Between Crisis and Preservation: The Canadian Jewish Congress and the Quebec Nationalist Movement, 1976-1980

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Abstract

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In November 1976, the predominately English-speaking Jewish population of Quebec found itself in crisis. That month, René Lévesque led the nationalist-oriented Parti Québécois (PQ) to a majority government in the provincial election, promising to enact stricter language laws for the promotion of French and to hold an independence referendum. For the Jews, the prospect of living under a form of nationalism, especially considering their history of persecution under it, led to fear and panic. The governing institution of Canada's Jewish community, the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC), stepped in to advocate on behalf of the Jews and defend their civil rights in the face of the PQ. This thesis will examine the CJC as it reacted to three major events in the history of the first PQ government: the 1976 provincial election, the passage of Bill 101, and the 1980 sovereignty-association referendum. Documents from the CJC's own archives are utilized with its content ultimately showing the CJC reacted in two ways. The Congress responded publicly in a 'controlled manner' so as to maintain a calm atmosphere and to reassure a visibly scared Jewish community, while showing its acceptance of some nationalist reforms. Internally, however, reactions ranged from unease and nervousness to outright fear of the direction Quebec society was headed, particularly in the areas of linguistic rights and possible independence. This resulted in the CJC taking actions and stances to calm the Jewish community, and the retention of the status quo in terms of linguistic and civil rights and Quebec's place in Canada.

Acknowledgements

This thesis is the culmination of years of hard work and research that began back in 2014 when my Canadian journey began. Having done my undergraduate degrees at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), I never thought I would be doing graduate work in Montreal of all places. Summarizing these past years is difficult, but I will try my best.

There are many people I want to thank for all the years of support and guidance, and I would like to begin with first thanking my two advisors: Dr. Peter Gossage and Dr. Ira Robinson. You two have both been immensely helpful in this difficult process. You have guided me in the correct research directions, helped me look at archival materials in a different light, and of course, helped with my grammar and style all throughout. Thank you both for your wisdom and guidance and putting up with all my questions. You have made me a better student and I am always grateful. To Donna Whittaker, thank you also for guiding me and my cohorts through this program, you have always been there for us when we needed it and we appreciate you so much!

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Table of Contents

Abbreviations

AJCS: Allied Jewish Community Services

CJC: Canadian Jewish Congress

CJN: Canadian Jewish News

FLQ: Front de libération du Québec

IOI: Inter-Office Information

JCRC: Jewish Community Relations Committee

JCRI: Jewish Community Research Institute

PQ: Parti Québécois

List of Figures

Introduction

"The Survival of the Jews, their resistance to destruction, their endurance under absolutely peculiar conditions and the fateful role played by them in history; all these point to the particular and mysterious foundations of their destiny…"[1]
-Dr. Nicolai Berdysev

In mid-May, 1977, 1,015 Jewish delegates gathered at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in downtown Montreal for the 18th Plenary Assembly of the Canadian Jewish Congress, or "CJC" as it was known.[2] Founded in 1919, The Canadian Jewish Congress was a communal-governing and advocacy organization that pushed for the interests and civil rights of Canadian and world Jewry. A Parks Canada plaque in Montreal refers to the organization as "The Parliament of Canadian Jewry,"[3] indicating the wide influence of the organization. Indeed, scholar Daniel Elazar describes the organization as "the long undisputed leader of Canadian Jewry."[4] Former CJC archivist and Jewish historian, David Rome, described the CJC's mission as, "nothing less than the pressing needs of individuals, the Jewish people and humanity as a whole."[5]

The plenary assembly was a triennial event where delegates from different Jewish communities across Canada met to develop policies and debate resolutions concerning their constituents and the upcoming challenges they faced. This proved much more urgent in 1977 than in previous years, as Canada's biggest Jewish community at the time,[6] the Montreal Jewish community faced a threat that had been brewing for the past decade and a half, the rise of Quebec nationalism. A year previously, in November 1976, Quebec nationalist and political leader, René Lévesque, led his party, the Parti Québécois (or PQ, as they are known) to a

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[1] Nicholai Berdysev, *The Meaning of History* (London: Moscow Academy, 1935), 86-87.
[2] In this thesis, I will be referring to the organization interchangeably as "the organization", "the Canadian Jewish Congress", "the CJC", or simply "the Congress/ Congress." This reflects the vernacular used in archival and media sources I consulted.
[3] Parks Canada, "Founding of the Canadian Jewish Congress National Historic Event," Parks Canada Directory of Federal Heritage Designations, Government of Canada, 2012. https://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/dfhd/page_nhs_eng.aspx?id=10931
[4] Daniel J. Elazar, *People and Polity: The Organizational Dynamics of World Jewry* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989), 235.
[5] Jacques Langlais and David Rome, *Jews & French Quebecers: Two Hundred Years of Shared History* (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1991), 143.
[6] Daniel J. Elazar and Harold M. Waller, *Maintaining Consensus: The Canadian Jewish Polity in the Postwar* World (Latham, Maryland: University Press of America, Inc, 1990), 17. In 1977, the Montreal Jewish population was 109,480 while in Toronto the population was 103,730. Eventually the latter overtook the former.

resounding victory in the provincial elections. The PQ garnered 71 out of 110 seats, given them a majority in the Quebec provincial parliament and a mandate to carry out its nationalist and separatist agenda, including promotion and protection of the French language and a referendum for the independence of Quebec from Canada.

For the Jewish community of Montreal at that time, the emerging reality of nationalistic forces coming to power was reminiscent of the previous few decades of Jewish history. In earlier decades of the 20th century, the Jewish people had been victims of numerous nationalist movements around the world, most notably the Holocaust in World War Two, which killed six million of their brethren. Many of the survivors of the Nazi genocide made their way to Quebec, hoping to rebuild their lives away from totalitarian nationalism. With the Parti Québécois coming to power in 1976 and a form of nationalism once again at their doorsteps, the Jews of Montreal panicked, fearing for themselves and for their future. While nationalism in Quebec was different from nationalism previously experienced, what would this form bring? What would happen to their community if Quebec left Canada? Would their rights be preserved? While politically diverse, a majority of Montreal Jews rejected the idea of independence because of their own fears of past nationalist actions against their own population.[7] Jewish Montrealers were also primarily an English-speaking population and thus out of step with the majority French-speakers of the province and their desire for greater power.[8] For the Canadian Jewish Congress, having a front-row seat to these events, it naturally took up its purpose as an advocate for the Jewish community.

The 1977 plenary assembly occurred just six months after the PQ's rise to power and already the CJC was discussing amongst its national members how best to deal with the situation. One panel titled "Quebec the New Reality" was held at the assembly and covered a wide range of topics, from possible changes in the language of instruction at Jewish schools to the continuation of support for Jewish healthcare facilities.[9] Resolutions were passed stating Congress's understanding that political events in Quebec had "altered" the character of the relationship between Jewish communities in Canada, that past nationalist movements had

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[7] Langlais and Rome, *Jews & French Quebecers,* 147.
[8] Elazar and Waller, *Maintaining Consensus,* 20.
[9] "Plenary Assembly of the Canadian Jewish Congress, *Inter-Office Information*, unnumbered, by Samuel Lewin, Alan Rose, ed, Canadian Jewish Congress, 1977, CJC Series FA 2, CJC Fonds, Alex Dworkin Canadian Jewish Archives, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

encroached on Jewish citizen's civil rights, and that Congress supported both official languages of Canada (English and French).[10] However, the climax of the assembly was an address to the delegates by Premier Lévesque himself. The PQ leader sought to assuage the fears of those present, stating that his government would continue to support Jewish institutions, but did not discuss language rights.[11] Lévesque also extended his hand to the Jews, stating that they had nothing to worry about and that he wanted them to help him build an independent nation where minorities would be welcomed.[12] How much the CJC leaders present believed Lévesque is an open question as, for that matter, is the broader reaction of the CJC to the events of that time. For with the arrival to power of René Lévesque and the nationalist Parti Québécois, a new era in Quebec history had begun, one that brought a succession of nationalist initiatives that continue to impact the province up to the present day.

As a strong voice for the Canadian Jewish community, how did the Canadian Jewish Congress react to the Quebec nationalist movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s? This thesis seeks to answer this question as it will examine the CJC as it reacted to three major events in the history of the first PQ government, led by René Lévesque, as seen through archival documents from the CJC's own archives. The three events in question are the provincial election of 1976, resulting in a PQ Victory; the introduction and passage of the Charter of the French Language (also known as Bill 101) in 1977; and the 1980 Quebec referendum on sovereignty-association. I use the word "reaction" to mean any kind of action; written or spoken, or event otherwise conducted on behalf of the CJC, as a reference point. My selection of the three events is largely due to their historical significance both for Quebec and the CJC, and most importantly because of the large reception each event procures in the source base.

The motivation for this research comes out of a desire to properly understand the nature of Quebec's Jews and also the Canadian Jewish Congress at an important moment in the province's history. After nearly a decade and a half of Jews witnessing nationalistic change, 1976 was a time of reckoning for Jews about their place in Quebec society, a reckoning that

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[10] *Inter-Office Information,* No. 820, by Samuel Lewin, Alan Rose, ed, Canadian Jewish Congress, June 3, 1977, CJC Series FA 2, Canadian Jewish Congress Fonds, 2.
[11] "Plenary Assembly of the Canadian Jewish Congress, *Inter-Office Information*, unnumbered, by Samuel Lewin, Alan Rose, ed.
[12] Henry Giniger, "Quebec Jews given Lévesque assurance," *The New York Times*, May 17, 1977, Accessed January 20, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/1977/05/14/archives/quebec-jews-given-levesque-assurance-premier-denies-a.html

began some fifteen years earlier when similar sentiments of fear towards nationalism began showing up within the Jewish milieu. In 1961, there were 102,726 Jews in the Montreal Metropolitan area.[13] With the onset of the Quiet Revolution, the Jewish Community began to see itself as "apart" from the rapidly changing French-speakers.[14] After all, history had separated the two groups linguistically, economically, even geographically, as many Jews stuck to their own neighborhoods in Montreal.[15] As stated, the majority of the city's Jewish population were English-speakers, partly due to provincial policy on education. The educational system of the province, until 1997, was set up parochially into a Protestant (predominately-English) School system, and a Catholic (predominately French) School system.[16] Jews did not fit into either of these religious categories and, as such, the status of their right to schooling was ambiguous. A 1903 court case concerning Jewish student's rights revealed, as David Fraser mentions, "nowhere in Quebec law did Jews have a right to attend public schools or receive an education."[17] However, the court case cited that because of this lack of clarity, Jewish families had the right to send their children to the school board they paid taxes to. At that time, an existing deal between the Jews and the Protestant School Board allowed Jewish children to attend its predominately-English schools by, "the conditional grace of Christian school officials." [18] This established precedent was later enshrined into provincial law that same year when the provincial government passed a law formally allocating taxes from Jews to the Protestant school board and for Jewish children to receive the same rights as Protestant children for school purposes.[19] The result of this agreement was a generation of Montreal Jewry who grew up as English-speakers.[20] By the 1970s, Jews were squarely within the Anglophone minority of Quebec. Thus, the Jews inhabited a paradoxical space in the province as a non-Christian, English-speaking minority in a majority Catholic, French-speaking society.

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[13] Elazar and Waller, *Maintaining Consensus,*74.
[14] Harold Troper, *The Defining Decade: Identity, Politics, and The Canadian Jewish Community in the 1960s* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 41.
[15] Troper, *The Defining Decade,* 41.
[16] It should be noted that the Protestant School System had French schools, and the Catholic system had English schools as well.
[17] David Fraser, *Honorary Protestants: The Jewish School Question in Montreal 1867-1997* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 146.
[18] Ibid., 146.
[19] Ibid., 150.
[20] Elazar and Waller, *Maintaining Consensus,* 78-79, 121.

1960 marked the beginning of one of the most important periods in Quebec's history, the Quiet Revolution. Jean Lesage and the Quebec Liberals came to power and began immediately transforming the province from a conservative society to a modern state by implementing vast nationalist reforms such as the nationalization of hydro-electricity, the creation of the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec, and other such initiatives to give more power to Francophones over the province.[21] At this time, Jewish leaders conveyed their first expressions of concern that would be echoed the following decade: concern as the new government and its reforms left no clues to the Jewish leadership on how the future of the Montreal Jewish community would look.[22] While reforms brought by the Liberals were not dangerous, many Jewish leaders felt uneasy about vast reforms or "revolutions." Furthermore, with all the changes, how would the Jewish community look at the end of the reforms? What was their place in the new Quebec? Regardless of these underlying concerns, the Jews accepted the Liberals for their reforms, and many voted for them in 1960 with excitement at the prospect of change and increased civil rights.[23] As the main advocacy organization for the Jewish Community, the CJC began speaking out for Jews in the wake of all these reforms. This period, as Quebec historian Pierre Anctil notes, was particularly brutal for the CJC, as it "began to rethink their relationship to Quebec society."[24]

Among these efforts to re-orient themselves was Congress's intention to build relationships with politicians by reaching out to the Lesage government in 1963 on the issue of schooling. These communications were some of the first in-roads with the provincial Liberals laid during those early years.[25] In terms of language, Samuel Bronfman, former president of the CJC, put out a press release calling for the Jewish community of Montreal to embrace the French fact in Quebec, acknowledging the changes and the future of the province with the dominance of French.[26] Montreal Jews, like other Jewish populations, were linguistically adept and were able

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[21] John A. Dickson and Brian Young, *A Short History of Quebec,* 2nd ed. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), 374.
[22] Troper, *The Defining Decade,* 58-59.
[23] Ibid., 59.
[24] Pierre Anctil, *Histoire des Juifs du Québec* (Montreal: Éditions Boréal, 2017), 326.
[25] Troper, *The Defining Decade,* 64-65.
[26] Ibid., 67.

to adapt to the changing linguistic scene easily.[27] This resulted in by the 1970s, 44% of Montreal's Jews recorded being bilingual.[28] The CJC continued its close relationship with the Quebec Liberals, who ruled the province from 1960 to 1966 and again from 1970 to 1976. With allies in Quebec City, nationalist concerns were not a top priority for the CJC and the organization had nothing to worry about. That would not last. Thus, this study is positioned at the climax of these events, when the Jews and the CJC could no longer keep avoiding the changing province around them.

Historiography

By exploring the CJC Archives, it is possible to provide a more in-depth explanation of Congress's reactions than what is already available in the literature about this topic. While historians have delved into the history of the CJC, very few go into detail about the Congress's specific responses to the rising tide of the nationalism during those four years. Scholarship on this topic stretches back to at least the late 1960s when historians began exploring the political events in Quebec and its implications on its Jewish population. Rabbi Stuart E. Rosenberg from Toronto was probably the first academic to approach this topic. He offers an interpretation based on predictions from past historical events in an exploratory essay published in 1972. Rosenburg proposes a connection between the Jews of Canada and the experience of Polish and German Jewry, specifically how nationalism impacted the latter two during the Second World War.[29] He applies the issues of Quebec separatism to these theories and implies that while not to the extent of Poland and Germany, there *could* be significant events that impact Jews in the near future in Quebec. As such, in his view, it was imperative that Jews learn to adapt to the looming situation. This adaptation will be of interest to this study. The theoretical and speculative nature of Rosenberg's essay should not be ignored, however. While the PQ was not in power in 1972, nationalist forces were gathering, and language grievances were boiling over.

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[27] Harold Waller and Morton Weinfeld, "The Jews of Quebec and Le Fait Français," in *The Canadian Jewish Mosaic,* ed. Irwin Cotler, William Shaffir, Morton Weinfeld (Rexdale, Ontario: John Wiley & Sons Canada Limited, 1981), 419.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Stuart E. Rosenberg, "French Canadian Separatism: Its implications for Canadian Jews: A Preliminary, Exploratory Essay," in *American Jewish Yearbook* (Philadelphia: American Jewish Committee and Jewish Publication Society of America, 1972).

Five years later, just a few months after the election of the first PQ government, Ruth Wisse and Irwin Cotler published an article approaching the issue of Jews and Quebec nationalism in much the same way as Rosenburg. These authors argue that with the rise of Québécois nationalism, Montreal Jews had entered into a state of "almost continuous caucus that reflects uncertainty about the present and anxiety of the future."[30] Due to past economic expansion in Quebec that had favored English-speakers, they argued, French separatists believed that an independent Quebec was the only way to correct the historical wrongs of social inequalities and cultural threats to the French-speakers. For the English-speakers, and by extension, the Jews, this would result in a "separate but equal situation."[31] These authors also state that the Jews had a sense of "eerie familiarity" and a "crise de conscience" as they understood the aspirations of French Canadians but were afraid of the "inevitable" fallout of nationalism for their community.

These two McGill professors also offer a more nuanced view of the differences in how Jews and French Canadians approached historical memory. They argue that while French Canadians see the provincial motto "Je me souviens" as remembering the glories of New France and the need to "reconquer their heritage," when Jews remember their past, the consequences of past nationalism enter their collective conscious and their response to "I remember" is, "Never Again."[32] To emphasize underlying differences in attitudes between the two groups, these authors also discuss a meeting between a Jewish study group and separatist intellectuals to hear explanations of French-Canadian aspirations. According to the authors, when the Jews asked the French Canadians, "What can we do to help you?" they replied, "Honestly, nothing, you can be with us, but you cannot be *of* us."[33] Thus a central theme appears in the literature that Jewish Canadians will never be "true Quebecers." Ultimately, Wisse and Cotler conclude that due to the unpredictability of the situation, the Jewish community would "wait to see which way the winds will blow."[34]

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[30] Ruth R. Wisse and Irwin Cotler, "Quebec's Jews: Caught in the Middle," *Commentary* 64, no. 3 (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1977), 55-59.
[31] Wisse and Irwin, "Quebec's Jews: Caught in the Middle."
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid. It should also be noted that both Rosenburg's and Wisse and Cotler's works appeared in American publications, perhaps most likely to catch the attention of the much larger and more powerful American Jewish community, who otherwise were unaware of the situation in Canada at the time.

This article struck a chord with many in the academic community as multiple scholars reference Wisse and Cotler in their works. McGill professors Harold Waller and Morton Weinfeld were two of the earliest ones to cite them in their 1981 article "The Jews of Quebec and 'Le Fait Français." This article is part of a second group of academic works whose content and interpretations grew as more works concerning this topic became available as time passed from 1980. This article, much like Wisse and Cotler, took on a responsive approach to the past events, the nuances that came out of them, and what future impacts those events might have on the Jewish community. However, even though Waller and Weinfeld include analysis of the preceding five years (1976-1981), they repeat much the same arguments as Wisse and Cotler, arguing that Jews felt threatened by an independent Quebec, and felt marginal in their society, given their exclusion from the ranks of the "true Québécois."[35] Waller and Weinfeld also bring in an important theme that will be explored later in this thesis: the theme of collective vs. individual rights, with the PQ being more geared towards the former and the Jews towards the later. The two authors also offer a very important question: did the Jews of Montreal want to adjust to the changing province?[36] This question is of interest to this thesis and will be touched on in later chapters.

Another author who delved into this subject in the 1980s was Rona Donefer, an undergraduate student at the Université du Québec à Montréal. Donefer offers an analysis of how the first five years of the PQ government resulted in leaders of the Jewish community evolving on their views and accepting "the French fact," as seen through articles in the *Canadian Jewish News*.[37] Her research points out that controversy arose in the media, specifically concerning the Congress's decision to remain neutral in its stance towards the 1980 referendum. Donefer also points out that the CJC took up a position of public neutrality in terms of politics, something that in her view would be difficult as the Jews of Quebec were not "politically monolithic."[38] Donefer's focus on the *Canadian Jewish News* is important. This newspaper was perhaps the

[35] Harold Waller, Morton Weinfeld, "The Jews of Quebec and Le Fait Français," in *Canadian Jewish Mosaic,* ed Irwin Cotler, William Shaffir, Morton Weinfeld (Rexdale, Ontario: John Wiley & Sons Canada Limited, 1981), 422.
[36] Ibid., 437.
[37] Rona Donefer, "Les Juifs Québécois et le Changements Politique au Québec : Une Analyse du Canadian Jewish News, 1976-1981." In *Juifs et réalités Juives au Québec*, ed. Pierre Anctil and Gary Caldwell (Québec: Institut québécois de recherche sur la culture, 1984), 329.
[38] Donefer, "Les Juifs Québécois et le Changements Politique au Québec," 344.

only major widely read Jewish publication at the time and, as such, it provides glimpses into how the Jewish public viewed the CJC at that time.

Late in the 1980s, more substantive and niche studies of Canadian Jewish history began appearing in different academic disciples. One such area is political science. Daniel Elazar along with Harold Waller, approaching the subject from a political standpoint, offered a view of the question through an analysis of the CJC as a body politic. Elazar's 1989 book, *People and Polity*, is a study of nearly all Jewish organizations worldwide. In his analysis of Canadian Jewry, Elazar states that the CJC was the principal instrument and long undisputed leader of the Canadian Jewish community. However, because of its place as a Jewish organization in a multiethnic society, it was more focused on religious/cultural life and community relations, as opposed to political issues.[39] The Congress's objectives were therefore mainly focused on lay activities based around culture and community according to Elazar, who offers a much less political interpretation of the organization with hardly any mention of the events in the 1970s and only passing reference to the PQ.[40]

One year later, Elazar, together with Waller, produced a more in-depth, politically-centered work specifically about Canada entitled *Maintaining Consensus*, which focused on the Canadian Jewish polity after World War Two. Devoting an entire section to Montreal Jewry and "The Quebec Crisis," Elazar and Waller utilized a demographic analysis to approach the topic. The two interpret the Jewish reaction to Quebec nationalism as a combative one based on mutual experiences from their shared intersecting identities as English-speakers and as an upwardly mobile minority.[41] In referencing official institutions, Elazar and Waller veer away from past authors, including Elazar's former work, on the status of the CJC as the uncontested leader of the Montreal Jewish community. They argue that another organization actually held the power: the Associated Jewish Community Services (known as AJCS). The AJCS was another Jewish organization in Montreal which acted like a Jewish federation such as one could find in many North American cities. It was a rival of sorts to the CJC, according to the authors. Elazar and Waller argue that since AJCS was in charge of allocating most Jewish funds in the city, including those set aside for the CJC's Eastern/ Quebec Region, the AJCS therefore was in fact

[39] Elazar, *People and Polity,* 235.
[40] Ibid., 239.
[41] Elazar and Waller, *Maintaining Consensus*, 67-131.

the true leader of the Montreal Jewish community.[42] The two authors therefore frame their analysis of the community's response to the Quebec nationalist movement through that lens. However, their analysis only touches on schools, language rights, and healthcare facilities, only briefly touching on positions of the organizations or any variables which prompted its reactions to the nationalist crisis.[43]

One year after the publication of Elazar and Waller's book, CJC archivist David Rome and scholar/ priest, Dr. Jacques Langlais, produced a substantive work on the Montreal Jewish community entitled *Jews & French Quebecers: Two Hundred Years of Shared History.* The book explores the relationships between Jews and French Quebecers from 1627 to 1991 in an attempt to bridge differences and foster understanding of the shared history of the two groups. In their sections covering the Quiet Revolution, the authors argue that the crisis caused by the PQ victory was one whose effects "have yet to be fully accessed," even fifteen years later in 1991.[44] According to them, history separated Jews and French Quebecers from each other, and Jewish "solitudes" prevented the former from seeing the depth and character of French Canadian nationalism and from understanding the aspirations and dissatisfaction in the province.[45] The two also go much more in-depth in terms of CJC activities at this time. Discussions on francization efforts made by the CJC are cited, as well as the reaction of the CJC national president to Bill 101.[46] However, Langlais and Rome offer very little archival material in support of these discussions. While the Archives of the Canadian Jewish Congress are cited in the notes, none of its collections are used to support the authors' discussion of the years 1976-1980.

More substantial volumes and monographs on Canadian Jewish history would not be published until the 21st century. The year 2010 marked 250 years of Jewish presence in Canada.[47] In his 2008 book, *Canada's Jews: A People's Journey*, Gerald Tulchinsky analyzes the Jewish community and the Quebec nationalist movements in the later chapters, more fully perhaps than any other work at that time. He touches on many important themes, arguing in particular that pre-war antisemitism ran deep in the memories of the community's Jews and that

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[42] Ibid., 92.
[43] Ibid., 120-129
[44] Jacques Langlais, David Rome, *Jews & French Quebeckers: Two Hundred Years of Shared History* (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1991) 138.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid., 140.
[47] Elazar and Waller, *Maintaining Consensus,* 6.

the PQ victory produced, "considerable anxiety in the Jewish Community over what its future might be in what might become a separate state."[48] This work also references Wisse and Cotler, who were widely believed, Tulchinsky suggests, to have misinterpreted the PQ's nationalist program and attitudes towards minorities.[49] The author also notes how others observed Jewish prosperity in Montreal to have been linked thoroughly to their use of English. As such, Jews saw English as "their only cultural gateway to Jewish self-expression."[50] Tulchinsky also touches on the CJC, agreeing with past authors that Canadian Jewry faced a threat brought on by the PQ. There is an important nuance, however, since in this account, the organization did not view the PQ as antisemitic, believing rather that its agenda of separation was a significant threat because of the Jews' position as an English-speaking minority.[51] Ultimately though, Tulchinsky concludes that Jewish fears of Quebec nationalism proved "Ill-founded."[52] Four years after the publication of his work, another scholar followed Tulchinsky in adding onto the growing literature of Jews in Quebec.

Pierre Anctil is a prolific scholar who offers a much-needed Francophone perspective on Quebec's Jews. In relation to this thesis' topic, he is the only scholar with an article *solely* about the Canadian Jewish Congress and the Quebec nationalist movement. His 2014 article titled "Le Congrès Juif Canadien face au Québec issu de la Révolution tranquille (1969-1990)" was of vital importance to my understanding of the CJC in this time period.[53] Anctil's argument centers around his interpretation that the CJC reacted to the changes brought on by the Quiet Revolution at first with fear, but ultimately these sentiments changed towards positivity as time went on. He argues the organization realized it could not reverse the trajectory of opinion in the province, and as such, began to accept the new realities brought on by the nationalist movement. Much emphasis is on the positive aspects of the CJC's reaction and on the evolution of its understanding of Québécois nationalist sentiment. However, Anctil notes there was some resistance as well, such as the CJC's preference for bilingualism instead of the PQ's coercive

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[48] Gerald Tulchinsky, *Canada's Jews: A People's Journey* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 445.
[49] Ibid., 446.
[50] Ibid., 446.
[51] Ibid., 443.
[52] Ibid., 448.
[53] Pierre Anctil, "Le Congrès Juif Canadien Face au Québec issu de la Révolution tranquille (1969-1990)" in *De la représentation à la manifestation; groupes de pression et enjeux politiques au Québec, XIXe et XXe siècles*, ed. Stéphane Savard and Jérôme Boivin (Québec : Septentrion, 2014), 314-340.

language legislation.[54] Of notable interest is Anctil's utilization of the CJC archives in this paper, however he only references two briefs from the examined time period with much more archival documents used to examine the CJC's activities in years prior to 1976. However, three years later, Anctil expanded on this paper in a much more substantial work.

Published in 2017, *Histoire des Juifs du Québec* is perhaps the most in-depth monograph written in French up to date on the subject. Anctil frames his study through the argument that Jews are a group within Quebec society who came into contact with larger forces. Some Jews sought to preserve their history and cultures through organizations, and some Jews act like all Quebecers; therefore, it is difficult to distinguish them from the masses. Anctil calls this a "voluntary withdrawal and full participation that constitutes the foundation of Quebec Jewish history."[55] As such, his discussion of the CJC emphasizes the idea of the organization as a place of solace for the community, dedicated to the protection and preservation of Jewish culture.

In his examination of the Quiet Revolution and the subsequent rise of the nationalist movement, Anctil utilizes the same arguments from his 2014 article. He agrees with the preceding authors in this historiography that the CJC reacted with shock to the vast changes in Quebec, which forced them to rethink their relationship with Quebec society.[56] As for the Jewish community itself, Anctil again agrees the authors mentioned above, citing Waller and Weinfeld, and Rome and Langlais, in particular. The Jewish population, he maintains, was afraid of the long-term consequences of the nationalist movement, particularly because they didn't understand it.[57] While the community and some leaders were afraid, however, he argues acceptance of nationalist changes ultimately prevailed, with many Jewish leaders and organizations recognizing the restorative character of the movement, as long as it respected their civil rights.[58] In summary, he states:

> Essentiellement, les dirigeants du réseau communautaire juif se déclarent prêts à accompagner et à soutenir la majorité francophone dans son cheminement politique, ce qui inclut la francisation et, s'il le faut, la redéfinition du régime

[54] Anctil, "Le Congrès Juif Canadien Face au Québec...," 20.
[55] Anctil, *Histoire des Juifs du Québec,* 13.
[56] Ibid., 326.
[57] Ibid., 380.
[58] Ibid., 381.

> politique fédéral, tant que cette démarche sera respectueuse des droits individuels fondamentaux prévus dans la Charte Québécoise des droits et libertés de 1975.[59]

Anctil's interpretations are quite interesting, for they offer a view that diverges from those already stated, particularly Rome and Langlais who argue that even in 1991, the impact of the crisis brought on by the PQ was yet to be fully accessed. Tulchinsky's argument that the Jewish view of English as their source of self-expression and that the CJC saw separation and language as a significant threat also goes against Anctil's argument. These two realms of thought are of interest to this thesis and an examination of the documents will provide a much better sense of where the organization stood. Anctil's archival sources in his book's analysis of this time period do include some CJC archival documents, but they are limited to references to briefs or statements, not so much in-depth analysis of them or their consequences.

Sources and Methodology

As examined, different scholars have touched on different aspects of the topic of this thesis, the Canadian Jewish Congress and its response to Quebec nationalism and sovereignty in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Little attention, however, has been paid to archival material held by the CJC. Scholars who have used those archives have done so superficially, without exploring in depth the background or the implications of those very rich materials. This thesis seeks to fill in that gap by using thoroughly contextualized primary sources from the CJC Archives to better understand the nuanced reactions of the organization. Ultimately, it will show that the CJC reacted in a 'controlled external manner' so as to maintain a calm atmosphere and to reassure and keep calm a visibly frightened Jewish community, while displaying its acceptance of some reforms. At the same time, the CJC also reacted internally with unease, nervousness, and fear, rooted in deep concern over the direction Quebec society was headed, particularly in the areas of linguistic rights and possible independence. This resulted in the CJC taking actions and stances to ensure the continuity of the Jewish community and to promote the status quo with respect to linguistic and civil rights to Quebec's place in Canada.

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[59] Ibid., 388. Translation: "Essentially the leaders of the Jewish community network declare themselves ready to support the French-speaking majority in its political process, which includes francization and, if necessary, the redefinition of the federal political system as long as this approach is respectful to fundamental personal rights in the Quebec Charter of Rights and Freedoms of 1975." (My own translation)

The research for this thesis was conducted at the Alex Dworkin Canadian Jewish Archives, located in Montreal. Documents located there paint a clear picture of the atmosphere within the CJC in the 1970s and early 1980s, as the Parti Québécois gained strength, formed a government, and pursued its nationalist agenda. One series of sources, weekly newsletter publications known as "Inter-Office Information," (IOI for short) contributed the most to this thesis. The CJC published these newsletters from the 1950s to the 1980s, with a short-lived French edition in the late 1970s, giving its subscribers an in-depth update on the workings of Congress on any given day. The format of the IOIs was a simple list of updates and news items, placing most important news first, and pushing less important news towards the back. These newsletters were essential building blocks for my understanding of the organization and what its operations looked like at any given time. Due to their "newsletter" format, their content was often brief, providing only descriptions and not much else. However, because of their vast quantity, the reader can expect to see them cited more often than most sources in this thesis. I refer to this series of documents interchangeably as "IOIs" or "Newsletters." (Figure 1)

Another source also appears much more frequently due to their quantity. Each month, the CJC Eastern/ Quebec Region held meetings among its officers. These meetings were recorded in official officers meeting minutes, the contents of which stretch over decades of CJC history. Meeting minutes from the late 1970s and 1980 are used in this work, and they provide a more detailed background of the officers' discussions during this time period. Like the IOIs, their content was indispensable to my developing understanding of the organization's reaction to nationalist initiatives at the time. However, while plentiful in their content, the formal written nature of the meeting minutes also proved to be an obstacle. The format of the minutes provided only basic speaking points and central themes from the meetings, rarely delving into personal opinions or debate amongst the officers. Only from one personal written meetings minutes, which I cite in chapter four, did I uncover true opinions and debate amongst officers. The Congressional Bulletin is also briefly cited in this work. This was a monthly magazine-style publication by the Congress filled with stories, advertisements, and other material concerning the organization's activities at the time. Interestingly though, aside from a few opinion articles, the Bulletin's contains few references to the nationalist events of the period examined.

Official briefs and research papers presented to the Quebec government also occupy an important place in this thesis, and in most works previously mentioned. These documents state

precisely what the CJC's positions were on specific aspects of government reforms, as well as its interpretation of consequences such plans could have on its constituents. The authors of these sources were mostly researchers, community leaders, and CJC officers, allowing the organization to produce documents akin to a treatise. Their content allows the reader to understand CJC reactions in a very forthright manner. For Congress's Brief on Bill 101, presented in chapter three, I have also compared the CJC's recommendations with the text of the language charter adopted in 1977, in order to gain a better understanding of its influence.

Lastly, a big portion of the sources for this study came from personalia boxes and files which in themselves contain a plethora of sources. These range from obituaries, CVs, personal letters, memos, memorandums, and hand-written notes. As such, my research and understanding of the Canadian Jewish Congress during this key period in Quebec history was enriched by the study of individual personalities who kept detailed records of the events, ultimately leading me to understand the nuances of their reactions. However, as these documents were personalia files, they often led me to a "paper-trail." While government briefs and IOIs are straightforward with proper context and clear citations to other documents, uncovering a memorandum or a letter in a personalia file lead to many questions, particularly if they are out of order. Many of these documents themselves were connected but required work to understand the references between them.

This thesis approaches its argument by presenting the sources pertaining to the three events in which they appear to provide better context and understanding of the different reactions the CJC took and the nuanced and multifaceted nature behind them. Chapter one is intended to set the stage by providing some important historical contexts. It first offers a brief overview of Quebec political history from 1960 to 1976 with an emphasis on the rise of the nationalist movement and the push for political sovereignty. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to background information about the CJC, its structure and operations, with emphasis on individuals who played prominent leadership roles. We enter the heart of the analysis in Chapter two, which focuses on the CJC in the run-up and aftermath of the PQ victory in the 1976 provincial election. It reviews the CJC's activity prior to 1976 highlighting the organization's election policy of neutrality and its fearful reaction after the PQ's rise to power. Chapter three delves into Congress's reactions to Bill 101, the Charter of the French language, particularly concerning a

government white paper on language, and a CJC-issued brief to the PQ with recommended changes to Bill 101. This chapter will also explores which of those recommendations were incorporated and the organization's increased actions afterwards. Finally, chapter four presents the Congress's reactions in the months prior to the 1980 referendum and its efforts to handle the situation through external and internal reactions. Attention is given to the CJC's position of neutrality and its attempts to use this to calm the public, and internal fear and debate amongst themselves in speeches and meetings. Overall, this thesis attempts to portray a Congress going between a balancing act of dealing with multiple crises, to mitigating acts of preservation to aide its community during a very trying time for the Jewish community of Montreal.

Chapter 1: Contexts

We are not a small people, we are perhaps something like a great people.

—René Lévesque, November 15th, 1976[1]

In 1976, Quebecers found themselves for the first time with a Parti Québécois government determined to enact great change. Four years later, a strict new language law had passed, and the province was on the verge of voting on a sovereignty-association referendum towards eventual independence. These events were the culmination of years of nationalism growing from the onset of the Quiet Revolution in 1960. How and why the province reached these critical points is the focus in the first part of this chapter. Equally important to understand is the broader history of the Canadian Jewish Congress. What was it, what was its structure, and what was its relationship to other organizations and the government? Who were the important figures in the Congress and how did their backgrounds and personalities impact the way the organization reacted? General context is laid out in this chapter to position this study at the meeting point of events in the province's history, and a Congress whose focus, structure, and people put it on a collision course with these historical events.

The Rise of Québécois Nationalism, 1960-1976

The historical developments leading to the election of René Lévesque and the Parti Québécois in November 1976 began eighteen years earlier with the death of another premier. Maurice Duplessis and his Union Nationale government had ruled Quebec for all but a five-year period between 1936 and 1959.[2] The Duplessis era is often described as "la Grande Noirceur" (the Great Darkness) due to his authoritarian methods, conservative ideology, and lax political ethics.[3] His death in 1959 and the subsequent 1960 provincial election heralded in a new age in the province known as the "Quiet Revolution." In the span of a decade, Quebec radically transformed from a religiously conservative society to a secular welfare state. Montreal lawyer

[1] My own translation, Lévesque is referring to the Québécois nation here. "Novembre 1976: "I'Indépendance au Pouvoir," Archives de Radio-Canada (Radio-Canada, 2008), http://archives.radio-canada.ca/sports/partis_chefs_politiques/clips/6151/.

[2] Between 1939 and 1944, the Quebec Liberal Party under Adélard Godbout ruled the province.

[3] Desmond Morton, *A Short History of Canada*, 6th ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2006), 225; these methods included usage of "the Padlock Law" to lock up business deemed to be used for "communist purposes."

Jean Lesage and the Quebec Liberal Party began this process when they swept to power, promising a departure from the years of "Duplessisme," indicating its intentions to reform the government.[4] During this time, according to Lucia Ferretti, "on the strength of broad social consensus … the Quebec state pursued the duel objectives of accelerated modernization of the welfare state model and, very clearly, of the national promotion of the Francophone Québécois."[5]

Indeed, before the Quiet Revolution, the French language in Quebec was at a huge disadvantage. From the nineteenth century until about the 1960s, efforts to promote and preserve French in the province fell largely to the Catholic Church.[6] Historians Marcel Martel and Martin Pâquet argue that during the years of attempted assimilation of the French-Canadian population by the English after the rebellions of 1837, the promotion of French and the dominance of the Catholic Church went together.[7] From the 1840s until the 1950s and 1960s, the link between language and religion was reinforced by Catholic dominance over large facets of French-Canadian life. The provincial government in Quebec certainly did not offer any state-sponsored help to promote the French language.

After its election in 1960, the Lesage government took steps to address the problem of the quality of French language use in the province. Catholic dominance faltered as Quebecers embraced the secular values of the age, so the Church began to reform itself in line with worldwide reformation in this period.[8] New vocations opened up outside the Church, men and women began leaving the religious orders, and soon enough, the churches themselves were cleared out of worshippers as the state took over the Church's roles in language and education.[9] The Liberals formed the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and within it, formed the Office de la Langue Française, which directed the government to give precedence to the use of French.[10] The Lesage government's reforms meant French Canadians began to implement their will through

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[4] Peter Gossage and J.I. Little, *An Illustrated History of Quebec: Tradition & Modernity* (Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press, 2012), 233.
[5] Quoted in Ibid., 232.
[6] Marcel Martel and Martin Pâquet, *Speaking Up: A History of Language and Politics in Canada and Quebec,* trans. Patricia Dumas (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2012), 41.
[7] Ibid., 41.
[8] Susan Mann, *The Dream of Nation: A Social and Intellectual History of Quebec* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1982), 301.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Martel and Pâquet, *Speaking Up*, 103.

their governing institutions for the first time and with that, felt a sense a pride. The role of the French language was thus transformed from preservation and survival to a common interest and a method to build the nation.[11]

Meanwhile, the growing social and economic inequalities between French speakers and English speakers within Canada finally became too blatant to ignore, especially in Quebec. The Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Montreal, a nationalist organization, conducted awareness campaigns throughout the mid-sixties on the lack of French in the city.[12] Intellectuals and researchers also noticed inequalities between French and English speakers—so much so that they took it upon themselves to research their own explanations. For example, demographers Hubert Charbonneau, Jacques Legaré, and Jacques Henripin conducted a large-scale study relating to birth rates. Francophones in Canada were known to have high birth rates before the Quiet Revolution, but the trio's results released in 1968 showed birth rates declining, predicting that Francophones in Quebec would fall from 82.3 percent of the population in 1960 to 76 percent—and even to 58.2 percent in Montreal—in 1986.[13] These results not only took into account the dramatic drop in births among Francophones, but also the preference among immigrants in Quebec to learn English rather than French.[14] The language tensions and the demand for more attention to linguistic rights caught the attention of both the federal and provincial governments. Formal commissions of inquiry were established to research the issue in order to come to appropriate policy-based conclusions. These were the Royal Commission of Bilingualism and Biculturalism (known as the Laurendeau-Dunton Commission) on the federal level, and the Commission of Inquiry on the Situation of the French Language and Linguistic Rights in Quebec (known as the Gendron Commission) on the provincial level.[15]

Prime Minister Pearson established the Laurendeau-Dunton Commission in 1963 with the renowned journalist André Laurendeau as one of its heads. Laurendeau dutifully took up his goal of exploring the relationship between "the two founding people" (referring to the English and the French) of Canada.[16] However, many people from other cultural communities rejected the idea

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[11] Martel and Pâquet, *Speaking Up*, 108.
[12] Ibid., 111–12.
[13] Ibid., 116–17.
[14] Ibid. Statistics of immigrants preferring English to French can be found on page 117.
[15] Ibid., 118.
[16] Ibid., 119.

of "two founding peoples." To them, the use and adoption of such wording would lead to the "symbolic non-inclusion" of their communities. The CJC was one of those worried. In 1963, the CJC expressed concern that constitutional recognition of "two founding peoples" would ignore the contribution of other ethnic groups in Canada.[17] Nevertheless, Laurendeau's preliminary report in 1963 declared that Canada was in "the most critical period of its history since Confederation" (referring to the situation between the English and the French). Further results revealed what was already assumed: an economic gap between English speakers and French speakers, particularly in Quebec. According to scholars John Dickinson and Brian Young, the Royal Commission stated that unilingual English speakers in Quebec earned an average salary of CAD $6,049, while unilingual French speakers earned CAD $3,107.[18] The Commission also recommended that English and French should become the official languages of Canada. Soon after in 1969, the Official Languages Act passed in Parliament, accomplishing that recommendation.

During this same period of language tensions, political forces also emerged, which would reorient the Quebec political landscape towards the promotion of political sovereignty. The main actor in this period was René Lévesque the founding leader of the Parti Québécois, which united the disparate secessionist forces in 1968. Before he was premier, Lévesque was an important member of the Liberal government of Jean Lesage. He was instrumental in the government's introduction and use of state-run capitalism as their preferred method of economic growth, with Lévesque most famously nationalizing hydroelectricity.[19] According to former journalist (and former Official Languages Commissioner) Graham Fraser, "He projected a personality that seemed transparently honest, impulsive, mischievous, modest, outspoken, and provocative."[20] Lévesque was a special political figure; he was completely bilingual and worked for Radio-Canada before his entry into politics. However, in 1958, a producers' strike at the national

[17] Ibid., 123.
[18] John A. Dickson and Brian Young, *A Short History of Quebec,* 2nd ed. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), 322.
[19] For more information on the Quiet Revolution and the changes enacted, see Mann, *The Dream of Nation,* 298–314. For information on René Lévesque and Hydro Quebec, see Graham Fraser, *René Lévesque and the Parti Québécois in Power*, 2nd ed. (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 27–29.
[20] Fraser, *René Lévesque and the Parti Québécois in Power*, 31–32.

broadcaster led Lévesque to believe that the federal government did not care for French media.[21] This event left its mark on Lévesque, who began to foster sovereignist sentiments.

In 1963, Lévesque began referring to French Canada as a "true nation," and by 1964, he went so far as to call it an "associate state."[22] His time in the Lesage government further convinced him that Quebec had the tools and institutions it needed to create a modern state (as with the establishment of the Caisse de Dépôt et Placement du Quebec) while some aspects of his role, such as the negotiations over the Canada Pension Plan, also showed Lévesque how fragile Confederation was.[23] At the same time during Lévesque's turn toward sovereignty, other secessionist forces also emerged. As the reforms of the Quiet Revolution began to give French-speaking Quebecers some control over their affairs, separatist movements and groups began to form. Gossage and Little state that the beginnings of the Quebec independence movement in the sixties started with the establishment of several parties and organizations such as the Rassemblement pour l'Independence Nationale (RIN) in 1960. Its members espoused separatist ideology and attempted to promote it and bring others into the cause.[24] Meanwhile, the political violence and bombings of the Front de Libération du Quebec (FLQ) represented a terrorist/paramilitary effort to bring about independence.[25] The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism and its results also gave the sense to many Francophones that Confederation had failed them. Historian Susan Mann mentions that French speakers were already insulted that their socioeconomic status was low, and even more insulted in the realization that learning English was the only way out of this situation (although still not guaranteed).[26]

For many Francophones and sovereignists, a single government run by Francophones seemed like the natural next step for the province,[27] not to mention that many problems and solutions in Quebec were distinct *to* Quebec and not the rest of Canada.[28] Many were shocked by the violence of the FLQ and believed that greater autonomy for Quebec could only be achieved

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[21] Ibid., 20–21.
[22] Ibid., 31–32.
[23] Ibid., 32–34.
[24] Gossage and Little, *An Illustrated History of Quebec*, 254.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Mann, *The Dream of Nation,* 310.
[27] Gossage and Little, *An Illustrated History of Quebec*, 255.
[28] Mann, *The Dream of Nation*, 322.

through peaceful, democratic means.[29] The emergence of René Lévesque as a charismatic leader would give those separatists a voice. Further developments would finally propel him to act on his sovereigntist ideals. When the Lesage Liberal government lost power in 1966 to the Union Nationale, it began to tear itself apart.[30] Within this period, Lévesque's sovereignist-oriented views became more potent.[31] This culminated in the summer of 1966 when, during a meeting of fellow Liberals, Lévesque read out a long statement declaring his support for "the essential components of independence." The former cabinet minister wanted the province he helped develop to become "sovereign" as soon as possible.[32] He attempted to make his stance a policy proposal at the October 1967 Liberal Party convention but failed. He finally split off from the party for good, walking out of the convention.[33] One year later, in October 1968, Lévesque and his allies, who also walked out on the Liberals, founded the Parti Québécois, a staunchly nationalist and sovereignist party. The new political party stood in the 1970 Quebec elections, modestly winning seven seats.[34] As for the Liberals without Lévesque, they were back in power and soon preoccupied with nationalist unrest, including a fresh wave of FLQ violence (the October Crisis) and the growing demand for legislation to protect the French language.

Provincial action on language during this period traces back to 1963. The idea of officially recognizing French as the official language of Quebec at the outset of the Quiet Revolution gained some support. But Liberal Minister for Cultural Affairs at the time, Georges-Émile Lapalme, told the provincial legislature that the Canadian Constitution forbade the province from enacting French as the sole official language.[35] Two years later at a policy convention, the Liberals took the position to make French the *primary* language of the province, but not the *official* language.[36] However, this never played out as the Liberals lost power when the Union Nationale government under then-Premier Jean-Jacques Bertrand came to power in 1966. The language issue was again front and center two years into the Union Nationale's

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[29] Gossage and Little, *An Illustrated History of Quebec*, 254.
[30] Fraser, *René Lévesque and the Parti Québécois in Power,* 39.
[31] For example, Lévesque published a weekly column in the journal *Dimanche-Matin*. Fraser mentions readers of Lévesque's publications in this period included references to "demographic threats" and "the failure of Confederation." Ibid., 41.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid., 43.
[34] Ibid., 54-55.
[35] Martel and Pâquet, *Speaking Up,* 134.
[36] Ibid.

mandate, stemming from language tensions in the Saint-Léonard neighborhood of Montreal. Many Italian-speaking Quebecers lived in the neighborhood at the time, and as was common for children of immigrants who spoke neither English nor French (known in Quebec as "Allophones"), they chose to attend English schools, primarily due to the assumption English was more economically necessary to know.[37] However, in 1968, the Catholic school board of Saint-Léonard decided Allophone children were required to attend French schools.[38] This action enraged many Italian parents who protested the decision, with some actions reaching physical altercations with school commissioners.[39] In response to the Saint-Léonard crisis, Premier Bertrand introduced the first of many legislative bills intended to resolve the language problem. Bill 63 mandated that parents have the right to send their children to either French or English schools, regardless of their linguistic background. However, it also mandated that children in English schools be provided with a basic knowledge of French.[40] While the bill was intended to solve the problems brought on by Saint-Léonard, it only deepened the divide.

For many French speakers, Bill 63 did not go far enough in protecting and promoting the French language. Giving parents freedom of choice as to the language of education, they believed, was not doing enough to promote French. The anger among French speakers soon boiled over into widespread outrage concerning not only Bill 63, but also the lack of government action for the language in general.[41] Anger translated to votes, and the Union Nationale lost power in the 1970 election, dropping to a mere sixteen seats. The newly reinvigorated Liberals under Robert Bourassa, Lévesque's former colleague, won 71 out of 108 seats, a formidable showing. The PQ, meanwhile, won only seven seats.[42] This strong majority meant the divisive language issue now fell back to Bourassa and the Liberals.

The 1970 election was followed six months later by a much more somber event. As noted earlier, the sovereignty movement consisted of many different wings, the terrorist FLQ being one of them. On October 5th, 1970, the FLQ kidnapped the British trade commissioner to Montreal, James Cross, and five days later, kidnapped Liberal Minister of Labour, Pierre Laporte, a good friend of Lévesque. In the confusion that ensued, Bourassa asked Ottawa for help. Prime

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[37] Gossage and Little, *An Illustrated History of Quebec*, 266.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid., 267.
[41] Ibid., 251.
[42] Fraser, *René Lévesque and the Parti Québécois in Power*, 54.

Minister Pierre-Elliot Trudeau complied and deployed the Canadian Army onto the streets of Montreal. In one of the most dramatic events of the crisis, the Prime Minister invoked the War Measures Act. Such a measure had never occurred during peacetime and invocation of the act enacted martial law over the city. During this period, civil liberties were suspended, and hundreds of individuals were arrested, mostly sovereignists not associated with the FLQ.[43] Sadly, on October 18th, Laporte was found dead; he had been strangled and his body left in the trunk of a car. James Cross was eventually released unharmed.

The fallout from this violent episode, known as the "October Crisis," left a huge stain on the province and the sovereignist movement. Many Quebecers saw the invocation of the War Measures Act, the deployment of federal troops into Montreal, and the arbitrary arrest of their fellow citizens as more useless federal interference by Ottawa in Quebec, largely because none of those actions saved Laporte.[44] Political violence in the sovereignist movement was also permanently discredited, and while Lévesque lost a good friend in the death of Laporte,[45] the crisis actually turned sovereignist-minded Quebecers away from the aggressive tactics of the FLQ and toward the PQ and their democratic-minded path toward independence.[46] Lévesque's fortunes continued to grow over the next five years, and while his party showed modest results in the 1973 provincial election, it was the Liberals and its language legislation that eventually pushed Lévesque over the top.

Three years into the Liberals' mandate, the aforementioned Gendron Commission released its conclusions about the status of French in the province. Like the federal commission before it, the Gendron Commission found that Quebec's inclusion in the greater North American economy over the last decade had caused the use of French to decline. This explained Allophone parents tendency to educate their children in English rather than in French.[47] The Commission also noted that in businesses, pressure to use English was more commonplace than French due to the economic benefits of English.[48] The report finished with several recommendations, namely:

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[43] Gossage and Little, *An Illustrated History of Quebec*, 261–62; Morton, *A Short History of Canada*, 308.
[44] Gossage and Little, *An Illustrated History of Quebec*, 262.
[45] According to Graham Fraser, Lévesque and Laporte were close friends. Lévesque covered Laporte's electoral campaign in 1956 for presumably Radio-Canada, and Laporte covered Lévesque's campaign in 1960 for *Le Devoir*. The two played tennis together regularly as well. When Lévesque heard of Laporte's death, he reportedly went into his office and wept. Fraser, *René Lévesque and the Parti Québécois in Power,* 55.
[46] Gossage and Little, *An Illustrated History of Quebec,* 263.
[47] Martel and Pâquet, *Speaking Up*, 161.
[48] Ibid.

the government should establish French as the "common language of Quebecers," which meant usage in the workplace. Strangely, the Commission was silent on the issue of the language of instruction for Allophone children.[49] To address the concerns of the Commission, Martel and Pâquet state that generally two camps of thought existed among lawmakers on how to best mandate the promotion and protection of French. Particularly, should the government be persuasive or coercive in its efforts? In other words, should the government enact persuasive measures to entice parents to send their children to French schools or use coercive measures such as laws to legally mandate parents to send their kids to a French school?

The result of this was Bill 22 or "The Official Language Act," passed in July 1974, which enshrined French as the sole official language of Quebec.[50] French was to be used in business settings, and a new office, "La Régie de la Langue Française" (French Language Board) was established to manage the implementation and adherence to the law.[51] In terms of schooling, Bill 22's approach proved controversial. Lawmakers decided that quasi-coercion was their preferred method in dealing with the school issue. Children only had the right to schooling in English if they could pass a test that demonstrated sufficient knowledge of English.[52] This kept in place the principle of freedom of choice for parents. According to Gossage and Little, the Bill was pitched to Quebecers as "as reasonable compromise between collective rights of French speakers to the protection and promotion of their language … and the individual rights of parents, business people, and others to choose their languages of instruction or commerce in an officially bilingual country."[53] However, this "compromise" only caused more problems.

Bill 22 was a paradoxical law for the population it was meant to serve. For some, especially the English-speaking community, the idea of forcing young children to take tests from the Ministry seemed an overreach.[54] Anger over the regulation of compulsory French in some professions also caused a backlash.[55] For French speakers, many saw the law as "timid,"[56] and not going far enough.[57] Many were appalled specifically about the provision granting choice to

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[49] Ibid.
[50] Martel and Pâquet, *Speaking Up*, 162; Gossage and Little, *An Illustrated History of Quebec*, 267.
[51] Martel and Pâquet, *Speaking Up*, 162.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Gossage and Little, *An Illustrated History of Quebec*, 267.
[54] Ibid., 268.
[55] Fraser, *René Lévesque and the Parti Québécois in Power,* 61.
[56] Martel and Pâquet, *Speaking Up*, 162.
[57] Gossage and Little, *An Illustrated History of Quebec,* 267.

parents.[58] The fallout hurt the Liberals immensely. By 1976, key constituents in Liberal support among the electorate began to fade away, mostly from English speakers and Allophones who were disgusted with Bourassa and Bill 22.[59] In the 1976 election, as in 1970, anger translated into votes. Many English-speakers abandoned the Liberals in favour of the Union Nationale, who had taken a softer line on language with Bill 63. And with the PQ Convention of 1974 passing a promise to hold a referendum *before* declaring sovereignty, ensuring a perceived smooth democratic method for independence, Francophones flocked to Lévesque. On November 15th, 1976, Lévesque and the PQ won a resounding victory, 71 out of 110 seats, a great victory and support from the public for the nationalists to enact their agenda. This put the new government of the day on a collision course with the other main actor in this thesis, the CJC. For the history of the organization and the people who operated it were very much at odds with the PQ and its plans.

The Canadian Jewish Congress: A Brief Overview

In January 1934, at the CJC Second General Session, the Canadian Jewish Congress adopted a constitution that would serve as its founding document and template for any future amendments or bylaws pertaining to its governance. Section II of the constitution spelled out the organization's aims: safeguarding the rights of Canada's Jews, combating antisemitism, studying problems concerning the Jews, assisting the Jewish Agency in Palestine, and collaborating with world Jewry when necessary.[60] Two bylaws, 59, passed in 1968, and 64, passed in 1979–1980, are especially important for understanding the structure of the congress.[61] These bylaws and a few other internal documents, are cited throughout the following section which shall describe a brief overview of Congress.

The CJC was founded as a parliamentary-style organization where its main decision-making body was the Plenary Assembly. Delegates from different regions of Canada were elected to meet periodically at these assemblies to pass resolutions and make major decisions.

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[58] Fraser, *René Lévesque and the Parti Québécois,* 61.
[59] Martel and Pâquet, *Speaking Up,* 166; Gossage and Little, *An Illustrated History of Quebec*, 268.
[60] CJC Constitution and Resolutions, January 27–29, 1934, CJC Series AA, File 1, CJC Fonds, Alex Dworkin Canadian Jewish Archives, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, 1.
[61] CJC Bylaw 59, Canadian Jewish Congress, May 1977, CJC Series AA, File 1, CJC Fonds; CJC Bylaw 64, Canadian Jewish Congress, 1979–1980, CJC Series AA, File 2, CJC Fonds.

Bylaw 59 established four main "regions" from which a proportion of delegates were elected.[62] This was amended in Bylaw 64 to six regions: the Atlantic region, the Quebec region, the Ontario region, the Manitoba/Saskatchewan region, the Alberta region, and the Pacific region.[63] Membership in the CJC was open to all Jews, eighteen years and older, male or female, who lived in Canada, and who "concurred" with the objectives of the congress. Any member also had the right to vote and run as a delegate in elections.[64] The Plenary Assembly was tentatively held every year in any determined place in Canada.[65] It had ultimate authority to determine the policy of the Congress and pass resolutions. Any such resolutions were binding until otherwise amended by a future assembly.[66] Each assembly consisted of four special committees, each of which oversaw different operations: a steering committee, a credentials committee, a nominations committee, and a resolutions committee.[67] There are many other aspects of the assembly committees, but for the purposes of this thesis, it is important to understand that major decisions were vested in the upper decision-making bodies of the Congress: the National Council, the National Executive, and the officers.

Due to the large size of the Congress and the inability to meet more than once a year, the CJC vested decision-making powers within several upper bodies that were responsible for decisions when the Assembly was not in session. The first was the National Council, which, redundantly, was composed of all delegates to the Plenary Assembly, plus the main officers of the congress. Meetings were held if "the affairs of Congress require."[68] Fifty members constituted a quorum, and delegates could meet regionally.[69] When the National Council did not meet, another body called the National Executive managed the affairs of Congress. This body consisted of all the officers of the Congress, regional chairmen, an honorary counsel, presidents of community councils, chairmen of congressional standing committees, and a few other

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[62] Bylaw 59, 1.
[63] Bylaw 64, 1. Note that this does not include the different territories. Before this, Bylaw 59 had the Maritimes, Atlantic Canada, and Quebec in one single region called the "Eastern Region." Some archival materials are labelled "Eastern Region," while after 1979 they are labelled "Quebec Region." For the purposes of this thesis, the names "Eastern Region" and "Quebec Region" are used interchangeably as they both included Quebec.
[64] Bylaw 59, 1; Bylaw 64, 1.
[65] Bylaw 59, 1-2; Bylaw 64, 2. By the 1970s, the Plenary Assembly seems to have switched to a triennial schedule, meeting every three years with assemblies in 1977 and 1980.
[66] Bylaw 59, 2; Bylaw 64, 2.
[67] Bylaw 59, 4; Bylaw 64, 4.
[68] Bylaw 59, 4.
[69] Ibid.

prominent members from Jewish organizations.[70] The National Executive's powers included meeting at any time, but at least five times in one calendar year. If delegated by the National Council, the National Executive could exercise all powers of Congress, appoint employees, enter into contracts, and business transactions.[71]

The most important people on the National Executive, who served as fulltime employees of Congress, were its officers. Chief among these were the president, the honorary and past presidents, the chairmen and associate chairmen of the national executive, the vice presidents, the treasurer, the secretary, the regional chairmen, and an honorary counsel.[72] All these officers had specific duties that shall not be described in-depth here, but it is important to know that these people were the face of Congress, and some of whom appear in the archival documents cited in this thesis. For further explanation of the organizational structure of Congress in the 1960s, which is mostly the same as in the 1970s, Figure 2 is helpful.

As stated earlier, the CJC divided Canada into six major regions. This thesis mainly examines the activities of the Eastern Region, as it was known until 1979, when it was divided into the Atlantic and Quebec regions.[73] The region's offices were located at the same Montreal headquarters of the National CJC, with the Quebec offices located on a different floor. Each region had its own governing body with fulltime staff overseeing the duties and committees related to the Congress's work in the specific region. The bylaws of the Eastern Region from 1975 provide an understanding of the region and acted as a constitution.[74] Most of the bylaws of the Eastern Region were the same as the national bylaws, except for the overall structure. The Eastern Region Council was the main legislative body of the region, consisting of all members of the Eastern Region who were on the National Council, plus twenty representatives of communities outside Montreal.[75] The duty of the Council was to meet four times a year to ratify policy of the committees it oversaw.[76] The region also had an Executive Committee, similar to the National Executive. This body consisted of one hundred members, ten of whom hailed from

[70] Bylaw 58, 10–11; Bylaw 64, 11–12.
[71] Bylaw 64, 13.
[72] Bylaw 59, 7; Bylaw 64, 7.
[73] In this thesis, both names, Eastern Region/Quebec Region, when appropriate, reference corresponding dates.
[74] CJC Eastern Region Bylaws, CJC Eastern Region, October 21, 1975, CJC Series AA, File 3, CJC Fonds.
[75] Ibid., 2.
[76] Ibid., 3.

outside Montreal. This body was also responsible for policy when the Eastern Region Council was not in session.[77]

Lastly, the Regional Officers Committee, like the National Officers, consisted of the most senior figures of the Eastern Region. They were the hardworking men and women who worked at the headquarters overseeing the operations of the Region. They had the power to decide policy and act between meetings of the Executive Committee. They tentatively met monthly, and the minutes of those meetings, cited in this thesis, were sent to the Executive Committee. Its main role was not only the daily operations, but also the "adequate functioning" of all the committees of the Eastern Region.[78] The Regional Officers committee consisted of the regional chairperson, the vice-chairperson, the secretary, the treasurer, the current and past chairperson of the region, and four "officer-advisors.[79] The individuals presented later on in this chapter occupied most of these posts and therefore had a great influence on the policies of the Congress and its respective committees. The Standing Committees of the Eastern Region were the mechanisms by which the Congress exercised its powers to reach out to the community. As the CJC was located in Quebec one of the special committees was the Francophone Committee, whose objective was "the integration of the Francophone Jews into all aspects of Congress's work."[80] It should also be noted that while the Eastern Region of the Congress and its committees had a large role in governing the Montreal Jewish community, it was not alone. There were two other organizations that existed alongside the CJC who also governed the community and have a role in this thesis as well.

Among many North American cities with large Jewish populations, the method of governing a Jewish community is usually done through what is called a Jewish "federation." Daniel Elazer describes a federation as a "government-like" institution that serves local needs. Usually federations will include "a Jewish Community Center, a central agency for Jewish education, a Jewish community relations council, social welfare institutions to deal with problems from adoption to aging, a Jewish hospital, a welfare fund, and cultural societies."[81] For

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[77] Ibid.
[78] Eastern Region Bylaws, 2.
[79] Ibid., 2.
[80] Ibid., 8.
[81] Daniel J. Elazar, *People and Polity*: *The Organizational Dynamics of World Jewry* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989), 217.

Montreal, a reorganization occurred in 1965 when a new organization, the Allied Jewish Community Services (AJCS) replaced an already existing federation. It subsequently took over all its duties and rose in prominence.[82] What is key to understanding the differences between the AJCS and the CJC is the former's purely *local* agenda, with very little government contacts, while the latter's was a countrywide federal organization.

It should also be noted that because of the overlap between the two in many instances of community leadership, conflicts arose over "jurisdictional matters."[83] Elazar goes so far as to call this a "rivalry" of some sorts.[84] However, there appeared to be substantial cooperation between the two regardless of this, notably in the face of Quebec nationalism. It was not uncommon, for instance, to see members of AJCS in attendance at Eastern Region Officer's Meetings, or as part of larger correspondence/briefs to the government or research projects. Around the time of this thesis, there was serious discussions about merging the two; however, it appears that this ultimately did not happen as neither merged by the CJC's closing in 2011 and AJCS's incorporation into a new federation-type organization around that same time.[85] Regardless of the rivalry, the AJCS played a role as well in the events examined here; however, most of these actions were through the CJC.[86]

Another important organization, which is cited directly in a few archival documents, is B'nai B'rith, Hebrew for "Children of the Covenant." This organization was founded in New York City in 1843 to help Jews "maintain communal bonds."[87] In Canada, B'nai B'rith is highly involved in community affairs, especially in the post-World War Two era, particularly in terms of policymaking.[88] While its position in community relations is noteworthy, it is the organization's involvement in the fight against antisemitism through its "League of Human Rights," the Canadian counterpart to the Anti-Defamation League, that is most noteworthy.[89] As

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[82] Daniel J. Elazar, Harold M. Waller, *Maintaining Consensus: The Canadian Jewish Polity in the Postwar World* (Latham, Maryland: University of America, Inc, 1990), 71.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid., 113.
[85] Janice Arnold, "Montreal's Federation CJA to Celebrate 100 Years of Achievement," *The Canadian Jewish News*, August 16, 2016, https://www.cjnews.com/news/canada/federation-to-celebrate-achievements-over-100-years.
[86] Such instances include appearance at meetings, the inclusion in research projects undertaken by the CJC, or the inclusion in government correspondence.
[87] Elazar*, People and Polity,* 114.
[88] Elazar and Waller, *Maintaining Consensus,* 54.
[89] Ibid.

such, as with the AJCS, the CJC and B'nai B'rith often "competed" against each other in some issues.[90] However, it does not appear that these engagements turned into the sort of rivalry that existed between the CJC and the AJCS. In some ways, I found the CJC and B'nai B'rith's relations quite cordial in the archival documents, particularly B'nai B'rith's co-authorship with the CJC in the brief to the René Lévesque in early 1977, discussed in Chapter 3. Like the AJCS, B'nai B'rith should be viewed as a supplemental organization that worked with the CJC to achieve similar goals in relation to the Quebec nationalist movement, although with a much warmer relationship with the Congress.

Individual profiles

Among the CJC staff, about six of them are important to this thesis. Each person has a great presence in the archival documents used for this research, and each contributed in some form to the way the Congress reacted to the many events in the late 1970s. These key players are worth getting to know better before we proceed. They are a diverse cohort of immigrants, academics, religious, lay people, and much more, all shaped in their Jewish identity as Jews having lived through World War Two and the post-war era. This section of the chapter goes over these people briefly based on archival documents found at the CJC Archives.

Elected in April 1980 at age 34, Frank Schlesinger was the youngest person ever elected as Chairperson of the CJC Quebec Region.[91] A musician in his youth, he decided to become a lawyer, and while in law school, he was recruited into the AJCS, and then the CJC. His youthful intellect and quick rise to the top position of the Quebec Region is what makes him so interesting. Like the majority of Montreal Jews at the time, Schlesinger was educated in English, but broke with other Jews and decided to attend the University of Montreal to learn French to prepare him to participate in Quebec society. Schlesinger was very aware of the changing society and political situation of Quebec, and he wasn't afraid to address this in Congress. He advocated for the inclusion of French speakers in the Jewish community, hoping to turn the relationship between the two from what he believed to be "cordial" rather than friendly[92], to something more

[90] Ibid.
[91] Lou Seligson, "CJC Quebec Head Sees 'Difficult Adjustments,'" *Canadian Jewish News*, April 24, 1980, CJC Series ZB, Frank Schlesinger, CJC Fonds.
[92] Seligson, "CJC Quebec Head Sees 'Difficult Adjustments." CJC Fonds.

substantial. Schlesinger believed that French speakers deserved more than to serve as "token participants" in the community, but in executive positions. His own experience among them gave him much hope, and he believed that the antisemitism that existed among French-speaking Quebec society from the early twentieth century to be substantially less at that time.[93] He hoped that the CJC would slowly become more French, even if that meant difficult adjustments. In response to the sovereignty referendum, he believed the Congress should stay out of it, but encouraged people to vote.[94]

Born in Dundee, Scotland in 1921, Alan Rose served multiple functions, not only in the CJC, but also in other Jewish organizations. In the first thirty-six years of his life, Rose graduated from the University College London and served in World War Two as a tank commander in the Middle East, Italy, and Northwest Europe. He was among those who liberated the Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp.[95] After the War, Rose then served as a volunteer in the Israeli War of Independence.[96] In 1957, Rose immigrated to Canada and began a long career in many distinguished Jewish organizations, first, as Director of the Joint Public Relations Committee of the Canadian Zionist Federation, then in B'nai B'rith, and finally joining the CJC in 1969 as an assistant.[97] During his tenure at the Congress, Rose first conducted work on populations of oppressed Jews and traveled to Ethiopia and the Soviet Union.[98] He then served as Assistant Director from 1970–1973, Associate Executive Director in 1973, and in 1974, succeeded to the position of National Executive Director, which he held until 1977 when he became Executive Vice President.[99] Alan Rose also was the main editor of the IOIs and was bilingual. While he was on the national level of the CJC, his presence was still very much felt in the Eastern Region, with him often in meetings and reporting on the activities of the region.

Born in 1948 in the United States, Dr. Jack Kantrowitz's strong academic background proved to be extremely valuable to the CJC. Having grown up in Montreal, Kantrowitz did his

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[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Biography – Alan Rose, C.M. Executive Vice-President of the Canadian Jewish Congress, CJC Series ZB, Rose, Alan, File 25, CJC Fonds; "Two Recent Losses," *The Jewish Standard*, July 20 – August 20, 1995. CJC Series ZB, Rose, Alan, File 5: Various. CJC Fonds.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Letter from the Canadian Jewish Congress Alan Rose Fund for International Dignity to "friend," February 26, 1996, CJC Series ZB, Rose, Alan, File 5: Various. CJC Fonds.
[99] "Rose, Alan," Alex Dworkin Canadian Jewish Archives Internal Reference Documents, accessed October 2019.

undergraduate work at McGill University before earning a Ph.D. in politics from the University of Sussex, and then earned another Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Paris in 1977.[100] He returned to Montreal that same year and began teaching at the Université de Montréal and started his career at the CJC, becoming the Director of Research at the Jewish Community Research Institute (JCRI). This organization provided organizations such as the AJCS and the CJC with in-depth research and policy recommendations concerning the political evolution of Quebec society and the Jewish community.[101] During his time at the JCRI, Kantrowitz authored several reports and papers for the CJC. He became the Executive Director of the CJC Quebec Region starting in 1979, where he used his knowledge to help steer the organization through the 1980 referendum.[102]

Joel Pinsky's journey fits with the trend of other officers who did military service and subsequently committed themselves to the Jewish community of Canada. Born in Montreal sometime before the Second World War, he attended Baron Byng High School, entering the family meat business after graduation.[103] When World War Two broke out, he enlisted in the Canadian Army and served overseas. Upon his return, he remained active in the Royal Canadian Legion.[104] Pinsky also became active in charitable works and the welfare of others, becoming active in the Knights of Pythias, a fraternal order dedicated to helping youth, the elderly, and veterans.[105] At some point, he earned a B.A. from McGill and a B.Com. from Sir George Williams University (which later merged with Loyola College to form Concordia University).[106] He was the past National Chairman at B'nai B'rith and the Vice Chairman of the CJC Eastern Region, before finally ascending to Regional Chairman of the CJC Eastern Region and National Vice-Chairman of the entire organization.[107] Pinsky, along with Leon Teitelbaum, authored the CJC's Response Brief to Bill 22 of the Bourassa government and remained an important figure in the CJC during the 1970s.

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[100] "Jack Kantrowitz," CJC Series ZB, File Jack Kantrowitz: Various, CJC Fonds.
[101] Curriculum Vitae, CJC Series ZB, File Jack Kantrowitz: Various, CJC Fonds.
[102] "Jack Kantrowitz," CJC Series ZB, File Jack Kantrowitz: Various.
[103] "Please Join us in Honoring Past Grand Chancellor Joel Pinsky," CJC Series ZB, Pinsky, Joel, CJC Fonds.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.; Home Page, Grand Lodge Knights of Pythias Domain of Quebec, http://www.knightsofpythias.qc.ca/index.html.
[106] "Joel A. Pinsky," CJC Series ZB, Pinsky Joel, CJC Fonds.
[107] Ibid.

Part of the CJC's responsibilities was religious affairs. No person exemplifies the work of the Congress in this area better than Samuel Lewin. Born in Poland in 1911 or 1912 to Orthodox Jews, his family was well positioned in Polish society, as his father was a member of the Polish Parliament, and he himself earned a Ph.D. in Krakow.[108] During World War Two, his family fled from Poland by way of Lithuania, China, and Japan, arriving in Canada in 1941.[109] Three months after arriving in Canada, Lewin joined the CJC Eastern Region as an archivist, but soon found his way to the religious department, as he was also an ordained rabbi. Due to his religious background, he was consulted on religious issues by different Jewish communities in Canada.[110] Lewin stayed with the CJC for his entire career and rose in its ranks. His initial position as archivist resulted in the archives going from a small, disorganized corner to an entire floor of the headquarters with fulltime staff.[111] He also served as the Education Director, and briefly as the Eastern Region's Executive Director. He is quoted as saying that if Quebec were to separate, the Jewish community would be less influential, becoming like the Jewish community of Medicine Hat, Alberta.[112] He also edited over five thousand versions of the IOIs, including a Yiddish section at one point.[113]

Finally, among the more controversial officers who occupied the offices at the CJC Headquarters was the Eastern Region's Chairman from 1977–1978, Dr. Melvyn Schwartzben. While his time in the top job only spanned eighteen months, from May 1977 to November 1978, his tenure can only be described as "tumultuous," due to the circumstances in which he was eventually forced out of the job. Before his time at the CJC, Schwartzben undertook his undergraduate studies at McGill. During his time there, he was active in numerous Jewish organizations. He attained a B.A. and then a dental degree from McGill and soon became affiliated with many dental schools in Quebec and Canada.[114] His ascension to the Chairmanship of the Eastern Region came in May 1977, upon the completion of the term of Leon Teitelbaum

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[108] "Lewin Remembered for Community Work," *Canadian Jewish News*, March 12, 1992, CJC Series ZB, Lewin, Samuel, CJC Fonds.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Ibid.
[111] "Veteran Professional Retires," *Canadian Jewish News*, July 7, 1978, CJC Series ZB, Lewin, Samuel. CJC Fonds.
[112] Ibid.
[113] "Lewin Remembered for Community Work"; "Lewin served Canadian Jewish Congress 36 Years"; *The Gazette*, March 5, 1992, CJC Series ZB, Lewin, Samuel, CJC Fonds.
[114] Curriculum Vitae by Melvyn Schwartzben, CJC Series ZB, File: Schwartzben, Melvyn, CJC Fonds.

(discussed below) who served from 1974–1977. He won his election due to his position that the Congress "must take action" against Bill 101.[115] During his short tenure, he oversaw the production of the brief submitted to the government concerning Bill 101 and promoted CJC as a resource to help Jewish citizens if they felt their rights were violated by Bill 101 (Figure 3).[116]

However, another issue overshadowed Schwartzben's tenure that ultimately cost him his job. In October 1978, discussions were held between the CJC and the AJCS about a possible aforementioned merger.[117] This apparently was a sticking point between Schwartzben and the Eastern Region Officers who subsequently removed him through a vote of no confidence.[118] Dr. Schwartzben then published a resignation letter in the newspaper, *The Suburban,* accusing the democratic process at the CJC of being "put aside," as he believed a "small power elite" within the Jewish community wanted to push through the merger on terms with which he disagreed.[119] In the ensuing Eastern Region Full Council Meeting held on November 2nd, cited in meeting minutes, and in the Canadian Jewish News, region-wide delegates voted to adopt Schwartzben's resignation as binding.[120] This came after former VP Leon Teitelbaum disavowed Schwartzben's accusations of corruption. He pointed to major accusations against him from CJC members, such as his incitement of officers who did not agree with him, his inability to carry out decisions of officers, acting alone on certain occasions, and his alienation of the Francophone and Sephardi communities.[121]

The personalities listed thus far are the most prominent figures in this thesis. There are some figures who, to a lesser extent, contributed to the overall events. Unfortunately, due to a lack of archival material, very little is available about them. These figures included Leon

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[115] "CJC Eastern Region Elects New Chairman," *Canadian Jewish News*, May 13, 1977, CJC Series ZB File: Schwartzben, Melvyn, CJC Fonds.
[116] "Canadian Jewish Congress Vows to Fight for Jewish Community's Rights," *The Suburban*, November 16, 1977, CJC Series ZB, File: Schwartzben, Melvyn, CJC Fonds.
[117] Mel Solman, "Resignation Holds, E. Council Declares," *Canadian Jewish News*, November 10, 1978, CJC Series ZB, File: Schwartzben, Melvyn, CJC Fonds.
[118] "Minutes of a Meeting of the Eastern Region Officers held on the 17th October 1978 at 8:30 p.m. at Samuel Bronfman House, Montreal," CJC Eastern Region/Quebec Region, October 17, 1978, CJC Series DB 07, Box 10, File: 10/34, CJC Fonds.
[119] Melvyn Schwartzben, "The Dilemma of Decision," *The Suburban*, October 25, 1978, CJC Series ZB, File: Schwartzben, Melvyn, CJC Fonds.
[120] Canadian Jewish Congress – Eastern Region Council Meeting, November 2, 1978, 8:00 p.m. at the Chevra Synagogue, Montreal," CJC Eastern/Quebec Region, November 2, 1978, CJC Series DB, Box 10, File: 10/34, CJC Fonds; Solman, "Resignation Holds."
[121] Ibid. It should be noted that Naglie was not ordained.

Teitelbaum, Chairman of the Eastern Region around the time of the 1976 election, and his wife Edith, and Flora Naglie, a layperson in the Congress who participated in congressional meetings in the run-up to the referendum.[122] Also worth mentioning are Ruth Lazerus, an assistant to Samuel Lewin, and later the main editor of the IOIs after the retirement of Alan Rose,[123] and Manny Weiner, the director of the AJCS in the late 1970s who also participated in congressional meetings prior to the 1980 referendum.[124] For now, our discussion of the CJC and its complex response to the rise of the Parti Québécois begins under the Eastern Region presidency of Leon Teitelbaum, at a time when linguistic demands and sovereignist sentiments in the province began to boil over and a coming election would prove to be a catharsis for Quebec French-speakers and source of anxiety for the CJC.

[122] According to Janice Rosen, Archives Director, Canadian Jewish Archives, who knew Flora Naglie.
[123] "Lazerus, Ruth," Alex Dworkin Canadian Jewish Archives Internal Reference Documents, accessed October 2019.
[124] Janice Rosen, head archivist at the CJC Archives, knew Manny Weiner and is the only source who was able to tell me his functions in congressional activities.

Chapter 2: The 1976 Election

"I have never thought I could be so proud to be a Quebecer as this evening."[1]

-René Lévesque, November 16, 1976

Our position is that in times of crisis, Jewish people have always come together with a greater sense of our usual unity and dedication.[2]

-White Paper on the Jewish Community in Greater Montreal, 1977

These two quotes are from two very different contexts and emphasize the distinct atmosphere between the two groups whose interaction is the focus of this thesis. The rise to power of the Parti Québécois in the provincial election of 1976 led to great euphoria for the nationalists as they finally reached a position of power to carry out their objectives. For the Jewish community and the Canadian Jewish Congress, watching a nationalist party come to power and talk of further reforms created an atmosphere of anxiety and uncertainty. This chapter will focus on the CJC and its actions and reactions in the run-up to that important election, and the aftermath. It will examine the Congress's activities prior to 1976 and its tendency to focus more on international Jewish matters, often putting domestic issues to the wayside. As the election neared, we will see emerging an explicit position of non-affiliation in elections, but also efforts to inform Jewish citizens about political parties in several events. Transitioning to after the election, the Congress entered a period of crises as they attempted to calm a frightened Jewish community through increased meetings with organizations. The CJC, along with AJCS, issued a White Paper stating the two's positions on nationalism and the new government, which showed differences in policy opinion between the CJC and the PQ, but also a re-orientation by the Congress to familiarize and accommodate itself and the community to the new reality.

More Attention to International Issues: The CJC Leading Up to 1976

With reference to its mission to safeguard Canada's Jews and assist world Jewry, the early 1970s at the CJC were spent working more on the latter than the former. While these years saw many

[1] Graham Fraser, *René Lévesque and the Parti Québécois in Power*, 2nd ed. (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), prologue, xlv.
[2] White Paper on the Jewish Community of Montreal by Joseph Ain and Leon Teitelbaum, 1977, CJC Series ZB, Box 8, File 12, CJC Fonds, 3.

major events in Canada and Quebec, the weekly newsletters (IOIs) show considerably more attention to international matters in the contents of its weekly updates. Between 1970 and 1975, the CJC contributed substantial attention and resources towards the well-being of Jews in other countries, specifically towards Soviet Jews, Ethiopian Jews, Chilean Jews, Cuban Jews, and Iraqi Jews.[3] The focus given to these events, most noticeably in the IOIs, are the result of important world events concerning world Jewry at this time. One of those events was the fate of Jews in the Soviet Union. In the 1970s, Soviet Jews fought to leave the country and emigrate to Israel. Those Jews, who were refused permission to leave became known as "Refuseniks." The fate of the Refuseniks gained world-wide attention as world Jewry stood in solidarity with the Soviet Jews. In Canada, the CJC took a leading role in pressuring the Soviet government. Notable events include assistance in organizing multiple marches and demonstrations,[4] creating a National Committee on Soviet Jewry,[5] assisting Soviet Jews who had gotten out and arrived in Canada,[6] and personally appealing to the Soviet government on behalf of Refuseniks who were jailed.[7] It is through this lens of fighting for Jews abroad for their right to emigrate that exemplifies the Congress's broader civil rights activities at this time. Many CJC personalities recently discussed had backgrounds in immigration, as such, the issue of Soviet Jewry was taken very seriously and provided a blueprint into how the CJC would deal with future civil rights matters.

Among other important events in the early 1970s capturing the attention of the CJC was the welfare of the State of Israel and its citizens. Within the first five years of the decade, somber events befell Israel in different settings. In May 1972, terrorists attacked and killed 26 people at the country's international airport. The Canadian Jewish Congress condemned this attack, sending a telegram to Prime Minister Golda Meir, and also took out pages in newspapers for statements of solidarity with the country.[8] Later that year in September, the Palestinian terrorist group, Black September, kidnapped and murdered Israeli athletes at the Summer Olympics in Munich, West Germany. This sent shockwaves around the Jewish world as many lamented the

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[3] *Inter-Office Information*, No. 3395-3975; 806-836, by Rose Lazerus, Samuel Lewin, Alan Rose, ed, Canadian Jewish Congress, 1969-1980, CJC Series FA 2, CJC Fonds.
[4] IOI, No. 3505 January 5, 1971, 1. (March in Ottawa); No. 3511: January 26, 1971, 1. (March in Edmonton); No. 3749: March 26, 1974, 1. (Demonstration in front of Soviet Embassy).
[5] IOI, No. 3814: January 9, 1975, 1.
[6] IOI, No. 3821: February 4, 1975, 1.
[7] IOI, No. 3859: June 10, 1975, 1.
[8] IOI, No. 3628: June 2, 1972, 1.

death of Jews, again on German soil. The CJC covered the events extensively in its September 15-20th IOIs and received messages of condolence from leaders wishing to express their grief through the Congress to the Canadian Jewish community.[9] Both these events though, pale in comparison with what happened one year later.

In October 1973, the combined armies of Egypt and Syria attacked Israel on Judaism's holiest day of the year, Yom Kippur. This attack was in retaliation for Israel's victories seven years earlier in the Six-Day War. Many Jews across the world saw the Arab attack as a serious threat to Israel and yet another war where the country's existence was at stake. The CJC provided non-stop coverage and updates of the events in the country, and held several emergency meetings.[10] Israel won the war, but in the process, it lost no fewer than 2,522 military personnel.[11] After the war's end, Congress reported on Canadian Jewish efforts to pressure the federal government to play a role in the maintaining of the cease-fire.[12] Finally, in November of that year, Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, passed away, creating a sense of loss for the Jewish people. The CJC reported on his death, offering condolences.[13] The well-being of Israel would remain a central issue in the organization, but events at home also occupied the time and resources of the dutiful staff, although not to the same degree as international matters.

To judge from the contents of the IOIs from the early 1970s, the CJC's concern with domestic events had a somewhat "second-tier" status compared to coverage of international developments. Take for instance the October Crisis of 1970, a pinnacle event relating to relations between Quebec and Canada. In the Congress's coverage in the IOIs, only one entry in the October 19, 1970 edition discussed the event, offering condolences to different politicians regarding the murder of Pierre Laporte.[14] Subsequent IOIs in the following month did not mention the October Crisis at all, focusing instead on a visit from Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir[15], and also on the status of Soviet Jews.[16] This lack of attention also existed for the October

[9] IOI, No. 3642: September 15, 1972, 2-3; No. 3643: September 20, 1972, 1.
[10] IOI, No. 3710: October 8, 1973, 1-3; No. 3712: October 12, 1973, 1; No. 3714: October 23, 1973, 1.
[11] Martin Gilbert, *Israel: A History* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2008), 459.
[12] IOI, No. 3718: November 2, 1973, 2.
[13] IOI, No. 3727: December 6, 1973, 1.
[14] IOI, No. 3479: October 19, 1970, 1-2.
[15] IOI, No. 3484: November 4, 1970, 1.
[16] IOI, No. 3492: November 24, 1970, 1.

1973 provincial election, and the 1974 federal election.[17] However, when other significant political events occurred in Quebec, specifically relating to language, Congress gave full attention to them. Beginning in 1969, coverage of Bills 63 and 22 regularly appeared in the IOIs.[18] The organization "welcomed Bill 63," according to a November 1969 IOI, and three years later when the Bourassa government signaled its intentions to replace it with Bill 22, the CJC expressed its feelings towards the change as "Profoundly disturbed" during a conference on January 24th, 1972 between officials of the Eastern Region and Bourassa. Also in this meeting, officers conveyed to the Premier their specific rejection of coercive measures to solve language problems, citing their belief that "injustice starts where equality of citizenship ends."[19] One month later, the Eastern Region established the Francophone department to better serve the Francophone Jewish community of Canada, but also to show that the organization was sensitive to the need for francization efforts.[20]

With regard to the ongoing language reforms by the Bourassa government in this period, Congress reacted in varied ways to different situations. In March 1973, the CJC recognized the Gendron Commission's recommendation that French be designated the official language of Quebec. Its preference, however, was that *both* English and French be designated as the "national languages" and that the linguistic status quo remain pertaining to schools (referencing freedom of choice in Bill 63).[21] In April that year, the organization again met with Premier Bourassa and encouraged the continued development of English and French community structures, arguing to the Premier that the "melting pot approach" had failed decisively.[22] After Bill 22 was introduced one year later in 1974, the Congress's efforts turned more serious. A June 1974 IOI reports on urgent meetings held between the CJC and other Jewish organizations, as well as the production of an official brief by Chairman Leon Teitelbaum which the CJC sent to the National Assembly. The contents of this brief dissected the entire bill and made recommendations for revisions.[23] Most significant of these recommendations was the CJC's

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[17] 1973 election: IOI, No. 3717: October 29, 1973, 1 which only mentioned the CJC discussed the need to inform on the important of voting and that the choice of the candidate was up to the individual voter; 1974 Federal election: there is no IOI and the CJC instead focused on Bill 22: IOI, No. 3763: July 10, 1974, 1-2.
[18]First instance of Bill 63 showing up in IOI: IOI, No. 3395: November 2, 1969, 2.
[19] IOI, No. 3605: January 25, 1972, 1-3.
[20] IOI, No. 3610: February 10, 1972, 2.
[21] IOI, No. 3677: March 2, 1973, 1.
[22] Press Release by Canadian Jewish Congress, April 2, 1973, CJC Series ZB, Joel Pinsky, CJC Fonds.
[23] IOI, No. 3759: June 12, 1974, 1.

insistence that Bill 22 be amended to state: "French and English should be the official languages of the Province of Quebec."[24] This provision, obviously, was not acceptable to the Bourassa government, who passed the law through the National Assembly, much to the Congress's dismay. In November 1974, following Bill 22's passage, the CJC adopted a resolution affirming its support of the Francophone majority and their aspirations for linguistic reform. However, Congress also signaled its support to its representatives who were to participate in a coalition of groups opposing Bill 22 in the courts, giving the impression of conflicting aspirations of what kind of linguistic reform the CJC preferred.[25] Efforts to oppose Bill 22 would be short-lived; after the passage of the Bill, Bourassa's government only lasted two more years. At that time, the Congress reverted back to focusing on international issues, leaving domestic matters on the side as 1975 turned into 1976.

Entering 1976: Normalcy and "No Political Personality"

In examining the activity of the CJC in 1976, the year can be divided into two parts: pre-election and post-election. The perceived "normalcy" of the Congress's activity, meaning more focus on international activities and non-political activities on the domestic front, are what characterize the pre-election period. Indeed, the first part of 1976 at the CJC offices was once again occupied with activities concerning international matters such as Soviet Jewry,[26] Jews in Arab Lands,[27] Nazi War Criminals in Canada,[28] and the Summer Olympics.[29] Passing references to Bill 22 and continued francization efforts were reported on sparingly. Interestingly, there was also an increased acceptance of French within the organization at this point as exemplified in an article in the Congressional Bulletin titled: "Parlez-vous français? If not, please try harder."[30] However, there was still some pushback as evidenced by individual opinion pieces in the Bulletin from members of Congress on Bill 22 whose sentiments ranged from: "Imperfect, but good," to… "a new reality today," down to "…. Immoral and reactionary."[31] Yet even with these differences of

[24] IOI, No. 3763: July 10, 1974, 1-2.
[25] IOI, No. 3798: November 7, 1974, 1.
[26] IOI, No. 3905: February 3, 1976, 1.
[27] IOI, No. 3922: March 31, 1976, 1.
[28] IOI, No. 3942: June 1, 1976, 1.
[29] IOI, No. 3903 January 27, 1976, 1. This IOI dealt with discussions on appointing a Jewish chaplain to the Montreal Summer Olympics in 1976.
[30] Canadian Jewish Congress Collection Series FA 2, Congressional Bulletin, June 1975, 2. CJC Fonds.
[31] Congressional Bulletin, February 1976, 12. CJC Fonds.

opinion, the French fact of Quebec was mostly accepted by the CJC. Even still, the Congress was still active in its opposition to Bill 22, providing updates on the aforementioned court challenges to the Bill concerning education, and later a challenge to the constitutionality of it. It should be noted while the CJC was not officially active in these challenges, it still supported them.[32]

The only other instance during the first part of 1976 which Congress gave any attention to the election or to nationalist politics was one IOI entry from May, foreshadowing Congress's policy for the rest of the year regarding the upcoming election. Dated February 16th, 1976, and relegated to the second page of the newsletter, an article appeared titled "Stating Policy of Canadian Jewish Congress on Attendance at Political Conventions." The background for this article was an invitation extended to the CJC by the national Progressive Conservative Party to attend a leadership convention. In response to the invitation, Alan Rose, the Executive Director at the time stated:

> We feel it would be inappropriate for the Jewish Community to be present as the Jewish Community includes members of all political persuasions but has no political personality as such. However, we would welcome the opportunity of being invited to future policy conventions of your party, as is our practice with the other national political parties.[33]

This position is rather contradictory in the true character of Congress. Its activities very much had a political personality, particularly in international events. This was also true domestically, as will be clear when examining Congress's opposition to language legislation as examined in the next chapter. Thus, a prevailing characteristic is established here about the organization during the period of this thesis: it was officially politically neutral but unofficially politically active.

The Lead-Up to the November Election and Policies of Political Involvement

During the summer months, Congress's activities tended to slow down as its staff took time off. As such, CJC publications and correspondence generally slowed down or even paused for a few weeks as well.[34] The year 1976 brought with it an exciting summer as Montreal hosted the 21st

[32] IOI, No. 3911: February 23, 2; No 3943: May 7, 1976, 3.
[33] IOI, No. 3909: February 16, 1976, 1.
[34] An IOI from June 1976 referenced the slowdown of IOI publications during the summer months, stating: "The regular publication of the IOI is being suspended until the end of July. During that period, the IOI may appear sporadically to report on specific matters." – IOI, No. 3943: June 8, 1976, 5.

Summer Olympics. The CJC's activities resumed in earnest in August with continual IOI reporting on basic rules and regulations concerning Bill 22 and corporations.[35] The coming of the Jewish High Holidays began on September 24th and lasted until October 17th.[36] Once more, "business as usual" reigned at the organization until October 18th, when Premier Bourassa called the election scheduled for November 15th. For the CJC, provincial elections meant close monitoring of the key players and their respective policies. If a new party came to power, it meant new policies of that party needed to be known. It also was a key time to see how receptive the parties would be to the Congress's positions and priorities in areas such as language. The 1976 Election was no exception to this but included many more conversations about the future of Quebec because of the presence of the Parti Québécois. However, in terms of direct political involvement, the CJC took a much more neutral stance.

Immediately following the dropping of the writs, Congress began preparing both itself and its constituents for the coming election, being careful in the language they used in official correspondence. Like in May of that year, the CJC again felt a need to clarify its position on political activity. It did so in an IOI released on October 20th, which again addressed the organization's non-political nature, further emphasizing this policy in elections:

> The Canadian Jewish Congress has a standing policy that Jewish citizens participate in municipal, provincial and national elections as citizens of Canada, sharing with citizens of all other faiths and origins, a common interest in the proper and efficient administration of our country's affairs. The Canadian Jewish Congress consequently rejects on principle any political appeal directed by a candidate based on racial or religious grounds, designed to give the impression that there is an ethnic or religious bloc such as "The Jewish Vote," which is aimed at attracting votes, by favoring or discriminating against any group in the electorate.[37](Figure 4)

The organization therefore encouraged its members to participate in elections, but empathetically denied that there was a monolithic 'Jewish voting block' which could be courted by politicians with a single message to all Jews. The IOI continued on about this policy,

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[35] IOI, No. 3959: September 10, 1976, 2. This IOI entry deals mainly only with the francization provisions of Bill 22, not so much pending court challenges.

[36] During the Fall months each year, Jews Celebrate five holidays in succession: Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret, and Simchat Torah. This period of the Jewish Calendar is called "The High Holy Days" or "High Holidays" and is the holiest, and busiest time of year for Jews. The CJC, then must have limited operations, and not produced much work in this busy time period.

[37] IOI, No: 3970: October 20, 1976, 1.

referencing a recent policy statement by the Board of Directors of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds (of which the CJC was a member) which affirmed a standing policy against, "partisan political activities by any of its members in their official capacities."[38] This position put a limit on what Congress members might do if they chose to campaign actively; they could do so as citizens of Canada with democratic rights but were forbidden to use their positions of power in the organization to influence votes.

The position expanded adding two more layers of complexity. On the same page of this IOI, the policy further adds specifications on members' abilities to campaign, stating they might still campaign as private citizens but must do "everything in their power to make clear that their political activity is in no way identified with Jewish agencies."[39] Finally, the policy ends with one final statement about political involvement, but this particular statement, the most important of all, created an even larger mess of confusion stating: "Neither Jewish leaders nor Jewish organizations are restricted from speaking and acting on public issues of concern to the Jewish community, even when such conduct may be interpreted as approval or criticism of positions of candidates for political office."[40] To summarize, election regulations were: CJC officials might participate in all elections as per the democratic duty of a citizen of Canada. Partisan political activities by any officials in official capacities as members of Jewish organizations were forbidden. However, officials might still campaign for political campaigns as long as such activity was not in any way related to Jewish agencies. However, officials were not restricted from speaking out on "public issues of concern to the Jewish community" even if such activity could be interpreted as approval or criticisms of candidates for office.

The formation of this policy, while multifaceted, was purposeful. It had been discussed privately among the Eastern Region Executive Council, with all members agreeing on its premise and sharing in the collective concern of becoming "too" involved with the political process. Executive Member Ted Baker kept personal records of notes from executive meetings from this period. His October 20th meeting notes are full of agreements among members to not state an official stance during election time.[41] The question of why the CJC chose this position,

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[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Officer Meeting Minutes, Canadian Jewish Congress Eastern Region, October 20, 1976, CJC Series ZB, Ted Baker Box 8, File 12, CJC Fonds.

and why this was its longstanding policy on political engagement is interesting and important; we will explore it in detail in Chapter 4, with reference to another provincial vote, the 1980 referendum.

With its stated policy of political neutrality in place, Congress then took up its responsibility of advocating and informing the Jewish public on important issues. For an election, this meant chairing information sessions and panels involving the many political parties but, per its policy, stating the organization's non-political stance in opening statements. One such information session was reported in the November 3rd IOI. A public affairs forum hosted by the Saidye Bronfman Centre (now the Segal Centre) occurred on October 31st[42]. A Congress official chaired the event, and candidates from all major political parties were in attendance. This event sparked great interest as the IOI reports an audience of over 500 with overflow rooms used. The program allowed the Jewish community to listen to the candidates from the major parties to better inform them in the run-up to election day.[43] This IOI was the last correspondence from the CJC about the November election prior to polling day on the 15th. No Other IOIs issued included anything about the election; no Congress bulletins were published including any political material at this time, and executive meeting minutes are not available from this period. There is no clear explanation for this gap in archival material, but it is symbolic that in the lead up to one of the most historic and impactful elections in the province's history, the CJC remained restrained and quiet.

The Historic Election

For Quebec nationalists, November 15th, 1976 was a triumphant day. The election resulted in Réne Lévesque's Parti Québécois securing a resounding victory with 71 of the 110 seats in the National Assembly and 41% of the popular vote. The importance of this event cannot be understated in the history of Quebec in the post-Quiet-Revolution era. Lévesque's victory symbolized for many Francophone Quebecers that they could finally practice true self-government in their own province. For others, the election of a nationalist government in Quebec

[42] IOI, No. 3975: November 3, 1976, 1-2. The Saidye Bronfman Centre (present-day Segal Centre) is located across the street from the headquarters of Federation CJA, the Montreal Holocaust Centre, and the Jewish Public Library in the Côte des Neiges – Notre Dame de Grâce borough of Montreal, near the highly Jewish populated suburbs of Hampstead and Cote St Luc.
[43] Ibid.

was a cause for worry. At the CJC, the PQ victory sent shockwaves throughout the organization as the reality and uncertainty of nationalist leaders taking the reins of power began to set in. In spite of this, Congress and the executive committee sought to act to show normalcy during this period in order to reassure a frightened Jewish public.

Immediately after Levesque's victory, the CJC sent a congratulatory telegram to Premier-designate Lévesque (Figure 5), wishing him luck in forming his new government and extending an invitation to have a conference with him about issues impacting the Jewish community.[44] On the surface, this telegram appears to show the organization sticking to its non-partisan policy, remaining calm, and extending an olive branch. Internally, however, the executive committee expressed nervousness at the prospect of a new nationalist government in power which they knew almost nothing about. Ted Baker's meeting minutes from November 23rd offer an inside look into the immediate reactions internally from the CJC. The first pages discussed a recommendation that the JCRC (Jewish Community Relations Committee, a committee of the CJC) should meet every Tuesday until further notice due to "The present situation in Quebec." The committee would also be expanded to include observers from the AJCS.[45]

During that same meeting, Alan Rose went further, stating that it would be in the interest of the CJC to "advise community leadership at all levels to remain cool," in the format of a meeting [46] Rose continued reassuring those present, arguing that governments become more moderate once they come to power, while acknowledging that the Congress must prepare short- and long-term policies in response to the new government.[47] These actions and opinions in the weeks immediately after the election are key to understanding the precarious position of the CJC. They show both the external, public efforts aimed at calming the community and the high level of internal anxiety within the organization. In the immediate aftermath, as Alan Rose stated, more information was needed. The CJC decided to undertake research about the community and the challenges it faced with respect to the new government. This research resulted in an extensive White Paper.

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[44] IOI, No. 3979: November 16, 1976, 1.
[45] "Minutes of the Officers' Meeting held Tuesday, November 23, 5:30 p.m. at the Samuel Bronfman House, 1590 McGregor Avenue," CJC Eastern/Quebec Region, November 23, 1976, CJC Series ZB, Box 8, File 12, CJC Fonds.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.

Reactions, Research, and Perseverance

Following the election, the Jewish community raised different concerns to the CJC. Many people were wondering what the organization thought about specific issues now that the PQ was in power. Others wanted to know about the expected reforms regarding the "francization" of their businesses, or about their children's future access to English schools. All of these questions and many more were answered in a White Paper published in early 1977 in conjunction between the CJC and the AJCS. This White Paper was authored by Joseph Ain and Leon Teitelbaum, both of whom had extensive experience in the community. The White Paper presented a "questions and answers" approach to numerous criticisms and questions that the CJC had received following the November election. Its preamble stated that the Jewish community yearned for a "stronger central community organization" and that "we are living in rapidly critically changing times."[48] It further acknowledged the existence of "Great anxiety among very many Jewish people from all walks of life,"[49] signaling that indeed, anxiety among the many parts of the Jewish community was present.

The White Paper sought to answer the most important questions regarding the current situation, with the first and most important being: "What is the community's position in regard to the strong drive towards French nationalism, French language, and French culture in our Province? Should Jews be encouraged to become an integral part of the Québécois objectives, expecting the political issue of separation?" In response to this, the CJC chose to respond with hope and positivity instead of alarm. The White Paper answered the question by stating that the Jewish community had noticed the trend towards francization and that the official position was: "we can only gain and benefit by enlarging the numbers among us who have this capacity to participate in and accept the French culture as part of our own."[50] However, the position deviated from the nationalists' goal of a unilingual French state by further stating: "But it is also our position that we stand for a bilingual province."[51] Further rebukes for the government's francization policy were also stated, calling the approaches proposed by the PQ (less freedom of choice) "totally unacceptable."[52] Congress therefore took a multilayered stance that reflected its

[48] White Paper on the Jewish Community of Montreal by Joseph Ain and Leon Teitelbaum, 1977, CJC Fonds.
[49] White Paper, 1.
[50] White Paper, 3.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.

constituency, who were members of a predominately Anglophone/ bilingual community. In summary, its views can be summarized as: The nationalist aspirations of the new government, while a cause for concern, are non-threatening. The Jewish community can gain from becoming more French, but certain planned reforms by the government are not acceptable, and the community must take a stand against them.

The White Paper concluded with a long underlined sentence: "the Jewish Community of Greater Montreal is here to stay" and called for unity in community, stating that Jewish people have always come together in times of crisis.[53] This sent a strong message of reassurance to the community. By putting forth those positions, the CJC allowed the Jewish community to face the prospect of the new government with a more nuanced approach. It also reassured its constituents that everything would be okay and that it was ready for the tough challenges ahead.

Looking Ahead

Overall, the CJC found itself in November 1976 facing a daunting new reality. A new government with a program built around nationalist principles had come to power. For the Jews, nationalism brought up deep-seated fears from the not too distant past. Many Jewish residents in Montreal were Holocaust survivors or immigrants from Eastern Europe who remembered nationalist waves in the early 20th century before the Holocaust.[54] The CJC, being the voice of the Jewish community of Montreal, were aware of these fears. Its decision to externally present themselves as "having the situation under control" was a strategic position designed to calm those in the community who looked to them for guidance. However, internally, the organization was just as anxious as its constituents. In the face of this and understanding the considerable influence they held in the community, Congress decided to show resilience and urged unity against fear. In approaching the new political order, and especially with the production of the White Paper, the CJC reasoned it could "test the waters" of the new PQ government and brace its constituents for what might happen next.

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[53] Ibid., 3.

[54] For information on the demographic composition of the Montreal Jewish community, including information on Holocaust survivors in Montreal, see: "Demographics - Jewish Montreal". 2011. *Federationcja.Org*. https://www.federationcja.org/en/jewish_montreal/demographics/.

Chapter 3: Bill 101

"Their language is their point of honor, as well as their level of power. So long as they keep it, they are unconquered. When it ceases to be spoken by their children, a greater loss than Montcalm's will be felt."
-Thomas D'Arcy McGee[1]

The divisive issue of the status of the French language in Quebec reached its climax in 1977. After two bills under two different governments, it was the PQ's turn to craft legislation. René Lévesque entrusted his Minister of Cultural Development, Camille Laurin, with preparing the new law. In the early summer of 1977, Laurin unveiled the first draft of Bill 1, later recast as Bill 101, the Charter of the French Language. The PQ's electoral victory the previous year was based on the promise of a stronger language policy than its predecessors, and this new bill had much to deliver on. Gone was the "persuasion" model used in Bill 22. Bill 101 inscribed coercive measures into law to guarantee the promotion and usage of French. For the CJC and the majority English-speaking Jewish community, while accepting that French would take a larger role in their lives, they wondered if these language laws would reduce them to second-class citizens and feared for their civil rights. The leadership of Congress also worried that the linguistic privileges enjoyed by their Anglophone constituents could be rescinded. This chapter will focus on how the CJC reacted to the PQ's signature piece of language legislation, Bill 101, and will show how the organization attempted to position itself as accepting the promotion of the French language while also asserting civil rights concerns of its community.

Meeting with the New Premier … and the White Paper

In the aftermath of the 1976 election and the issuance of its White Paper, the CJC felt it was necessary to meet with René Lévesque, particularly given the circumstances. According to IOIs from January 1977, the CJC always extended this courtesy to newly elected premiers. Camille Laurin was also extended an invitation, though it is unclear if he attended. The purpose of this

[1] Graham Fraser, *René Lévesque and the Parti Québécois in Power*, 2nd ed. (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 91.

meeting was to make known to the Lévesque government the concerns of the Jewish community.[2] In the January 31st meeting, a delegation consisting of Eastern Region Chairman Leon Teitelbaum, Joseph Ain, Joel Pinsky, representatives from B'nai Brith, and representatives from Zionist and Sephardic organizations met with the Premier.[3] In opening the discussions, Teitelbaum expressed the view that the CJC was the "representative voice of the Jews in Quebec (…) and that while we are not a monolithic community, the Jews of Quebec are traditionally federalist in their outlook." Teitelbaum stressed, however, that this would not prevent cooperation with the new government.[4] The meeting then turned towards several topics of discussion, with the first being human rights. Immediately the CJC delegates informed Lévesque of their preference that any new language legislation include protections for ethnic and minority cultures. They explicitly cited their objections to the coercive measures of Bill 22, asking for them to be "tempered by reasonable judgment."[5]

Another topic of discussion was "the National Movement," referring to Quebec nationalism and the sovereignty movement. Teitelbaum once again conveyed to the Premier the apprehension of the Jewish community towards nationalism, taking direct aim at the issue by stating the following:

> The average Jewish citizen feels uncomfortable with nationalist movements. Our history has taught us all too well of the dangers to minorities when even legitimate national movements forget the constitutional protection of a minority (…) history will judge the Government, not as much for its accomplishments for the majority of French-speaking citizens of this Province, but by the civilized and progressive manner in which it treats its minorities.[6]

While Teitelbaum's message was critical of certain aspects of the ideology of Lévesque and the PQ, the Premier seemed quite receptive to it. According to the IOI, Lévesque expressed interest and a desire to understand the issues. Regardless of this empathy, this would not stop his government from crafting overarching language legislation that included coercive elements. The PQ had campaigned on a commitment to change Bill 22, and according to Fraser, the new government spent the first months of 1977 "dominated" by the language law. Laurin's first

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[2] IOI, No. 806: January 14, 1977, 3.
[3] IOI, No. 809: February 4, 1977, 1.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid, 2.

duties in office were the formation of a committee to conduct research and produce a White Paper on French language policy, with findings that would guide the government in writing the new law.[7] Like the many commissions and research efforts before, the White Paper resulted in more pessimistic conclusions concerning the future of Francophones in Quebec.[8] Given these conclusions and to add weight to this foundational measure, the PQ decided to enact its new regulations in the form of a Charter.[9]

The CJC reacted with detailed responses, both before and after the publication of the government's White Paper. In the aforementioned January meeting, the CJC was informed of the planned White Paper and invited to submit a brief to the government giving more details and concerns about the Jewish Community and language. Published in early 1977, this brief is an important document, particularly when compared to the organization's reaction after the White Paper's release. It was authored, once again, by Teitelbaum and by JCRI Chairman, Joel Pinsky. The opening pages of the brief dealt specifically with the two most important issues regarding the CJC and the government: human rights and language. With regard to human rights, the CJC cited the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms (Bill 50, 1975) which had extended protections to people based on race, color, sex, civil status, religion, political convictions, language, and ethnic or national origin.[10] In particular, they quoted this passage from Article 43 of the Charter: "Persons belonging to ethnic minorities have a right to maintain and develop their own cultural interests with the other members of their groups."[11] The citation of Article 43 indicates Congress's insistence that the PQ respect existing rights as minorities, particularly cultural rights. The inclusion of the word "language" as a basis on which a person has full and equal recognition also points to the CJC's preference that its linguistic rights as English-speakers be respected. The decision to frame linguistic protection as a human-rights issue was intentional. Congress intervened on behalf of a Jewish community whose culture and religious practice were

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[7] Fraser, *René Lévesque,* 94.
[8] Further information on the White Paper and its contents are located later in this chapter.
[9] Marc Chevrier, *Laws and Languages in Quebec: The Principles and Means of Quebec's Language Policy* (Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère des relations internationales, 1997), 9.
[10] "Brief Submitted by The Canadian Jewish Congress Eastern Region and B'nai Brith – District 22 to The Honorable René Lévesque Premier of Quebec on The Various Concerns of the Jewish Community," by Harvey Crestohl, Joel Pinsky, and Leon Teitelbaum, CJC Series G, File 1977, CJC Fonds, 2.
[11] Ibid.

mostly English, but also to articulate a legal and humanitarian grievance against any attempts by the PQ to modify the linguistic rights of the Jews.

The brief then goes on to address the language issue directly by referencing an IOI from 1974, which itself was in response to Bill 22. This document cited the CJC's understanding of the new realities of French as the language of work and community, but it also expressed its alarm over the "implied-discrimination" which could result from any new legislation that might cast Anglophones as second-class citizens.[12] Congress stated clearly that the Jewish community was sensitive to such divisions. In closing its section on language, the CJC offered a direct statement as to what it would prefer to see in any new language legislation:

> We urge that while pursuing the legitimate objectives of promoting and preserving the use of the French Language in Quebec, the Government not adopt any policy, legislation, or regulations that would categorize population by race, color, creed, ethnic origin, or mother tongue, or which could use any of these criteria to create advantages for one group of citizens to the detriment of others.[13]

This advice stood in stark contrast to both the linguistic reality of the province and to the PQ vision for the future. Any new language legislation introduced by the nationalist government would certainly give advantages to French against other languages in order strengthen and promote it, as became even more obvious after the provisions of the White Paper became known. In comparing the two group's attitudes towards language, Martel and Pâquet include an analysis that applies well to the contrast between interests of the CJC and those of the government of Quebec: collective vs. individual rights; and coercive measures vs. persuasive methods.[14] Bills 22 and 101 both deal with these two important themes, which reflect the direction the government of Quebec had been taking since the 1960s. The PQ government ultimately decided that to avoid the linguistic decline predicted by so many commissions and experts since the 1960s, persuasion was no longer enough to protect and promote French. With this conclusion reached, for the betterment of the language and the common good of Quebec, individual language rights had to be superseded by sweeping collective rights to promote French. This would prove to be a step too far for the CJC.

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[12] Brief submitted to René Lévesque, 3.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Marcel Martel and Martin Pâquet, *Speaking Up: A History of Language and Politics in Canada and Quebec,* trans. Patricia Dumas (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2012), 162.

The White Paper

In April 1977, Minister Laurin formally tabled this government's White Paper on language, with its policy positions mirroring the numerous studies that had come before. Demographic research showed the French language declining in all parts of Canada and Quebec. In the world of business, Francophones still held jobs with lower economic rewards than Anglophones, and English was still the language most used of commerce. To counter this, the White Paper included several important recommendations. Companies with more than 50 employees would need a "francization" certificate to prove that their employees were competent in the language and primarily used it in the workplace. On products and signage, it was recommended French be the only language visible. Municipalities with English names would need to replace them with French names. But most importantly, in the realm of education, new restrictions were put in place. It was recommended that children of immigrant parents no longer be allowed access to English schools, and were mandated only to attend French schools.[15] The White Paper therefore took a much more coercive approach in dealing with the language issue.

Shortly after the policy document was released, the CJC issued a scathing response. A telegram sent by the CJC to Premier Lévesque stated that the Congress "viewed with dismay" that the government intended to carry out the recommendations in the White Paper. The telegram reiterated the organization's support for the promotion of French while strongly opposing "the development of French (…) by the diminution of English and the severe encroachment on the rights of all non-Francophones proposed in the White Paper."[16] The telegram continued with much harsher and accusatory language, accusing the White Paper's goals as "discriminatory in intent and coercive in nature."[17] It even went as far to call into question the legitimacy of the Quebec nationalist movement by stating: "No legitimate national movement where the renaissance of people is linked to the flourishing of language and culture can take such action without seriously jeopardizing the laudable aim of advancing the cause of French."[18] The telegram finishes off unequivocally stating that any government action based on the White Paper

[15] "Master Plan for a New French Quebec – CBC Digital Archives," CBC Radio-Canada, Accessed August 12, 2019. https://www.cbc.ca/archives/entry/master-plan-for-a-new-french-quebec
[16] IOI, April 6, 1977. (No number listed, this was most likely an individual IOI part of press release).
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.

would lead to forced francization which would jeopardize the rights of minorities, and lead to two-class systems of Francophones and non-Francophones, a situation Congress wanted to avoid. In essence, the CJC's impassioned reaction came from its belief that the nationalist movement was veering in the wrong direction; particularly in the government's perceived planned repression of minority rights instead of focusing on other ways to promote French language and culture

These statements and accusations by an organization that had high hopes of working with the provincial government are telling. The meetings with the Premier in January, the submission of detailed concerns to the government, and the meetings with Minister Laurin,[19] all allowed the CJC to extend its voice into the government, with the hope of establishing the level of familiarity and lines of communication it had enjoyed when the Liberals were in power. The White Paper demonstrated to the CJC and its constituents that all the attempts to make its voices heard had fallen on deaf ears and been passed over in favor of a coercive promotion of French. The PQ government did make sincere efforts to reach out to the Jewish community through the CJC in the weeks before and after the White Paper's release. But these interactions only created more distrust and misunderstanding between the two. In particular, the Minister in charge of the language legislation, Camille Laurin, touched on a question regarding Jewish fears in an interview with the *Montreal Star*, as reported in an IOI from April 1977. Laurin reportedly stated that he understood the Jewish community recognized the "political will" of the Francophones and would adjust to it. But he further explained he did not expect Jews to assimilate into the French-speaking community, "because the Jewish community of Quebec is identified with the Anglophone community with few exceptions."[20] This is significant in that it shows the PQ government viewed the Jews primarily as a component of the Anglophone minority, rather than as a religious and cultural community in their own right. This is further supported by Laurin's closing statements in which he stressed the PQ government did not feel any "spirit of revenge" towards Jews or Anglophones. This was a sentiment he made clear to Jewish community leaders but one which he had doubts they understood, stating: "but I'm not

[19] Minister Laurin met with the CJC somewhere around January 1977. This is mentioned in IOI, No. 805: January 14, 1977, 1.
[20] IOI, No. 818: April 29, 1977, 1.

sure they believed me."[21] This statement seems to confirm several observations in the literature that the two sides simply did not understand each other due to their very different pasts and historical trajectories.[22] These trajectories would collide in the introduction of the PQ's signature legislation, Bill 101.

The Charter of the French Language

The Charter of the French Language, known initially as Bill 1,[23] was tabled by Minister Laurin in late April and a draft of the proposed law was released to the public. The legislation took most of the recommendations in the White Paper and proposed to make them provincial law. As expected, the legislation went further than Bill 22; the PQ sought to make French not only the official language but the *sole* language of Quebec in the government, courts, schools, and workplaces.[24] French would become the mandatory language of signs and labels, and children would only be eligible for schooling in English if their father or mother had received such instruction in English in Quebec and nowhere else.[25] Companies of 50 or more employees were to undergo francization programs to transform their language of work into French only, and the Ministry of Culture could even apply this to companies with fewer than 50 employees where they deemed it necessary.[26] Civil administrative services and texts were to be only available in French.[27] Advertisements were to be in French only[28], and a new regulatory authority, the Office de la langue française, was established to oversee the implementation and adherence to the law.[29] Bill 101 took considerably more coercive measures than Bill 22, which was exactly what the PQ wanted. Parents lost their freedom of choice to decide where to send their children to school. The Office de la langue française enacted strict requirements on businesses of 50 or more employees to not only begin francization programs immediately, but also to maintain French as the sole

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[21] Ibid.
[22] Gerald Tulchinsky, *Canada's Jews: People's Journey* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 447.
[23] The legislation started off as "Bill 1" because the government wanted its first piece of legislation to be the language bill as a demonstration of its priorities. The name eventually ended up being "Bill 101."
[24] "Bill 1: Charter of the French Language" (Draft), Assemblée nationale du Québec, 1977. CJC Series G, File 1977, CJC Fonds, 10-11 (articles 51-59).
[25] Bill 101 draft, 5, article 24, and 10-11 articles 51-59.
[26] Ibid., 20, article 111.
[27] Ibid., 3, article 15.
[28] Ibid., 9, article 46.
[29] Ibid., 13-17, Title II, Chapter II titled "The Office de langue française."

language of commerce, or face penalties.[30] And, perhaps the most significant of all articles in the Bill, Article 172 stated that Section 52 of the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, which protects rights in the Charter from any future law except when otherwise stated[31], was amended allowing Bill 101 to supersede protections granted by it.[32] In other words, Bill 101 was not subject to the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and any perceived violations of rights undertaken under the auspices of the Charter were to be completely legal.

The sweeping reforms of the new bill outraged many segments of the population who now saw their linguistic privileges and their civil rights rolled back. The CJC, representing the Jewish community and by extension many citizens to whom the new restrictions applied, acted immediately to express its dissatisfaction and frustration. Congress's official response came in the form of a statement in an IOI dated June 30, 1977 titled "Position of Jewish Community of Quebec on Language Legislation (Bill 1).[33] Here, the CJC informed its constituents that in reaction to the draft of the Bill, another Brief had been submitted to the government detailing the Jewish community's concerns. The remainder of the IOI summarized key issues cited in the brief, especially those that concerned the Jewish community the most. The CJC was careful to frame its grievances with Bill 101 on the basis of civil rights. The statement began by reaffirming the Jewish community's support for French as the language of Quebec, but that support for the Bill from the Jewish community covered only that single objective. The CJC then stated its objections to the Bill based on what it interpreted as "unjust treatment of minorities or individuals or an infringement of their rights and freedoms."[34]

The statement then turned to a tone of solidarity, evoking both Jewish and Québécois suffering by stating: "We believe that the French language can flourish without undue coercion and harsh penalties (…) whatever the injustices of the past of which the Jewish community has also been the victim as so often in our history, these cannot be corrected by discriminatory coercive measures."[35] This statement, with its powerful evocation of the past traumas of the

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[30] Ibid., 17-27, articles 95-159.
[31] Section 52 of the Quebec Charter of Rights and Freedoms states: "Sections 9 to 38 (which state the explicit civil rights of the population) prevail over any provision of any subsequent act which may be inconsistent therewith unless such act expressly states that it applies despite the Charter." As found in: *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms* 1975 (Québec) s 52. http://legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/showdoc/cs/C-12
[32] Bill 101 draft, 29, article 172.
[33] IOI, No. 822: June 30, 1977, 1-2.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.

Jewish and Québécois peoples, was perhaps an attempt at understanding. Both histories involve persecution, both involve some form of dispossession, and both pasts involve assimilation or overarching rule by another power(s). Premier Lévesque himself had a great admiration for the Jewish people and the State of Israel for their shared history and determination to be their own masters.[36] Perhaps this historical reference, even though part of a much more critical statement, was the Congress trying to bring about mutual understanding between the Jewish community and the PQ.

Regardless though, the position then turns away from solidarity towards civil rights concerns, referencing the proposal to have the language charter supersede the Quebec Charter of Human Rights, which the CJC opposed vehemently.[37] Congress lambasted the PQ's inclusion of such a provision stating: "to allow an article of this nature to remain, not only belies the intent of human rights legislation, which was so eagerly received by our community, and, indeed, by all citizens of Quebec, but tends to encourage intolerance and disregard for human rights."[38] In closing its position, the CJC urged the government to reconsider many provisions in the proposed law, particularly its use of the terms "Québécois" and "language of the Quebec people." Specifically, the CJC objected to the statement: "The French language has been the language of the Quebec people."[39] Historically such a statement is true when referring to the majority Francophone population, however, the CJC called this statement "historically inaccurate," and that other languages had also been part of Quebec culture.[40]

Since its emergence into common usage in the 1960s, the term "Québécois" has had different meanings to different people. Civic nationalists would argue that it is meant to embrace everyone who identifies with the Quebec nation, regardless of their mother tongue or cultural heritage. But in its response to the draft language legislation, the CJC clearly inferred that its usage in Bill 1 was intended to refer only to those Quebecers whose mother tongue was French. Congress's dissatisfaction with the usage of "Québécois" to only refer to Francophones was telling, given its position as an advocacy organization for a minority group that in the past had

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[36] Pierre Anctil, "René Lévesque et la communauté juive de Montréal," *Le Devoir*, November 24, 2007, accessed August 30, 2019. https://www.ledevoir.com/opinion/idees/165790/rene-levesque-et-la-communaute-juive-de-montreal
[37] IOI, No. 822: June 30, 1977, 1-2.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid.

been grouped as "Other" and isolated from majority populations. This concern was therefore twofold. It concerned language rights, certainly, but also the fear among Jews about their place in Quebec society. Would this bill put them in the margins? Would they be reduced to second-class citizens? Only the final draft of the Bill would tell. In the meantime, Congress took the opportunity to assemble its objections and grievances into a comprehensive document.

Another Brief and Specific Recommendations

During the consultation period between the introduction of the French Language Charter in the Spring of 1977 and the moment it received royal assent in August, the government invited individuals and groups to send recommendations concerning the Bill. As stated in its official position circulated in June, the CJC's leadership jumped at the opportunity to make their concerns heard. JCRC Chairman, Joel Pinsky and the President of the B'nai Brith District of Montreal, Harvey Crestohl, directed this effort and subsequently prepared a brief and submitted it to the government. This was an impressive document, twenty-six pages long, and consisting of 57 proposals for revisions, covering a majority of the articles in the Bill. This document is perhaps one of the most important I examined for this thesis as is straightforward in its content and outlines in clear terms the CJC's policy on specific issues related to language.

In its preface, the CJC reiterated its policy accepting French as the main language of the province. Juxtaposed with that acknowledgement, however, were fears that increased language restrictions would infringe on its constituents' civil rights as Jewish citizens.[41] Furthermore, Congress expressed its concern that any division of the province's citizens into "majority" and "minority" groups should be eliminated, and that all Quebecers be deemed equal.[42] The brief also outlined the CJC's interpretation of human rights violations in the Bill; specifically, it called for removal of Article 172 superseding the Quebec Charter of Human Rights.[43] The brief further questioned the usage of the term "Québécois" and reiterated the CJC's belief that the government was using the term to refer to only French-speaking Quebec citizens, which they worried would "set up different classes of Québécois." In its subsequent recommendation, the Congress urged

[41]Brief Submitted by the Canadian Jewish Congress Quebec Region to Commission on Education, Cultural Affairs and Communications on Bill 1 Charter of the French Language in Quebec by Harvey Crestohl, Joel Pinsky, and Melvyn Schwartzben, June 2, 1977, CJC Series G, File 1977, CJC Fonds, 3.
[42] CJC Brief on Bill 1, 2.
[43] Ibid., 4-5.

the government to replace the term "Québécois" with "Every person."[44] Elsewhere, the Quebec Human Rights Charter was again referenced, specifically its provision that "every person has a right to full and equal recognition and exercise of his human rights and freedoms without distinction, exclusion, or preference based on …. Language." The brief pointed out that such rights would be violated by means of the Bill's provision for French-only advertisements and also by the restriction of access to English schools.[45] As Congress believed there were other instances of rights violations, and also in order to add its own recommendations based on the needs of its community, wide-spread recommendations followed in the second section.

Following this substantive preface was the central section of the brief, devoted to specific provisions and analysis. Here, the authors went article by article (there were 177 in the entire draft Bill) making precise suggestions and providing the reasoning behind some suggestions. For example, on page twelve, the Brief critiques Article fifteen, which stated: "The text and documents of the Civil Administration shall be drawn up in the Official Language."[46] The recommended change for this article read: "The text and documents of the Civil Administration shall be drawn up in the Official Language and shall be available in English to those requesting an English version."[47] The reasoning according to the CJC stated, "Close to one million residents of Quebec ought not to be put in the position where they might either misinterpret the law or not be able to take advantage of the social and economic policies by the government of the day."[48]

In referencing the Charter's preamble which discussed the importance of the French language and its connection to the people of Quebec, the CJC advocated for the replacement of it with one that not only discussed French, but also cited minorities and their language rights.[49] This theme of inclusivity is seen throughout the recommendations, such as the Congress' preference for the phrase "every Quebecer" to be replaced with the word "every person" in an article referring to education.[50] Congress also felt that to further connections between French speakers and minorities that the president of the Office de la langue française should be assisted

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[44] Ibid., 5-6.
[45] Ibid., 7.
[46] Bill 101 draft, 3.
[47] CJC Brief on Bill 1, 12.
[48] Ibid., 12-13.
[49] Ibid., 9.
[50] Ibid., 11.

by two individuals of minority descent.[51] Another theme throughout was the CJC's insistence that English rights be more protected in certain areas where the Charter specified services were available in French only. For example, the CJC felt any person had a right to public services in French *and* English such as in public notices by the civil administration, health services, and the courts.[52] The Brief also wanted clarification to be put into the Charter that permitted English to be spoken in formal assemblies.[53]

In reference to provisions concerning business and commerce, the CJC proposed changes in many areas, such as its preference for businesses of five or fewer employees not be obliged to serve customers in French, and the deletion of an article prohibiting the firing of employees who were unilingual French-speakers. This was recommended in its belief that the Quebec Charter of Human Rights already prohibited this, and due to the CJC's belief that its inclusion would lead to a differentiation between two classes of people, English and French speakers.[54] In its proposals about francization provisions, specifically the provision by which the government could force a business with less than 50 employees to implement such a program, Congress advocated for its removal, stating that it believed francization provisions in Bill 22 were sufficient.[55]As for the planned penal sanctions for businesses found in violation of the Charter, the CJC pushed for those to be removed as well. However, if those provisions were to remain, Congress recommended that an appeals process be put in place to allow businesses greater rights in these areas.[56]

The Charter's provisions concerning labels, advertising, and French names also concerned the CJC, who wished certain provisions be put in place to protect its community. Specifically, Congress proposed an exemption of kosher foods from being required to have French names or descriptions on their packaging.[57] In reference to advertising in shops, which impacted many of Congress's constituents who owned businesses, a suggestion to allow English or another language in advertising on the exterior of store was added, so long as French was

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[51] Ibid., 21.
[52] Ibid., 10-11 (notices by civil administration), 11 (health), 12 (courts).
[53] Ibid., 11.
[54] Ibid., 11, 16.
[55] Ibid., 22.
[56] Ibid., 24.
[57] Ibid., 17.

more predominant.[58] These recommendations also touched on firm names. Many CJC constituents did not have French names, and as such, Congress advocated for the removal of provisions requiring firm names to be in French only, citing its belief that provisions in Bill 22, which called for a French name which could also be accompanied by an English name, were sufficient.[59]

In turning towards education, Congress proposed its most sweeping recommendations, specifically calling for the complete removal of the provision that English education be only available to children whose parents had been educated in Quebec. Instead, the organization preferred that English education be available to any child whose parents received it *anywhere* in the world.[60] The CJC also pushed for the exemption of private religious schools from language provisions in the Charter. This would cover the many Jewish private schools in the Montreal area.[61]

When the recommendations reached Article 172 concerning the Bill superseding the Quebec Charter of Human Rights, Congress used nearly the same wording as in its June 20th IOI, with a much more negative tone. It cited its deep rejection of any such provision, which it viewed as only the beginning of further encroachment on civil rights:

> The Jewish Community feels especially concerned about the inclusion of this Article. It is a major catalyst that has aroused the anxiety and apprehension of all segments of Quebec society. To allow an Article of this nature to remain, not only belies the intent of human rights legislation, which was so eagerly received by our community, and indeed by all citizens of Quebec, but tends to encourage intolerance, a disregard for human rights.[62]

With its 57 recommendations in place, the CJC concluded its brief with a final note of solidarity, stating that it supported the government's objective to promote and preserve French and that it believed its suggestions would not hinder such goals. The brief also made one final appeal for a language law that did not violate the human rights of Quebecers, stating: "We believe that the French Language can flourish without undue coercion and harsh penalties (…) that Bill 1 becomes the Charter of the French language for all persons in Quebec.[63]

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[58] Ibid., 17. Article 46 called for advertisements in French only.
[59] Ibid., 18.
[60] Ibid., 18-19.
[61] Ibid., 20.
[62] Ibid., 24-25.
[63] Ibid., 26

Adopted Changes

In June, with the completed brief, a delegation of CJC officers delivered the document to the government during a formal meeting in Quebec City. Representatives of the PQ, including Minister Laurin, were present.[64] At the ensuing officers' meeting in July, Frank Schlesinger, a delegate to this meeting, reported back positive news. According to him, the government decided to incorporate 37 of the 57 recommendations, with the PQ praising Congress for preparing what they called "the best brief" they had received. It should be noted that the CJC was not told which 37 recommendations were incorporated, but regardless, Schlesinger noted he felt that government officials were sincere in their praise and comments.[65] Only by examining the final legislation passed by the National Assembly in August can we discover whether Schlesinger's optimistic words would really ring true.

In researching this thesis, therefore, I went through the text of Bill 101 adopted in 1977 to see if the PQ did indeed incorporate the changes recommended by the CJC.[66] This proved quite challenging as the article numbers in the final draft did not always correspond with those in the first draft and the brief. Still, I was able to identify 27 articles the brief referenced.[67] The results of this research show that Schlesinger's positive assessment was incorrect. In those 27 articles, six changes were partially adopted with only seven changes fully adopted by the PQ, only two of which were truly significant, and five which were only symbolic changes. The remaining 14 articles show no changes at all. Among the seven changes adopted, the five symbolic changes were as follows: The government changed the text of Article 6 from: "Every Quebecer has a right to receive his instruction in French," to "Every person has a right to receive his instruction in French.[68] In another change, the PQ allowed English to be used in courts and legislation.[69]

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[64] Minutes of Officer's Meeting held Wednesday, July 13, 1977 at 12: Noon Samuel Bronfman House. CJC Eastern/ Quebec Region, July 13, 1977, CJC Series BB, Box 16: Eastern/Quebec Region Officers minutes 1974-1998, File 3, CJC Fonds.
[65] Minutes of Officer's Meeting held Wednesday, July 13, 1977 at 12: Noon Samuel Bronfman House.
[66] Gouvernement du Québec, *Charter of the French Language (Bill No. 101) with Regulations* (Montreal: CCH Canadian Limited, 1977).
[67] The Following footnotes cite the final draft of Bill 101 passed by the National Assembly in 1977 as cited in the previous footnote along with the section, and reference of the original article of the draft which they correspond to.
[68] Bill 101, Section 6, referencing draft Article 6.
[69] Ibid., Section 11, referencing draft Articles 7-14.

Kosher foods were allowed to have labels with languages other than French[70], advertisements in English media were allowed to remain in English with religious ads exempted from the law[71], and the inclusion of an appeals process during charter violation investigations was included at the CJC's behest.[72]

Two significant changes stand out, however, the first being the PQ's several concessions on education. A provision to exempt private religious schools from the law was added, but the schools would have to get in line with linguistic provisions in order to receive state funding.[73]Articles on access to English schools, furthermore, were modified to allow children access to English education if their parents, already domiciled in Quebec, had received English primary and secondary education in Quebec *or* outside Quebec.[74] This effectively meant that for children of immigrants who received English education in any place outside the province, access to English schools remained, so long as their parents were currently living in Quebec.[75] This meant future immigrants were still impacted by the law, but it ensured those current immigrants that access to English schools remained a rights. Perhaps the most significant change adopted by the government, finally, and a big win for the CJC, was the removal of Article 172 from the final draft, ensuring that the Quebec Charter of Human Rights would apply to Bill 101. Of all the changes adopted, this one was the most important. It ensured Congress leaders that regardless of what impact the Bill might have on the larger community, the civil rights of its constituents were protected under provincial law: a modification that most likely gave some breathing room for the organization because it expanded the grounds on which the language legislation might be challenged in court.

However, regardless of those two significant changes, this left only the five minor changes mentioned earlier along with six partial changes. These revisions, while representing some

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[70] Ibid., Section 51, referencing draft Article 42.
[71] Ibid., Section 59, referencing draft Article 46.
[72] Ibid., Section 155, referencing draft Article 119.
[73] Ibid., Section 72, referencing draft Article 58.
[74] Ibid., Sections 73 and 76, referencing draft Article 52.
[75] It should be noted that following the Constitution Act of 1982 and the adoption of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, access to education in both official languages was enshrined as a constitutional right, regardless of where a child's parents were domiciled, and therefore, limiting the powers of Bill 101. In response, the Charter was amended to indicate any child was guaranteed access to English schooling if their parents received English education anywhere in Canada. This was known as "The Canada Clause." For more information, see Martel and Pâquet, *Speaking Up,* 192.

concessions from the government, only amount to practical or symbolical changes. What is even more important to understand is the extent to which the PQ ignored or dismissed the CJC recommendations. Civil administration services and texts, for example, remained available in French only.[76] Consumers retained the right to be served in French, even in companies smaller than five employees.[77] The provision protecting employees from dismissal based on only knowing French or lacking skills in another language was retained.[78] The composition of the Office de la langue française remained unchanged.[79] Francization provisions remained the same,[80] particularly the article authorizing the government to force a company with fewer than 50 employees to implement a francization program was kept in place.[81]All commercial advertisements anywhere, besides in English media sources, must remain only in French.[82] Penal sanctions remained in place for those found in violation of the law.[83] And company names were to remain only in French; however, products by the firm could have translations, and health/ social services could keep non-French names so long as they had an English translation.[84]

In summary: only seven articles were changed, none of which re-shaped the overall principles of the Bill. Fourteen changes were rejected entirely, and six changes were adopted partially. Ultimately, Schlesinger's hopeful report back to the CJC in July proved unfounded. However, given the PQ's ideology and overall agenda, it was unlikely that many of the major changes the Congress proposed would actually have been adopted. The organization's main argument for its recommendations was based on civil rights, especially with respect to Article 172 and other provisions concerning access to English in places like the courts or healthcare. However, asking the PQ to adopt other changes, specifically deleting its coercive articles, was an unrealistic expectation. The PQ's intention for Bill 101 *was* a coercive law that would force the province and its citizens to come in line with its program for the protection and promotion of French. Previous legislation and investigations had led to the conclusion that such measures were necessary to curb the decline of French. If anything, the CJC's recommendations in its brief

[76] Bill 101, Section 2 (services), and Section 9, (Texts) referencing back to draft articles 2 and 15 respectively.
[77] Ibid., Section 2, referencing draft Article 3.
[78] Ibid., Section 45, referencing draft Article 36.
[79] Ibid., Section 100-110, referencing draft Articles Article 67 to 74.
[80] Ibid., Sections 135-140 and 151, referencing draft Article 106.
[81] Ibid., Section 151, referencing draft Article 111.
[82] Ibid., Sections 58-59, referencing draft Article 46.
[83] Ibid., Section 205, referencing draft Article 163.
[84] Ibid., Sections 63, 68, 70, and 71, referencing draft Articles 48 and 49.

would have reduced Bill 101 to not so much a charter of the French language, but a quasi-bilingual charter giving more rights to French but still retaining rights for English speakers in certain key areas. The PQ explicitly did not want this and ultimately did not adopt many major changes the CJC wanted. This is similar to the CJC's actions towards Bill 22 in 1974, when the organization affirmed its preference for official bilingualism over French as the official language. Like the PQ, Bourassa and the Liberals would not have accepted such a provision, but Congress recommended it nonetheless. Regardless of the mixed results on Bill 101 though, the CJC had made its first major inroads with the new government. While not getting the results it wanted, the organization showed the extent of its dedication to making Jewish voices heard. These actions would later prove influential. Many of the concerns of the CJC about the Charter would later be the basis for many judicial challenges against it. Congress's place in the much larger debate concerning Anglo-rights in the province thus propelled them to not only provide leadership to its community, but also, for many Quebec Anglophones who held qualms about the Charter as well.

The Passage of the Bill and the Aftermath

Bill 101 received royal assent on August 26th, 1977, officially replacing Bill 22 and finally putting in place a sweeping language law the PQ wanted. It is unclear what the CJC's reaction to the final draft was as archival documents do not mention the legislation in this time period. Seeing as many of the substantial changes Congress wished for did not make it into the final draft, there must have been considerable disappointment. Indeed, a newsletter from October 1977 reported that following the submission, the Congress sent an aide-memoire to the government offering, yet again, more suggested changes.[85] However, the longer-term impacts of Bill 101 on the CJC were not those that happened after the passage, but before. Following the submission of the brief in July, Eastern Region meeting minutes from August show the beginnings of discussions about appointing a representative in Quebec City.[86] This became known as "The Man in Quebec Project." Discussions about the project spanned from early

[85] IOI No 828, October 21, 1977. The contents of this Aide-Memoire were not found in the archives.
[86] Meeting Minutes of Officers' Meeting held on Tuesday, August 2nd, at 6:00 p.m. Samuel Bronfman House. CJC Eastern/ Quebec Region, August 2, 1977, Series BB, Box 16: Eastern/Quebec Region Officers minutes 1974-1998, File 3, CJC Fonds.

August into September,[87] resulting in Congress deciding that in order to remain up to date with the workings and the agendas of the new government, a permanent representative of the organization should be present in Quebec City, and a new committee would be established among the CJC and other Jewish community organizations. This individual's job was to report back to Congress on government activity and follow political policy directions from the CJC.[88] The additional new committee's work would primarily be "information gathering to help organizations make decisions."[89] Those present at the discussions repeatedly evoked "November 15th" as the main reason for this project, as well as the feeling that the change in government had led to changes in the decision-making process that the CJC did not yet understand.[90]

That is where the CJC stood towards the end of 1977, only one year into the mandate of the PQ government, and the first disagreements between the Congress and the PQ had already passed, albeit with mixed results. Overall, the CJC's experience of and reaction to Bill 101 was characterized by negativity, frustration, and action. The prospect that the linguistic rights of its constituents might be rolled back led the organization to believe that the community's human rights would be violated and that regulation of society by language could lead to non-Francophones being treated as second-class citizens. This was underscored by the PQ's attempts to override the Quebec Charter of Human Rights in the case of Bill 101. These realities were something the CJC desperately wanted to avoid. At the same time, Congress wanted the government to understand its support for the principle that the French language should be promoted and preserved, but not in coercive ways. This shows the organization balancing two parallel objectives: preserving rights as Jewish citizens but also going along with societal change in Quebec. Its attempts at suggested reforms of Bill 101 through its brief was a sincere and substantive effort but one that achieved mixed results at best, since many of its proposals would have seriously diluted the Bill's true purpose of promoting and protecting French. However, the CJC did successfully convince the government to change its stance on schooling and on the

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[87] Discussions of this topic most likely concluded as the Jewish High Holidays of 1977 began on September 12th.
[88] Meeting Minutes of Officers' Meeting held on Tuesday, August 2nd, at 6:00 p.m. Samuel Bronfman House.
[89] "Meeting Minutes of joint meeting between CJC Eastern Region Officers and AJCC held on Thursday, August 18th, 5:30 P.M. Samuel Bronfman House, page 2, CJC Eastern/Quebec Region, August 18th, 1977, CJC Series BB, Box 16: Eastern Region/ Quebec Region Officers minutes 1974-1998 File 3, CJC Fonds
[90] Stated by Flora Nagile and Leon Teitelbaum in "Meeting Minutes of Eastern Region Officers of Canadian Jewish Congress, which took place on Thursday, August 25, 5:30 P.M. at the Samuel Bronfman House, 1590 McGregor Avenue," CJC Eastern/Quebec Region, August 25, 1977, CJC Series BB, Box 16: Eastern Region/Quebec Region Officers minutes 1974-1998, File 3, CJC Fonds.

application of the Quebec Charter of Human rights. The Brief also provided an opportunity for the Congress to create its first real conversations and connections with the PQ in the hopes of better relations in the future. However, what came next in 1980 would bring the CJC face to face with another PQ policy. This time, it was one it could not tolerate.

Chapter 4: The 1980 Referendum

"But this country of Quebec only will arrive when an adult society, aware of itself, will have approved it with a clear and democratic majority, in a referendum, as we promised."[1]

-René Lévesque, November 15th, 1976.

Speaking those words to a rapturous crowd on election night in 1976 after his electoral victory, Réne Lévesque expressed a central promise to those listening: his government's intention to hold a referendum on sovereignty within its mandate. Lévesque kept his promise and on May 20th, 1980, Quebecers went to the polls to vote on "sovereignty-association."[2] As the leading organization of Canada's Jews, the CJC saw this push for sovereignty as opposed to its values, given its constituents' fear of nationalism and its general preference for federalism. Major concerns of the Jewish community centered around the possibly of losing its civil and linguistic rights if they were to be no longer part of Canada. This chapter deals with the CJC and its reaction to the PQ's plan for a sovereignty-association referendum. As we shall see, the CJC chose once again to stay politically neutral, as it had in the 1976 election, and to face the consequences of that decision. Additional attention focuses on how the CJC reacted externally to its concerned constituents and internally within the confines of executive meetings. In the end, the CJC maintained a "controlled" and "stiff upper lip" façade to the Jewish community, prompting criticism from constituents who were looking for guidance. Internally, officers dealt with disunity and anxiety at the prospect of how to deal with the referendum as an organization and how Quebec sovereignty might impact the future of the Montreal Jewish community.

Early Reactions and the Approaching Referendum

As examined in the previous two chapters, the election of the PQ and the implementations of the new government's language policy caused anxiety and consternation at the CJC. By 1978, however, the CJC was much more prepared and focused than in years prior. Dealing with the

[1] "Novembre 1976 : "L'indépendance au pouvoir," Archives de Radio-Canada (Radio-Canada, 2008).
[2] "Sovereignty-Association" had been Lévesque's preferred constitutional option since 1967. It meant that Quebec should gain full political sovereignty but retain an economic association with Canada, the terms of which were to be negotiated in the wake of a Yes vote in a referendum. For more information, see Graham Fraser, "Chapter 12: The Question," in *René Lévesque and the Parti Québécois in Power*, 2nd ed. (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 190-207.

experience of the Charter of the French Language helped the Congress organize better and respond more promptly to the reforms coming from the new government. For example, one of the first events in 1978 following the PQ's first year in power was yet another meeting with a government minister, this time, with the Minister for State and Economic Development, Bernard Landry. Frank Schlesinger and other members of the CJC held a bilingual discussion with the minister, during which Landry praised the Jewish community's efforts to increase francization in its schools. He also noted that he believed Bill 101 was flexible enough to deal with the "particular problems" brought up by CJC, adding that be believed the Jewish community to be the most bilingual in the province following French Canadians.[3]

Minister Landry also responded to fears in the community, telling those present that the PQ was a progressive party and that members of his government were not fanatics or racists.[4] The Minister even touched on his views of Jewish assimilation in the province, stating his view that the historical assimilation of Jews into the Anglophone community due to the placement of Jews in Protestant schools was an "unfortunate accident of history." He also suggested that it was in the Jews' interests not to align with Anglophones who had "colonized Quebec."[5] However, Landry concluded his remarks by stating that he felt hurt that the Jewish people mistrusted the PQ government.[6] Such statements from a PQ Minister are significant in this context, showing that the CJC's efforts to make inroads with the government were working and that there was a general understanding of the community's concerns within the National Assembly. Landry's comment on the Jews' relationship with the Anglophones, however, still showed tension between the CJC and the government, given that the Jewish community's identification with the English-speaking minority was still strong. Indeed, the majority of Quebec's Jews were English speakers, but the history of the Jewish people and their fraught relationship with nationalist movements is key to understanding Jewish opposition to Quebec sovereignty.

As mentioned in chapter three, the CJC used its meetings with Premier Lévesque in 1977 to make its positions known with respects to sovereignty, establishing that its community was

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[3] "Canadian Jewish Congress – Eastern Region Officers' Meeting, Wednesday January 25, 1978, at the Samuel Bronfman House, CJC Eastern Region/Quebec Region, January 25, 1978, CJC Series BB, Box 16: Eastern Region/ Quebec Region Officers minutes 1974-1998, File 4, CJC Fonds.
[4] Ibid, (this document does not have page numbers).
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.

"traditionally federalist in outlook," and that "the traditional Jewish citizen feels uncomfortable with nationalist movements."[7] This shows that the community linked nationalism and Quebec sovereignty together. In terms of the community's fear, one needs only look at the past 200 years of history to see nationalist movements in several European countries such as Russia, Poland, Germany, and France that resulted in large scale persecution of Jews. With many CJC officers having emigrated from countries where persecution occurred, and given the organization's commitment to civil rights, the CJC was bound to encounter huge challenges when the referendum finally came about. Reactions of fear, confusion, and anxiety animated both the Jewish community and the CJC officers. The archival research for this thesis identified two distinct forms or levels within this broadly apprehensive reaction. The first is a set of external reactions which were presented to the Jewish community at large, usually in the form of public statements and positions, or meetings with the community. Internal reactions are the second form. They appear as discussions among the CJC officers, found in private speeches and meeting minutes which the public would otherwise never see. Examining both kinds of reaction in turn will provide a better understanding of the different positions the CJC found themselves in during this period and helps explain how this minority community faced this event head-on with perceived confidence but also widespread fear. External reactions shall be examined first.

External Reactions to the 1980 Referendum

External reactions by the CJC provide a look at the façade the organization attempted to portray to the wider Jewish community. This section, therefore, explores the different sources of external communication used by the CJC in reference to the referendum. As will be seen, Jewish citizens looked to the CJC for guidance, with major community institutions such as the Jewish media publishing articles and opinion pieces from its leaders, external congressional communiques, and promotions of public events by the CJC.[8] Thus there was an expectation the Congress would offer some level of guidance on the important issue of the referendum. The sources examined here include the IOIs, community meetings, newsletters, and newspapers. As such, all of the statements and positions communicated in these sources were known at large by the Jewish public and provide clear insights in the CJC's public posture in the referendum debate.

[7] IOI, No 809: February 4, 1977, 1-2.
[8]The Canadian Jewish News is an example of a vital Jewish publication frequently reported on CJC activities.

The first external discussions about the referendum appear in IOIs as early as February 1978. The IOI mentions a newsletter from February 10th which stated the CJC's position of political neutrality taken two years earlier concerning the 1976 provincial election, and suggests that same position would apply to the referendum.[9] Thus, in attempting to remain "non-political" towards the issue of Quebec sovereignty, the Congress once again presented itself as maintaining its traditional approach of neutrality. However, the importance of the referendum changed the dynamics of this approach. The referendum was not just another election, its results would determine the future of all citizens of Quebec. Such an influential vote meant that the organization would need to re-evaluate the effectiveness of its traditional position while also attempting to show the public that it nevertheless was confident in it. Newsletters two months later in April informed constituents of internal discussions during a meeting of the National Executive concerning the referendum. During that said meeting, various options were considered on what position Congress should take. The IOIs describe discussions about the importance of voting, but also the importance of staying out of elections as a standing policy of the CJC and concluded that the Congress would study the issue further. The IOIs gave the public the view that even though Congress was to take its traditional non-partisan position, further examination of the situation was to be conducted, giving the impression the CJC had the situation under control. What the IOIs omit are the diverse viewpoints, moods, and feelings that prevailed in those discussions. More often than not, IOIs gave the picture of a united Congress standing up to the challenges of the changing province. Further analysis in the next section will show otherwise, but the tactic of dissemination of external communications, such as the IOIs, and official statements, were designed to calm a frightened Jewish citizenry. As such, they contain no hint of internal division.

Beginning in 1979, the contents of the IOIs became less and less detail-oriented, particularly in the French edition, so much so that by 1980, IOIs ceased publication altogether.[10] The last references about "The Quebec Situation," as it was known, appeared in one newsletter in early 1979 which described a community meeting at a synagogue which hosted Premier

[9] IOI, No. 836: February 10, 1978, 3.
[10] Once can see the IOIs changing from detailed reports to a simple newsletter with different parts reporting on each region.

Lévesque who took questions from the community.[11] Further external communications by the organization were found through an examination of the internal meeting minutes and research through archival boxes of individual Congress members. Several meeting minutes are categorized in this chapter as "internal communication" but for the purpose in this section, contents of a select few meeting minutes yield information about actions Congress was to take in public events. Indeed, beginning in 1980, Congress began a series of meetings amongst its executive and other committee boards on what best practices to use when communicating with the public about the referendum. Contents of meeting minutes from late February show discussions amongst officers in which they believed, regardless of the outcome of the referendum, there were certain realities the community needed to face up to. Flora Naglie, an officer present, suggested that meetings between presidents of organizations be convened.[12] It is these meetings and the CJC's official press releases and communications with the public that are of interest.

Within the archival material, references to these community meetings omit any specific details about the mood and outcome of these events. What is striking, rather, are the instructions given to Congress members to help them conduct these meetings, particularly concerning strict protocols on what to say. For example, meeting minutes from March 12th, 1980 give explicit instructions to the members which emphasized several priorities, beginning with the need to restate to community leaders the neutral position of Congress and then to allow input from presidents and community leaders to be heard. CJC leaders should also provide all organizations with information on the technicalities of the referendum process, encourage the dissemination of the information through organizational meetings, and finally, recommend to presidents that the organized community not take a public position.[13] These suggestions were then put to a vote amongst the officers with the results being eight officers in favor and four against. Those who voted against the proposal felt it dealt too little or too much on the referendum question.[14] While

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[11] *Information CJC,* No. 5, February 19, 1979, 10, by Ruth Lazerus, and Alan Rose, ed, Canadian Jewish Congress 1979. CJC Series FA 2, CJC Fonds.
[12] "Minutes, Officers' Meeting February 27, 1980, 5:30 P.M. Samuel Bronfman House," CJC Eastern Region/Quebec Region, February 27, 1980, CJC Series BB, Box 16: Eastern Region/ Quebec Region Officers minutes 1974-1998, File 6. CJC Fonds.
[13] "Minutes, Officers' Meeting March 12, 1980, 5:30 P.M. Samuel Bronfman House," CJC Eastern Region/Quebec Region, March 12, 1980, CJC Series BB, Box 16: Eastern Region/ Quebec Region Officers minutes 1974-1998, File 6. CJC Fonds, 1-2.
[14] Minutes, Officers' Meeting March 12, 1980, 2.

one third of the officers voted in favor, the presence of the others shows the beginnings of disunity on the approach, especially on the final point of the proposal which again underlined the organization's preferred stance of neutrality. The inclusion of these protocols is rather odd in this context as, with these plans in place, the CJC nonetheless urged the community to retain the status quo of neutrality. This most likely was part of a larger tactic intended to keep people calm, lessen their worries, and, most importantly, to remain neutral and not get the community mired in controversy.

This theme of reassurance is seen throughout other documents the CJC used when conducting these meetings with the public. Another such document was found in the box of CJC Member Jack Kantrowitz. This document, titled "Point to Make in Briefing Community Prior to Referendum," (Figure 7) included eight points of detailed reference officers were meant to rely upon when conducting those meetings. Once again, the document reiterated the impossibility of the CJC taking a stance on the referendum, but advised officers to assure the public that the organization was "constantly monitoring the situation (…) to protect the rights of the Jewish population."[15] The document continued, advising officers to state: "A yes vote would most certainly not mean the end of the world,"[16] stressing the point that regardless of the results, the referendum "would not change the direction that Quebec was taking."[17] As the referendum day drew near, a third and final communiqué was issued focusing more on the long-term impact of the referendum, and the CJC's goals of reassurance and preservation of the Jewish community regardless of the outcome, stating: "When speaking to community groups, it should be clearly underlined that there will be no change the day after the referendum. This should be made very clear in order to avoid any panic within the population."[18]

With these protocols laid out, the CJC was determined to promote a coordinated effort amongst community leaders to call for unity and calm in the face of uncertainty. However, regardless of the concerted effort by the organization to externally show a strong Congress, it appears that these meetings actually did little to calm the public. As the main advocacy leader of the Montreal Jewish community with many connections, the CJC generally knew the attitudes

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[15] "Point to make in briefing community prior to Referendum," CJC Eastern/Quebec Region, 1980, CJC Series Db 07, Box 1, File 24, CJC Fonds.
[16] "Point to make in briefing community prior to Referendum," 1.
[17] Ibid.
[18] "Questions and answers for the briefing of the community prior to the Referendum," CJC Eastern/Quebec Region, 1980, CJC Series Db 07, Box 1, File 24, CJC Fonds. Underline reflects emphasis in original document.

and feelings of the community at any given time. As such, while documents from this period focus mainly on the organization's position, they also hint at community reactions. In the circumstances described in this chapter, the CJC's stance of neutrality concerning the referendum was not taken well by the public, and Congress knew this well. As early as 1979, meeting minutes began recording the fact that constituents wanted the CJC to take a more pro-active position on the referendum.[19] As news of Congress's officially neutral stance spread, the public grew dissatisfied. The CJC archives have several news clippings and letters from that period which offer a glimpse into public opinion. For example, the *Canadian Jewish News* printed an entire page worth of letters to the editor listing people's opinions in its April 17th, 1980 edition. One such man, Ruben Carin of Montreal, offered rather colorful criticisms, with statements such as: "What unmitigated gall! Even our own expression of *chutzpah* could never describe such arbitrary, unauthorized misrepresentation by a community leadership …. Who exactly do the CJC and AJCS actually represent? Who gave them a mandate to proclaim impartiality?"[20]

Personal letters addressed specifically to the CJC officers also appeared. One such letter dated May 6, 1980, from a woman named Hassa Wittenberg vehemently protested the CJC's decision to remain neutral. Mrs. Wittenberg's letter is highly emotional and contains many elements of fear, stress, anxiety, and past trauma, with her closing statement in all capital letters stating: "WHAT PRICE MUST I PAY AS A SECOND-GENERATION CANADIAN JEW TO MAINTAIN THE QUALITY OF MY JEWISH IDENTITY AND CULTURE IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC?"[21] In answering to the highly emotional letter, Jack Kantrowitz stuck to the official Congress position of neutrality, informing Mrs. Wittenberg that the CJC did not hold her views and encouraged her to attend an upcoming community meeting to calm her fears.[22] These two examples certainly did not reflect the feelings of the entire community, but the CJC, with its connections and intuition, nonetheless knew the community was nervous. The

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[19] "Meeting minutes of Eastern Region Officers of Canadian Jewish Congress, February 7, 1979," CJC Eastern/Quebec Region, February 7, 1979. CJC Series BB, Box 16: Eastern Region/Quebec Region Officers minutes 1974-1998, File 5. CJC Fonds.

[20] Reuben Carin, letter to the editor, *Canadian Jewish News*¸ re-printed in unknown newspaper, April 17, 1980, CJC Series Db 07, Box 1, File 44, CJC Fonds. "Chutzpah" is a Yiddish word which means: "Shameless audacity; impudence."

[21] Letter from Hassa L. Wittenberg to Jack Kantrowitz, May 6, 1980, CJC Series Db 07, Box 1, File 44, CJC Fonds.

[22] Letter from Jack Kantrowitz to Hassa L. Wittenberg, May 23, 1980, CJC Series Db 07, Box 1, File 44, CJC Fonds.

degree to which the CJC was bombarded with such criticisms and fear is unclear, but given the tense atmosphere among the wider community, and the pressure they felt, how did the CJC officers themselves feel about the referendum? Was Congress really confident in its neutral position?

Internal Reactions: Anxiety and Dissent

Up to this point, this chapter has examined external reactions in the CJC and emphasized its continuing stance of official neutrality. However, most of these external reactions had an "internal counterpart" to them. More often than not, in other words, when certain communiqués or statements were released to the public, it was only after discussions and debate among officers where they made their true feelings known. It is impossible to measure these feelings fully as many of these discussions were not open to the public, but the minutes of internal meetings and other archival sources still provide some insight into the feelings of the many CJC officers. Later on in this section, I will focus on what was said during those meetings and at what the officers expressed behind closed doors. As we will see, although the CJC took its stance of neutrality, the officers themselves expressed nervousness, fear, and anxiety about the referendum. But due to its own limitations and its wishes to appear "in control" to the community, the organization opted to wait for the results before conducting any substantial actions.

We can begin with a speech given by Melvyn Schwartzben, the Chairman of the Eastern Region of the CJC given on May 29, 1978.[23] The occasion of speech was an officers meeting where Schwartzben decided to give a report on his first year in office as the Eastern Region Chairman. The speech was reflective in nature, covering major policies of Congress; but it also offered several explanations, concerns, and warnings about the future Congress faced under the PQ government. Schwartzben opened his speech by stating that the CJC faced uncertain times and that it was essential the Congress unite with other Jewish organizations.[24] He then turned his attention towards nationalism. As previously discussed, Congress was not comfortable with the "nationalistic" character of the PQ government. Schwartzben reiterated this view in his speech

[23] "Canadian Jewish Congress – Eastern Region Executive Meeting, Monday May 29, 1978, 7:45 P.M. at the Chevra Kadisha B'nai Jacob Synagogue, Montreal," CJC Eastern/Quebec Region, May 29, 1978, CJC Series BB, Box 14, File 30, CJC Fonds.
[24] Eastern Region Executive Meeting, Monday May 29, 1978, 3.

that night, telling his colleagues that each time a Minister of the government met with the CJC, he told them in, "no uncertain terms, that we, the Jewish Community, feel insecure on account of the nationalistic orientation of the present government."[25] The Chairman again also touched on how Congress felt about the "racist connotations" of the phrase "True Québécois."[26] Though, of particular important in this speech was Schwartzben's explanation on why Congress chose to remain neutral on political matters. The Jewish community of Montreal is historically linked to the English community and because of this link, Schwartzben noted, "Has been identified with certain political elements in this Province."[27] In other words, some people's perception of the Jewish community as an extension of the Anglophone minority identifies them with "the old way of life,"[28] i.e., the Quebec Liberal Party. He then turned towards political matters, stating: "I believe that the whole question of a Jewish Vote has been a "Red Herring," used by unscrupulous politicians. I strongly feel that there is no such thing as a "Jewish Vote" to be exploited or condemned by politicians. It is my earnest wish that we should continue our position of strict political neutrality.[29]

In closing his speech, Schwartzben explained to his colleagues that after long discussions with political leaders, he had come to the conclusion to stay clear of partisan politics. In this connection, he referenced Quebec independence in this speech two years before the referendum, stating: "If we were to take a stand for or against separation, we would do a grave disservice to this community because we would cut ourselves off from one element of the Quebec political scene. The other sectors could simply take us for granted and exploit us."[30] With this statement, it is clear that the decision to remain neutral towards separatism had both political and historical implications. In terms of politics, the CJC chose neutrality in order to avoid the negative consequences of choosing a side. Knowing the Jewish Community and its preference for federalism, choosing to actively campaign for the "No" side had the possibility of straining relations against the majority Francophones. On the historical side, there is the concern of Jewish exploitation. Throughout history, Jews have been exploited by many regimes as scapegoats to

[25] Eastern Region Executive Meeting, Monday May 29, 1978, 6.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid., 10.
[28] As in the historical milieu of the province was in prior to the Quiet Revolution where Anglophones dominated businesses.
[29] Eastern Region Executive Meeting, Monday May 29, 1978, 10.
[30] Ibid., 11.

blame for failures. If a scenario arose where the referendum was lost by a small margin, there could be the possibility that the "federalist Jews" could be blamed for the failure of the "Yes" side. The CJC obviously wanted to avoid such a situation.[31] Thus, neutrality was not only a political decision, but one with historical precedent to protect the community out of fear of repercussions. This was the position taken by the CJC Eastern Region Chairman in 1978, and while these views were expressed two years before the referendum, they arose again in 1980 as referenced in the previous section concerning the CJC's insistence on neutrality amongst themselves and other organizations in community meetings. Internally among the officers, similar concerns and fears also existed, as revealed in particular by the notes taken by one particular officer, Jack Kantrowitz.

As with community reactions by the CJC examined in this chapter showing nervousness, anxiety, and anger, individual CJC officers themselves also expressed these feelings. Research to this point did not find evidence of these private sentiments, until finally, one archival document revealed the tense feelings of the CJC officers. It is not an official document, but rather the handwritten notes of Jack Kantrowitz, whose own archival records revealed many important unpublished documents about the referendum. The meeting in question was on March 3rd, 1980, and the topic was the referendum and the organization's stance. Interestingly, no official meeting minutes exist from that day, with only brief summaries recounting a few details in subsequent meeting minutes from March 12.[32] Kantrowitz left five pages of carefully handwritten notes, whose content shall be analyzed here (Figure 8).[33] What differentiates these handwritten from officially typed meeting minutes, which only state key points and record resolutions and votes, is his attention to detail. He recorded not only main themes and speaking points, but also reactions, contradictory points, and feelings. For example, at the beginning of the March 1980 meeting, he writes about Flora Naglie as follows; "Flora Naglie: Fears of complacency in the community."[34] This description would have never appeared in any official meeting minutes. It should be noted that the ending of this meeting resulted in the already mentioned decision to hold

[31] These concerns would somewhat later materialize 15 years later. Upon the sovereignist losing the 1995 referendum by a very slim margin, PQ Leader and then-Premier, Jacques Parizeau, drunkenly blamed the loss on "l'argent et vote ethnique" (money and the ethnic vote) in his concession speech.
[32] "Minutes, Officers' Meeting March 12, 1980, 5:30 P.M. Samuel Bronfman House," CJC Fonds.
[33] "Community Leadership Meeting 24/3/80," by Jack Kantrowitz, March 3, 1980, CJC Series Db 07, Box 1, File 22, CJC Fonds.
[34] Community Leadership Meeting 24/3/80, 1.

further meetings with community leaders. How the committee got there is an interesting path to examine.

It is impossible to go over what everyone said in that meeting, and only major themes will be mentioned here. The beginning of the meeting opened with discussions from Quebec Region Chairman at the time, Frank Schlesinger. After once again reiterating Congress's neutral position, he then called for comments from those present. Member Dorothy Reitman stated she believed there was a need in the community to discuss the referendum issues, suggesting maybe the presidents of major organizations could be a vehicle.[35] This opened a wider discussion about the overall role of the CJC and its position on the referendum. Member H. Reiter expressed his belief that the community was unaware that the "Yes" side might do well, and added he believed the situation among the community was "highly emotional."[36] Flora Naglie expressed her concerns about the CJC being viewed as complacent by the greater community for its neutrality stance, but also that perhaps the community was getting too involved.[37] Naglie represents the careful position the CJC attempted to claim for itself, which was politically neutral, concerned about its involvement, but somewhat still active. Within this meeting, generally two schools of thought existed: participants were divided over whether the CJC should maintain its neutral position on the referendum or if more concerned effort was needed, especially to combat the public's concerns.

The trajectory of the debate generally focused on these two opposing positions. One member (whose name is illegible in Kantrowitz's notes) reiterated the position of neutrality, stating the CJC should not make a statement at all and suggesting the community should just adapt to the situation if it did not threaten them. He then went on to say the CJC should avoid associating itself with the No campaign.[38] Member Edith Teitelbaum recounted the actions and consequences of a prior CJC committee which calmed the public, stating that in 1975 a project was conducted on citizens' participation in politics which resulted in the creation of an organization called "Impact Quebec" in 1976.[39] She suggested that actions such as that dissipates

[35] Community Leadership Meeting 24/3/80, 1.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid., 3.
[39] According to an information sheet, Impact Quebec was "an independent English and French speaking citizens group concerned with the economic, social, and political issues facing Canada. Impact Quebec Information Sheet. Impact Quebec, 1980, CJC Series Dd 07, Box 1, File 40, CJC Fonds.

fear.[40] Schlesinger reiterated his own position that the CJC could not tell people how to vote, but expressed his worry that if the vote did not go in Congress's preferred way that the situation in the province would never "be the same," lamenting at the fact there would be "No return to the good old days."[41] Member Manny W. disagreed with neutrality, stating it was the duty of the CJC to guide the community regarding these issues, and that Congress's knowledge of rising tensions due to its lack of action on the referendum was only a catalyst for things to come.[42]

As the meeting went on, one topic that many people touched on was what to do after the referendum. Schlesinger himself told those present they should focus on the morning after. Dorothy Reitman asked the question: "Where do we go from here?"[43] Naglie responded with the recommendation to provide resources for people who wanted to discuss the situation. She even recommended the facilitation of group therapy to help out those who were anxious or afraid.[44] Considerable discussion centered around a proposal by member Irving H, who advised the creation of a "Youth Commitment Movement," in which young Jews would publicly commit to staying in the province, no matter the political changes.[45] Irving felt that even though it was late to try this initiative, it was still necessary. He added that it was essential to inform the community of plans for the future and underline the point that they were "not facing doom."[46] Member Howard Cooper countered these points, stating that the CJC should not just "assuage anxieties" and that a "Yes" victory would change issues. Others still aligned more with neutrality, preferring a "wait and see" approach, with one member named Aba saying the CJC should "Sit tight and shut up" (Figure 8).[47]

The meeting eventually wound down and members present ultimately chose to hold more consultations with community organizations and leaders, but the atmosphere of tension and dissension in this meeting cannot be understated. Kantrowitz's hand-written notes show a CJC executive committee divided, frightened, unsure of itself, and most importantly, not *even remotely neutral* amongst themselves. Ultimately though, Congress would hold firm on its preference for a neutral public position. Several days after that March 24th meeting, Kantrowitz

[40] Community Leadership Meeting 24/3/80, 2.
[41] Ibid., 3.
[42] Ibid., 5.
[43] Ibid., 4.
[44] Ibid., 4.
[45] Ibid., 2.
[46] Ibid., 2.
[47] Ibid., 4. "Aba" is Hebrew for father.

wrote the draft of what must be interpreted as Congress's "official statement", dated March 31st, 1980. In it, Congress gives its clear position of neutrality stating:

> As the recognized spokesman for the Quebec Jewish community, Canadian Jewish Congress – Quebec Region has dealt and must continue to deal with the present and all future governments of Quebec of whatever the political stripe. To maintain its credibility with all parties and political orientations Congress must continue, as in the past, to be strictly non-partisan and not to be formally identified with any given political party or option. Therefore, Canadian Jewish Congress will take no official position on the upcoming Quebec Referendum on sovereignty-association.[48] (Figure 9)

It is unclear if this statement was distributed to the wider public, but in the meantime, Congress took the remaining two months to carry out the aforementioned meetings with the community. No doubt the leadership stuck to its proposed talking points and templates, while also imploring the community to remain calm and not overact. As the date of the referendum finally came, the CJC most likely took a final breath and waited.

Results and Moving Forward

Towards the end of the referendum campaign in May, the CJC released its "standard" Congress election statement encouraging citizens to vote. This statement was printed in several newspapers to reach all constituents.[49] It is short in content and reiterates the position of neutrality and also encourages citizens of all political orientations to vote.[50] It was also agreed that the organization would release an official statement after the referendum. Finally, after months of tension, on May 20th, 1980, Quebec citizens voted nearly 60% against sovereignty-association.[51] In the Montreal electoral districts with large Jewish populations such as Mont-Royal, Outremont, D'Arcy McGee (town of Hampstead and City of Côte-Saint-Luc), Westmount, and Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, the average "No" vote was 85%, indicating that the

[48] "Canadian Jewish Congress Statement on the Quebec Referendum," by Jack Kantrowitz, CJC Eastern/Quebec Region, March 31, 1980, CJC Series Db 07, Box 1, File 24, CJC Fonds.
[49] "Canadian Jewish Congress – Quebec Region Officers' Meeting, Wednesday, May 14, 1980, at the Samuel Bronfman House, Montreal," CJC Eastern/Quebec Region May 14, 1980, CJC Series BB, Box 16: Eastern Region/ Quebec Region Officers minutes 1974-1980. CJC Fonds.
[50] Ibid.
[51] The official results gave the "No" side 59% of the vote while the "Yes" side received 40%. For more complete results, see: "Référendum du 20 Mai 1980," Élections Québec (Assemblée Nationale du Québec), accessed August 24, 2019, https://www.electionsquebec.qc.ca/english/provincial/election-results/referendums.php

larger Anglo/Jewish population voted overwhelmingly against sovereignty.[52] The percentage of voter turnout in those electoral districts was 87%, possibly indicating that the CJC's call to participate might have reached the larger Jewish populations in those districts.[53] After the election, as promised, Congress did draft a statement in response, which simply stated the CJC had encouraged all its constituents to vote and that now that the results were known, they should work together to build a better society.[54] It is unclear if this statement was ever truly published or would have taken on a different tone or format altogether in the event of a "Yes" victory. Regardless, the rejection of sovereignty-association in the referendum surely evoked a collective sigh of relief among the CJC.

Months went by, and little mention of the referendum appeared in CJC documents. Unfortunately, the minutes for a meeting that was called directly after the referendum to explicitly discuss the results have been lost. Regardless, 1980 was a tense and trying time for the CJC. Sticking to its traditional position of neutrality proved to pay off long-term, but it was not without its controversy. In August, Chairman Schlesinger sent out a Rosh Hashana message to the community (Figure 10). Rosh Hashana, the Jewish New Year, is a time when Jews reflect on the past year, and the chairman recounted the preoccupation of the community and its fears and anxieties during the referendum period. He advised his constituents that while political changes were far from over, they should focus more on assuring their continued functionality in Quebec society, while encouraging greater participation in community organizations.[55] Activity at the CJC returned to a somewhat "normal" state as the Congress turned its attention back towards international Jewish concerns, but still with some attention to domestic politics. An IOI from July 1980 mentions focus on the plight of Jews in Iran, a Yiddish Festival in Hampstead, but also an upcoming community conference discussing plans for the future.[56]

It will never be known what the CJC would have done had the "Yes" side won. The weeks and months leading up to the May 20th referendum were not easy for this organization. While it tried

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[52] According to Élections Quebec, these are the "No" results of the cited ridings: Mont-Royal: 85%, Outremont: 64%, D'Arcy McGee: 95%, Westmount: 86%, and Notre-Dame-de-Grace: 85%. (See above footnote).
[53] Ibid.
[54] "Proposed Statement after Referendum," by Jack Kantrowitz, CJC Eastern/ Quebec Region, May 20, 1980, CJC Series Db 07, Box 1, File 9, CJC Fonds.
[55] "Rosh Hashanah Message from Frank M. Schlesinger, Chairman, Canadian Jewish Congress, Quebec Region," by Frank Schlesinger, CJC Eastern/Quebec Region, August 28, 1980, CJC Series Db 07, Box 1, File 24, CJC Fonds.
[56] *Information CJC*, No. 26: July 2, 1980, 1-2.

its best to calm the frightened community and remain neutral, fear and uncertainty still existed amongst themselves. It is clear from the reactions of a Jewish public looking for guidance on the issue that the official external communications stating a position of neutrality and calling for calm did not satisfy them. Internally, CJC officers held differing opinions on how best to deal with the referendum with many expressing fear and anxiety over the prospects of what a "Yes" victory would bring. These fears were based on the organization's discussions and beliefs that taking a side on the referendum would lead to dangerous consequences for the Jewish community as well as other factors. These discussions were never made public, with only one available from handwritten notes, showing a frightened and discombobulated CJC, not knowing what approach to take and falling back on its default position of political neutrality, which again pleased no one. Ultimately, the fears and anxieties of the CJC amounted to nothing with the failure of the referendum and the organization returning its attention back towards international Jewish concerns. However shaken Congress and its leaders were by the past events, officers soon resumed regular activities, geared towards retaining a voice for the Jewish community and adapting to the future in the changing province.

Conclusion

There is much to be said about the two groups analyzed in this thesis, for they could not be more different, politically, linguistically, economically, and of course, religiously. The Jews of Quebec in the 1970s were a product of past decades of upward mobility within an Anglophone community prospering at the expense of the majority French population. Their past traumatic experiences as Jewish victims of nationalism in other parts of the world, either from their early lives, extended families, or Jewish solidarity, produced a sense of lingering nervousness and urgency to protect themselves and the federalist era status quo within Quebec. All this was reflected in their top advocacy organization, the Canadian Jewish Congress. For Francophone Québécois, centuries of past injustices had resulted in an increasingly assertive wave of nationalistic sentiment, leading to changes in their governing institutions. Some of those changes took the form of coercive measures at the expense of civil rights of minorities: measures deemed as necessary to better the situation of the French majority. As a result of these two communities living in the same territory and embracing vastly different sets of aspirations, clashes between the Jews through the CJC and the Francophone Québécois through the PQ were bound to happen at some point.

Scholarly works on this topic suggest a Jewish community and its representatives reacting negatively to the changes brought on by the PQ. Little detail is available as to how, why, and in what form those reactions occurred. The archival evidence from the Canadian Jewish Archives ultimately shows a Congress whose reactions had a two-fold appearance. There were at one level a series of carefully controlled external reactions, usually in the form of reassurance to the public political neutrality, combined with acceptance of some nationalist aims. At another level, we have documented some strong negative reactions, most notably in correspondence to the government showing nervousness/ concern at the government's actions, and also internal anxiety and fear within the institution itself, brought on by a historically-based Jewish fear of nationalism. This resulted in a tumultuous four years for both the CJC and the Jewish public.

It is no coincidence that November 1976 was the beginning of the clashes between the two. By the end of the year, the CJC had lost its allies in power as the Quebec Liberal Party fell to the wayside and the Parti Québécois surged to a majority in the National Assembly. In an

attempt to distance itself from electoral politics, the Congress took a politically neutral position released in an IOI regarding political involvement and Jewish organizations. It allowed its members to participate in electoral campaigns, but not in their official capacities as CJC officials.[1] Once the election had come and gone, a new political order emerged in Quebec. As a result, fear and shock were rampant in both the CJC and the greater Jewish community. Meeting minutes from that period show a nervous Congress and other Jewish organizations making future plans to meet much more often, but also a call from the CJC President to remain calm.[2] In a show of strength designed to combat fear within itself and its constituents, the CJC released a white paper to the Jewish public, outlining concerns and challenges the community faced, but ultimately calling for solidarity in the face of the new government.[3]

In some sense, the CJC entered the initial months of the first Lévesque government with an uneasy "wait and see" approach. Congress officials did not have contacts with PQ officials prior to 1976, and it was unknown whether the new government would be responsive to Jewish concerns. A breakthrough was reached when a meeting between CJC officials and Premier Lévesque occurred in January 1977 and the subsequent preparation of a detailed brief for the Premier.[4] While this document does show empathy among Congress officials for certain nationalistic aims, it also stresses the community's deep fear of nationalism, citing past injustices done to Jews in the name of it. Language recommendations also appeared as the organization conveyed its wish that any new language legislation should include protections for minorities.[5] While this brief was a good first step in communication, the CJC soon learned that regardless of its concerns, the PQ government would proceed with measures to further its nationalistic aims.

Upon the release of a government white paper in the Spring of 1977 outlining the PQ's plans for sweeping and coercive language legislation, the CJC reacted with anger, calling into question the legitimacy of the nationalist movement and expressing fears of forced francization of minorities and erosion of civil rights.[6] Further negative reactions followed when the first draft

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[1] IOI, No: 3970: October 20, 1976, 1.
[2]"Minutes of the Officers' Meeting held Tuesday, November 23, 5:30 p.m. at the Samuel Bronfman House, 1590 McGregor Avenue," CJC Eastern/Quebec Region, November 23, 1976. CJC Fonds
[3] White Paper on the Jewish Community of Montreal by Joseph Ain and Leon Teitelbaum, 1977.CJC Fonds
[4] "Brief Submitted by The Canadian Jewish Congress Eastern Region and B'nai Brith – District 22 to The Honorable Rene Levesque Premier of Quebec on The Various Concerns of the Jewish Community." CJC Fonds
[5] "Brief Submitted by The Canadian Jewish Congress Eastern Region and B'nai Brith – District 22 to The Honorable Rene Levesque Premier of Quebec on The Various Concerns of the Jewish Community," 2. CJC Fonds
[6] IOI, April 6, 1977. (No number listed, this was most likely an individual IOI part of press release).

of the new French Language Charter (Bill 101) was released. At this point, the CJC prepared and submitted another comprehensive brief to the government, calling for substantive revisions to many articles in the proposed legislation. These changes mostly fell within the organization's desire to protect minorities and to maintain the civil rights of all citizens. This was especially notable in Congress's insistence that article 172 of the Bill, which allowed the Charter to supersede the Quebec Civil Rights Charter, be deleted. However, it should also be noted that many of the revisions the CJC called for would have removed many of the Bill's key aspects, reducing the Charter to not so much the new legal foundation for the promotion of the French as the basis for a setting of quasi-bilingualism, a situation the PQ obviously rejected.[7]

The experience of Bill 101 generated more nervousness in the Congress on what other nationalistic actions the government might attempt in the future. This led to the establishment of a permanent representative of the CJC in Quebec City to keep up with the government. The greatest challenge, however, was yet to come.[8] Three years later in 1980 as the PQ began implementing its key election promise of an independence referendum, attempts at controlling a frightened Jewish citizenry once again transpired. Memoranda and meeting minutes show a coordinated strategy of CJC officials taking a neutral stance on the referendum and holding meetings with community leaders and constituents to calm the public.[9] This did not go well as newspaper editorials and personal letters show anger from Jewish constituents at the CJC's "lack of leadership" on the referendum.[10]

Internally at the same time, officers in Congress were anxious as well. Speeches from leaders show that their neutrality stance was intended to prevent political leaders from taking advantage of the community and also to avoid the situation where Congress could "Cut ourselves (the Jewish community) off from one element of the Quebec political scene."[11] Thus, the CJC was caught between a rock and a hard place. The organization could not take a strong stance on the referendum for fear of backlash against Jews, and its attempts at calming the public were

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[7] "Brief Submitted by the Canadian Jewish Congress Quebec Region to Commission on Education, Cultural Affairs and Communications on Bill 1 Charter of the French Language in Quebec," 3. CJC Fonds

[8] Meeting Minutes of Officers' Meeting held on Tuesday, August 2nd, at 6:00 p.m. Samuel Bronfman House. CJC Eastern/ Quebec Region, August 2, 1977. CJC Fonds

[9] Meeting minutes March 12, 1980 pages 1-2; Point to make in briefing community prior to referendum, CJC Fonds; Questions and answers for the briefing of the community prior to the referendum, CJC Fonds.

[10] Community letters in JK box (CJC editorials), Letter from unsettled woman, Jack Kantrowitz

[11] Canadian Jewish Congress – Eastern Region Executive Meeting, Monday May 29, 1978, 7:45 P.M. at the Chevra Kadisha B'nai Jacob Synagogue, Montreal,"

failing. This led to fear and dissension amongst CJC officers as they attempted to comprehend the best way to deal with the situation, as written notes from a meeting in March 1980 demonstrate.[12] The only possible scenario was to await the results of the referendum and to react accordingly. When referendum day came and the "No" side won convincingly, the Congress most likely regrouped, breathed a collective sigh of relief, and, as documents show, returned to its normal business of catering to non-political Jewish matters.[13]

While the fears of Congress about the fallout of a "Yes" victory in the referendum amounted to nothing, the choice of the organization to remain politically neutral is somewhat strange, given the backlash they knew they would endure, but ultimately, understandable. It was obvious from its constituents that the collective Jewish community did not support sovereignty; votes among predominately Jewish neighborhoods in Montreal indicated this. If the CJC had chosen a different position than neutrality, such as officially supporting the "No" side, it would have had the backing of its constituents, but it also would have possibly faced a backlash from those outside the community. These fears of a backlash are not unfounded. Across history, Jews have been used as scapegoats in antisemitic acts with many leading to dire consequences. While the lethal degree of past scapegoat-based antisemitic attacks probably would not have transpired in Quebec, because of historical precedent for Jews, that fear still existed. In a Quebec context, one point of reference of animosity towards ethnic groups in relation to a nationalist Francophone government's sovereignty agenda, which could give any indication of what could have occurred, came 15 years later. Upon the loss of the 1995 sovereignty referendum, then PQ leader and Premier, Jacques Parizeau, drunkenly proclaimed in his concession speech that "money and the ethnic vote" were a factor in the "Yes" side's failure. Were a similar reaction to have occurred in 1980 by PQ officials, the CJC would have been in the precarious position of being alienated from the ruling political party (in this case until 1985 when the Liberals regained power) who would have been perceived to look down upon the organization and its community as a source of failure for its sovereignty aspirations. With those risks a possibility, the CJC's decision to remain neutral and to wait out the referendum, while unpopular among its constituents, ultimately was the right decision and paid off. By the end of 1980, the events of the

[12] "Community Leadership Meeting 24/3/80," by Jack Kantrowitz, March 3, 1980. CJC Fonds.
[13] *Information CJC,* No. 26: July 2, 1980, 1-2. CJC Fonds.

referendum and the previous four years had left an impression on the CJC. They weathered the nationalist wave to that point. The threat of independence had dissipated, at least for the moment. But the future still looked uncertain.[14]

With these conclusions in place, this thesis also suggests many avenues for further research. Indeed, the amount of material at the Alex Dworkin Canadian Jewish Archive is so massive, that one could spend days there and only understand a fraction of what happened in the late 1970s at the CJC, or any time during the organization's 94-year history. While I mainly went over official documents such as meeting minutes or government briefs, there are no doubt other types of documents that could paint a similar or different picture all together of the organization at that time. I also became aware of the existence of recorded tapes of officers and executive meetings during this time, which, no doubt will provide hours of very colorful testimony to give another depiction of the atmosphere in the Congress at that time. This thesis also only investigated one side of this story, the CJC's. Past researchers such as Rona Donefer have looked into Jewish media around that time, and scholars such as Elazar also point to the other Jewish organizations that took part in Congress meetings and government briefs, particularly the ACJS and B'nai B'rith. These two organizations are of particular interest as both still exist today in some form or another. The Canadian Jewish Archives itself includes many documents from the AJCS and B'nai B'rith which could lead to other different conclusions about how other Jewish organizations reacted to the pivotal events. Finally, this thesis does not discuss the Jewish community's response to the Quebec nationalist movement from the perspective of Quebec nationalists themselves. Somewhere in the Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec or in another archive in the province there most likely are invaluable records of PQ reactions to the CJC's actions during this time. The inclusion of such research into this conversation is crucially needed to create a much more accurate picture of the two sides. Of interest would be the PQ's internal reception of Congress's Bill 101 brief.

This thesis, now completed, grew out of my interest in the fascinating and changing state of the Jewish community in Quebec, both past and present. As an American student whose understanding of North American Jewish communities came mainly from the confident, and well-established United States Jewish community, the Quebec community's position as a

[14] "Rosh Hashanah Message from Frank M. Schlesinger, Chairman, Canadian Jewish Congress, Quebec Region." CJC Fonds.

predominately English-speaking minority in a province whose identity is strongly based on the French language is truly paradoxical. Over the course of researching and writing this thesis, I've come to the conclusion that this Jewish community and its reaction to the nationalist movement really speaks to the core themes of Jewish survival in history, though in a much more Canadian context. In looking at the reactions of the CJC to the events of the 1970s, we see a group fighting for its survival against another group doing the same, albeit in much different positions of power. For the Jews and the CJC, their reasons were much more historically trauma-based and very legitimate. It speaks to the meaning of being a diaspora Jew to always be on alert, to protect yourself, especially in the post-Holocaust world. Quebec, of course, cannot be compared to Europe or other places of deadly persecution against Jews. However, because of thousands of years of antisemitic acts committed against their own families in lands they perceived they would be safe, Jews have developed an intuition to look out for themselves wherever they are, even in the most hospitable of countries. For the Jewish leaders in Quebec, as the PQ came to power and nationalism swept through the province, these intuitional Jewish fears went into overdrive as the CJC reached its limit of toleration of nationalism, but still wanted to show some solidarity with the new PQ government. There was, however, not much they could do. As a result, the Congress undertook a delicate dance of showing support for the nationalists in order not to alienate themselves, calming the community to show survival, and handling its own fears as the events unfolded to keep themselves together to face the threat.

For the Parti Québécois and the many nationalists, their actions were also very legitimate. Centuries of abuse under the British, the Catholic Church, and successive oppressive provincial and federal governments, as well as economic forces favoring English, resulted in a people yearning to liberate themselves. In this context, Quebec reached a turning point in 1976 when the PQ came to power offering the nationalists a chance to mold their society as they saw fit through their governing institutions and the implementation of sweeping language legislation. It was, a momentous time for the nationalists, as exemplified by the emotions on election night in 1976. However, in the midst of this, having a minority come forward, who themselves were familiar with past persecutions, advocating for push backs against reforms meant to better Francophones lives, probably made little sense to the nationalists. These two competing narratives thus clashed with each other with the chances of one side fully understanding the sentiments of the other mostly likely low. We therefore end up at a central theme Tulchinsky cites from Anctil which

underlines a central point of this thesis: "Jews were unable to understand the language, the context, where the nationalists were coming from. At the same time, the nationalists did not fully grasp Jewish fears of authoritarian nationalism with racist undertones. Little understanding was possible in such an atmosphere."[15] These sentiments, unfortunately, still exist today in Quebec.

In 2020, four decades have passed since the PQ first came to power in 1976. In that time, another independence referendum has been held, albeit with much closer results, many Jews have left the province for Toronto and other parts of Canada, and the CJC itself folded in 2011. But positive change has happened as well. The rate of bilingualism in the province amongst Jews has skyrocketed.[16] A new bilingual Museum on Jewish Montreal opened in Montreal's Plateau borough.[17] And a new organization, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA) has taken the place of the CJC in Canada-wide Jewish matters. In Montreal, The AJCS's duties were incorporated into Federation CJA, a Jewish Federation-style organization which has completely taken over advocating for the city's Jewish community. One thing has remained constant, however. Clashes between ethnic and religious minorities and a nationalist Francophone government have once again come into the public eye as debate rages over further revisions to Bill 101.[18] There is also a new "secularism" law known as Bill 21 which limits the rights of not just Jews, but all other religious minorities against their right to wear religious symbols and clothing. On behalf of the Jewish community, CIJA has come out against this law.[19] There is no doubt that the two sides will once again clash and emotions will run high, for this Bill, like those in the 1970s, touch on a person's very identity. For the Jews and the Francophones, perhaps it is time to facilitate more conversations about these sentiments. In this way, the two sides can avoid further clashes and finally gain what eluded them both in the 1970s and 1980s, understanding.

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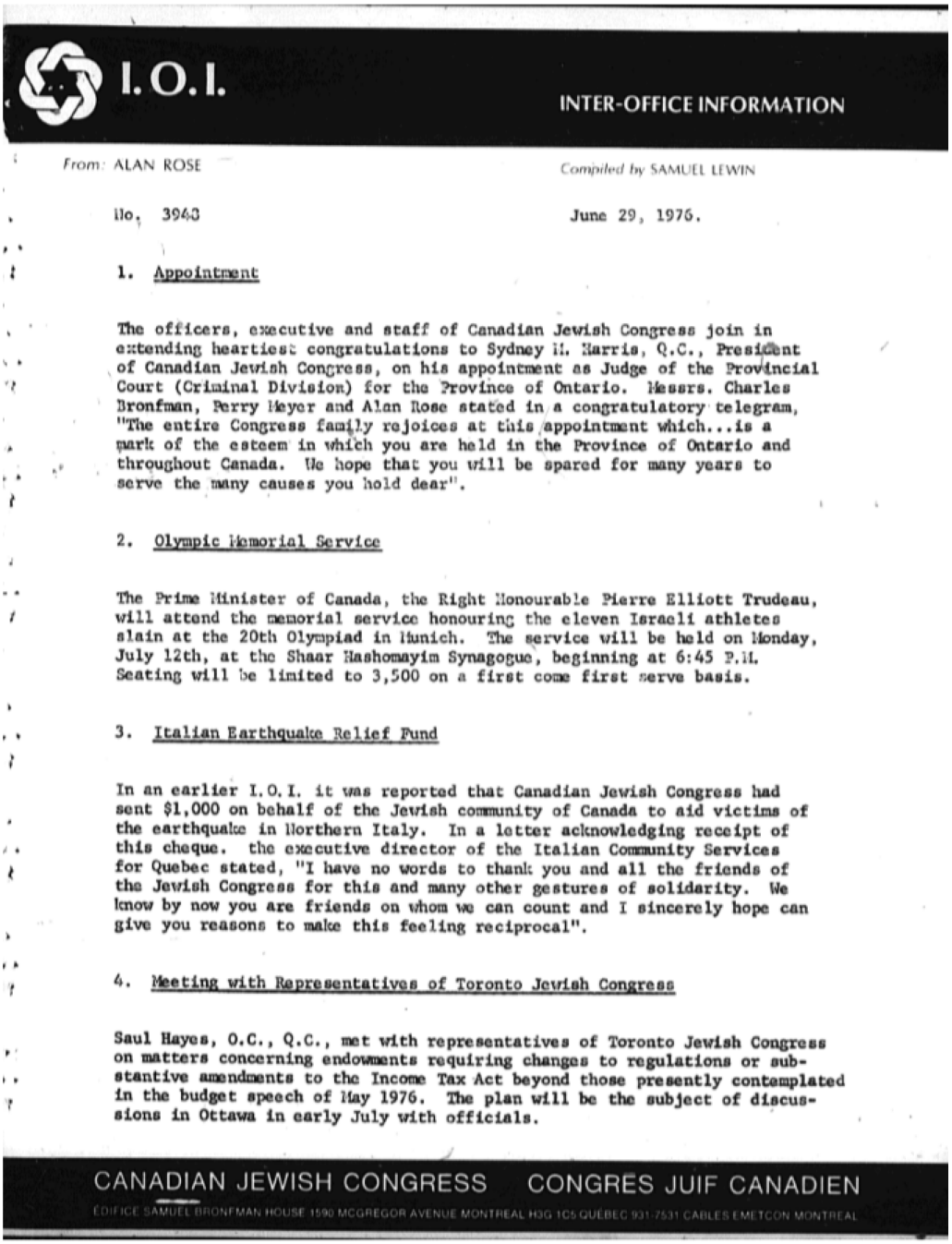
[15] Gerald Tulchinsky, *Canada's Jews: People's Journey* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 447.
[16] Demographics - Jewish Montreal". 2011. *Federationcja.Org*. https://www.federationcja.org/en/jewish_montreal/demographics/.
[17] "Welcome to The Museum of Jewish Montreal," The Museum of Jewish Montreal, https://museemontrealjuif.ca/
[18] Philip Authier, "We're open to reinforcing Bill 101, Premier Legault says," *The Montreal Gazette*, November 20, 2019, Accessed, January 20, 2020, https://montrealgazette.com/news/quebec/were-open-to-reinforcing-bill-101-premier-legault-says
[19] Janice Arnold, "CIJA voices opposition to Quebec's Bill 21 at public hearings," *The Canadian Jewish News*, May 9, 2019, Accessed January 20, 2020, https://www.cjnews.com/news/canada/cija-urges-compromise-on-quebec-secularism-bill

Figures



I.O.I.

INTER-OFFICE INFORMATION

From: ALAN ROSE

Compiled by SAMUEL LEWIN

No. 3948

June 29, 1976.

1. Appointment

The officers, executive and staff of Canadian Jewish Congress join in extending heartiest congratulations to Sydney H. Harris, Q.C., President of Canadian Jewish Congress, on his appointment as Judge of the Provincial Court (Criminal Division) for the Province of Ontario. Messrs. Charles Bronfman, Perry Meyer and Alan Rose stated in a congratulatory telegram, "The entire Congress family rejoices at this appointment which...is a mark of the esteem in which you are held in the Province of Ontario and throughout Canada. We hope that you will be spared for many years to serve the many causes you hold dear".

2. Olympic Memorial Service

The Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honourable Pierre Elliott Trudeau, will attend the memorial service honouring the eleven Israeli athletes slain at the 20th Olympiad in Munich. The service will be held on Monday, July 12th, at the Shaar Hashomayim Synagogue, beginning at 6:45 P.M. Seating will be limited to 3,500 on a first come first serve basis.

3. Italian Earthquake Relief Fund

In an earlier I.O.I. it was reported that Canadian Jewish Congress had sent $1,000 on behalf of the Jewish community of Canada to aid victims of the earthquake in Northern Italy. In a letter acknowledging receipt of this cheque. the executive director of the Italian Community Services for Quebec stated, "I have no words to thank you and all the friends of the Jewish Congress for this and many other gestures of solidarity. We know by now you are friends on whom we can count and I sincerely hope can give you reasons to make this feeling reciprocal".

4. Meeting with Representatives of Toronto Jewish Congress

Saul Hayes, O.C., Q.C., met with representatives of Toronto Jewish Congress on matters concerning endowments requiring changes to regulations or substantive amendments to the Income Tax Act beyond those presently contemplated in the budget speech of May 1976. The plan will be the subject of discussions in Ottawa in early July with officials.

CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS CONGRES JUIF CANADIEN

ÉDIFICE SAMUEL BRONFMAN HOUSE 1590 MCGREGOR AVENUE MONTREAL H3G 1C5 QUÉBEC 931-7531 CABLES EMETCON MONTREAL

Figure 1:

A typical IOI as it appeared in 1976, IOI No. 3948: June 29, 1976, 1.

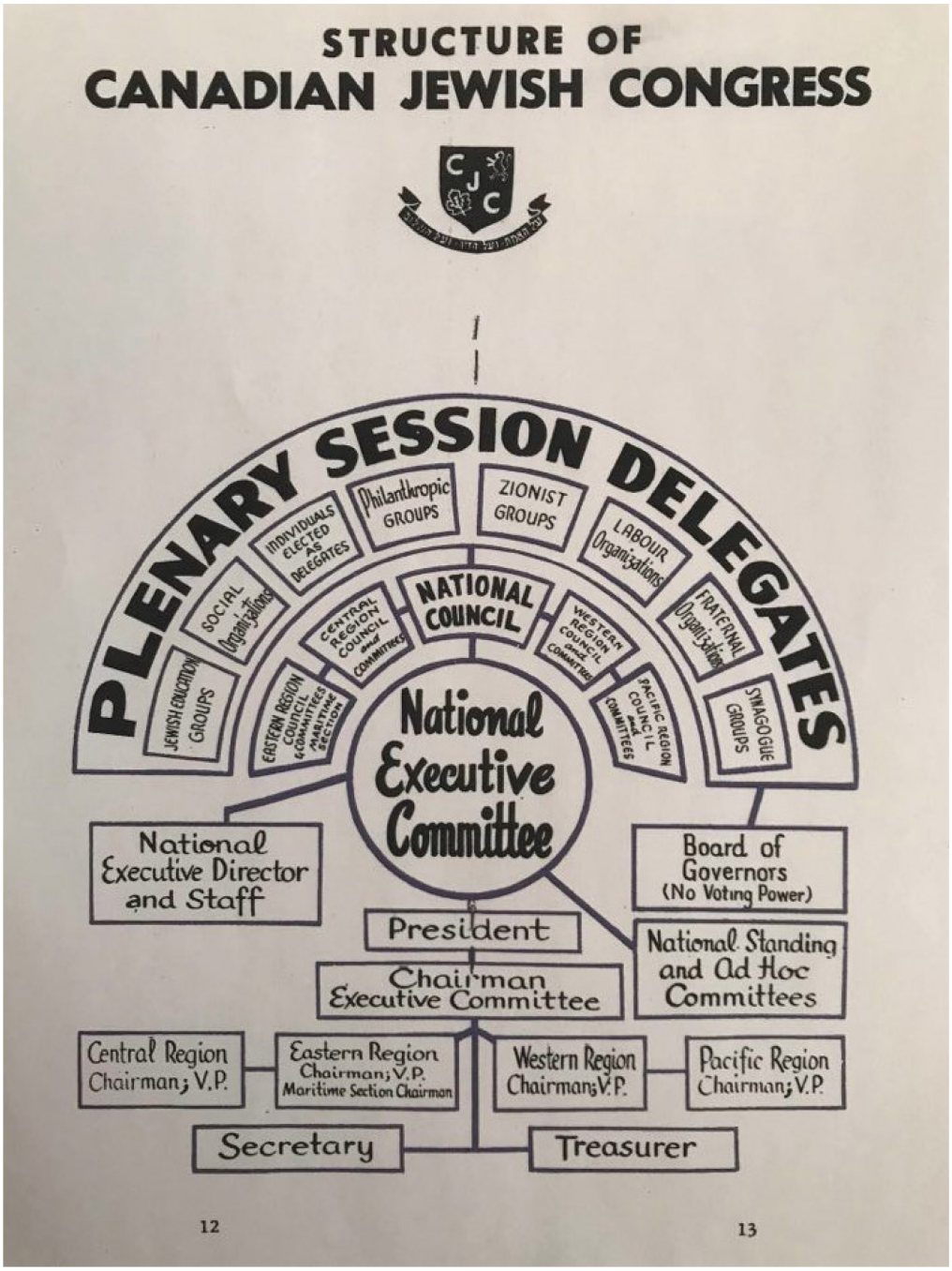
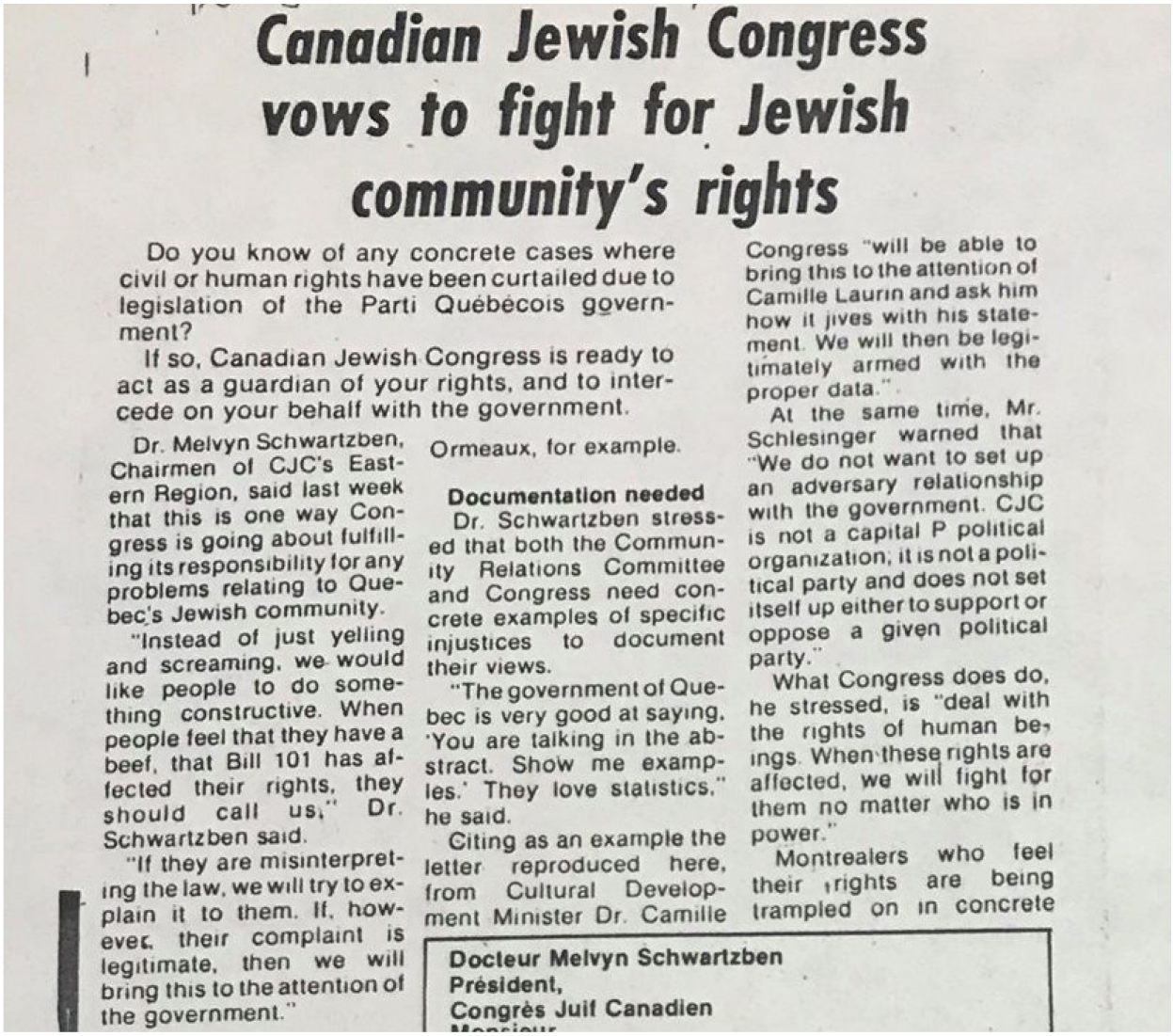


Figure 2:

"Structure of the Canadian Jewish Congress." In *The voice of Canadian Jewry at home and abroad*, (Montreal: Canadian Jewish Congress, 1961), 12-13. CJC Fonds.



Canadian Jewish Congress vows to fight for Jewish community's rights

Do you know of any concrete cases where civil or human rights have been curtailed due to legislation of the Parti Québécois government?

If so, Canadian Jewish Congress is ready to act as a guardian of your rights, and to intercede on your behalf with the government.

Dr. Melvyn Schwartzben, Chairmen of CJC's Eastern Region, said last week that this is one way Congress is going about fulfilling its responsibility for any problems relating to Quebec's Jewish community.

"Instead of just yelling and screaming, we would like people to do something constructive. When people feel that they have a beef, that Bill 101 has affected their rights, they should call us," Dr. Schwartzben said.

"If they are misinterpreting the law, we will try to explain it to them. If, however, their complaint is legitimate, then we will bring this to the attention of the government."

Ormeaux, for example.

Documentation needed

Dr. Schwartzben stressed that both the Community Relations Committee and Congress need concrete examples of specific injustices to document their views.

"The government of Quebec is very good at saying, 'You are talking in the abstract. Show me examples.' They love statistics," he said.

Citing as an example the letter reproduced here, from Cultural Development Minister Dr. Camille

Congress "will be able to bring this to the attention of Camille Laurin and ask him how it jives with his statement. We will then be legitimately armed with the proper data."

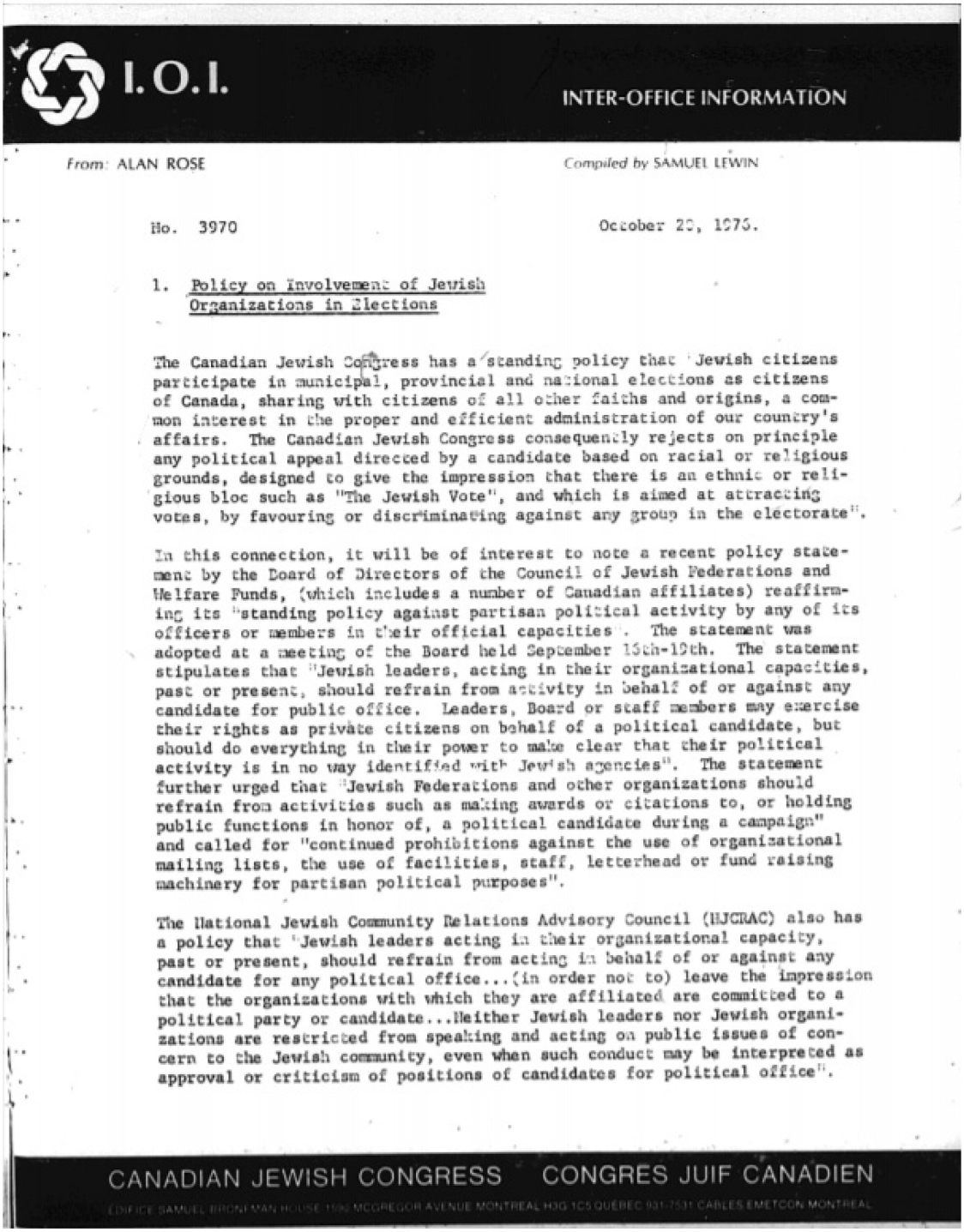
At the same time, Mr. Schlesinger warned that "We do not want to set up an adversary relationship with the government. CJC is not a capital P political organization; it is not a political party and does not set itself up either to support or oppose a given political party."

What Congress does do, he stressed, is "deal with the rights of human beings. When these rights are affected, we will fight for them no matter who is in power."

Montrealers who feel their rights are being trampled on in concrete

Docteur Melvyn Schwartzben
Président,
Congrès Juif Canadien
Monsieur

Figure 3:
"Canadian Jewish Congress Vows to Fight for Jewish Community's Rights," *The Suburban*, November 16, 1977. CJC Fonds.



I.O.I.

INTER-OFFICE INFORMATION

From: ALAN ROSE

Compiled by SAMUEL LEWIN

No. 3970

October 20, 1976.

1. Policy on Involvement of Jewish Organizations in Elections

The Canadian Jewish Congress has a standing policy that "Jewish citizens participate in municipal, provincial and national elections as citizens of Canada, sharing with citizens of all other faiths and origins, a common interest in the proper and efficient administration of our country's affairs. The Canadian Jewish Congress consequently rejects on principle any political appeal directed by a candidate based on racial or religious grounds, designed to give the impression that there is an ethnic or religious bloc such as "The Jewish Vote", and which is aimed at attracting votes, by favouring or discriminating against any group in the electorate".

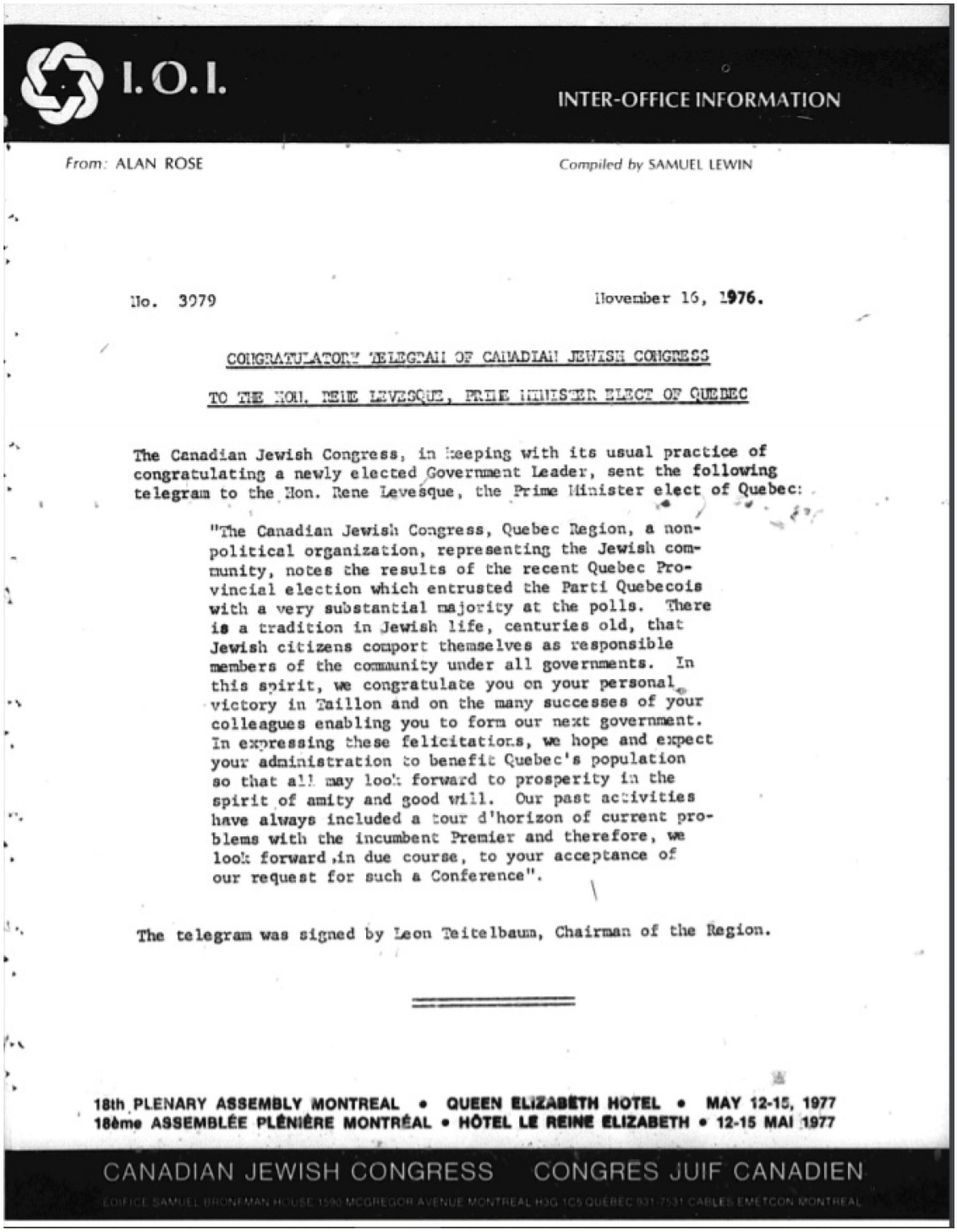
In this connection, it will be of interest to note a recent policy statement by the Board of Directors of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, (which includes a number of Canadian affiliates) reaffirming its "standing policy against partisan political activity by any of its officers or members in their official capacities". The statement was adopted at a meeting of the Board held September 15th-19th. The statement stipulates that "Jewish leaders, acting in their organizational capacities, past or present, should refrain from activity in behalf of or against any candidate for public office. Leaders, Board or staff members may exercise their rights as private citizens on behalf of a political candidate, but should do everything in their power to make clear that their political activity is in no way identified with Jewish agencies". The statement further urged that "Jewish Federations and other organizations should refrain from activities such as making awards or citations to, or holding public functions in honor of, a political candidate during a campaign" and called for "continued prohibitions against the use of organizational mailing lists, the use of facilities, staff, letterhead or fund raising machinery for partisan political purposes".

The National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council (NJCRAC) also has a policy that "Jewish leaders acting in their organizational capacity, past or present, should refrain from acting in behalf of or against any candidate for any political office...(in order not to) leave the impression that the organizations with which they are affiliated are committed to a political party or candidate...Neither Jewish leaders nor Jewish organizations are restricted from speaking and acting on public issues of concern to the Jewish community, even when such conduct may be interpreted as approval or criticism of positions of candidates for political office".

CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS CONGRES JUIF CANADIEN

EDIFICE SAMUEL BRONFMAN HOUSE 1590 MCGREGOR AVENUE MONTREAL H3G 1C5 QUEBEC 931-7531 CABLES EMETCON MONTREAL

Figure 4:
IOI, No: 3970: October 20, 1976, 1.



I.O.I.

INTER-OFFICE INFORMATION

From: ALAN ROSE

Compiled by SAMUEL LEWIN

No. 3979

November 16, 1976.

CONGRATULATORY TELEGRAM OF CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS

TO THE HON. RENE LEVESQUE, PRIME MINISTER ELECT OF QUEBEC

The Canadian Jewish Congress, in keeping with its usual practice of congratulating a newly elected Government Leader, sent the following telegram to the Hon. Rene Levesque, the Prime Minister elect of Quebec:

"The Canadian Jewish Congress, Quebec Region, a non-political organization, representing the Jewish community, notes the results of the recent Quebec Provincial election which entrusted the Parti Quebecois with a very substantial majority at the polls. There is a tradition in Jewish life, centuries old, that Jewish citizens comport themselves as responsible members of the community under all governments. In this spirit, we congratulate you on your personal victory in Taillon and on the many successes of your colleagues enabling you to form our next government. In expressing these felicitations, we hope and expect your administration to benefit Quebec's population so that all may look forward to prosperity in the spirit of amity and good will. Our past activities have always included a tour d'horizon of current problems with the incumbent Premier and therefore, we look forward, in due course, to your acceptance of our request for such a Conference".

The telegram was signed by Leon Teitelbaum, Chairman of the Region.

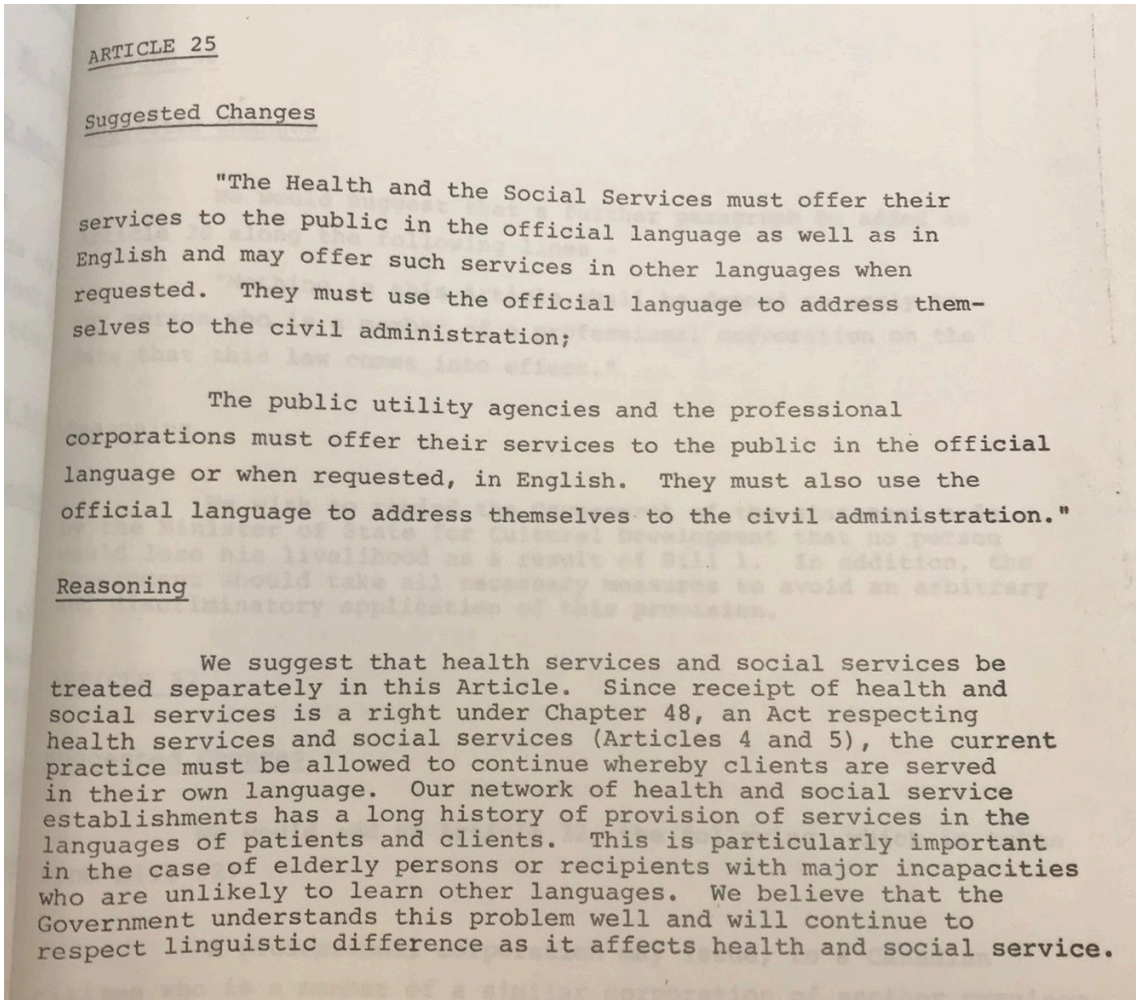
18th PLENARY ASSEMBLY MONTREAL • QUEEN ELIZABETH HOTEL • MAY 12-15, 1977
18ème ASSEMBLÉE PLÉNIÈRE MONTRÉAL • HÔTEL LE REINE ELIZABETH • 12-15 MAI 1977

CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS CONGRÈS JUIF CANADIEN

ÉDIFICE SAMUEL BRONFMAN HOUSE 1590 MCGREGOR AVENUE MONTREAL H3G 1C5 QUÉBEC 931-7531 CABLES EMETCON MONTREAL

Figure 5:

IOI, No. 3979: November 16, 1976, 1.



ARTICLE 25

Suggested Changes

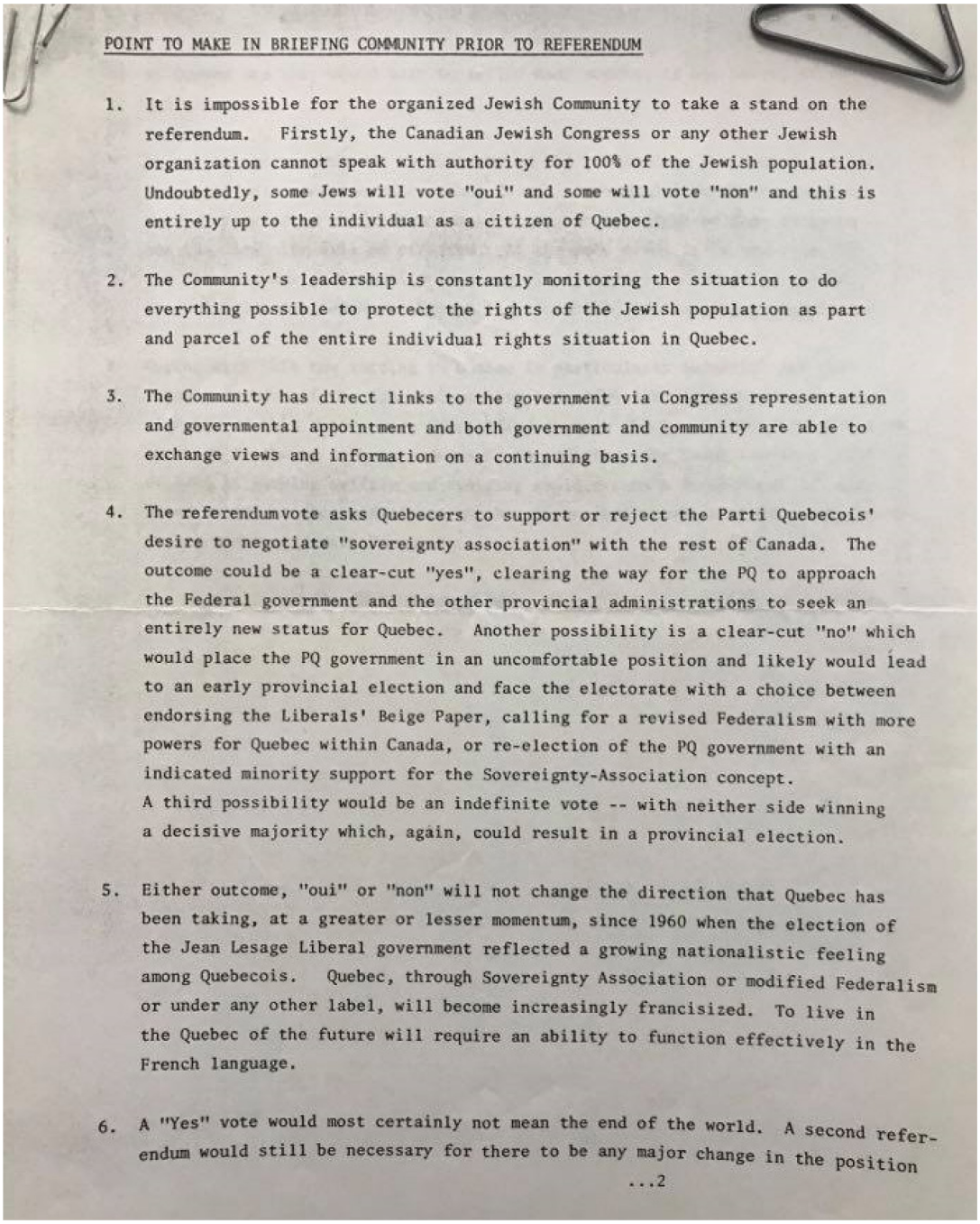
"The Health and the Social Services must offer their services to the public in the official language as well as in English and may offer such services in other languages when requested. They must use the official language to address themselves to the civil administration;

The public utility agencies and the professional corporations must offer their services to the public in the official language or when requested, in English. They must also use the official language to address themselves to the civil administration."

Reasoning

We suggest that health services and social services be treated separately in this Article. Since receipt of health and social services is a right under Chapter 48, an Act respecting health services and social services (Articles 4 and 5), the current practice must be allowed to continue whereby clients are served in their own language. Our network of health and social service establishments has a long history of provision of services in the languages of patients and clients. This is particularly important in the case of elderly persons or recipients with major incapacities who are unlikely to learn other languages. We believe that the Government understands this problem well and will continue to respect linguistic difference as it affects health and social service.

Figure 6:
Brief Submitted by the Canadian Jewish Congress Quebec Region to Commission on Education, Cultural Affairs and Communications on Bill 1 Charter of the French Language in Quebec by Harvey Crestohl, Joel Pinsky, and Melvyn Schwartzben, June 2, 1977. Page 11. CJC Fonds.



POINT TO MAKE IN BRIEFING COMMUNITY PRIOR TO REFERENDUM

1. It is impossible for the organized Jewish Community to take a stand on the referendum. Firstly, the Canadian Jewish Congress or any other Jewish organization cannot speak with authority for 100% of the Jewish population. Undoubtedly, some Jews will vote "oui" and some will vote "non" and this is entirely up to the individual as a citizen of Quebec.

2. The Community's leadership is constantly monitoring the situation to do everything possible to protect the rights of the Jewish population as part and parcel of the entire individual rights situation in Quebec.

3. The Community has direct links to the government via Congress representation and governmental appointment and both government and community are able to exchange views and information on a continuing basis.

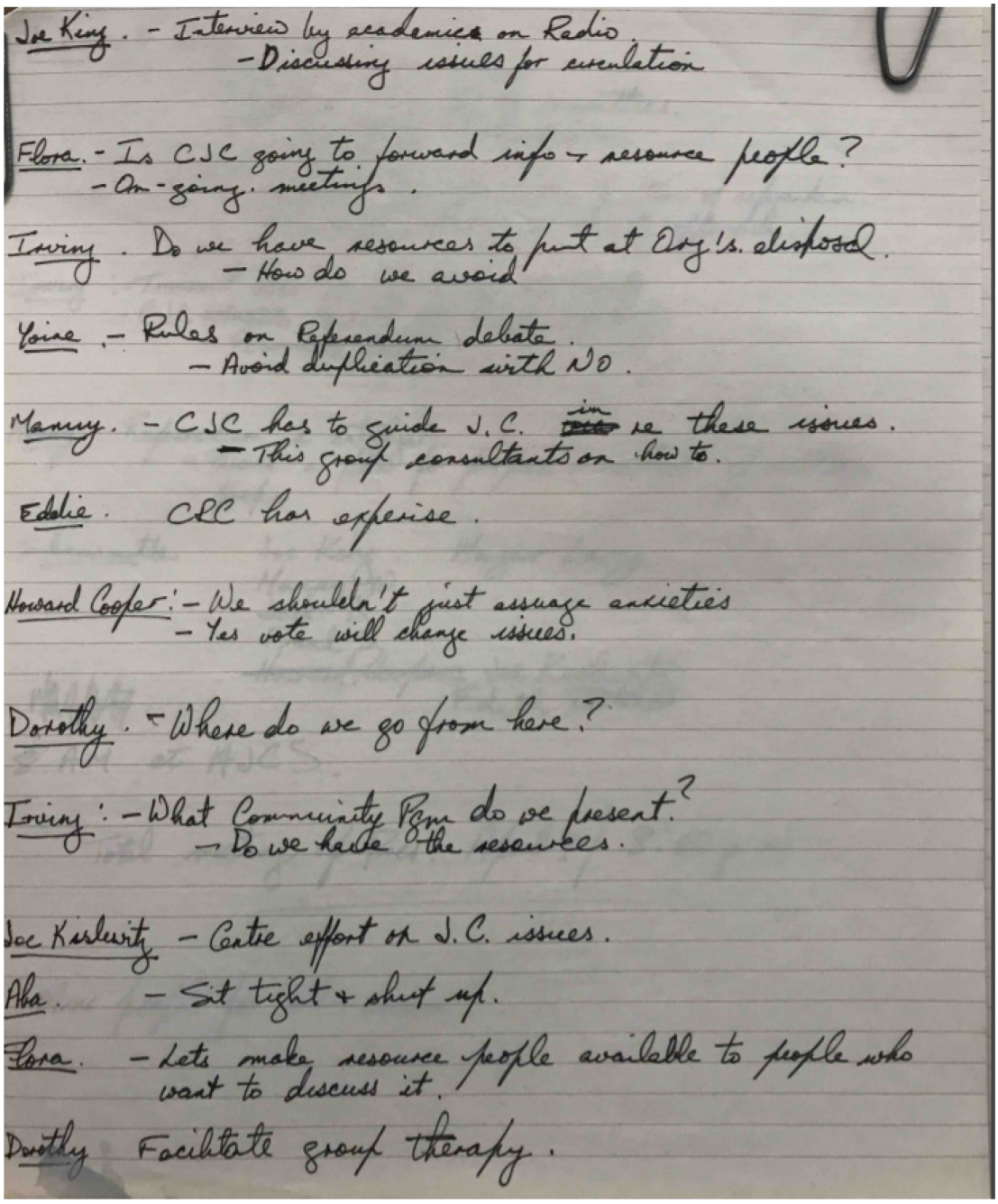
4. The referendum vote asks Quebecers to support or reject the Parti Quebecois' desire to negotiate "sovereignty association" with the rest of Canada. The outcome could be a clear-cut "yes", clearing the way for the PQ to approach the Federal government and the other provincial administrations to seek an entirely new status for Quebec. Another possibility is a clear-cut "no" which would place the PQ government in an uncomfortable position and likely would lead to an early provincial election and face the electorate with a choice between endorsing the Liberals' Beige Paper, calling for a revised Federalism with more powers for Quebec within Canada, or re-election of the PQ government with an indicated minority support for the Sovereignty-Association concept.
A third possibility would be an indefinite vote -- with neither side winning a decisive majority which, again, could result in a provincial election.

5. Either outcome, "oui" or "non" will not change the direction that Quebec has been taking, at a greater or lesser momentum, since 1960 when the election of the Jean Lesage Liberal government reflected a growing nationalistic feeling among Quebecois. Quebec, through Sovereignty Association or modified Federalism or under any other label, will become increasingly francisized. To live in the Quebec of the future will require an ability to function effectively in the French language.

6. A "Yes" vote would most certainly not mean the end of the world. A second referendum would still be necessary for there to be any major change in the position

...2

Figure 7:
"Point to make in briefing community prior to Referendum," CJC Eastern/Quebec Region, 1980. CJC fonds.


Joe King. - Interview by academics on Radio.
- Discussing issues for evaluation

Flora. - Is CJC going to forward info + resource people?
- On-going meetings.

Irving. Do we have resources to put at Org's. disposal.
- How do we avoid

Joine. - Rules on Referendum debate.
- Avoid duplication with NO.

Manny. - CJC has to guide J.C. ~~in~~ re these issues.
- This group consultants on how to.

Eddie. CRC has experise.

Howard Cooper: - We shouldn't just assuage anxieties
- Yes vote will change issues.

Dorothy. - Where do we go from here?

Irving: - What Community Pgm do we present?
- Do we have the resources.

Joe Kirkwity - Centre effort on J.C. issues.

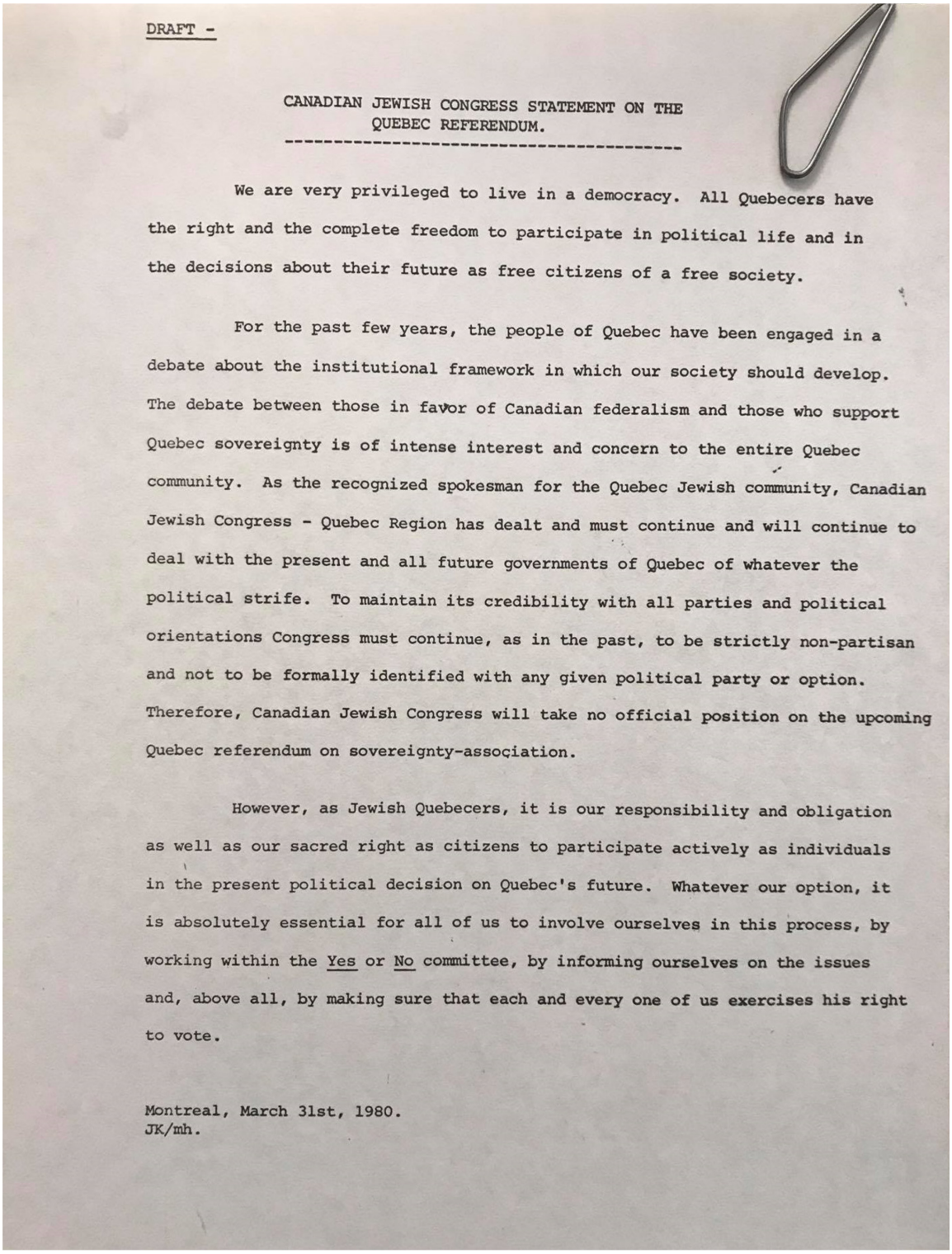
Abe. - Sit tight + shut up.

Flora. - Lets make resource people available to people who want to discuss it.

Dorothy Facilitate group therapy.

Figure 8:

"Community Leadership Meeting 24/3/80," Page 4. CJC Fonds.



DRAFT -

CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS STATEMENT ON THE
QUEBEC REFERENDUM.

We are very privileged to live in a democracy. All Quebecers have the right and the complete freedom to participate in political life and in the decisions about their future as free citizens of a free society.

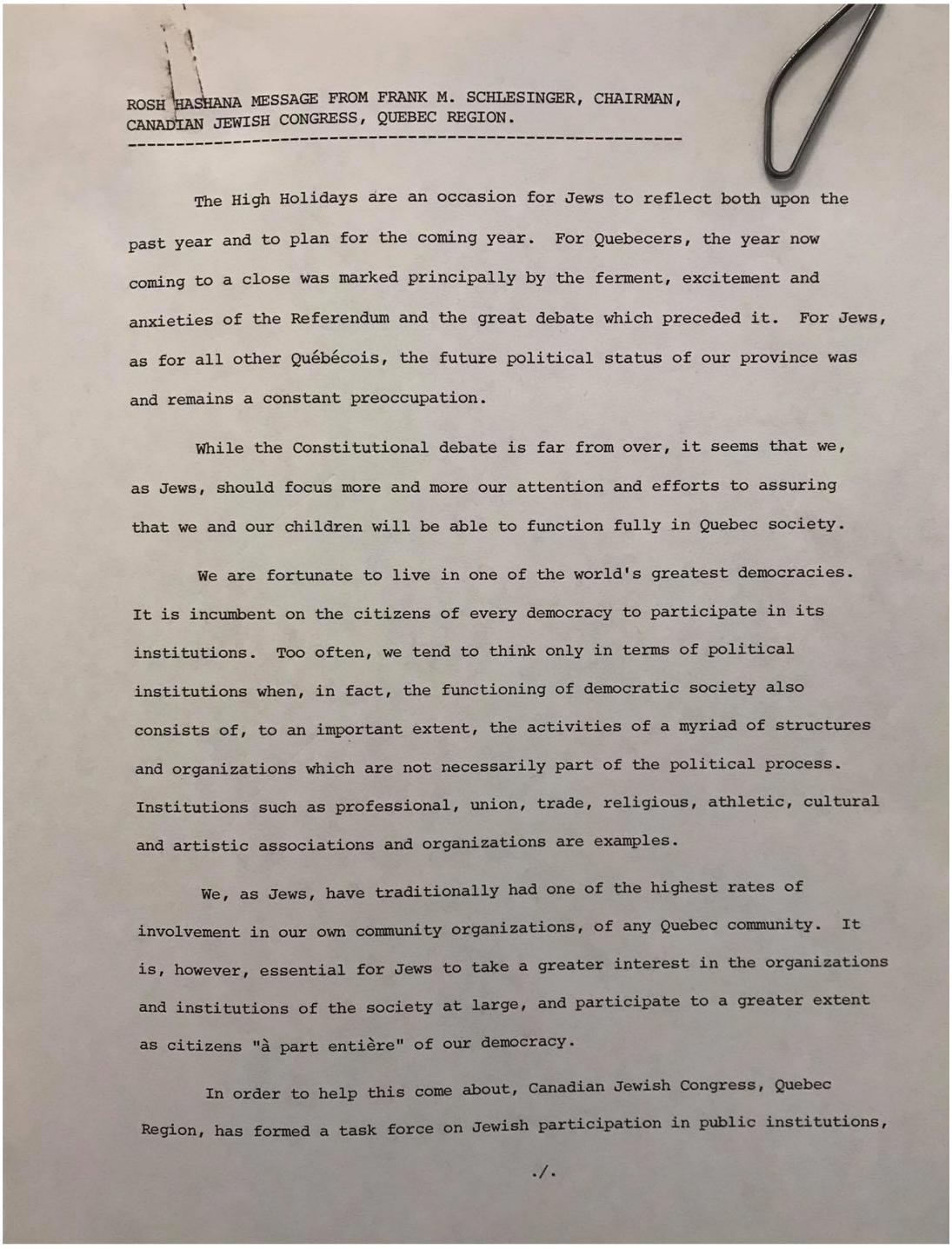
For the past few years, the people of Quebec have been engaged in a debate about the institutional framework in which our society should develop. The debate between those in favor of Canadian federalism and those who support Quebec sovereignty is of intense interest and concern to the entire Quebec community. As the recognized spokesman for the Quebec Jewish community, Canadian Jewish Congress - Quebec Region has dealt and must continue and will continue to deal with the present and all future governments of Quebec of whatever the political strife. To maintain its credibility with all parties and political orientations Congress must continue, as in the past, to be strictly non-partisan and not to be formally identified with any given political party or option. Therefore, Canadian Jewish Congress will take no official position on the upcoming Quebec referendum on sovereignty-association.

However, as Jewish Quebecers, it is our responsibility and obligation as well as our sacred right as citizens to participate actively as individuals in the present political decision on Quebec's future. Whatever our option, it is absolutely essential for all of us to involve ourselves in this process, by working within the Yes or No committee, by informing ourselves on the issues and, above all, by making sure that each and every one of us exercises his right to vote.

Montreal, March 31st, 1980.
JK/mh.

Figure 9:

"Canadian Jewish Congress Statement on the Quebec Referendum." CJC Fonds.



ROSH HASHANA MESSAGE FROM FRANK M. SCHLESINGER, CHAIRMAN,
CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS, QUEBEC REGION.

The High Holidays are an occasion for Jews to reflect both upon the past year and to plan for the coming year. For Quebecers, the year now coming to a close was marked principally by the ferment, excitement and anxieties of the Referendum and the great debate which preceded it. For Jews, as for all other Québécois, the future political status of our province was and remains a constant preoccupation.

While the Constitutional debate is far from over, it seems that we, as Jews, should focus more and more our attention and efforts to assuring that we and our children will be able to function fully in Quebec society.

We are fortunate to live in one of the world's greatest democracies. It is incumbent on the citizens of every democracy to participate in its institutions. Too often, we tend to think only in terms of political institutions when, in fact, the functioning of democratic society also consists of, to an important extent, the activities of a myriad of structures and organizations which are not necessarily part of the political process. Institutions such as professional, union, trade, religious, athletic, cultural and artistic associations and organizations are examples.

We, as Jews, have traditionally had one of the highest rates of involvement in our own community organizations, of any Quebec community. It is, however, essential for Jews to take a greater interest in the organizations and institutions of the society at large, and participate to a greater extent as citizens "à part entière" of our democracy.

In order to help this come about, Canadian Jewish Congress, Quebec Region, has formed a task force on Jewish participation in public institutions,

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Figure 10:
"Rosh Hashana message from Frank M. Schlesinger, Chairman, Canadian Jewish Congress Quebec Region." CJC Fonds.

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  - August 2, 1977
  - August 18, 1977
  - August 25, 1977
  - January 25, 1978
  - February 7, 1979
  - February 27, 1980
  - March 12, 1980
  - May 14, 1980

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