding generally to critics, Fratesi echoes the current anti-elitist tone of President Donald Trump, declaring "we're not going to back off because certain heavy-duty politicians don't like what we've done." See *Globe and Mail*, "Soo Council Sticks to resolution Despite Franco Protests," February 6, 1990, A13.

³⁹ Mougeon, "French Outside," 223; Interviewee 10.

⁴⁰ *Globe and Mail*, K. Byrne, "Parlez-vous Niagara Fall, Thunder Bay Will Consider Motions to Make English Official Language," February 5, 1990, A1; Jeffrey Simpson, "Playing with Fire in Thunder Bay," February 7, 1990, A6.

⁴¹ *Toronto Star*, Gerald Caplan, "A Stalking Horse for the Ultra-right?" March 18, 1990, B3; Sims, *The Best Man*, 17; *Soo English*, Caplan, "Stalking Horse," B3; Byrne, A1.

⁴² This reflects how since the 1970s, for Francophones outside Québec, i.e., non-Québécois Francophones, their cultural survival depended less on "what the federal state can or will do" and more on "decisions made by their respective provincial government" see Mougeon, "French Outside," 228.

⁴³ Sims, *The Best Man*, 28.

⁴⁴ D., Interview; J. P., Interview; M. Interview.

⁴⁵ The way interviewees recalled events, it's clear there were several protests. D. noting at least two and P. stated, "There used to be marches at city hall."

⁴⁶ Correspondence from Francis Guth to Mayor and Aldermen, May 1990, 2009-018/007 (022), Francis Guth Fonds, Wishart Library, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada; *Globe and Mail*, "Soo Council," A13; D. Interview; J. P., Interview; P. Interview.

⁴⁷ *Globe and Mail*, "Soo Council," A13; J. P., Interview; Sims, *The Best Man*, 51; Heller, "Crosswords," 84.

⁴⁸ Concerned Citizens of Sault-Ste. Marie and Alliance Sault Canada also formed to respond to the resolution. Press Release, "Public Environment," from CALM, May 23, 1990, 2009-018/007 (021), Francis Guth Fonds, Wishart Library, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada. At the meeting, CALM debated aligning with Alliance Sault Canada and its call for an economic boycott of Sault businesses. See CALM Meeting of Executive, April 29, 1990, 2009-018/007 (021), Francis Guth Fonds, Wishart Library, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada. In a subsequent November letter to the *Sault Star*, CALM reported it declined to join with Alliance because it opposed the boycott strategy. See correspondence from Francis Guth to Editor, November 5, 1990, 2009-018/007 (021), Francis Guth Fonds, Wishart Library, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada). Sims (*The Best Man*, 53-54) highlights Fratesi's role in this. Joe Fratesi himself had called the school which his daughter attended, concerned for their safety at the Water Tower. The school in turn cancelled their event. See correspondence from R. D'Amato, to Mayor Fratesi, March 21, 1990, 2009-018/007 (022), Francis Guth Fonds, Wishart Library, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada; D. Interview; Sims, *The Best Man*, 51-53.

⁴⁹ Correspondence from Francis Guth, to Mayor and Alderman, Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie, May 1990, 2009-018/007 (022), Francis Guth Fonds, Wishart Library, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada. Whether a meeting occurred is unclear. However, a hand-written notation on a copy of Szczepanik's letter to CALM states, "Fri., [June?] 22, 3:30;" a possible meeting time?; Correspondence from Ed Szczepanik to President, CALM, May 31, 1990, 2009-018/007 (021), Francis Guth Fonds, Wishart Library, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada.

⁵⁰ Correspondence from Francis Guth, to Alderman and Mayor, June 5, 1990, 2009-018/007 (021), Francis Guth Fonds, Wishart Library, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada; *The Sault Star*, M. Lewis and D. Olinger, "City Venues Hurt as Events Moved Over English Ruling," February 19, 1990, B1; See also Sims, *The Best Man*, 51.

⁵¹ In a March 9, 1990 press release, CALM reported, the Canadian Union of Postal Employees cancelling its 1990 convention in the Sault. Forum '91 and a planned economic conference was facing donors and sponsors dismayed by the Sault's "anti-Canadian and anti-bilingual elements," See Press Release, "Sault Ste. Marie Citizens

for A Progressive City,” March 9, 1990, 2009-018/007 (021), Francis Guth Fonds, Wishart Library, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada); Correspondence from Francis Guth, to Editor, December 7, 1990, 2009-018/007 (023), Francis Guth Fonds, Wishart Library, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada; Correspondence from Joe Fratesi, to Francis Guth, December 4, 1990, 2009-018/007 (022), Francis Guth Fonds, Wishart Library, Algoma University.

⁵² *Globe and Mail*, M. Fisher, “Defiant Soo Ponders Language Vote,” November 12, 1990, A6.

⁵³ Press Release, “News Release,” January 28, 1991, 2009-018/007 (021), Francis Guth Fonds, Wishart Library, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada; Francis Guth had written to United Sawmills seeking, “anything—some document, memo, notes, etc., --that could prove something about the M.N.R. move.” See correspondence from Francis Guth, to Mr. René Fontaine, February 19, 1991, 2009-018/007 (021), Francis Guth Fonds, Wishart Library, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada; Sims, *The Best Man*, 57. All those supporting the Resolution were re-elected. Three newly elected councilors had campaigned against repealing it; the *Sault Star*, “English-Only bylaw hurt—Martin,” February 22, 1991, C7.

⁵⁴ Correspondence from Harry and Renaud to Joseph Fratesi and Members of Council, November 19, 1992, 2009-018/007 (021), Francis Guth Fonds, Wishart Library, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada; Correspondence from Joe Fratesi, to Yvon Renaud, December 11, 1992, 2009-018/007 (022), Francis Guth Fonds, Wishart Library, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada. Simpson (269) reports that Fratesi showed Renaud’s letter to the council. Asking them if they believed the Resolution was still in effect, they agreed: thirteen to zero.

⁵⁵ Sims, *The Best Man*, 60.

⁵⁶ Sims, *The Best Man*, 229. The *Sault This Week*, E. Gray, “City Council Overturns Sault’s 1990 English-only resolution,” August 11, 1999, A13. *Globe and Mail*, Jeffrey, Simpson, “An Old Language Scar,” August 13, 1999, A10.

⁵⁷ M., Interview; J. P., Interview; P. Interview; and D. Interview.

⁵⁸ Éric Grenier, “Canadians Becoming More Bilingual, Linguistically Diverse, Census Data Shows,” *CBC News*, August 2, 2017, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/census-wednesday-language-1.4231213>.

⁵⁹ J. P., Interview; D. Interview.

⁶⁰ P. Interview; M. Interview.