THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GARRISON MENTALITY AMONG
THE ENGLISH IN LOWER CANADA
1793 - 1811

by

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Date July 5, 1970
The mutual antagonism of French and English speaking Canadians during the first decade of the nineteenth century has been explained by historians in a variety of ways. Traditional French Canadian historiography attributes much of the trouble to the machinations and religious and racial bigotry of a handful of bureaucrats. The neo-nationalist school of the University of Montreal maintains that the conflict was the inevitable result of the "decapitation" of French Canadian society at the Conquest and the impossibility of two cultural "nations" coexisting harmoniously in the same political entity. A recurrent tendency in English historical writing has been to lay the blame on the irresponsibility of the nationalists who founded Le Canadien. The "Laurentian" school, including both English and French Canadian historians, postulates that the change from a fur trading to a grain and timber exporting colony and the emergence of rival agrarian and commercial interests were the main causes of the ethnic struggle.

Without denying the elements of truth in all these interpretations, this study attempts to provide a more comprehensive understanding of English Canadian attitudes towards the French Canadians during the war against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France. It contends that such attitudes can be explained only by taking account of the English Canadian fear of an attack on the colony by French
troops and an armed uprising by the French Canadians.

The English Canadians found themselves in an ambiguous situation. The evidence at their disposal suggested—at almost any time during the period—that France might be planning an invasion of Lower Canada and they had no certain means of assessing the loyalty of the French Canadians. Because of their physical situation as an outnumbered minority and because they held strong convictions on the ease with which revolution could be brought about, they were disposed to make the most pessimistic interpretation of events which the twentieth century historian can see did not warrant serious alarm.

While English Canadian fears were exaggerated, they were a major influence on the political history of the period. Dozens of political developments and issues from the language dispute of 1792-93 to Governor Craig's Reign of Terror can be understood only by taking this factor into account. More generally, these fears virtually insured the breakdown of the Constitution of 1791, hardened English Canadian attitudes to French Canadian cultural survival, and contributed indirectly to the emergence of French Canadian nationalism.
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<td>AAQ</td>
<td>Archives de l'archevêché de Québec</td>
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<td>AHAR</td>
<td>American Historical Association, Annual Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APQ</td>
<td>Archives of the Province of Quebec</td>
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<tr>
<td>BRH</td>
<td>Bulletin des recherches historiques</td>
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<tr>
<td>ch.</td>
<td>chapter or chapters</td>
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<td>CHAR</td>
<td>Canadian Historical Association, Annual Report</td>
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<td>CHR</td>
<td>Canadian Historical Review</td>
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<td>Const. Docs.</td>
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<td>JHALC</td>
<td>Journals of the House of Assembly of Lower Canada</td>
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<td>LOC</td>
<td>Library of Congress</td>
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<td>MG</td>
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<td>OH</td>
<td>Ontario History</td>
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<td>PAC</td>
<td>Public Archives of Canada</td>
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<td>QDA</td>
<td>Quebec Diocesan Archives (Anglican)</td>
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<td>RAC</td>
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<td>RAQ</td>
<td>Rapport de l'archiviste de la province de Québec</td>
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<tr>
<td>RG</td>
<td>Record Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>RHAF</td>
<td>Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSCHEC</td>
<td>Rapport de la société canadienne d'histoire de l'Église catholique</td>
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s.d. ...... same date

TRSC ...... Royal Society of Canada, Proceedings and Transactions.
NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

"Canadian" refers to a French speaking resident of Lower Canada; "English" refers to an English speaking resident of Lower Canada; "British" refers to a resident of the British Isles; and "Briton" refers to a person residing anywhere in the British Empire. I have chosen "Canadian" and "Canadians" because these words were commonly used by the English to refer to the French speaking residents. "French Canadian" and "Canadien" were rarely used. The Canadians referred to themselves as "les Canadiens" and to the English (including Scots and former Americans) as "les Anglois".

From the beginning of our period to 1801, the British Home Secretary was responsible for the colonies. In the latter year colonial business was transferred to the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies. For the sake of simplicity I have used the terms "Colonial Secretary" and "Colonial Office" throughout.

Bills and statutes did not, at that time, have short titles. The short titles used in the text and footnotes are my own.
I would like to thank the archivists of the Public Archives of Canada and the Archives of the Province of Quebec for their invariably patient, fast and efficient service in response to innumerable requests for assistance. I am particularly grateful to Jean-Marie Leblanc of the Public Archives whose knowledge of the documents dating from the 1790's clarified many obscure points relating to the habitants' attitude to Revolutionary France. My supervisor, Dr. Leslie Upton, helped immensely on the organization of material and the means of expression. My wife J'Anne prevented dozens of ambiguities from joining others in the text and typed the final manuscript as well as several drafts.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

By the first decade of the nineteenth century the forced marriage of 1759 had been destroyed in all but form. The English in Lower Canada\(^1\) talked openly of eradicating every vestige of the distinctive way of life of their conquered and ignorant subjects. Canadian political leaders spoke of the valley of the St. Lawrence as the exclusive home of the Canadians, and referred to the English ("les intrus") as crass materialists who would abandon family for fortune or as servile tories who sold themselves for place. Politics, poisoned by ethnic hostility, had taken on the extremist tone which was to last to the Rebellion of 1837. Bitter debates in the Legislature and in the newspapers on issues involving cultural assimilation were common. The elected Assembly, controlled by the predominantly Canadian Popular Party demanded the powers of the British House of Commons. The English, almost unanimous in support of the Governor, advocated the elimination of representative government or a union of the Canadas with provisions to

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\(^1\)There is no evidence known to me which can be used to determine the opinions of the English farmers, artisans, labourers, shopkeepers or clerks. "English" therefore refers to English government officials, merchants, professionals (including newspaper editors) and seigneurs. Since these men, rather than the lower strata of English society, helped shape the political, constitutional and ideological history of Lower Canada during the period, the omission of the farmers etc. is not as serious as it might first appear.
insure an English majority in the united assembly. Extremes of intolerance were reached when the Assembly majority in 1806 ordered the arrest of some of its more outspoken English opponents and again in 1810 when the government arrested the leaders of the Popular Party and held them without trial. The intense clash between English and Canadians during these years left an enduring legacy of mutual distrust and therefore, as one historian has aptly put it, originated "one of the central tragedies of Canadian history."^{2}

Why did this quarrel come about? To provide a partial answer to this question the present study examines the origins and nature of the English hostility to the Canadians, which was manifest during the early nineteenth century. Historians have offered a variety of contradictory opinions to explain this hostility and have disagreed on both its chronology and the degree of anglicization desired by the English. Disagreement can be traced in part to the marked tendency to offer explanations which fit neatly into wide-ranging interpretations of Canadian history, but do not result from an autonomous investigation of English antipathy to the Canadians. Few writers have devoted much time to research on the question; almost all have concentrated on the short period between the Gaols Act

^{2} Donald Creighton, The Empire of the St. Lawrence (Toronto, 1956), 154.
dispute of 1805 and Governor Craig's Reign of Terror, while even the most thoughtful treatments rely heavily on newspapers, political pamphlets and governors' dispatches, to the neglect of more revealing sources such as private letters, journals, diaries and travel literature.

In the writing of the older French Canadian historians the English of the 1800's are simply brought onto the stage as foils, the better to offset the virtues of the Canadians and their heroics in the drama of cultural survival. This is true not only of the nationalists, Garneau, Groulx and Bruchesi, who believed that inter-ethnic cooperation endangered the purity of the culture and interpreted the Conquest as an enduring tragedy; but also of the optimists, Sulte and Chapais, who eulogized the


4 Lionel Groulx, Histoire du Canada français depuis la découverte, 4v. (Montreal, 1950-52), III, 12, 140-64; L'Enseignement français au Canada, 2v. (Montreal, 1931/35), 75-81.


7 Thomas Chapais, Cours d'histoire du Canada, 8v. (Quebec, 1919-34), II, 172-86, 218-28. See also Louis-Philippe Audet, Le système scolaire de la Province de Québec, 6v. published (Quebec, 1950-56), III, 84-89, 113.
the Conquest generations of peace, prosperity and political liberty for French Canada, as well as its isolation from the atrocities and secularism of the French Revolution. English attitudes, it was assumed, were well represented by that unlovable triumvirate of Civil Secretary Herman Ryland, Attorney-General Jonathan Sewell and the Anglican Bishop Jacob Mountain. The bureaucrats were interested in maintaining their monopoly of patronage and power, desirous of furthering Bishop Mountain's ecclesiastical empire-building schemes, and motivated by a racial and religious animus. This latter required little proof or explanation beyond referring to Ryland's well-known statement of his "contempt and detestation" of the "papist" religion, which "sinks and debases the human mind." Bruchesi viewed this and similar statements as evidence that the English exhibited the arrogance of a conquering people convinced of the inherent superiority of their race and traditions. In some cases this impressionistic approach was supplemented by resorting to very general explanations of the tensions between the


9 Ryland to , 23 Dec. 1804, Robert Christie, A History of the Late Province of Lower Canada, 6v. (Quebec/Montreal, 1848-55), VI, 72-73.
nationalities in the 1800's. The defective Constitution of 1791 which denied the Canadian majority effective power is a recurrent theme, while Groulx detected a conflict of philosophies of life: urban, capitalist, individualist, materialist, empirical and Protestant versus agrarian, hierarchical, moral, Cartesian and Roman Catholic.

One might take issue with the stress the older French Canadian historians placed on racial and religious bigotry, which they unfortunately neglect to define. Can the attitudes of the English be sufficiently explained in this way, when Sewell, for example, had little personal, as opposed to political, dislike of Canadians, when there was a growing tolerance of Roman Catholicism in Britain, when religious animosities of a doctrinal nature were muted in Lower Canada, when intermarriage was common at least

\[10^\text{See e.g. Garneau, Histoire, III, 199. See also Bishop Joseph-Octave Plessis to M. Bourret, 4 July 1806, RAQ, 1932-33, 29.}\]

\[11^\text{For every example of an attitude similar to that of Ryland, one could cite a contrary example illustrating that many of the English in this period considered religious toleration as a worthy ideal and strove to practise it. See e.g. John Cozens Ogden, A Tour through Upper and Lower Canada (Litchfield, Conn., 1799), 38; Bishop Mountain to the Bishop of Lincoln, 26 Oct. 1804 (draft), QDA, Mountain Papers, C Series, v. 4 (referring to Thomas A. Coffin); Ross Cuthbert, An Apology for Great Britain (Quebec, 1809), 13; Journals of Samuel Southby Bridge, PAC, MG 24, I. 20 (19 April 1810, p. 75); "Camillus" [John Henry], An Enquiry into the Evils of General Suffrage and Frequent Elections in Lower Canada (Montreal, 1810), 28; Craig to Liverpool, 1 May 1810, Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 392. Issues of a religious nature were virtually unknown in the Assembly: ibid.}\]
into the 1790's, when English children took pride in learning the French language, when social status rather than national origin determined whether a Canadian was admitted into polite society. These facts suggest that the explanation of English hostility is not to be found primarily in a desire to proselytize, or in the cultural arrogance of the conqueror or in some instinctive dislike of the unfamiliar, although all these doubtless played a part.

The interpretation of the neo-nationalist school of the University of Montreal can be found in Jean-Pierre Wallot's analysis of the political crisis during Craig's governorship. Wallot's thesis is a sophisticated elaboration of Lord Durham's racial interpretation as modified by the Maurice Séguin-Michel Brunet decapitation version of the Conquest. The intense ethnic conflict of the Craig period was simply the most bitter and most obvious of the numerous contests between the nationalities for cultural supremacy in the preceding half century. These

13See e.g. Cuthbert, An Apology, 10.
14See e.g. Gérard Parizeau, "Bas-Canada-1800: Le milieu et ses problèmes," TRSC, 1963, I, 187-219, passim. The same impression is given in the writings of Lord Selkirk, John Lambert and Philippe Aubert de Gaspé which are cited in the bibliography.
conflicts had arisen because of the existence of three conditions which were the natural results of the Conquest. First, there existed on the same politically organized territory two distinct ethnic groups or nations. These groups came into contact at a number of friction-creating points. Wallot here refers to religious and language differences, the contest between agrarian and commercial interests, and the struggle for political power. Shortly after the Conquest antagonism between the two groups was translated into the incompatible ideologies of "la nation canadienne" as the exclusive home of Canadians and total anglification, a development which itself greatly embittered relations between the nationalities. The third condition was "la rareté des chances ou des positions" which made it difficult for the Canadians as a conquered people largely excluded from high commerce and government positions to achieve desirable social status. Such conditions made conflict along ethnic lines inevitable, for it was natural that each nation—and Wallot stresses the near unanimity of view in each during the Craig period—should strive to insure the freedom of the collective group to develop its full potential, politically, economically and culturally, free from the restraint of the other.

While Wallot's comprehensive thesis has a superficial attraction and contains many insights into the period, it cannot be accepted. Many of the arguments brought against the older French Canadian historians can also be made against
the neo-nationalist position. Wallot's treatment of the mentality of the English also suffers from a concentration on the brief period of Craig's tenure of office and a heavy reliance on newspapers, pamphlets and dispatches. He has, for example, made little use of such important collections as the Mountain and Sewell Papers. The assertion of inevitability is simply that, an assertion which cannot be proved or disproved on the basis of historical evidence. The stress on inevitability, moreover, has led Wallot to neglect the very essence of historical study: change over time, in particular the changing attitudes to cultural survival and anglification taken by representative Canadian and English spokesmen from the late 1780's to 1811.

Until the 1930's few English speaking historians exhibited much interest in the early history of Lower Canada. The so-called Britannic school concentrated on such topics as the War of 1812 and the evolution of responsible government, while the political nationalists wrote mainly on the latter subject, Confederation, and the growth of autonomy in foreign affairs. The long-settled area of Lower Canada held few attractions for the student

16 This comment also applies to Wallot's Ph.D. thesis to which he refers for supportive proof: "Le Bas-Canada sous l'administration de Craig, 1807-1811," 2v. (University of Montreal, 1965).

17 This point will be developed in ch. 5, 7, 8, below.
of frontierism.\(^{18}\) Those who dealt with the period at all were satisfied to explain the ethnic tensions by brief references to the defective constitution and/or a conflict on the economic future of the colony, symbolized by the Gaols Act dispute of 1805.\(^{19}\) The most distinctive of these early treatments was that of William Kingsford, founding father of the Britannic school.\(^{20}\) In Kingsford's view the story of Canadian history was the emergence in North America, in conditions of constant challenge from south of the border, of a viable British community. Responsible government was a crowning imperial success as it enabled Canada to maintain its tie with the mother country and its independence from the United States and thereby perpetuate such "British" values as constitutional liberty, honesty, thrift and industry. Kingsford had little sympathy for French Canadian nationalism at any period and even less for those misguided resident bureaucrats and officials of the Colonial Office who for so long resisted the evolution of responsible government. By trotting out a dangerous and

\(^{18}\) For a description of the various schools see J.M.S. Careless, "Frontierism, Metropolitanism, and Canadian History," CHR, 1954, 1-21.


unnecessary nationalism to serve narrow electoral interests, the leaders of the Popular Party forced the mass of the English community into an unnatural alliance with the extremists in the bureaucracy. Had wiser heads prevailed in the Popular Party, the Canadians and the English, instead of indulging in mutual recrimination, would have worked in happy harmony to reform the oligarchic structure of government which, "if it had been constitutionally and temperately attacked could not have been maintained,"\(^2\)

The first detailed analysis of English attitudes by an English speaking historian is found in Donald Creighton's *The Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence, 1760-1850*,\(^2\) a work which developed the "Laurentian" version of the environmentalist approach to Canadian history and clearly reflected the growing tendency among North American intellectuals during the depression years to explain political behaviour in terms of economic motivation. Creighton attributed English attacks on Canadian culture and Craig's Reign of Terror to the frustrations of the "progressive" merchants, those harbingers of a Confederation based on natural east-west trade routes, who in the early nineteenth century were engaged in exploiting the commercial empire of the St. Lawrence, Great Lakes, Saskatchewan.

\(^2\) V, 45.

\(^2\) (Toronto, 1937), republished as The Empire of the St. Lawrence in 1956. References are to the latter, p. 96, 143-50, 153-62.
and Fraser water systems. Creighton suggests that English
attitudes were conditioned in part by the structural changes
in the economy during the 1800's. Earlier, when the fur
trade had provided the main source of mercantile income,
the two nationalities had lived together in reasonable
harmony. With the growing importance of profits derived
from grain and timber exports—profits which could be
maximized by encouraging immigration, increasing agricul­
tural production and facilitating the transfer and
improvement of land—the seigneurial system, clerically
controlled education and the slovenly farming methods of
the habitants began to appear as intolerable and unnecessary
brakes on the economic progress of the colony. With the
emergence in 1805 of the Popular Party, whose leaders
resisted all reform and were desirous of perpetuating a
seventeenth century feudal arcadia, the English were
understandably goaded to fury.

The environmentalist-economic interpretation influenced
Creighton's judgment on two further questions relevant to
this study: the political alliance of merchants and bureau­
ocrats, and the extent of the anglicification threat. The
alliance was seen as an attempt by the merchants to protect
their economic interests, with Governor Craig and his ad­
visers enthusiastic about the aims of the merchants to the
point where they acted, in effect, as the political arm
of the mercantile community:
To Craig, who cherished the nineteenth-century middle-class ideals of education, respectability and material progress, the French-Canadian legislators were simply a collection of illiterate, ignorant, oafish incompetents. He turned from them to the merchants with evident relief.... The reversal of alliances, fore-shadowed by the changes of 1783, was becoming a fact; and trade and bureaucracy drew together in what was beginning to appear more and more a typical American commercial state. 23

Creighton also suggested that the main components of Canadian culture—religion and language particularly—were not seriously called into question by the English during this period. Provided the merchants could have realized their economic reforms, there would have been little further demand for assimilation. 24

The neo-nationalists excepted, Creighton's stress on the conflict between agricultural and commercial interests has become the standard method of accounting for the political and constitutional disputes during the first decade of the nineteenth century. The theme appears in numerous general works which touch on the period and is used in the most recent monograph dealing with the political history of Lower Canada. 25 It has received a detailed and

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23 p. 161.

often penetrating elaboration by Professor Fernand Ouellet. Ouellet, like Creighton, has assumed that because of the general prosperity and the continued predominance of the fur trade, the period of the war against Revolutionary France was Canada’s "age of good feelings." He concludes the section of his book dealing with the period 1793 to 1802 by stating that "la prospérité économique favorise ... la paix sociale et incite à l'accord idéologique." The prevalent mood was one of "calme ... concorde ... bien-être." Both the economic situation and the fact that the English merchants were able to control the Assembly "a permis au système parlementaire d'atteindre ses objectifs, en particulier la pacification sociale." Conflict in the Assembly was minimized as the merchants felt no urgency to introduce commercial reforms. The hatred of revolutionary ideas, moreover, united all classes—including the habitants—in an "exaltation de la solidarité impériale." This "bel édifice" was unfortunately destroyed by the changes in the economic structure after 1802 and the stubborn opposition of the Popular Party to the merchants' programme, beginning turmoil of the Craig period to the bigotry of Ryland—"a man who had Germanic notions on race and religion" (Lower)—and the desire of the bureaucrats to retain their monopoly of patronage. It should be noted that Lower appears to have been influenced by Creighton's views on the nature and extent of the threat of assimilation. The others do not deal with the point.


with the dispute over the financing of jails in 1805. To explain this opposition Ouellet provides an original and persuasive account of the economic and psychological malaise of the Canadian middle class. He points out that the Canadian professional class was growing much faster than the population as a whole, at the very time when agricultural production in the region of the seigneuries was declining. Excluded from commerce, of rural background, educated in clerically controlled colleges and of depressed social status, the Canadian middle class was unprepared psychologically to sympathize with the reforms demanded by the merchants. In the face of bewildering economic change, symbolized for them by the rapid settlement of the Eastern Townships, they clung desperately to the familiar. The articulation of the ideal of la nation canadienne, the practice of confrontation politics and the attempt by the Assembly to achieve control of the executive—and thereby of patronage—were designed to advance the material interests of the middle class and to increase their sense of self-importance.

Although Professor Ouellet considers that the socio-economic conflict was the prime factor governing the political history of the Craig period, he presents a more balanced treatment than Creighton. In dealing with the bureaucrats, for example, he makes it clear that the desire to retain a privileged access to patronage, a fanatical belief in the virtues of British institutions, and the
conservative ideology found in the writings of Edmund Burke influenced their politics at least as much as a willingness to further the merchants' aims. He does, however, follow Creighton's interpretation of the mercantile-bureaucratic alliance. Faced with an obvious threat to their economic interests, should the Popular Party realize its constitutional aims, the merchants were reluctantly forced to cooperate with the officials despite the fact that they strongly disapproved of "les menées de la clique fanatique" of which Mountain and Ryland were the leaders. The implication is that the merchants' unnatural alliance with the executive was dictated solely by economic considerations and that they were not interested in assimilating the Canadians beyond what was essential for the commercial development of the province.

The interpretations offered by Kingsford, Creighton and Ouellet leave many questions unanswered. They might have asked themselves, for example, whether Canadian nationalism was in part a response to hardening English attitudes to the perpetuation of the least vestige of distinctive Canadian culture. They might also have asked whether the political unanimity of the English community reflected something more profound than a reaction to

\[28\] Ibid., 201, 210-11; "Mgr Plessis et la naissance d'une bourgeoisie canadienne (1797-1810)," RSCHEC, 1956, 83-99 at 85. While Professor Ouellet often implies that the bureaucrats sympathized with the merchants' aims (e.g. Histoire économique, 201; see also p. 167 below) he does not explicitly deal with the point.
editorials in *Le Canadien* or even the merchants' desire to protect their economic interests. While the economic factor as described by Creighton and Ouellet was an important determinant of English hostility toward the Canadians, one may legitimately ask, does their thesis provide a complete explanation? If it does how can one account for the intensification of assimilationist sentiment in the late 1790's and early 1800's, that is before the Gaols Act dispute and before the fur trade lost its primacy in the economy? Again why assume, as both do, that the demands of the merchants and the English community generally for anglification were based primarily on economic motives, when the *Quebec Mercury*, for example, continually referred to anglification as essential in the interests of security? Why assume, as Creighton does, that Governor Craig and the bureaucrats were preoccupied with the economic future of the province? Why not, rather, assume as a hypothesis worth investigating that their attitude to the Canadians was accurately reflected in almost everything they wrote on the political state of the colony, that is, that they were genuinely, if misguidedly, concerned with the problem of internal security? The Popular Party leaders were, after all, arrested on suspicion of treasonable practices. Britain was at war against a nation which was the former mother country of the Canadians, and Bonaparte's territorial ambition seemed to contemporaries to be limitless. If this concern were genuine, was it confined to a few nervous
officials or was it general throughout the English community? If the answer to the latter question is yes, the environmentalist-economic interpretation must undergo serious qualification.

The judgments of historians on the English reaction to French intrigues and the possibility of revolution in Lower Canada have been superficial or misleading or both. Kingsford, who devoted many pages to recounting the subversive activities of citizens Genet and Adet and their agents, assumed the literal truth of the exaggerated reports made by government officials. He therefore saw nothing strange about the English reaction, including Monk's roundup of suspects in 1794 and the trial and execution of David McLane in 1797. It was a rational response in defence of the Empire. Kingsford, consequently, did not make use of the idea of English nervousness to help explain national antipathies during the Craig period. W.L. Morton in his general history, *The Kingdom of Canada*, mentions that "the unrest excited by the Revolution and the outbursts of 1794 and 1796 instilled a distrust of Canadians in the British officials in Lower Canada" but does not develop the point or indicate whether the feeling of insecurity was shared by other segments of English society. Mason Wade, in his book *The French Canadians, 1760-1967*, refers


30 (Toronto, 1963), 192.

briefly to English fears and makes the general statement that these fears contributed to ethnic tensions during the war. It is not altogether clear whether alarm was shared by the English community generally or confined to the small group of influential loyalist officials. Wade also leaves the impression that by the first decade of the nineteenth century, when there was no revolutionary agitation in the countryside, reflections on Canadian disloyalty had become mainly a rationalization to preserve the bureaucrats' monopoly of public office and land grants. In any case he evidently did not think the fear of revolution was sufficiently genuine or pervasive to use in his interpretation of English plans to anglicize the Canadians or of the crisis under Craig.

With the exceptions noted, historians have either omitted the subject entirely or dismissed as obvious opportunism English claims that the Canadians were dangerously disloyal, although it has usually been recognized that Governor Craig sincerely believed this. The idea of opportunism originated with the Popular Party and was

32 I, 106, 110.

Wade does raise, in passing, the possibility that Milnes' education policy in 1801 owed something to his concern for internal security (I, 104). He also recognized that Craig believed there was a danger of revolution (I, 110).

33 See e.g. Le Canadien, 9 Oct. 1809; Louis-Joseph Papineau to Antoine Ménard, 22 March 1809 (1810), PAC, Collection Baby, v. 13: 8294-95.
taken up in the generation after the war by the liberal editors of the Quebec and Montreal Gazettes, John Neilson and James Brown, by the Patriote leader Louis-Joseph Papineau and the historian Garneau.35 Thereafter it found ready acceptance among French Canadian historians who until the last few years, tended to assume that the habitants, following the lead of a far-sighted clergy, quickly learned to detest the atrocities and doctrines of the French Revolution. It was also found useful by a number of English speaking historians whose sympathies were on the side of the Assembly in the constitutional struggle of the Craig period.

Opportunism has been explained in a variety of ways. English assertions on the subject of Canadian disloyalty have been attributed to: a desire on the part of the law officers of the Crown to increase their fees by prosecuting crimes against the government,36 attempts by the bureaucrats to gain promotion by exaggerating the danger and thereby enhancing their importance in the eyes of the Colonial Office,37 a pretext devised by the bureaucrats and English


assemblymen in the hope that the introduction of freehold tenure would be facilitated by portraying the Canadians as dangerous revolutionaries and the seigneurial system as a grievance which might be effectively exploited by the French emissaries, a rationalization of the official oligarchy's opposition to the assumption of any increased power by the Assembly and/or of their attempts to insure a docile Assembly through anglicization, an electoral tactic used by government supporters during the Craig period, a rationalization of English attempts—attributed to racial and religious animus and/or a desire to develop the province economically—to assimilate the Canadians, destroy the Popular Party and eliminate representative government or bring about the union of the Canadas, a convenient tactic with which to advance the interests of the English collectivity in the inevitable clash for cultural and

38 Garneau, Histoire, III, 112.


40 Le Canadien, 9 Oct. 1809; Louis-Joseph Papineau to Antoine Menard, 22 March 1809 [1810], n. 34 above; Garneau, Histoire, III, 148; Bruchesi, Histoire, 383-84; Wallot, "Le Bas-Canada," passim, but see particularly II, 377-78, 415.

41 Garneau, Histoire, II, 126-61; Chapais, Cours, II, 147-53, 178-80, 214-233; Claude De Bonnault, "Napoléon et le Canada," Revista de historia de America, 1956, 31-56 at 38-39; Manning, The Revolt, 77-81; Bruchesi, Histoire, 381-390. Some of these writers (e.g. De Bonnault) refer to the point only in very general terms.
This study will attempt to demonstrate that English hostility to the Canadians in the 1790's and 1800's reflected, in large part, a state of mind, at times bordering on hysteria, which saw French plots everywhere and assumed that on the appearance of even the smallest French military force, the mass of the Canadians would rise in arms, with the English marked out as the first victims. This state of mind I call a "garrison mentality". Although the fears of the English always had some basis in fact, they continually exaggerated both the external and internal danger out of all proportion. As will appear in the text such pessimism is explained by the situation of the English as a vastly outnumbered--and, in their view, inadequately protected--minority, by the fact that they could not be certain of the loyalty of the Canadians or of French military intentions, and, finally, by a profound conviction of the ease with which revolution could be brought about. The many expressions of English fears during our period.

42Wallot, Intrigues, 122-23; "Le Bas-Canada," n. 40 above; Vaugeois, L'union, 47.

43The terminal dates of the study should be explained. 1793 was chosen for the obvious reason that it was the year of the war. 1811 was decided upon for two reasons. First, Napoleon and his officials in the United States after the opening of the Russian campaign took little or no interest in sending an invading force to Lower Canada. The evidence also indicates that the garrison mentality lasted throughout the War of 1812 (p. 264 n. 18 below). Its main lines were firmly fixed by 1811 and any detailed treatment in the following four years would have involved needless complication and would likely have produced little additional understanding of the English attitude to the Canadians.
were, therefore, not cold-bloodedly manufactured to serve other purposes, but reflected real feelings. No one, of course, would be foolish enough to deny that the English interpretation of the security problem often provided a convenient rationale for diverse personal, class and political aims. This fact doubtless helps explain why the assumptions on which the garrison mentality rested were seldom challenged or critically examined within the English community. Thus, far from explaining insincere English reflection on Canadian disloyalty, the varieties of self-interest detected by the historians helped sustain a genuine conviction of potential danger.

The consequences of the garrison mentality were many. It poisoned relations between the nationalities, intensified English demands that the Canadians must assimilate, helped stimulate the emergence of Canadian nationalism, and found political expression in Craig's Reign of Terror. It also contributed to the ultimate breakdown of the Constitution of 1791 and hence to the Rebellion of 1837. Indeed it is not too much to say that the political, constitutional and ideological history of the period of the Constitutional Act cannot be understood without taking the garrison mentality into account.
On February 1, 1793 the French republic declared war on Great Britain, a war which was to last until the short-lived treaty of Amiens in March 1802. During the war the English in Lower Canada assumed that the appearance of French troops in the colony would trigger insurrection. The external threat from France, then, was a basic constituent of the garrison mentality. This chapter describes the military plans devised by French officials for the conquest of Lower Canada and the espionage activities of the agents they sent to the colony. Most of what is outlined was known shortly after the fact by officials of the Lower Canada government. Successive British ministers at Philadelphia kept them accurately informed of the plans to subvert the colony, which were devised by the French diplomatic and consular representatives to the United States. Detailed knowledge of the intrigues of emissaries within the borders of Lower Canada was obtained from the depositions of arrested suspects and information volunteered by residents or supplied by the paid informers employed by the Attorney-General and the Montreal magistrates. While the historian, making use of additional sources, understands that the interest France took in reconquest was but occasional and superficial, contemporaries had no such confidence. The evidence of French intentions—which was not kept a government secret—suggested that the invasion of Lower Canada held
a high priority. There was, moreover, no infallible means of discovering that French invasion plans were abandoned and, despite British control of the seas, no assurance that the invasion would present insuperable military difficulties. In these circumstances a large proportion of the English believed that the appearance of a French attacking force was always a distinct possibility.¹

Anticipating war in November 1792 the Girondist government appointed citizen Edmond Genet as Minister to the United States and charged him with the task of

¹No attempt has yet been made to analyze the English assessment of the possibility of a French invasion, although many portions of this chapter owe a great deal to the work of other writers. Wade, "Quebec and the French Revolution" and Maude Woodfin, "Citizen Genet and his Mission," unpublished Ph.D. thesis (University of Chicago, 1928), 414-31 have provided detailed treatment of Genet's Canadian policy and the activities of his principal agents, Mezière and Rousse. The subversive plans of the Vermont frontiersmen can be studied in Chilton Williamson, Vermont in Quandary: 1763-1825 (Montpelier, 1949) and, for the early 1800's in Stuart Webster, "Napoleon and Canada," unpublished Ph.D. thesis (University of Chicago, 1961), 39-51 and his "Ira Allen in Paris, 1800, Planning a Canadian Revolution," CHAR, 1963, 74-80. Wallot (Intrigues) has uncovered a wealth of material dealing with alleged French or American plots during the years 1800-1802. There is almost nothing written on the Canadian policy of the Jacobins or the Directory although the existence and main features of the invasion plan of 1796 were long ago established by A.L. Burt in The United States, Great Britain and British North America (New Haven, 1940), 170-73. Brief treatments of the activities in Lower Canada of Adet's agents may be found in Kingsford, History of Canada, VII, 440-45 and S.D. Clark, Movements of Political Protest in Canada, 1640-1840 (Toronto, 1959), 184-87. These accounts, which are based almost exclusively on the Q Series, touch only on the highlights, do not relate the intrigues to the Directory's Canadian policy, and tell us more about the official view of the intrigues than the intrigues themselves. Benjamin Suite's treatment ("Les projets de 1793 à 1810," TRSC, 1911, I, 19-67 at 41-51) is unfootnoted and incoherent.
interesting the American government in a commercial-political alliance and a joint Franco-American expedition against Louisiana and "la belle étoile du Canada," which would be united to "la Constellation Américaine." Such expeditions would protect France's sister republic from encirclement and destruction by the wicked forces of monarchism and would have the additional benefit of injuring the commerce of Britain and Spain and diverting their troops and money from the European theatre. The French government had every reason to believe that President Washington might be tempted to assist in expelling the British from North America. Relations between the United States and Britain were embittered to the point where war between them was always a possibility. The United States was still prohibited from trading in the British West Indies and the British retention of the western posts south of the Great Lakes suggested to many Americans that the former mother country was aiming to dismember or even destroy the union. The diplomatic-military programme worked out for Genet was, however, fatally undermined just two weeks after his arrival in the United States. Feeling war against either of the two belligerents would be disastrous for the young

2AHAR, 1903, II, 201-11.
3See Woodfin, "Citizen Genet," ch. IV, passim.
4See Burt, The United States, Great Britain, and British North America, ch. IV-VII; Alexander De Conde, Entangling Alliance (Durham, N.C., 1958), ch. 3.
republic, Washington on April 23, 1793 proclaimed the neutrality of the United States.

Despite his discovery that the United States government would look with disfavour on any military expedition originating on American territory, Genet remained enthusiastic about liberating the Canadians:

Je serais au comble de mes voeux si j'entrevoyais la possibilité d'y faire germer la noble sentiment de l'indépendance et d'exciter nos anciens frères à secouer le joug honteux des Anglais ... dont notre France régénérée sera toujours prête à les affranchir.5

By August 1793 he had conceived the idea of sending to the St. Lawrence an army of volunteers on board the French West Indian fleet which was then at anchor in the New York harbour.6 During the next two months, the Minister, using New York as his base of operations, established a powder magazine, arsenal and barracks and recruited a force of about 2,500 made up mainly of American adventurers and Irish and French residents of the city. Genet also hoped to make

5Genet to citizen Hauterive (French Consul at New York), 4 June 1793 (draft), LOC, Genet Papers. See also Genet to citizen Dannery (French Consul at Boston), 7 June 1793 (draft), ibid.

6For Genet's attempts to send a military force to Lower Canada, see Genet to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 2 Aug. 1793, AHAR, 1903, II, 234-35; Same to Same, 15 Aug. 1793, ibid., 239-40; Same to Same, 7 Oct. 1793, ibid., 264-65; George Hammond (British Minister to the United States) to Grenville, 17 Sept. 1793, PAC, FO 5, v. 1: 292-94; Same to Same, 12 Oct. 1793, ibid., 331-32; Same to Same, 10 Nov. 1793, ibid., 355-56; minutes of the Executive Council for 25 Oct. 1793, PAC, CO 42, v. 97: 188-89; Woodfin, "Citizen Genet," 414-31; Eugene Perry Link, Democratic-Republican Societies, 1790-1800 (New York, 1942), 141-44; Williamson, Vermont in Quandary, ch. 14, passim.
use of volunteers recruited among the Vermont frontiersmen to mount a second invasion via the Richelieu river valley. These hopes were by no means unfounded. A number of land speculators and/or exporters of grain, potash and timber living in the Champlain Valley section of the state coveted the empty lands of the Eastern Townships and saw Canadian conquest as a precondition to building a canal around the Richelieu rapids—which often destroyed the timber—and as a means of escaping from commercial bondage at the hands of the Montreal merchants, who by virtue of the Navigation Acts enjoyed a monopoly of shipping from St. Johns to the ocean-going vessels at Quebec.7

With his irregular army and only fifteen sail Genet planned a naval extravaganza of staggering proportions. The fleet would sail north to destroy the English cod-fishing installations on the Newfoundland coast and capture the six hundred ships of the fishing fleet in addition to the fur convoy from Hudson Bay. Then it would retake St. Pierre and Miquelon for France, burn Halifax and sound the dispositions of the Canadians at Quebec: "que mes agens excitent à l'insurrection."8 After refitting at New York and taking on more army volunteers in Virginia the fleet would attack Nassau, the resort of many English privateers, and capture New Orleans from Spain. Genet, however, could

7Williamson, Vermont in Quandary, ch. 14, passim.
8Genet to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 2 Aug. 1793, n. 6 above.
not convince the officers of the wisdom of "ce plan très vaste" which he expected would succeed because of the surprise factor. By October he had worked out a reduced programme in which most of the southern expedition and the visit to Quebec were dropped. The officers of the fleet considered even this modest version of the Minister's confidence in their naval prowess to be excessive and sailed off to France. Thus disappeared in total confusion Genet's sole chance to test by a military presence the effect of the propaganda he was industriously circulating among the Canadians.

For an assessment of revolutionary sentiment in Lower Canada Genet had relied heavily on a young printer from Montreal, Henri Mezière, who in June 1793 had prepared a report on the political and military situation in the colony. Mezière did not hesitate to claim that insurrection would greet a French landing, for in his roseate view the French Revolution "a électrisé les Canadiens, & les a plus éclairés en un an sur leurs droits Naturels qu'un siècle de lecture n'aurait pu faire."

Taking Mezière at his word, Genet used his ideas as a basis from which to draft the key document in his Canadian propaganda campaign, Les Français libres à leurs

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frères les Canadiens. The pamphlet apologized for France's abandonment of Canada but assured Canadians that this neglect had not meant indifference of the French people but rather "une stérile indignation de la conduit criminelle de nos rois envers vous." The dawn of liberty had now struck. Canadians should not await the inevitable revolution in England but should rise immediately and call to their assistance their friends, the Indians, and rely on that of the Americans and the French. The Girondin version of social paradise was expressed in the advantages which would accrue upon the overthrow of the British government. Canada would gain political independence and be able to make alliances with France or the United States. It would enjoy complete free trade and no privileged companies would be allowed to monopolize the fur trade. Titles and seigneurial dues would be abolished. Canadians would elect all members of the legislature and government and careers in the civil service would be open to talent. Catholic priests would be elected as in the early church and instead of the tithe would receive a salary according to their utility. Schools, printing presses, institutions for the higher sciences, medicine and mathematics and even civilizing missions to the Indians were promised.

In August or September, 1793, Mezière, ensconced

at Lake Champlain in upper New York, sent Jacques Rousse, an expatriate Canadian, into Lower Canada with three hundred and fifty copies of *Les Francais libres* and a variety of other propaganda designed to justify the King's execution and impress Canadians with the success of French armies. Revolutionary songs and copies of Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man* were also included. By February Rousse reported he had circulated the propaganda in all the parishes of the province. Rousse also made contact with local sympathizers who soon spread the rumour that France would shortly send a force to the colony and attempted to ensure that the Canadians should on no account take up arms to defend the province. Genet did not remain in office long enough to see the results of Rousse's activity. The Minister was recalled in November and retired from his duties in February 1794, wisely choosing to avoid a Jacobin guillotine by remaining—as a gentleman farmer—in the United States.

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12 Rousse to Genet, 13 Feb. 1794, n. 11 above.

13 See ch. 3 below.
The Jacobin Committee of Public Safety made no original contribution to Canadian policy. In November 1793, two of its members, Nicolas Billaud-Varenne and Lazare Carnot, submitted to the Minister of Foreign Affairs a memorandum prepared by two representatives on mission at Bordeaux. Its contents amounted to nothing more than a rehash of the bankrupt policy contained in Genet's instructions and was based on the same erroneous assumption of Washington's intention that "les Américains ne desirent rien tant ... que de chasser les Anglais du continent ou leur voisinage leur cause des inquietudes continuelle." According to the authors Canada and Nova Scotia were waiting impatiently to "s'unir aux treize états pour partager leur prospérité--fille de la Liberté." Nothing, of course, came of this idea. As France was, moreover, desperately dependent upon the United States for grain supplies, the Committee, above all, wished to prevent any diplomatic rupture between the two republics. The new Minister, Jean-Antoine Joseph Fauchet, was accordingly instructed to drop Genet's expeditionary projects and as a result took little interest in the Canadians.

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15De Conde, Entangling Alliance, ch. 12, passim.
17Robert Liston (British Minister to the United States) to Lieutenant-Governor Robert Prescott, 28 Nov. 1796, RAC, 1891, 62.
attempting the conquest of Lower Canada was not revived until after the Directory took power in November 1795.

As it became clear in the months following Jay's Treaty that the United States had agreed to become a major provisioner and carrier for Britain, the exasperation of the French government knew no bounds. The Directors, the consuls in the American cities, and Pierre-Auguste Adet, who replaced Fauchet as Minister to the United States, soon conceived a grandiose scheme which would in effect recreate the threat of New France. The repossession of Louisiana would be negotiated with Spain—now an ally of France—and British North America would be conquered. France would then be in an excellent position to threaten the

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dismemberment of the western states and territories, which were dependent for export on access through the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico. The United States would be encircled and threatened with invasion by French troops assisted by their Canadian and Indian allies. The end result envisaged was the negotiation of a commercial and military alliance with an American government totally dependent on the will of France. Canadian conquest then was conceived primarily as an integral part of the Directory's encirclement plan, although French officials easily convinced themselves of a multitude of subsidiary benefits. British North America was to become an expanding market for French manufacturers, a source of naval stores alternate to the Baltic, a new source of provisions for the French West Indies and a home for those soldiers who could not be easily reabsorbed into civilian society after the war.\(^\text{21}\) France would also, finally, fulfill its obligation to forsaken nationals. As J.A.B. Rozier, the French consul at New York put it, France "devennu libre, se hatera réparer les crimes de ses tirans; elle ne restera point sourde aux cris de ses enfans du nouveau monde qui lui tendent leurs bras en implorant son secours."\(^\text{22}\) As Rozier's


\(^{22}\) Rozier's "Mémoire," n. 20 above.
opinion suggests, conquest was thought to be an easy matter. French officials from the Directory down were convinced the Canadians must be universally disaffected and would rush to arms on the appearance of a French attacking force.23

The Directory found willing accomplices for the liberation of the Canadians among the Vermon ters of the Champlain Valley, and one in particular, the former "Green Mountain Boy", Ira Allen, land speculator, lumber magnate, adventurer, and desperate. Almost bankrupted by taxes on his extensive land holdings, Allen cast a covetous eye on the Canadas as a means to recoup his fortunes. His personal financial difficulties and the economic problems of northern Vermont would be solved by access to Canadian lands, the building of the Richelieu canal and freedom to navigate the St. Lawrence. The possibilities in terms of plunder, the monopoly of the fur trade and so on were numberless.24 In Paris Allen discussed the liberation of the Canadians with the Director Lazare Carnot, a decided advocate of the conquest of Canada.25 The essential

23 See e.g. the Directory's instructions to Michel Margourit (proposed Minister to the United States), 6 Aug. 1796, AHAR, 1903, II, 938; Létombe to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 17 July 1797, ibid., 1046; de Launey's "Mémoire," n. 20 above, IIIV-115; Anguèril's memorandum, n. 21 above, 97.

24 Williamson, Vermont in Quandary, ch. 15, passim.

provisions of the plan they devised in the summer of 1796 are contained in a report made two years later by Talleyrand, then Minister of Foreign Affairs. The French government agreed to finance the purchase—on easy credit terms—of twenty thousand muskets and bayonets and two dozen light artillery pieces, worth in all 500,000 livres. Two fictitious bills purporting to show Allen had paid one-fifth of the price down and pledged his land holdings for the remainder, masked the real transaction by which interest at five percent accrued on the capital amount, which was payable after seven years. In return for its generosity in supplying the arms at bargain terms and for a personal loan of 200,000 livres, the Directory required that Allen organize a Vermontese army. A transport fleet carrying three to four thousand French regulars and accompanied by two ships of the line and four or five frigates would reach Halifax about August 20, 1797, attempt to take the town and capture the British merchant fleet from Quebec. It would then proceed to join up with Allen's forces near Quebec City. The troops under Allen would be enrolled as ostensibly fighting for Vermont. Simultaneously with the naval attack on Halifax they would capture St. Johns, assisted by armed men previously

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infiltrated into the area on one of Allen's timber rafts. From there Allen and his men would proceed to Quebec, on the way raising the Canadians whose francophile political sentiments would meanwhile have been cultivated by emissaries. The combined force would have no trouble in taking Quebec and then forcing the remaining enemy troops out of British North America. Vermont would be detached from the union and join the former British territories in establishing a republic to be known as New Columbia.²⁷

From sources other than Talleyrand's report certain additional elements of strategy can be reconstructed. The Indians in Upper Canada would be infiltrated by French emissaries with a view to ensuring their neutrality, or if all else failed, their participation.²⁸ There was serious consideration given to a diversionary attack on Upper Canada by way of the Mississippi likely consisting

²⁷Talleyrand's resumé of the plan may have been inaccurate in one respect: the proposed timing of the invasion. Emissaries in Lower Canada prepared for an invasion in the spring or early summer of 1797. See e.g. The King v. David McLane (1797), 26 State Trials 721-826 (hereafter "McLane's trial") at 765, 767, 772; Richardson to Jonathan Sewell, 9 Jan. 1797, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 1027; John Hunsden to John Blackwood, 13 June 1797, PAC, CO 42, v. 109: 63-64. Of the relevant documents discovered only Rozier's Mémoire (p. 20) stresses the greater likelihood of success if the invasion occurred immediately before the St. Lawrence began to freeze. He suggested mid September as the ideal time for landing the troops, for "six mois de sureté ... sont plus que suffisants, non seulement pour la conquête, mais encore pour donner à la colonie La Nouvelle organisation."

²⁸See Rozier's Mémoire and references in n. 82 below.
of American frontiersmen, Indians, and French and Spanish troops. Almost certainly a body of Allen's forces and perhaps some from the New York side of the St. Lawrence were to proceed to Upper Canada. The fleet, it appears, was to stop temporarily at a point near Kamouraska, about one hundred miles east of Quebec, where proclamations would be distributed to agents for circulation among the Canadians. The terms of these proclamations likely would have included a call to armed insurrection, a guarantee of private property and freedom of religion, a prohibition of violence except against persons in arms against the Republic, the promise of prompt payment in cash for goods and services, the abolition of the tithe and seigneurial dues, and the establishment of New Columbia.

The success of the French invasion plan depended on preparing the Canadians for insurrection and obtaining detailed military information about the colony. In September 1796 nine French officers in the Armée française

29 Adet to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 24 Feb. 1797, AHAR, 1903, II, 992.
30 Stephen Thorn (one of Allen's fellow conspirators) to Committee of Public Safety, "L'an troisième" [1794-95], PAC, MG 23, G.1. 8, 2-3; Rozier's Mémoire, 22.
d'outre mer entered the province. According to one informer they were wearing some of the three thousand national cockades they had brought from France and displaying the tricolour. Led astray by their guide they returned across the provincial lines and dispersed. Two of their number, De Millière, commander of the Second Battalion of sapeurs and Ianson (or Janson or Jonson), another military engineer, remained behind to gather information and organize a spy network. Ianson departed shortly after and John Richardson, head of Lower Canada's counter-intelligence operations in the Montreal area and Attorney-General Jonathan Sewell traced his movements via New York and Hamburg to Paris and several meetings with

33Report of Attorney-General Sewell to Prescott on the French intrigues (hereafter "Sewell's report"), 12 May 1797, RAC, 1891, 73. The report is based on the depositions of admitted French agents, the evidence uncovered by Richardson's spies and informers and the evidence revealed at the March assizes.

34William Stanton to Colonel Barnes, 18 Nov. 1796, RAC, 1891, 60-61. Sewell's report (p. 73) states simply that "they encountered so many difficulties that they abandoned it [their intention to enter the province by the woods], returned to the Province Line." Liston informed the Foreign Secretary Lord Grenville that De Millière, it appeared, had "erred, through the late arrival of the French Squadron in the gulph of St. Lawrence [p. 52 below], and ... set out with a few followers with a national flag and a number of three coloured cockades ... but soon returned on learning that the ships had left the coast."

35Sewell's report, 73; Stanton to Barnes, n. 34 above.
the Directory in November 1796. De Millière, posing as a farmer, constructed a base of operations in the form of a small hut on the New York side of Lake Champlain, one-half mile from the lines. Later in the month he sent in two Canadians, one Jean-Baptiste Louisneau, and Joseph Ducalvet, twenty-two years of age and a tailor by trade. They were both commissioned as sub-lieutenants and they crossed the border openly at St. Johns on September 24th with inflammatory addresses and blank army commissions stitched into Ducalvet's breeches. The next day they held a meeting near Montreal with sympathizers to consult on the best means of effecting a revolution. The only persons attending whom government officials later identified were one Jean-Baptiste Bizette of Côte des Neiges and Ducalvet's uncle and grandfather, Etienne and Joseph Girard dit Provençal, both gardeners employed by the Seminary of Sulpice. Ducalvet also attempted, with little success, to distribute the addresses for circulation announcing that

36 Richardson to Jonathan Sewell, 13 Feb. 1797, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 1059-60; Same to Same, 6 April 1797, ibid., 1090; Jonathan Sewell to Ryland, 9 April 1797, PAC, CO 42, v. 109: 42.

37 Stanton to Barnes, 18 Nov. 1796, n. 34 above. Stanton included a map depicting De Millière's location (see PAC, CO 42, v. 108: 120).

38 Stanton to Barnes, 18 Nov. 1796, n. 34 above; Richardson to Sewell, 13 Feb. 1797, n. 36 above; Same to Same, 23 March 1797, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 1081; Sewell's report, 73-74; Attorney-General Sewell's calendar of cases involving offences against the government, March assizes, 1797 (hereafter "Sewell's calendar"), 12 May 1797, RAC, 1891, 77. The documents do not make clear which Provençal was the uncle and which the grandfather.
France, having conquered Spain, Austria and Italy, would now subdue the British Empire, beginning with the liberation of their enslaved colonies. The advantages of the republican form of government were outlined and it was freely predicted that in a short time the cry of "Vive la République" would be heard in Canada.\(^{39}\) Ducalvet hurriedly quit the province towards the end of September leaving his commission behind at his uncle's. Richardson intercepted a letter requesting its return and organized a fictitious correspondence on the subject designed to entice him back into the colony from a refuge in Burlington. Warned at the last minute Ducalvet frustrated this attempt, and also the government's intention to press for his extradition, by fleeing deeper into the United States.\(^{40}\) The sentiments expressed in his intercepted letter gave government officials something to ponder long after he had disappeared:

\(^{39}\)Report of Attorney-General Sewell to the Executive Council on the Road Act riots, 30 Oct. 1796, RAC, 1891, 59. The authorities were unable to find a copy of the address. For the limited circulation of this address see p. 97 n. 121 below.

\(^{40}\)Richardson to Jonathan Sewell, 12 Dec. 1796, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 1023-24; Same to Same, 19 Jan. 1797, ibid., 1043; Same to Same, 23 Jan. 1796 [1797], ibid., 958-59; Same to Same, 6 Feb. 1797, ibid., 1053-54; Same to Same, 13 Feb. 1797, ibid., 1059-60; Liston to Prescott, 23 March 1797, PAC, Prescott Papers, Series 1, v. 11: 17; Same to Same, 28 March 1797, ibid., 18-19; Same to Same, 4 May 1797, ibid., 26-27. Liston's request that Ducalvet be extradited had been turned down. See his letters of 23, 28 March, supra. Louisneau was arrested but turned king's evidence and was not charged: Richardson to Sewell, 13 March 1797, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 1081; Sewell's calendar, 77.
In October citizen Adet himself reportedly made a tour of the borders and thereafter until the end of the year there was a continual stream of emissaries and sympathizers in and out of the province. In November Liston reported that a Frenchman by the name of Arrison was "lately returned from a tour of several months through Canada, where some of the more indiscreet members of the Democratick Party say he met with considerable success in perverting the minds of the people." Arrison, it was rumoured, intended to return to France and report to the Directory. In the same month three persons posing as carpenters set out as deputies from the Canadians to the French government, some time later appearing at Newburyport, Rhode Island, whence they apparently sailed to France. In early November one of Adet's agents, David McLane, a bankrupt merchant from Rhode Island, visited Montreal. He examined the military

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43 Liston to Prescott, 28 Nov. 1796, ibid., 62.

Arrison, alias Burns, may in fact have been Ianson: Richardson to Jonathan Sewell, 13 Feb. 1797, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 1059-60.

potential of the mountain, which he considered "a place of
great command over Montreal in case there should be a war."
He attempted to win over retailer William Barnard and
tavernkeeper Elmer Cushing to the cause but was unsuccess­
ful. He enquired of Barnard where the Seminary of St.
Sulpice and the principal merchants kept their cash,
informed both his anticipated assistants of the intended
invasion in the following summer and urged them to keep the
Canadians quiet until then. In late November or early
December a Frenchman named Aubins, employed by Adet, spent
some time—posing as a fur buyer—in the area of Chambly.
He learned that on no account would the habitants take up
arms to repel a French invasion.46 In December Richardson
credited a report that the captain of a French warship had
entered the province and was headed for Quebec with business
"of such consequence ... that he must risk it."47

In February 1797 McLane was in Philadelphia receiving
instructions from Adet for another mission to Lower

45Deposition of Cushing, Nov. 1796, PAC, CO 42,
v. 108: 111-118; deposition of Barnard, 1 Dec. 1796, RAC,
1891, 64-65; McLane’s trial, 763-67. McLane did not deny
meeting Barnard and Cushing although he did deny any
sedulous conversation (ibid., 781). There is no question, 
however, that he was an agent of Adet’s (see n. 48 below).

46Richardson to Jonathan Sewell, 23 Jan. 1796 [1797],
PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 958.

47Richardson to Jonathan Sewell, 12 Dec. 1796, ibid., 
1024.
At the end of April, guided by a Canadian habitant, Charles Frichette of St. Johns, he entered the province through the woods and the two proceeded to Quebec. McLane hid in a copse of trees outside the city and arranged a meeting with master shipwright John Black whom he considered disaffected to the government. McLane urged Black to contact eight or ten men with influence over the Canadians. They would organize as many volunteers as possible—five hundred, McLane thought, would be sufficient. At an appointed time they would be joined by persons infiltrated from the United States as labourers on rafts of timber. All would be armed with pikes seven or eight feet long, pointed with iron hardened in fire. As the French fleet was approaching Quebec, men of influence with the common soldier—such as Black—would distribute liquor laced with laudanum to the garrison. At the moment the opiate took effect McLane's irregulars would occupy the city or, at the very least, spike the cannon. Convincing McLane that he should reconnoitre the city after dark, Black went immediately to magistrate and executive councillor John Young and told him the events of the day. McLane was arrested at Black's house that

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evening.  

Despite the urging of Adet who on his return to France in 1797 attempted to convince the government to implement the plan, the invasion attempt never materialized. Ira Allen and his interesting cargo sailed from Ostend in December 1796 on the American ship, Olive Branch. Allen and the arms were almost immediately captured on the high seas by a British man-of-war. Neither the fictitious bills nor the ostensible destination of the arms availed in the least. Allen spent most of the remainder of his life vainly attempting to secure their release by convincing the British government he had never entertained hostile intentions against the Canadas. With the seizure of the Olive Branch the idea of invading Lower Canada was temporarily forgotten by the Directory, although no final decision was communicated to officials in the United States who continued through 1797 to assume that Richery's fleet supported by the Vermonters would

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49 Deposition of Frichette, 12 May 1797, RAC, 1891, 69-70; deposition of Thomas Butterfield, 22 May 1797, ibid., 71; deposition of John Black, 10 May 1797, ibid., 67-69; J. Pennoyer (a magistrate) to Thomas Dunn, 25 Aug. 1797, PAC, CO 42, v. 109: 115-116; McLane's trial, 768, 771-79.

50 McLane's trial, 777-78; Liston to Prescott, 2 April 1798, PAC, CO 42, v. 111: 20.

51 Burt, The United States, Great Britain, and British North America, 171; Webster, "Ira Allen," passim.

By the summer of 1798, Talleyrand, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, had come to the conclusion that unless France was prepared to risk a potentially disastrous war with the United States, the outstanding issues between the two republics must be liquidated by negotiation. The raison d'être of the Directory's Canadian policy was thereby eliminated and the plan of conquest was suspended indefinitely.

Shortly after Napoleon had seized power from the Directory in 1799 he learned of a project for Canadian conquest devised by the indefatigable Ira Allen. The Vermont adventurer had returned to France in the summer of 1798 to obtain documents proving he was the bona fide purchaser of the arms seized in the Olive Branch. Unceremoniously clamped in prison for reasons still undetermined, he had been released in September 1799. Hoping the new regime might be induced to support the military coup in British North America, and thus solve his ever-desperate financial plight, he lost no time in submitting a series of political-military memoranda to the Minister of Foreign

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53 See e.g. Létombe to Delacroix, 24 July 1797, AHAR, 1903, II, 1054; Same to Talleyrand, 12 Nov. 1797, ibid., 1077-78.


55 Liston to Prescott, 2 April 1798, PAC, Prescott Papers, Series 1, v. 11: 56; Prescott to Portland, 1 Oct. 1798, PAC, CO 42, v. 111: 20.
Affairs, Talleyrand. In the final version Allen contended that France and the United States should unite militarily to drive Britain from the seas and thus assure an unparalleled commercial development for their two peoples. As an inducement to the United States to join in such a plan, Allen suggested that she be guaranteed possession of British North America. The invasion of Canada would be carried out solely by American troops who could rely on the Canadian population to rise en masse.

The French government did what it could to assist Allen to obtain the Olive Branch arms. Fictitious documents were signed by officials stating Allen had paid the purchase price. Napoleon had nothing to lose by forwarding Allen's schemes in this way. If the American government could be persuaded to assist the Vermonter or connive at his plans, so much the better. France would gain if war broke out between the United States and Britain. Bonaparte, moreover, intended to repossess Louisiana. With the British out of North America, New France could be re-created and if events dictated, the encirclement policy of the Directory revived.56

When Allen's documentation did not convince the British authorities to give up the arms, he returned to Vermont for one last throw of the dice. In the spring and

56 Webster, "Napoleon and Canada," 39-51; Webster, "Ira Allen," 75-80.
summer of 1801 he established a secret society in Vermont which in turn organized a dependent "Civil Society" in Montreal. The Montreal founder was an American school teacher by the name of Rogers and the Society's sixty-one members were all English speaking, mostly American. Similar societies were established in Carillon, Three Rivers and Quebec. Their ostensible purpose was to search for hidden treasure; their real object was to recruit a fifth column. Government officials uncovered no concrete evidence of Napoleon's influence behind the societies, although they learned that one Charles-Baptiste Bouc, a shopkeeper at Terrebonne, claimed an emissary from France had contacted him with the message that French troops would be infiltrated into the colony in small groups. His story was checked by Richardson who directed an elaborate investigation and in the end proved it a fabrication.

57 Webster, "Ira Allen," 79-80; Wallot, Intrigues, 49-60.
59 Deposition of Bouc, 9 Oct. 1801, PAC, Q Series, v. 87-2: 413-16; first report, 335.
60 Wallot, Intrigues, 66-73.
61 Richardson to Ryland, 2 Nov. 1801, PAC, S Series, v. 74: 23432; Same to Same, 27 June 1803, ibid., v. 80: 25084.
A Vermont informer had alerted the Lower Canada government to the danger in July\(^2\) and six of the ringleaders—Rogers escaped to Burlington—were arrested in September and detained without trial.\(^3\) By November the Lieutenant-Governor reported to the Colonial Secretary that Allen's scheme had been completely broken.\(^4\) Four months later the Treaty of Amiens was signed.

The historian, with access to the diplomatic correspondence of French officials and other sources unavailable to contemporaries in Lower Canada, can confidently conclude that the external threat to the colony during the years 1793 to 1801 was minimal. The French government's interest in the colony, for example, only twice reached the point where actual military preparations were begun, which in each case were quickly abandoned. Officials of the government of Lower Canada, who could not be sure of French intentions, greatly exaggerated the danger. The only definite information available suggested that France was taking a decided interest in the liberation of the Canadians. Government officials were kept well informed by

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\(^{62}\) The informant was a Colonel Graham, formerly aide-de-camp of Governor Chittenden (RAC, 1891, 63); his information is printed in ibid., 83-84. See also Milnes to Portland, 1 Aug. 1801, PAC, Q Series, v. 87-1: 151-56.

\(^{63}\) Milnes to King, 16 Sept. 1801, n. 58 above.

\(^{64}\) Same to Hobart, 25 Nov. 1801, PAC, Q Series, v. 87-2: 443.
of Genet's military plans, and quickly learned of the activities of Rousse and other emissaries in 1793–94.

They understood the Directory's encirclement policy and that it entailed the naval invasion of the Canadas. They believed, correctly, that the Directory had supplied arms to Ira Allen for the purpose of mounting a second invasion via the Richelieu and were able to trace the activities of agents sent into the colony by Adet.

Definite evidence of French intrigues served to bolster the commonly-held assumption that France, having embarked on a world-wide ideological crusade, would hardly neglect its former possessions in North America, particularly

65 See references in n. 6, 11 above.

66 See n. 11 above and p. 77-83 below.


68 Prescott to Portland, 17 Dec. 1796, PAC, CO 42, v. 108: 105-06; Same to Same, 27 May 1797, ibid., v. 109: 39-41; Same to Same, 24 June 1797, ibid., 61-63; extract of a letter from Jonathan Sewell to Ryland, 19 Dec. 1796, ibid., 131; Same to Same, 9 April 1797, ibid., v. 109: 42.

69 See p. 37-43 above.

70 See e.g. JHALC for 1792-93, 9 May 1793, 690 (Lieutenant-Governor Alured Clarke's speech from the throne closing the session); Quebec Gazette, 21 May 1793 (Chief Justice William Smith's address to the grand jury of Quebec, 27 April 1793); references to the Loyal Associations in n. 95 below; Christie, A History, I, 178-79 (quoting Lieutenant-Governor Robert Prescott's speech from the throne opening the 1797 session).
cularly as reconquest, in the official view, would present no great difficulty. The number of British troops in the colony was considered woefully inadequate and the Canadians, it was believed, would lend every assistance to a French invading force. It also appeared likely that a significant force could be raised in Vermont and that the American government would do little to prevent an expedition originating in that state. Indeed during 1794, when tensions over the western posts reached a critical point, Governor Dorchester and Attorney-General James Monk were worried that the Washington administration would yield before the francophile political sentiments of the American masses as manipulated by Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson and other Republicans, enter the war on the side of France and cooperate in a joint attack on British North America.

After Jay's Treaty, it was well understood that the Federalist administrations of Washington and John Adams

71 See p. 113-14 below.
72 This point is fully developed in ch. 4.
73 See e.g. Dorchester to Dundas, 26 April 1794, PAC, Q Series, v. 67: 191; Same to Same, 7 June 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 2; Quebec Gazette, 22 May 1794; references in n. 68 above.
74 Dorchester to Dundas, 26 April 1794, n. 73 above; Same to Same, 7 June 1794, n. 73 above; Same to Same, 21 June 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 46-48; Same to Hammond, s.d., ibid., 48-51; Monk to Dorchester, 29 May 1794, ibid., 4-6; Same to Dundas, 17 June 1794, ibid., 352-53; Same to Dorchester, 12 July 1794, ibid., v. 99: 303-04.
would not favour any invasion via the United States but there was serious doubt whether the government would risk political unpopularity by taking preventive measures or even whether the federal system permitted it to do so. Liston informed Prescott that for political reasons the administration refused to order Governor Chittenden of Vermont—who was of the Allen faction—or other northern governors to hand Ducalvet over to the British authorities. The American government would attempt to prevent the arming of volunteers near the border, but as Liston pointed out, control is not so complete as might be wished for on occasions of this sort, and ... a Governor of a distant district may perhaps connive at proceedings which they [the federal government] would be inclined to suppress with a high hand. The British Minister attributed the failure to order De Millière and his associates from the frontier to the weaknesses of American federalism.

British sea power gave no absolute guarantee against the appearance of French troops in the colony. The French fleet from time to time during the war was able to escape

75Liston to Prescott, 8 April 1797, PAC, Prescott Papers, Series 1, v. 11: 18-19.

76Same to Same, 15 Jan. 1797, ibid., 13-14.

77Liston to Prescott, 4 May 1797, ibid., 26-27. In April the federal government did order the commanders of frontier posts to exclude from the back country all strangers and travellers without federal passports: Same to Same, 22 April 1797, ibid., 24.
the blockade of Brest. In the spring and summer of 1794, for example, the battle fleet sailed into the Atlantic to divert the British navy from a large convoy of flour en route to France from the United States. In August 1796 Admiral Richery, with seven sail of the line and some frigates, escaped the blockade and sailed to Newfoundland. In September the fleet destroyed a few houses, fishing boats and stores at Bay Bulls, Newfoundland, before returning home. Later that year Admiral Bouvet's fleet of thirty-five ships carrying almost 15,000 troops sailed within a few miles of the Irish coast and in 1798 a small naval force succeeded in landing General Humbert and 1,200 soldiers in Ireland. It is understandable, then, that government

78 De Conde, Entangling Alliance, 404.

79 Gerald S. Graham, Empire of the North Atlantic (Toronto, 1950), 226-27. The most succinct appreciation of the military weaknesses of the Canadas after Richery's demonstration that the blockade was not entirely effective is contained in a report from General Simcoe, Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, to the Colonial Secretary, the Duke of Portland: "... the Invasion of Canada by a French Fleet would be a matter of little real Hazard, & possibly the recent success of Richery may have an influence in its trial, for it must be obvious that by passing above Quebec, supposing all the Kings forces to be in that Capital, a very small Body of Troops indeed, would be in perfect security & lead the whole of the Province ... into open rebellion.... It is apparent that the Montreal force [even if equal in strength to the Quebec garrison] would be insufficient, from its position, to guard on one side against what might be apprehended from Lake Champlain on the other from the Universal Insurrection of the french Canadians....", 11 Dec. 1796, E.A. Cruikshank and A.H. Hunter, eds., The Correspondence of the Honourable Peter Russell, 3v. (Toronto, 1932-36), I, 104-05.

officials should consider it entirely possible that the French fleet would appear in the St. Lawrence. In the thinking of some officials, moreover, the French would not even have to risk a fleet in the river. According to Attorney-General Sewell it seemed perfectly feasible that French troops, after being landed on the American coast, would travel in small groups through New England to the Vermont-Lower Canada frontier where they would be armed. It also appeared possible after the Franco-Spanish alliance of 1795 that the French, using New Orleans as a staging area, would mount an invasion of the Canadas via the Mississippi. By 1797 the colonial government was aware that this possibility had been considered by the Directory and that its agents had been investigating the military support which might be obtained among the frontiersmen of Kentucky, Indian tribes to the south of the Great Lakes, and the Mohawks settled between Lakes Erie and Ontario in Upper Canada, who under the leadership of Chief Joseph Brant were involved in acrimonious dispute with the government at York over the right to sell their lands.

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81 Sewell to Milnes, 23 Oct. 1801, PAC, CO 42, v. 117: 325. See also Capt. James Green (Prescott's military secretary) to Sir John Johnson, 14 May 1798, Cruikshank and Hunter, Russell Correspondence, II, 151.

82 Richardson to Ryland, 6 Feb. 1797, Cruikshank and Hunter, Russell Correspondence, I, 140; Liston to Prescott, 8 April 1797, PAC, G Series, 18, v. 15: n.p.; Mathew Elliott to Sir John Johnson, 28 June 1797, PAC, CO 42, v. 109: 71-72; references in n. 89 below.
Operating on these assumptions, officials recurrently expected a French invasion of Lower Canada. Governor Dorchester requested Bishop Hubert to insure that the curés be alerted to the possibility and instructed to indoctrinate the faithful in the fatal consequences if the invasion should succeed. Even after learning the fleet in New York had unceremoniously abandoned Genet, Dorchester and Attorney-General Monk took very seriously the rumours that a naval force would attack during the summer of 1794. In the autumn of 1796 Prescott suspected that Richery's destination was Quebec. A few months later Richardson anticipated that Richery's fleet would be strengthened and up to 30,000 troops would be embarked for the Canadas during the spring of 1797. Neither the news of the capture of the Olive Branch nor the receipt of intelligence in 1798 that France had suspended the invasion plan significantly reduced apprehension. Civil Secretary Herman Ryland,

83 See p. 62-63 below.
84 See references in n. 74 above.
87 Liston to Prescott, 2 April 1798, PAC, Prescott Papers, Series 1, v. 11: 56; Prescott to Portland, 1 Oct. 1798, PAC, CO 42, v. III: 20. Prescott was reporting the opinion of an intelligence agent Jules Le Fer (see p. 100 below).
for example, was inclined to believe the story of a Canadian whose son, then a prisoner at La Rochelle, had written warning that the fleet would sail for the Canadas in the spring of 1797. Throughout the summer and autumn of 1798 Governor Prescott remained convinced the Directory's invasion plan would be revived. Despite the victory of the Nile and Napoleon's preoccupation with the European theatre, Attorney-General Sewell saw in Allen's Civil Society an attempt to recruit a fifth column to assist the impending French invasion. The tendency of officials to exaggerate French interest in liberating the Canadians is also illustrated by the curious conviction that the province was infested by French emissaries, even when, as in 1795 or 1798 to 1800, there were few, if any, who entered the colony. Every stranger was suspect. To cite but one of dozens of examples, a Doctor Dickson from Ireland—then in the midst


89 Prescott to Portland, 24 June 1798, PAC, CO 42, v. 109: 61-63; Same to Same, 22 Aug. 1798, ibid., v. 111: 7-9; Same to Same, 1 Oct. 1798, ibid., 22; Same to Liston, 19 Nov. 1798, PAC, Prescott Papers, Series 1, v. 13: 96-97; Same to Portland, 12 Dec. 1798, ibid., v. 13: 103. Both Liston and Le Fer (see n. 87 above) shared this opinion.

90 Sewell to Milnes, 23 Oct. 1801, n. 81 above.

of the United Irish Rebellion—was carefully watched by the government. He appeared to be a suspicious character in Prescott's eyes since he had left the eligible position of physician to Lord Camden and Vice-President of the College of Physicians in Dublin to embark on "so wild a scheme" as visiting Lower Canada to write a pamphlet in favour of establishing a university in the colony. His upper class status was incompatible with his failure to announce his eligibility to Quebec society. Bishop Mountain, one of the resident experts in educational matters, was set the task of spying on Dickson but could find nothing suspicious. Perhaps offended at the continual prying into his affairs the suspect left the province in February or March 1799 without the Governor being any the wiser.92

Fear of a French or a French and American attack was by no means confined to officials.93 The military plans of

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92 Mountain to Jonathan Sewell, 1 Dec. 1798, QDA, Sewell-Mountain Correspondence; Prescott to Portland, 12 Dec. 1798, PAC, Prescott Papers, Series 1, v. 13: 103-05; Same to Same, 7 Jan. 1799, ibid., 105-06; Same to Same, 5 March 1799, ibid., 112. Liston later informed Prescott that Dickson had left Ireland because he had been discovered swindling: 13 April 1799, ibid., v. 11: 70-72.

Genet and Adet, the activities of the emissaries they sent to Lower Canada, and the situation in Vermont were all public knowledge. The colonial government's apprehension of attack was impressed on the public mind by the province-wide Loyal Association campaign of 1794, the passage and enforcement in that year of a statute providing for the summary deportation of aliens and the suspension of habeas corpus, the passage in 1797 of the Act for the Better Preservation of His Majesty's Government, which again suspended habeas corpus, and the widely publicized trial and execution of David McLane. When it was first learned in Quebec City that Richery was off the Newfoundland coast, it was assumed his destination was Lower Canada and, according to lawyer George Pyke "all ranks and descriptions of people here endeavoured to obtain information of the disposition and sentiments of the Canadians in the distant parishes." In Montreal a few weeks later

94See e.g. Quebec Gazette, 22 May, 3 July 1794; 13, 27 July, 10 Aug. 1797.
95For the Loyal Association campaign see PAC, S Series, v. 58-60; Quebec Gazette, 3 July, 23 Oct. 1794; RAQ, 1948-49, 253-73; p. 127-29 below.
96See p. 124-27 below.
97See p. 137-42 below.
98See p. 142-51 below.
99McLane's trial, 786.
there was much talk about the need to form a voluntary armed association in preparation for the attack.\footnote{100} Writing in 1801, the proprietor-editor of the \textit{Montreal Gazette}, Edward Edwards, expressed a common concern when he suggested that Bonaparte's "intoxicating success" might encourage the French to "look to British America, they know the Canadians would not do much to prevent any attempt to attack us."\footnote{101} During the period 1793 to 1801 then, English government officials; and the English residents generally, considered the appearance of French troops in the colony to be a very real possibility. The unnerving question raised was how would the Canadians, former subjects of France, react.

\footnote{100}{William Lindsay to Jonathan Sewell, 1 Dec. 1796, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 1017-19. There were of course a few individuals who took a more optimistic view of the situation. Quebec merchant Henry Cull, for example, thought that until the French were able to "keep a stronger Fleet than Great Britian at the mouth of the Gulph ... I imagine we shall not be visited by them": Cull to James Dale, 23 Nov. 1796, PAC, Cull Papers, Letterbook, 63.}

\footnote{101}{Edwards to John Neilson, 23 April 1801, PAC, Neilson Collection, v. 1: 272.}
CHAPTER 3

THE CANADIANS AND REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE, 1793 - 1801

The standard interpretation of the impact of the French Revolution on Lower Canada asserts that, with the exception of a handful of extremists who soon left the colony, the Canadian elite after 1792 was unanimous in its condemnation of the Revolution. While this idea expresses an important truth, it lacks subtlety. In particular it overlooks an influential political faction under the leadership of assemblymen Joseph Papineau and Jean-Antoine Panet. Despite the September massacres and the execution of Louis XVI, these men continued to draw inspiration from the ideals of 1789. As will be shown in the succeeding chapter their ideological orientation and political activity provoked English suspicion that a segment of the elite was prepared to further the subversive projects of citizens Genet and

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2 I must acknowledge a debt to Professor Ouellet, whose discovery and analysis of Joseph Papineau's notes on Rousseau's essay "Economie politique" provided one of the clues which led to the discovery that such a faction existed and played an important role in the politics of the period: "Joseph Papineau et le régime parlementaire (1791)," BRH, 1955, 71-77.
Adet. A second, but less universal, misconception is that the habitants quickly absorbed the francophobe attitudes of the elite. If this were true, it would be next to impossible to deny that English expressions of alarm were opportunistic. The documentary evidence, however, indicates that despite negligible interest in the social and political reforms of the Revolution, a majority of habitants were hopeful that France would reconquer the colony. The garrison mentality, thus, had some partial basis in fact. Moreover, the behaviour of the habitants during the militia and Road Act riots and the election of 1796 could easily suggest to the English that the colony was on the verge of insurrection.

By late 1792 the Canadian elite was united in denouncing events in France. The clergy, from the outset suspicious of the revolutionaries, reacted with revulsion to the enforcement of the Civil Constitution, the September

3 See the references to Garneau, Chapais, Vernon, Ouellet and Wallot in n. 1 above. Some historians, while providing little proof, have stated that the habitants were favourable to the French cause, not only for national reasons but also because they found the reforms of the French Revolution appealing: Wade, "Quebec and the French Revolution," 364-68; Brunet, "Les Canadiens et la France révolutionnaire," 468-73; Clark, Movements of Political Protest, 177; Morton, Kingdom of Canada, 191-92. The evidence (p. 96-98 below) indicates such a conclusion is untenable.

4 Although some of the highlights of the militia riots and, to a lesser extent, of the Road Act riots are well known, there has been as yet no extended, explicit analysis of these disturbances in terms of habitant opinion. With the exception of the occasional passing comment (e.g. Morton, Kingdom of Canada, 192) the election of 1796 has not been mentioned by political historians dealing with the period (see e.g. Chapais, Cours, II; Wade, The French Canadians, I, 93-103).
massacres in which Canadian born priests were killed, and
the execution of the King. To a literate Roman Catholic
regicide was the most unforgiveable of crimes. God would
surely wreak a terrible vengeance on the parricides who
dared guillotine His anointed lieutenant in France. The
curé of L'Islet, Jacques Panet, was so enraged he insisted
the priests of France should have rushed to cover "le Roi de
leur corps et mourir à ses pieds! C'était là leur place au
lieu d'émigrer comme ils ont fait."5 The revulsion of the
clergy was shared by the Canadian seigneurs, one of whom,
referring to the September massacres, claimed that French-
men had now taken to human slaughter "avec une barbarie et
une féroceité digne des plus cruel cannibales."6 The
atrocities in France also effected a change in the opinions
of the Canadian middle class on the merits of the Revolution.
At the outbreak of war middle class assemblymen joined
seigneurial and English members in a unanimous address to
Lieutenant-Governor Alured Clarke which characterized Louis'
execution as "the most atrocious act which ever disgraced
society."7

5Quoted in Philippe Aubert de Gaspé, Mémoires, (Quebec, 1885), 87.
6Quebec Gazette, 31 Jan. 1793 (reporting a speech
made in the Assembly by Michel-E.G.A. Chartier de Lotbinière).
"Ah! les infâmes!" exclaimed the seigneur Philippe Aubert
de Gaspé upon learning of Louis' fate, "Ils ont guillotiné
leur Roi": Mémoires, 86.
7JHALC for 1792-93, 26 April 1793, 604.
The Canadian elite played an active role in the cause of loyalty during the 1790's. The majority of Canadian assemblymen during the first Legislature voted for all measures—such as the suspension of habeas corpus in 1794—considered by government officials to be vital in the interests of security. Clergy, seigneurs and middle class supported the government-inspired Loyal Association campaign of 1794, which attempted to demonstrate for all Canadians the horrors which would attend French reconquest. The seigneurs often tried to propagandize their censitaires and could be relied on to report any suspicious activity. The hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church sanctioned the practice of refusing to admit to the sacraments those persons suspected of republican sentiments and three times during the 1790's issued, at the request of the Governor, circular letters instructing the curés to preach.

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8 The main sources for the Loyal Association campaign are found in PAC, S Series, v. 58-60; RAQ, 1948-49, 253-73; Quebec Gazette, 3, 31 July, 18, 30 Oct., 1794.

9 See e.g. de Gaspé, Mémoires, 85-86; Ryland to Charles-Louis-Roch de St. Ours, 22 July 1794, PAC, St.-Ours-Dorion Papers, p. 36-37; François Alexandre Frédéric, duc de La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, Voyage dans les États-Unis d'Amérique fait en 1795, 1796 et 1797, 8v. (Paris, 1799), II, 210; Pierre-I. Aubert de Gaspé to , 7 July 1796, BRH, 1936, 379.

10 See e.g. Bishop Hubert to curé Bédard, 13 Aug. 1793, RAQ, 1931-32, 289; Same to Same, 14 Aug. 1793, ; Same to Same, 19 Aug. 1793, .
loyalty sermons. On these and other occasions the clergy diligently taught the faithful that the Revolution proved beyond doubt that the Conquest had been decreed by a beneficent Providence. They extolled the British regime—the lenient criminal law, freedom of contract, militia duty restricted to the province, peace, prosperity and ordered liberty—and contrasted its many blessings with the dark days of Bigot. Modern Frenchmen, the Canadians were taught, had executed their father, King Louis, massacred their clergy, and thought it permissible to kill one's parents if they became a nuisance.

There were, of course, exceptions to this picture of total hostility to developments in France. During the first years of the Revolution, a large proportion of the Canadian middle class had applauded the struggles of the Third Estate which they considered analogous to their own contest with the seigneurs and officials on the question of representative government. In some cases this initial enthusiasm survived in whole or in part the reaction after the September massacres. A few middle class francophiles like Dr. Timothee O'Connor in Quebec and the printer


Henri Mezière in Montreal, for example, would have welcomed revolution and have worked actively to support a French invasion. In Quebec City a group of them gained control of the Constitutional Club in the autumn of 1792 and for a few months discussed French affairs and sang patriotic songs at its infrequent meetings. During the early weeks of 1793 the Constitutional Club appears to have been dying a natural death through attrition of membership. The coup de grâce was administered upon the outbreak of war when the government officials let it be known that membership in such societies would bring a charge of sedition. By the summer of 1794 many of the extreme francophiles had—wisely—left the colony for the United States, where they offered their services as emissaries to the French Minister. In addition to these men, there were a few assemblymen like Montreal notary-surveyor Joseph Papineau and Quebec lawyer Jean-Antoine Panet who continued to draw inspiration from some of the political ideals of the French Revolution, while abhorring the violence it

13 A similar Club des Patriotes operated in Montreal.


15 Papineau and Panet were regularly supported in the Assembly by the half-pay officer Philippe de Rocheblave, son of a seigneur, fur merchant Louis Dunière and Quebec lawyer Michel-Amable Berthelot d'Artigny.
had occasioned and rejecting any idea of French reconquest. Although in no sense republicans or democrats, their political views were highly radical in the context of Lower Canada politics in the 1790's. They translated Rousseau's general will theory into the notion that assemblymen had a right and a duty to protect the interests of their constituents even if this meant opposing the Governor. From the Declaration of the Rights of Man, as well as British constitutional history, they derived a conviction that the individual must be protected against government. During the first Legislature the radicals attempted to write this belief into law by amending government bills to provide for a politically independent judiciary, to establish the right to a jury trial in all suits involving the Crown, and to restrict the sus-

16The radicals actively supported the Loyal Association campaign.

17The ideological orientation of the Papineau-Panet radicals can be estimated from their behaviour in the Assembly and the following sources: Abbé H. Gravé to Abbé Hody, 25 Oct. 1791 (draft), Honorious Provost, ed., Le Séminaire de Québec: documents et biographies (Québec, 1964), 288; John Richardson to Alexander Ellice, 16 Feb. 1793, W.P.M. Kennedy, Statutes, Treaties and Documents of the Canadian Constitution, 1713-1929 (Oxford, 1930), 213; Monk to Nepean, 7 June 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 350; The Times-Cours du temps, 9 Feb. 1795 (letter of "Modestus"); La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, Voyage, II, 210; Joseph Papineau's notes on Rousseau's "Économie politique," 23 July 1796, APQ, Papineau, AP-P-5-62. Among Papineau's notes was the following: "... La volonté la plus general est aussi toujours la plus juste, et la voix du peuple est en effet la voix de dieu."

18JHALC for 1793-94, 4 April 1794, 198-200.

19Ibid., s.d., 196-98.
pension of habeas corpus to the eight days following arrest.\textsuperscript{20} In all these endeavours they were overwhelmingly defeated, such was the profound distrust among most English and Canadian politicians after the September massacres of anything remotely suggestive of French principles. Although a small minority during the first Legislature, the radicals managed to gain the trust of the mass of rural voters and after the election of 1796 formed the largest faction in the Assembly.\textsuperscript{21}

It was generally recognized in Lower Canada that the success of any French attack would ultimately depend on the response of the habitants, who with their families made up over seventy percent of the population. The English could hardly have much confidence in the loyalty of the Canadian farming class. Many habitants were angered by the manner in which the seigneurial system functioned, were obviously anglophobic, detested the Canadian seigneur and suspected the integrity of the clergy in political matters. Despite the intense propaganda efforts of the elite, most retained a sentimental attachment for the former mother country.

Although the obligations of the Canadian censitaire were in no way comparable to the burdens imposed on the peasant in pre-Revolutionary France, emissaries and their

\textsuperscript{20}Ibid., 22 May, 304.

\textsuperscript{21}See p. 84-95, 139-42, 159 below; Appendix III.
sympathizers found that the functioning of the seigneurial system was one of the most exploitable of habitant grievances. During the French regime if a seigneur raised the rents or imposed new conditions the censitaire could appeal immediately for redress to the Intendant at little or no cost. Similarly if the seigneur refused to grant unceded land on the prevailing conditions in the seigneury the Intendant could make the grant for him. After the Conquest many English merchants and officials bought seigneuries and tended to look upon themselves as entrepreneurs and the unceded lands as their own personal property, imposing such conditions on new grantees as the market would bear. They also considered their habitants as tenant-at-will rather than co-owners holding in perpetuity, and often attempted to revise existing contracts. Although the English seigneurs were the worst offenders, illegal exactions were nearly universal by the nineties.

A typical violation of customary law involved the censitaires of the Barony of Longueuil, sixty-four of whom petitioned the Assembly in 1793 to deliver them from the oppression of their seigneur, David Alexander Grant:

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Qu'au mépris des ordonnances des anciens Rois de France, il auroit arbitrairement augmenté les redevances des terres qu'il auroit concédé dans la dit Baronnie depuis qu'il en est seigneur.

Que sans égard aux anciens titres de concessions, qu'ont plusieurs de vos suppliants, il les auroit menacé & menace journellement de poursuites judiciaires, et employé toutes sortes de moyens vexatoires, pour les contraindre à changer les redevances modiques de leurs terres en de plus onéreuses.23

As this petition suggests and as Solicitor-General Jonathan Sewell explained in a report to the Governor, the habitants, because of the expense of litigation, could rarely, if ever, enforce their rights.24

Although there was much grumbling about illegal exactions throughout the war against Revolutionary France, the problem was serious only in the case of severe crop failure such as occurred in 1795. In such cases seigneurial dues, most of which did not vary with production, could appear as intolerable burdens.25 In general in the 1790's production in terms of yield ratios per farm or per bushel sown was rising as virgin land was brought into cultivation in response to high prices on the imperial market. Where in the 1780's he had been a near-subsistence farmer, the habitant, on the average, now sold more than twice the amount of wheat he required for seed and the family's

23 March 1793, PAC, Q Series, v. 67: 79-81.

24 Sewell to Dorchester, 27 Feb. 1794; n. 22 above, 86-87. See also Monk to Dundas, 6 June 1794, n. 22 above.

25 See p. 83 n.73 below.
consumption. In these circumstances illegal exactions could be borne with some equanimity. Even in the areas near the cities where the pressure of population on land was the greatest and rents were often more than triple those which had prevailed in the French regime, the seigneur received in illegal rent and milling charges only about ten percent of the censitaire's surplus wheat available for sale.

The habitants in general disliked and distrusted the English. They or their fathers had been taught during the French regime that the British and Americans were the hereditary enemies capable of any atrocity. The English residents in the colony, Protestant, urban-centered, wealthy, speaking an unfamiliar language, provoked a natural hostility on the part of a Roman Catholic, illiterate class of small farmers. The very presence of the English and the occasional display of arrogance reminded the habitants that

26 On the economic position of the habitants during the period 1793-1802 see Ouellet, *Histoire économique* 151-57.

27 Monk to Dundas, 6 June 1794, n. 22 above; Ouellet, *Histoire économique*, 354.

28 This calculation is based on an annual production per farm of 200 minots (Ouellet, *Histoire économique*, 151), a seed production ration of 1:10 (ibid., 154-55), a milling charge of 1/10th rather than 1/14th (La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, *Voyage*, II, 206), an annual consumption per family of 34 minots (Richard Colebrook Harris, *The Seigneurial System in Early Canada* (Madison, Wis., 1966), 160), a tithe of 1/26th and a rente in the French regime of 3 minots (ibid.).
the Canadians were a conquered people. More concretely, the English who became seigneurs were the most insistent on enforcing every legal right and extorting illegal concessions from their censitaires. The anglophobia of the habitants revealed itself in many ways. They were, for example, prone to believe even the wildest rumours of impending oppression at the hands of their conquerors. On the eve of the American invasion during 1775 a number, Chief Justice William Hey observed, convinced themselves that "they are sold to the Spaniards (whom they abominate) & that Gen. Carleton has got the money in his Pocket." In the late 1780's and early 1790's many strongly suspected that representative government was a scheme designed by the English merchants to tax their lands and attack their religion. Anglophobia was almost

29 For a development of this point see A.R.M. Lower, "Two Ways of Life: The Primary Antithesis of Canadian History," CHAR, 1943, 5-18 at 8-9.


31 See e.g. Jean Vienne to Pierre Guy, 23 Oct. 1788, PAC, Collection Baby, v. 10: 6024-25; English Committee of Quebec to Lord Dorchester, 6 Nov. 1788, PAC, CO 42, v. 62: 79-80; Alexandre Dumas, Discours (Quebec, 1792), (a speech made to the Constitutional Club of Quebec on 30 May 1792). According to the traveller Guillemard the "grande defiance pour tous ce qui vient des Anglais ... leur conquereurs" also helped explain the habitants' refusal to adopt improved farming techniques: La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, Voyage, II, 197-98. Guillemard (no first name given), a wealthy English gentleman of Huguenot descent, travelled with La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt through North America. The latter found his companion intelligent and inquisitive. In the summer of 1795 Guillemard visited Lower Canada and recorded his impressions in a journal, extracts from which were published in La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt's book (II, 194-216).
certainly a major factor behind the habitants' negative attitude to military service. By the 1790's they would willingly perform such service only if convinced that they would not be asked to serve outside the province, that an invasion was certain and that French troops would not be among the invading force.\textsuperscript{32} Anglophobia was perhaps most manifest at election time. In the general election of 1792 the most common appeal made by or on behalf of Canadian candidates running in rural constituencies was to racial or religious prejudice.\textsuperscript{33} To cite a typical example, Quebec lawyer Jean-Antoine Panet, supporting the candidacy of a fellow lawyer in the county of Quebec, told a crowd of habitant voters assembled after mass that "s'il pouvait faire entrer Monsieur Berthelot dans la Chambre d'Assemblée ils fouleroient les anglois sous les pieds." The next day Panet elaborated: "... nous sommes cent contre un, et si vous le mettez avec moi nous


\textsuperscript{33}See e.g. James Morrison to [P.-A. De Bonne], 5 Jan. 1792, PAC, Lindsay-Morrison Papers, v. 1: 598; Dumas, \textit{Discours}, n. 31 above; [P.-A. De Bonne], \textit{Avis aux Canadiens} (Quebec, 1792); \textit{Montreal Gazette}, 5 July 1792 (reports on elections in Effingham and Kent); \textit{Quebec Gazette}, s.d., (report on election in Quebec County); O'Connor to Genet, 4 Feb. 1794, LOC, France, Aff. Et., Corr. Pol., E.U., supp., v. 28: 431; Monk to Dundas, 30 May 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 324.
mettrons le pied sur le cou des anglois." 

During the war against Revolutionary France it was a commonplace observation that the Canadian seigneurs had lost all political influence over the habitants and indeed, as Chief Justice William Osgoode put it, were "universally unpopular" in the countryside.35 A significant, although undetermined, proportion of the seigneurial class were rentiers having little connection with their tenants beyond collecting rents. Such a seigneur lived most of the year in or near the cities spending a meagre income from his lands and his salary or pension from the government to keep up appearances as a gentleman, rather than investing it in agricultural improvement.36 He was anxious to be accepted socially by the English upper classes and often went to the lengths of adopting British mannerisms, customs and modes of dress.37 To insure his continued access to


36 On the way of life, political activities, and ideological tendencies of the Canadian seigneurs from the Conquest to the end of the eighteenth century, see A.L. Burt, The Old Province of Quebec (Minneapolis, 1933), passim; Michel Brunet, La présence anglaise et les Canadiens (Montreal, 1958), 86-100; Parizeau, "Bas-Canada-1800," passim; Hilda Neatby, Quebec: The Revolutionary Age, 1760-1791 (Toronto, 1966), passim; Ouellet, Histoire économique, part 1, passim.

37 La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, Voyage, II, 200.
patronage he automatically gave political support to the Governor without paying much attention to the effect of government policies on the habitant, but a great deal of attention to their effect on his own economic interests. Not surprisingly the habitants considered the seigneurs in general to be despicable and selfish collaborators with the conqueror.

While the clergy aroused no such deep-rooted animosity, they exercised as little political influence as the seigneurs. The bargain effected during the first generation after the Conquest between the British government and the Roman Catholic Church by which the latter, in return for the legalization of the tithe and the non-enforcement of the royal supremacy, undertook to insure the loyalty of the people and in various other ways to serve the interests of the government, greatly reduced the political effectiveness of the Church. As was dramatically demonstrated during the American Revolutionary War, the habitants rejected the guidance of the clergy whenever they felt their vital interests were at stake. As will be shown presently, the habitants manifested a similar attitude during the war against Revolutionary France. Many would have agreed with those habitants in

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the County of Warwick who in the summer of 1794 suggested that the clergy would do or say anything to please the Governor even if this meant sacrificing the interests of the mass of the people.40

Historians have often pointed out that in the years immediately after the Franco-American alliance of 1778 the habitants hoped that the verdict of the Conquest might be undone.41 It has not been sufficiently recognized that this affection for the former mother country lasted into the 1790's, and was little influenced by the atrocities perpetrated by the French revolutionaries.42 The explanation is found primarily in the age composition of the rural population and the ineffectiveness of anti-revolutionary propaganda. About one in five adult habitants


41See e.g. Lanctot, Canada and the American Revolution, ch. 13, passim; Neatby, Quebec, 174, 276 n. 2.

42See n. 3 above. There are a few brief statements asserting a continuing affection: e.g. Morton, Kingdom of Canada, 191-92; Brunet, "Les Canadiens et la France révolutionnaire," 468. In addition to the proof provided in the present chapter on this point, see Mezière to Genet, 20 Sept. 1793 (paraphrasing a report by Rousse), LOC, France, Aff. Et., Corr. Pol., E.U., v. 38: 235-38; Journal of Pevret de St. Mesmin (a royalist émigré traveller), PAC, MG '23, J.16, 194 (Oct. 1793); circular latter of Bishop Hubert, 9 Nov. 1793, Tétu and Gagnon, Mandements, II, 471; La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, Voyage, II, 210; Joseph de Longueuil to General Peter Hunter, 26 Dec. 1799, PAC, C Series, v. 1207: 137.
(eighteen years and over) in 1793 had lived sixteen or more years under French rule by the date of the capitulation of Montreal. They had been taught as children that loyalty to France, eldest daughter of the Church, was one's highest secular duty; many were old enough to have fought at the Plains of Abraham or Sainte-Foy; all could remember from personal experience something of the tragedy of the Conquest. Considering that political decisions were mainly the prerogative of heads of households, one in five was a sufficient leaven to influence opinion in the countryside in a francophile direction. The evidence indicates that the majority of habitants discounted propaganda emanating from the Canadian elite, particularly the clergy and the seigneurs who were most active in this regard. The habitants could not themselves read about the horrors daily detailed in the newspapers. They distrusted the integrity of the seigneurs and clergy in political matters and these men were relating events which clashed with their prejudices and which, even to the literate, appeared incredible.

With these considerations in mind, one can credit Montreal merchant Samuel Gerrard's observation that many

43See Appendix I.

44During the Loyal Association campaign, for example, most adult sons living with their parents left to the head of the household the decision whether or not to sign: final report of the committee of the Loyal Association of Quebec, 18 Oct. 1794, Quebec Gazette, 23 Oct. 1794.

45Fewer than one habitant in twenty-eight could read and write: see Appendix I.
habitants in 1793 refused to believe that Louis XVI had been executed by his countrymen.\textsuperscript{46} Five years later the British Minister to the United States reported to his government that the "ignorance of many of the [Canadian] peasants ... exists in such a degree that they do not believe the death of the king or the murder of the Ecclesiasticks."\textsuperscript{47} The seigneur Philippe Aubert de Gaspé recorded in his Mémoires the difficulties involved in propagandizing the habitant:

Les Canadiens conservèrent longtemps après la conquête, un souvenir d'affection pour leurs anciens princes français. Lorsque mon père recevait son journal à la campagne, les vieux habitants lui demandaient des nouvelles du Roi de France, de la Reine et de leurs enfants. Pendant la révolution, la main du bourreau avait frappé cette malheureuse famille: mon père et surtout ma mère, leur avaient souvent fait le récit de leur supplice, des souffrances du jeune Dauphin, sous la verge de fer de l'infâme Simon; et, chaque fois, tous les habitants, secouaient la tête en disant que tout cela était un conte inventé par l'Anglais.\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{46}Gerrard to , 25 April 1793, PAC, Collection Baby, v. 11: 6469.

\textsuperscript{47}Robert Liston to Grenville, 2 April 1798, PAC, FO 5, v. 22: 119. Liston reported that he had learned this from "persons well acquainted with the state" of Lower Canada.

\textsuperscript{48}Mémoires, 85-86. Out of over sixty extant letters written by rural Loyal Associations in 1794, only one clearly indicates that the habitants had any glimmering of developments in France, then at the height of the Terror, and this despite intensive efforts to bring these matters to their attention (PAC, S Series, v. 58-60, exception at v. 58: 18917-18). See also Louis Labadie to John Neilson, 4 May 1797, PAC, Neilson Collection, v. 1: 64; Prescott to Liston, 14 May 1798, PAC, CO 42, v. 110: 132-33. Guillemard recorded in his journal (La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, Voyage, II, 210) that the habitant class "aime la France et les Français, sans penser à la révolution, et sans en rien savoir." He noted by way of exception
During the militia and Road Act riots the habitants discounted the horror stories circulated by the elite and exhibited a profound, if uninformed, affection for France.

By the first weeks of 1794 government officials were aware that emissaries had been in the colony and had circulated Les Français libres. In April they learned that riots had broken out in Montreal when one Joseph Leveillé, a canoeman convicted of cheating, had been sentenced to be placed in the pillory. Despite these danger signs, and despite the habitants' bias against military service, Governor Dorchester, anticipating that the United States might enter the war on the side of France, decided to call up the militia. On May 5th he ordered the embodiment for service on the frontier of two thousand unmarried militiamen and instructed the balloting to commence as soon as due notice had been given by the captains. The response of the British militia was zealous but "to his Lordships astonishment, he found the whole country so infected as

(p. 199) that some habitants living along the Quebec-Montreal road had acquired portraits of Louis XVI taking leave of his family prior to his execution.

49 Proclamation of Governor Dorchester, 26 Nov. 1793, RAC, 1921, 45-46; Monk to Dundas, 30 May 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 323.

50 For a description of these riots, which seem to have been unconnected with revolutionary intrigue, see Sheriff Edward Gray to Monk, 9 June 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 355-56; J. Reid to Monk, 12 June 1794, ibid., 359-60.

51 Dorchester to Dundas, 24 May 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 101: 5-7; Monk to Same, 30 May 1794, n. 49 above.
scarcely to leave a hope of assistance from the New Subjects." No wonder Dorchester was chagrined; the militia officers reported that in only seventeen Canadian companies out of two hundred twenty-two were the men disposed to march. Some companies which refused to ballot would reluctantly have accepted a command but the vast majority made it clear that under no circumstances would they take up arms.

French emissaries and their local sympathizers—mainly artisans from Quebec and Montreal—had done all they could to frustrate the May 5th order. In the Quebec area they effectively spread the rumour that the order was illegal, as it had come, they claimed, not from the Governor but from the new-fangled Assembly. They made much of habitant grievances against illegal exactions by the seigneurs. They exploited distrust of the conqueror by alleging that those embodied for service would be sent abroad to fight, a fiction which was swallowed whole.

52 Monk to Same, 30 May 1794, n. 49 above.

53 "Abstract of the Returns of the Commanding officers of the Militia of the Province of Lower Canada ...," PAC, S Series, v. 59: 19035-47 (hereafter "militia returns"). Of the 7,000 militiamen in the Quebec District only about 900 men in eight of the forty-two parishes were willing to serve: Monk to Dorchester, 29 May 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 4.


55 Monk to Dundas, 6 June 1794, ibid., 329.
Monk discovered that "the general and specious reasoning" by which the militia in the District of Quebec justified their conduct was "that should they ballot for the militia on service they would thereby be enlisted as soldiers and sent to the West Indies or out of the Province, and subject to military discipline":56 According to the deposition of one captain of militia, resistance in his company had begun with rumours that he had "sold" four militiamen to Captain Charles-Michel de Salaberry, then serving with Prince Edward's regiment in the West Indies campaign.57 In Charlesbourg, the habitants remembered the tragic uprooting of the Acadians:

... depuis qu'on parle de Commandement, la plus grande partie des habitans des Paroisses, de Charlesbourg et de la Jeune Lorette sont mal disposés, sous les Prétextes suivants, qu'on croit que les Commandements que l'on fait, ne sont pas pour défendre le Pays, mais pour faire des Soldats, les repandre dans les Régiments et les envoyer hors du pays, soit par terre soit abord des fregates ... qu'après ces premiers Commandements, on en fera d'autres pour en faire autant et aussi jusques à ce que le pays soit depeuplé.58

Agents and sympathizers also tried to convince the

56 Same to Dorchester, 29 May 1794, ibid., 5. Many were afraid that conscription would be for life: Dorchester to Dundas, 25 May 1794, ibid., v. 101: 9.

57 Deposition of Lessard Parent, 24 May 1794, ibid., 17-18.

58 Deposition of Leclair, n. 54 above. See also militia returns, 19038 (Lac des Deux Montagnes), 19041 (Vaudreuil), 19043 (report of Etat-Major of Boucherville), 19045 (St. Marie-Nouvelle Beauce); Sheriff Edward Gray to Monk, 9 June 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 356; curé Edmund Burke to Thomas Dunn, 1 Sept. 1794, PAC, S Series, v. 58: 19186.
habitants in many parts of the province that French troops would accompany the Americans and that it would be an outrage to shed the blood of kin. They were successful. The habitants revealed a determination to remain neutral in the war against France. La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt learned from British officers who had been stationed in Lower Canada that during the balloting the habitants often shouted the following, or words to the same effect:

Si c'était contre les Américains, nous marcherions sans doute pour défendre notre pays; mais ce sont les Français qui vont arriver, nous ne marcherons pas; pourrions-nous nous battre contre nos frères?

The habitants "disent d'une commun voix" wrote one Canadian revolutionary sympathizer to the French Consul at New York,

... que leurs pères ont fait serment de fidélité à l'Anglais mais qu'eux ne l'ont pas fait, qu'ils défendront cependant l'Anglais contre tous ses ennemis, excepté contre les Français parce qu'ils ne porteront jamais leurs armes contre leurs pères, leurs frères ou leurs parents.


60 Monk to Dorchester, 29 May 1794, ibid., v. 100: 5; Same to Same, 18 June 1794, ibid., 53; Same to Dundas, 17 June 1794, ibid., 352; militia returns, passim.

61 Voyage, II, 183.

62 Edited and printed in Michel Brunet, "Les Canadiens et la France révolutionnaire," 474-75. Internal evidence suggests the letter was written (author an unidentified resident of Laprairie) between August and December 1795.
An atmosphere of riot and revolutionary slogan highlighted resistance to the militia law in many localities. At Côte des Neiges, near Montreal, several hundred of the peasantry assembled in arms to resist the order of May 5th and the detachment of regulars which it was expected would be sent to enforce it. In some parishes in the Quebec District curés who tried to convince Canadian militiamen to do their duty were threatened with personal injury if they continued to interfere. In Quebec City there was talk of organizing volunteers in the city and countryside to force the prisons, destroy the Assembly, and massacre the English, Canadian bureaucrats and the Roman Catholic clergy. At Beauport, a few miles east of the capital, a mob of about seventy men descended on the house of the captain of militia and cheered a spokesman who shouted that they were prepared "de mourir et risquer leur vie plutot que de prendre les armes," while in the parish of St. Joseph-Nouvelle Beauce a mob of fifty armed militiamen seized and imprisoned their officers to prevent execution of the order. 

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64 Monk to Dorchester, 29 May 1794, ibid., 5.

65 See e.g. the depositions of Augustin Lavau and Richard Corbin, 27 May, 11 June 1794 (ibid., 17, 365) and those of William Bouthillier and François Le Droit dit Perche, 24, 25 May 1794 (ibid., v. 101: 13-20).


67 See Monk's, "State of Prosecutions in His Majesty's Court of King's Bench," November 1794, ibid., 58.
Charlesbourg, a village two miles north of Quebec, the lower classes got quite out of hand. For several days and nights up to three hundred habitants armed with muskets, pikes, and hunting knives formed patrols to defend themselves against an expected armed attack from the city. Some of the habitants, by their own sworn admission, also felt this might prove an excellent opportunity to help implement J.-A. Panet's advice to trample the English underfoot. The idea of patrols was initiated by mob oratory outside the house of the captain of militia when habitants Jerome Bédard and Charles Garnaud threatened to kill any who did not join in the defence. Armed resistance was justified in the name of the people "qui est au dessus de tout Roi." The habitant revolutionaries threatened recalcitrant individuals in the authentic idiom of Jacobin Paris, that "il fallait tuer et estriper tous ces gueux et ces laches" and "qu'ils les brûleroit, les tueroit et mettroit leurs tetes au Bout des Batons." Threatened house and barn burning was common and the ringleaders, according to the astonished Monk, "in this first instance of open Rebellion ... say

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68 Monk to Dorchester, 29 May 1794, ibid., v. 100: 5; Same to Same, 31 May 1794, ibid., 8 and enclosed deposition of three Charlesbourg habitants (pp. 10-15).


70 Marginal note in Monk's handwriting on deposition of Jean-Baptiste Leclair, 29 May 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 10.

71 Deposition of habitant Louis Savard, ibid., 14-15.
they have no occasion for the clergy nor confession'.

Two years after the militia riots the habitants again revealed their alienation from the British regime, their distrust of the Canadian and English seigneurs and their hopes for French reconquest. In 1794 the idea of France returning had appealed mainly to sentiment. In 1796 it seemed to many, particularly in the Montreal area, to provide an escape from exploitation. Throughout the year the sense of grievance against rack-renting seigneurs was greatly intensified by a precipitous, if temporary, decline in the habitants' standard of living. A short crop in 1794 was followed in 1795 by the worst harvest of the decade, producing only about one-half the wheat harvested the year before. By 1796 it had also become very clear to the

72Monk to Dundas, 30 May 1794, ibid., 323.

73On the harvest of 1795 and its effect on habitant welfare see the minutes of the Executive Council, 26-28 Aug., 5, 7 Sept. 1795, PAC, CO 42, v. 22: 49; Ouellet, Histoire économique, 153, 158; Gilles Paquet and Jean-Pierre Wallot, "Lower Canada, 1792-1812: Elements for a Quantitative Study," paper presented to the Canadian Political Science Association, Ottawa, 10 June 1967, 15, 25, table 6.1, graph 7. The price series for wheat prepared by the Seminary of St. Sulpice in the 1840's (Journals of the Legislative Assembly (Province of Canada), 1843, Appendix F) suggests that from 1794-95 to 1795-96, the income the typical habitant received from the sale of his disposable surplus dropped by at least 50%. Paquet and Wallot point out that in 1796 the Canadian marriage rate reached its lowest level in the period 1790-1812. On the basis of calculations similar to those in n. 28 above, it can be estimated that illegal exactions in the areas around the cities must have amounted in 1795-96 to more than 35% of the habitants' wheat available for sale. By contrast in the normal year they amounted to about 10%.
habitants, that the English and the Canadian seigneurs, using the government and the Assembly as their instruments, were capable of doing anything to advance their interests at the expense of the farming class.

Under the guidance of the Papineau-Panet radicals and their supporters among the Canadian middle class, the habitants by 1796 had grown disenchanted with an Assembly controlled by English members and Canadian seigneurs. The radicals could hardly have failed to make their case. The House had been blamed by many of the habitants for the militia ballot in 1794. In the same year it had passed the Alien Act under which dozens of habitants had been arrested on suspicion of treasonable activity and it had done nothing to reform the seigneurial system when the question had been canvassed by Panet and de Rochblave in the 1795 session. The Assembly crowned these achievements in the session of 1795-96. Responding to the demands of the Montreal merchants, Quebec magistrates and members of his own class, the seigneur Gabriel-E. Taschereau, Grand

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75 See p. 125 below. This became a grievance during the election of 1796: Osgoode to Simcoe, 7 July 1796, OH, 1954, 151.

76 JHALC for 1795, 21 Jan., 5, 23 Jan., 19; Osgoode to Simcoe, 30 Jan. 1795, OH, 1954, 91; Same to Burland, 27 Oct. 1795, n. 74 above.

77 See e.g. JHALC for 1795-96, 15 Dec. 1795, 35, ibid., 29 Dec. 1795, 55; Paul-Roch de St. Ours to François Baby, 8 May 1796, PAC, Collection Baby, v. 12: 6818.
Voyer of the District of Quebec, introduced a bill to improve the deplorable state of the roads.\textsuperscript{78} Despite the opposition of the radicals\textsuperscript{79} it passed easily and was assented to by the Legislative Council and the Governor.

The Road Act imposed new obligations which must have appeared to the habitants as legislation blatantly designed in the interests of the English and Canadian elite. The Grand Voyers and elected overseers could require the joint labour—up to twelve days per annum—of the neighbouring residents to open or repair roads through difficult terrain or deserted areas, including unconceded seigneurial lands as well as crown lands. Roads leading to banal mills were to be constructed one-half by the censitaires and one-half by the seigneur. They were then to be divided into fourteen equal parts of which one was to be maintained by the seigneur and thirteen by the censitaires.\textsuperscript{80} The repair of the streets in Montreal and Quebec was the responsibility of all males, eighteen to sixty, who resided in

\textsuperscript{78}JHALC for 1795-96, 20 Nov. 1795, 1.

\textsuperscript{79}Ibid., 30 March 1796, 233-35. The Act is 36 Geo. III (1796), ch. IX.

\textsuperscript{80}A petition presented to the Assembly in 1799 on behalf of the electors of Dorchester probably reflects a view of the Road Act which became common among the habitants soon after its passage. The petition urged repeal of the Act and cited the obligation—unheard of in the French regime—to build and repair roads to the banal mills and through unconceded lands as typical of the attitude of the seigneurs who seemed to think they had the right to impose whatever corvées they pleased on the people: JHALC for 1799, 29 April, 162-68.
the cities or the adjacent rural areas. Thus the habitant could be forced to work not only on the roads in his neighbourhood, but also on the city streets which he used infrequently. Those who could afford it were permitted to compound for the statutory labour.

The habitants exhibited forcefully their resentment against the seigneurs and the government in the general election of June-July 1796. Of the thirty-nine rural members elected, only ten were government supporters.81 Where in 1792 sixteen Canadian rural members were justices of the peace and twelve were military officers, in 1796 only one justice of the peace and two officers were successful candidates. In 1792 rural constituencies elected thirteen Canadian seigneurs or sons of seigneurs; in 1796 only four. Their places were taken mainly by Canadian professionals and shopkeepers of humble social status, artisans and habitants.82 The result in Dorchester County was typical. Two blueblood pillars of the community, the Grand Voyer Taschereau and the favourite of the Duke of Kent, the seigneur Louis de Salaberry, were defeated by Charles Bégin, a habitant,83 and Alexandre Dumas, a bankrupt trader turned

81Calculated mainly from the votes in the 1797 session on the election of the Speaker and on the attempted revision of the Road Act: JHALC for 1797, 24 Jan., 3-5, 15 Feb., 53. See Appendix III.

82See Appendix II.

83Joseph-Edmond Roy, Histoire de la seigneurie de Lauzon, 5v. (Lévis, 1897-1904), III, 286. Bégin was also probably a tavernkeeper at Pointe-Lévy: Tavern Licenses, PAC, RG 4, B.28, v. 70.
notary. The habitants turned for leadership from the seigneurs who exploited them to men with whom they had personal or business dealings and whose social background and class consciousness was similar to their own. Such men had a clear economic interest in protecting the habitant from direct taxes or novel corvées and they appeared to be willing to regulate illegal seigneurial rents.

Opposition to the political and social establishment was the main test of a candidate's acceptability. It is significant that with two exceptions, the Canadians elected for rural constituencies voted against the government nominee for speaker in 1797 and in favour of the revision of the Road Act. In some counties the fact that a candidate had suffered during Monk's round-up of suspects in 1794 became a compelling proof of his antipathy to the government and hence his reliability as an opposition member. The voters of Quebec County were influenced by these considerations when they elected John Black and Louis Paquet, an illiterate habitant of Charlesbourg, both of

84 BRH, 1934, 247.

85 Papineau, it appears, believed that land was the main source of wealth and thought that taxation should be levied primarily on the import or sale of luxury goods: (notes on Rousseau's "Economie politique," 23 July 1796, APQ, Papineau, AP-P-5-62).

86 See n. 81 above.

87 Osgoode to Simcoe, 7 July 1796, n. 75 above; John Young to Ryland, 9 June 1798, PAC, CO 42, v. 111: 470.
whom had been arrested on suspicion of treasonable practices.\textsuperscript{88} Quebec shopkeeper Alexandre Menut, one of the successful candidates in Cornwallis, had been identified by the government as a leading agitator behind the militia riots and his son had been forced to flee the colony to escape arrest.\textsuperscript{89} Another Quebec shopkeeper, Nicolas Dorion, elected in Devon, had been imprisoned in the autumn of 1794 on the assumption that he was one of Fauchet's principal agents in the district.\textsuperscript{90} Candidates often appealed to class resentment. Black, for example, advertised himself as a reliable fellow who had never reposed "on the downy couch of luxurious opulence."\textsuperscript{91} An editorial letter by "A Good Citizen", in the \textit{Quebec Gazette} expressed alarm at the

... machinations ... of Bad Men, who ... would persuade the unthinking, that a certain class of their fellow citizens [i.e. the seigneurs], who at this moment wisely oppose their aims, can triumph over the laws of the Country, and betray the people who may entrust them with the important Guard over Public Liberty.\textsuperscript{92} Chief Justice Osgoode learned that seven members had been elected who could "neither write nor read but have promised

\textsuperscript{88}See references in n. 87 above and PAC, S Series, v. 61: 19519-20.

\textsuperscript{89}Deposition of Augustin Lavau, 27 May 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 16-17; deposition of Jean-Baptiste Vocel Belhumeur, 29 May 1794, ibid., 18-19; declaration of John Neilson, 30 May 1795, PAC, RG 4, B.45, "Declarations of Aliens," n.p. Menut had been cook to Governors Murray and Carleton and thereafter a tavernkeeper in Quebec.

\textsuperscript{90}Monk to Dundas, 6 Aug. 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 376.

\textsuperscript{91}Quebec Gazette, 16 June 1796.

\textsuperscript{92}Ibid., 23 June 1796.
their Constituents to abolish all Rents and all Tithes.\(^93\)

Shortly after the election the government attempted to enforce the Road Act. To implement an unfamiliar statute imposing new corvées after a year of severe depression—and during the harvest season as well—was the sheerest folly. The first signs of unrest became apparent in the capital late in August. According to Chief Justice Osgoode those summoned to labour refused to work, took the wheels off their carts, gave three cheers and dispersed. The ringleaders were arrested to the accompaniment of a demonstration of about five hundred cursing women. Despite this outbreak and an impassioned plea by a "virulent Patriot who is revered as an Oracle [almost certainly J.-A. Panet]\(^94\)" the court levied fines and for a time resistance to law ceased.\(^94\) Meanwhile rumours were spreading in the district that the overseers had unlimited powers of taxation and many habitants soon believed that the former were about to impose a taille—the main direct tax on land in pre-Revolutionary France. In October in the parish of St. Roch


\(^94\) Ibid. (postscript dated 27 Aug.).

\(^95\) Address by Judge P.-A. De Bonne to the prisoners convicted at the March assizes (Quebec) for offences against the government, 3 April 1797, Quebec Gazette, 6 April 1797. Such a conviction could generate real hatred of the English and Canadian elite, for to be "taillable" in the ancien régime had carried a social stigma, the seigneurs, clergy and upper bourgeoisie being exempt.
on the outskirts of the city the meeting of overseers ended in rioting. A magistrate who attempted to disperse the mob was assaulted and threatened with his life.\textsuperscript{96} Despite Bishop Hubert's mobilization of the clergy to preach obedience to the law,\textsuperscript{97} there was renewed violence in January 1797, this time in the parish of St. Joseph de Pointe-Lévy across the river from the capital. Angry mobs descended on the home of the overseers and the latter were conducted to a mass meeting where, in imitation of the Stamp Act riots, they were compelled to renounce their offices and to give up the printed instructions they had received.\textsuperscript{98} A fortnight later two bailiffs arrested the ringleaders and were escorting them to Quebec when a party of eight habitants with bludgeons effected their rescue, informing the surprised bailiffs that it was no use attempting the arrest of anyone, for "we have three hundred men in arms ready to support our Determination."\textsuperscript{99} Lieutenant-Governor Robert Prescott, who had replaced Dorchester in July 1796, dispatched two companies of regular

\textsuperscript{96}Report of Attorney-General Sewell to Prescott on the Road Act riots, 12 May 1797 (hereafter "Sewell's report"), RAC, 1891, 75, 78; The King v. Antoine Dionne (1797), Judicial Archives, District of Quebec, item n. 421.

\textsuperscript{97}Circular letter, 5 Nov. 1796, Têtu and Gagnon, Mandements, II, 501-02.

\textsuperscript{98}Sewell's report, 75.

\textsuperscript{99}Ibid.
troops to Pointe-Lévy.\textsuperscript{100} This action was sufficient to frighten most of the twenty-one persons against whom warrants had been issued to surrender voluntarily and to insure tranquillity in the rest of the District.\textsuperscript{101}

The District of Quebec was relatively quiet compared to Montreal and the adjacent countryside. Late in September one Luc Berthelot, who lived just outside the city, was fined for refusing to labour or compound. On October 2nd the writ was entrusted to a constable named Marston, who for his troubles was beaten up "most cruelly" by five or six persons in Berthelot's house and "was happy to escape with his life." The sheriff succeeded in arresting Berthelot on October 4th, but as Attorney-General Sewell described the scene, "he had not been in the Sheriff's Custody above five minutes when he was most forcibly and most violently rescued from him by the mob in the Place d'Armes." Couriers travelled through the countryside telling the habitants to assemble in Montreal on the 11th to oppose the execution of the Act and threatened them with the "Destruction of their Houses and Barns if they failed." A large mob did appear on the date in question but dispersed upon being spoken to by a magistrate.\textsuperscript{102} Some

\begin{footnotes}
\item \textsuperscript{100}Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{101}Ibid; Gaspard de Lanaudière to his wife, 30 Jan. 1797, PAC, CO 42, Collection Baby, v.12: 6866.
\item \textsuperscript{102}Sewell's report, 74.
\end{footnotes}
habitants across the river in the parish of St. Antoine de Longueuill urged their neighbours to withhold all supplies from the Montreal market, until the city dwellers joined with the country folk in refusing to compound or labour. They walked out of a sermon exhorting parishioners to do their road duty, after a member of the congregation warned the curé to remain "within the sphere of your Clerical Duty" and not to "interfere in politicks." In Pointe-aux-Trembles and Pointe Claire the massacre of the English became a topic of tavern oratory.

The resistance in the Montreal area to the execution of the Act was greatly strengthened by the leadership and example of Joseph Papineau. He spread about the idea that the statute was illegal on the grounds that the Legislative Council had not the required number of members, pledged that the Canadian assemblymen would obtain its repeal or amendment, and refused himself to labour or compound. As part of a delegation of citizens he helped

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103 Ibid., 76.


105 Ibid., 4854-55

to convince the magistrate early in October to suspend enforcement for a few days until the Governor indicated whether or not he would immediately convocate the Legislature. Prescott refused and ordered the magistrates to enforce obedience to the law.\(^\text{107}\) This they felt was next to impossible to do:

Emissaries have been dispersed through the different parishes to foment the general dissatisfaction ... [which had] risen to such a pitch of popular Frenzy as to render ... the Civil Power insufficient to compel obedience.\(^\text{108}\)

About mid-October, at the height of the resistance to the Road Act in the Montreal area, Canadians learned that the French fleet under Admiral Richery had attacked Newfoundland and rumours flew that the destination of the fleet was Lower Canada.\(^\text{109}\) Here was hope. Exploitation by the government and the seigneurs would cease if France were once more in control of the valley of the St. Lawrence.\(^\text{110}\)


\(^\text{110}\) Osgoode to ___, 13 Oct. 1796, n. 106 above, 53; De Bonne's address (n. 95 above); Quebec Gazette, 5 Jan. 1797 (address by Louis Labadie, a schoolteacher, to the habitants of Verchères, 15 Nov. 1796). See also Labadie to John Neilson, 4 May 1797, PAC, Neilson Collection, v. 1: 64.
An indeterminate number of habitants began to talk approvingly of the abolition of all seigneurial rents and tithes. Whatever the motives, Richery's appearance, as Prescott observed, "produced a sensation throughout the Province" and, as Osgoode noted, "an Exultation" among "the people at large." Coadjutor Bishop Denaut, writing from Longueuil, described the impact of the news in that area:

Les nouvelles de Québec d'une invasion des Français dans cette province, ont porté la crainte dans le coeur de plusieurs et la joie dans le plus grand nombre. Tous les habitants les désirent. Nous touchons, on dirait, au moment d'une révolution pareil à celle de la France; des attroupements considérables d'habitants de presque tous les endroits se sont faits tous les jours depuis dimanche, ils refusent absolument de se soumettre à la loi portée par le bill des chemins.... La révolution, dit l'histoire, a commencé par un attroupement des femmes afflamées, que ne doit-on pas craindre d'homme entêtés.

Had Richery sailed up the St. Lawrence instead of returning to France, the fleet would have received a tumultuous welcome by the mass of the Canadian population.

Despite this turn of events, which doubtless increased the will to resist the road law, the Montreal magistrates struggled on gamely. On October 24th the unlucky Marston, attempting to levy a fine on one Latour, a ringleader in

111 Osgoode to [blank], 13 Oct. 1796, n. 106 above, 53.
113 Osgoode to [blank], 13 Oct. 1796, n. 106 above, 53.
the "free Berthelot movement", failed again when Latour and several friends armed with muskets barricaded themselves in his house. The magistrates thereupon suspended all attempts to enforce the Act.\textsuperscript{115} The Governor meanwhile had sent Sewell to Montreal armed with a not over subtle offer to Papineau that he accept a commission as magistrate.\textsuperscript{116} Sewell reported that Papineau refused to serve, and had pointed out that there would be serious trouble, perhaps even rebellion, if Canadian blood were spilt. The government could have peace only if all fines levied were remitted and enforcement ceased.\textsuperscript{117} Prescott responded to these new developments by dispatching two regiments to Montreal. According to Sewell, "this judicious step restored the Consequence of the Magistrates, and gave Energy to their Proceedings."\textsuperscript{118} One energetic proceeding was to serve an order on Papineau to perform his road duty or be fined. Accompanied by "a vast crowd of retainers," the popular notary was tried, convicted and fined. Resistance to the enforcement of the Act thereupon crumbled.\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{115}Sewell's report, 75.


\textsuperscript{117}Sewell to Prescott, 28 Oct. 1796, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 10: 4855-56.

\textsuperscript{118}Sewell's report, 75.

\textsuperscript{119}Osgoode to John King, 14 Nov. 1796, PAC, CO 42, v. 22: 58.
While it is clear the habitants manifested a decided disloyalty during the war against Revolutionary France, the security danger they presented should not be exaggerated. In particular they were little influenced by the revolutionary propaganda and did not have the remotest idea of insurrection. The behaviour of the emissaries and their sympathizers during the militia riots strongly suggests that the habitants were uninterested in the nature of the social and political reforms of the Revolution. Other evidence supports this conclusion. While Rousse, for example, was certain that habitant hatred of the English—particularly after the language dispute—could be effectively exploited and was encouraged by the joyous response to the news that French troops, "nos bons gens", might attack, he recognized regretfully that the Canadian farmers were not yet ready for the message contained in Les Français libres.\textsuperscript{120} The illiteracy of the habitants had prevented an understanding of developments in France during the period of favourable press reporting from 1789 to late 1792, while during the war the surveillance of government officials and the Canadian elite kept to a minimum the exposition and discussion of the written propaganda devised by Genet and

Adet. One major reason for the habitants' lack of interest, was the irrelevance of the reforms in France to their social situation and their notions of government. Careers open to talent, reform of the French taxation system, and democratization of the structure of the Roman Catholic Church could have no meaning for the habitant. He had little ambition to see his sons in the civil service or army, paid no direct taxes to the government, and in the typical case was served by a dedicated curé drawn from his own class, a man largely devoid of social pretension, worldly ambition or spiritual doubt. The revolutionary propaganda which circulated in the colony promised the abolition of seigneurial dues and during the recession in 1796 this idea had some positive appeal. But a majority of

121 The difficulties faced by those working for Genet and Adet are illustrated by the fact that Les Français libres and the pamphlet brought in by Ducalvet were usually circulated by throwing them into the open windows of houses at night (Sewell to Prescott, 28 Oct. 1796, n. 117 above, 4853-54). No revolutionary clubs or more informal discussion groups were ever discovered in the countryside. Monk, prone to exaggerate the revolutionary danger, could find only one instance of Les Français libres being publicly expounded (to Dorchester, 18 June 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 53). The Attorney-General noted with alarm that the habitants referred to Les Français libres as "le Catechisme", but this was probably a bemused comment on the fanaticism of the sympathizers and on their novel mysteries rather than any expression of interest and understanding (to Same, 25 May 1794, ibid., v. 101: 12). The distribution of Ducalvet's pamphlet was traced by government officials to only ten persons, all of whom claimed they had burned their copies (Prescott to Liston, 2 Feb. 1797, PAC, Prescott Papers, Series 1, v. 13: 19-21; Same to Same, 10 Feb. 1797, ibid., 23-26; Richardson to Jonathan Sewell, 13 Feb. 1797, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 5: 1057.
habitants who learned of the proposal must have wondered if it entailed the abolition in toto of the seigneurial system, and with it the concept that unconceded lands were held in trust for future generations. Those who thought about the question at all were probably opposed to individual ownership of land which would make it more costly to provide their sons with farms.122 During the 1790's the habitants wanted the operation of the seigneurial system reformed; they did not want the system abolished.123 The constitutional reforms of the Revolution, of course, were meaningless to those who believed in the divine right of kings and distrusted representative government. Despite the Constitution of 1791 and despite also a marked tendency to resist government when it detrimentally affected the habitants' interests, they were unable to appreciate that political authority could derive from the mass of the people.

122 While direct evidence is lacking, it is likely that the habitants during the early 1790's had absorbed from the Canadian elite something of the attitude described in the text. With near unanimity the latter had then opposed Chief Justice William Smith's attempt to introduce freehold on the grounds that a farmer would not be able to realize his life's ambition to establish his sons on land of their own. See Quebec Gazette, 24 March 1791 (petition of Canadians against a change in tenure); Thomas Bédard (Superior of the Quebec Seminary), "Observations on the Report Respecting a Change in the Tenure of this Province," 16 Feb. 1791, PAC, Q Series, v. 51: 475-501 at 486-87, 499-500; Burt, The Old Province, 469-71.

123 While Canadian assemblymen from rural constituencies twice raised the question of rent regulation during the 1790's (p. 68, 84 above, p. 107 below), not one of them showed the slightest interest in the abolition of the seigneurial system.
Uninterested in the principles of 1789, largely leaderless, satisfied with their improving economic position (except during 1796) and governed by the dictates of elementary prudence in the face of a minatory government and elite, the habitants were not prepared to take an active part to increase the chances of success of a French invasion. The militia and Road Act riots can each be described as rebellion à la justice, rather than in any sense an attempted insurrection. During the militia riots French agents and their local sympathizers found it a simple matter to encourage the habitants in the time-honoured technique of resisting the enforcement of an unpopular law. When they tried to provoke more serious trouble, as in September 1794 when attempts were made to recruit habitants to liberate the Montreal prison, they were unsuccessful. The Road Act riots were likewise defensive in nature. The contention that few habitants harboured thoughts of rebellion in 1796 is greatly strengthened, moreover, by the fact that French agents, foreign as well as local, had little or nothing to do with the outbreaks. With a French invasion scheduled for the spring or summer of 1797 they would hardly encourage a civil disturbance which might lead to the reinforcement of the British garrison. Both citizen Adet and his agent, David

McLane, were very much alarmed that the Road Act riots would have precisely that result. Despite thorough investigations in 1794 and 1796 government officials were never able to prove that concerted plans for rebellion ever existed; they never discovered a cache of arms in the countryside, corresponding committees or any organized system of aiding the emissaries. The likely response the large majority of habitants would have adopted if an invading force from France had appeared was summed up in the report prepared for the colonial government in the summer of 1798 by a royalist émigré, Jules Le Fer. According to Governor Prescott, Le Fer, after a careful investigation,

... found them in general (he had not indeed found any exceptions) very desirous that this Country should be regained by France: but he had not discovered that they had made any actual arrangements for lending the French any regular assistance in arms: and although their wishes were very strong in favour of France he did not think it likely, so far as he could discover, that any very considerable number would join the French in arms immediately, in case of their arrival: He conceived it to be most likely that the generality of them would be disposed to be mere lookers on at the first while matters might remain doubtful; but should the French succeed so far as to make it probable that they would make themselves masters of the Country in a short time, there would in that case be no doubt that the Canadians would then join them in great numbers.  

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125 Liston to Prescott, 15 Jan. 1797, PAC, Prescott Papers, Series 1, v. 11: 14; McLane's trial, 765, 768.

CHAPTER 4
THE GARRISON MENTALITY

To prove the existence of a garrison mentality, it is convenient to begin with an analysis of the situation in which the English found themselves and an explanation of the major assumptions which they employed to interpret that situation. Once these points are established, it will become apparent that the English could hardly have been other than profoundly and almost constantly afraid of Canadian revolution. The remaining portion of the chapter, which deals with the English response to the outbreak of war, the militia and Road Act riots, the election of 1796 and the discovery of the Civil Society in 1801, adduces specific proof that this was so.

It was natural that the English should have suspected that the propaganda circulated by Genet and Adet appealed to large numbers of Canadians. By late 1792-early 1793 the Revolution had begun to appear to Britons generally as a rising of the unpropertied against the wealthy, a judgment reinforced by the political ferment among the working class even in Great Britain.\(^1\) It hardly seemed

\(^1\)See e.g. Alexander Davison (a lessee of the King’s fur trading posts in Lower Canada) to J.G. Simcoe, 6 Nov. 1792, E.A. Cruikshank, ed., *The Correspondence of Lieut. Governor John Graves Simcoe*, 5v. (Toronto, 1923-31), I, 253-54; address of the Legislative Council to Lieutenant-Governor Alured Clarke, 22 Dec. 1792, *Quebec Gazette*, 27 Dec. 1792; *Quebec Magazine*, 8 Feb. 1793 (letters of "Old Country Fellow" and "Britannicus"); *Quebec Gazette*, 4 April 1793 (letter of "Scepticus"); Samuel Gerrard to ...
reasonable that the habitants and artisans in Lower Canada could long remain unaffected by the siren call of equality and the hope of plunder. As early as December 1792, Edward, the Duke of Kent, then stationed at Quebec with his regiment, described for a friend the judgment of "the most sensible and experienced people here" that the,

... situation of France having occasioned such a general fermentation... all over the world, it is certainly to be feared, that the same spirit which has manifested itself in England, may sooner or later work on the minds of the people here, and be productive of consequences which can be paralleled only by those, thro' which England unfortunately lost the American colonies.\(^2\)

Moreover feudal tenure—or a form of it—still flourished in the valley of the St. Lawrence. It is understandable that the English should feel that attacks on the seigneurial system might well provide a rallying cry for habitants as successful as it had been a few years earlier in rural France. Such evidence as was available served to strengthen these suspicions. Emissaries travelled through the colony undetected\(^3\)—suggesting passive cooperation on the

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1793, PAC, Collection Baby, v. 11: 6468; P.A. Brown, The French Revolution in English History (London, 1918), Ch. III, IV.


\(^3\)It was virtually impossible to stop them entering the colony near St. Johns. Colonel de Bernière, commanding at St. Johns, explained to Captain Green, the Governor's military secretary (27 May 1797, PAC, C Series, A.1, v. 14: 8-12) that "the multitude of passengers makes it an easy matter for a disguised person, speaking the language, to escape detection." According to De Bernière emissaries also entered the province clandestinely by way of a road to the east of St. Johns.
part of a majority of Canadians; they had helped stimulate the militia riots and had been in the colony immediately prior to the Road Act riots and, in the case of McLane at least, during them. During the riots, and occasionally at other times, revolutionary slogans were used by the discontented. It was known that the majority of the habitants were anglophobic and favoured the idea of French reconquest. On the basis of these premises it was a small step to the conclusion that the principles of 1789 were exercising a decisive influence on habitant behaviour and that sooner or later there would be a rebellion.

There was another disturbing element in the situation for, even as the French Revolution appeared to be demonstrating that elective institutions fostered anarchy and violence, Lower Canada's Assembly began to operate. The arrangement of constituencies on the basis of population and a franchise which was one of the most liberal in the world, meant that the large majority of members were Canadians elected by the votes of illiterate, anglophobic habitants. No wonder many of the English in Quebec City began to fear, as the Duke of Kent observed in December 1792, "that the new

4See John Richardson to Jonathan Sewell, 23 March 1797, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 1080-81.

5See e.g. the references at p. 71 n. 33 above.

6This will become obvious later in the chapter.
the electorate\textsuperscript{10} and even the Assembly.\textsuperscript{11} They joined with government officials and others in castigating anyone who dared oppose the government as a "democrat",\textsuperscript{12} meaning at that time admirer of the French revolutionaries. The dangers posed by parliamentary "demagogues" were firmly impressed on the minds of the English, not only those bureaucrats who had long opposed an Assembly, or the loyalists, who had unpleasant memories of the role of assemblies during the American Revolution, but even those who had earlier been in the forefront of the struggle for representative government. Wealthy exporter George Allsopp had a few years before been one of the leaders of the merchants' agitation for an assembly with control over government finances. Reacting to the French Revolution, Allsopp warned his son Carleton—an admirer of French republicanism—about the dangers of an uncontrolled elective body:

\textsuperscript{10}When the Legislative Council in 1793 sent down a bill to provide for the election of returning officers the Assembly amended it to restore the Governor's power of appointment: Monk to Nepean, 8 May 1793, PAC, CO 42, v. 97: 224-28.

\textsuperscript{11}In 1795 the Legislature passed two taxation statutes and granted the Governor--permanently--£5,000 per annum from the proceeds: Statutes of Lower Canada, 35 Geo. III (1795), ch. VIII, IX. An attempt by the Papineau-Panet radicals to limit the grant to two years was overwhelming defeated in the Assembly: JHALC for 1795, 28 Feb., 1, 45.

\textsuperscript{12}See e.g. Quebec Magazine, March 1793 (letter of "An Anglo-Canadian," referring to the common opinion of assemblymen). See also p. 125, 140 below.
I wish you well to weigh the constitution of your own Country & note the equal poise that the three estates hold with respect to each other [.] no country on earth can boast the like--Corruptions will creep in unavoidably into every establishment for all are human, sour malcontents are to be found in every country & it is the greatest satisfaction to such to raise murmurs and discontents and to stir up the disaffected with or without cause.13

Allsopp's opinion was widely shared.14

The possible damage which could be done by demagogues did not seem entirely academic to the English. As the Papineau-Panet radicals drew some of their inspiration from the ideals of 1789, consistently opposed government measures and at times sought to limit the powers of the executive, it is understandable that the English thought of them as "democrats" and wondered whether they were actively engaged in furthering French schemes for subversion. As both leaders were spell-binding orators and enjoyed great popularity among the habitants of their respective districts, it was also natural to suspect that they might effectively use the Assembly to alienate the

13 George to Carleton Allsopp, 24 Nov. 1793, PAC, Allsopp Papers, Letterbook, 33.

mass of the Canadians from British rule. Chief Justice Osgoode's reaction in 1795 to an attempt by the radicals to regulate illegal seigneurial exactions typified the fears of many on this point. The question, Osgoode thought, would "necessarily produce a great Conflict between ... the Landlords & Tenants" and might become "a useful Instrument in the Hands of the Disaffected." The habitants were grumbling, and the "Patriots wish the questions to Continue in Agitation but not to be settled." The "Arch patriot", J.A. Panet, had gone so far as to move for a peripatetic Assembly committee empowered to hold public hearings in any part of the province. Fortunately, in Osgoode's view, this potentially disastrous motion was defeated.

The nervousness of the English was greatly increased by the conviction that the French Revolution had been the result of an international conspiracy. This belief was grounded in ideas of historical causation which were then commonplace and held particular relevance for those who accepted the loyalist explanation for American independence. There was little attempt in the eighteenth century to relate historical change to broad political, social or economic factors. Contemporaries tended to accept the simplest explanation ascribing events approved of to

15 JHALC for 1795, 21 Jan., 5, 23 Jan., 19.
16 Osgoode to Simcoe, 30 Jan. 1795, OH, 1954, 86.
17 Osgoode to Burland, 27 Oct. 1795, n. 14 above.
Providence and those disliked to divine retribution or the nefarious activities of a small group of conspirators. The prevalence of the conspiracy interpretation in the latter half of the century is illustrated by the reaction of individuals, on both sides of the issue, to the events leading up to the American Revolution. American revolutionaries interpreted British policies from 1763 on as carefully planned steps in an elaborate conspiracy of British ministries to gradually enslave them with ever-increasing taxation, numerous commercial monopolies, the establishment of the Anglican Church and the elimination of representative institutions. British tories and many American loyalists, on the other hand, had ascribed the Declaration of Independence to a well-thought-out plot of Samuel Adams, John Hancock and a few other men originating as early as 1765. Pennsylvania loyalist, Joseph Galloway wrote a book to prove the conspiracy while Jonathan Sewell's father, the last Attorney-


General of British Massachusetts, had castigated the "plotters, instigators & cherishers of this most unnatural, causeless, destructive rebellion" who had "given themselves up to the guidance of malice, pride, envy, hatred, & every other vicious principle that can blacken the human heart."  

In his Reflections on the Revolution in France, Burke had often referred to a conspiracy of social upstarts but did not develop the idea. The conspiracy theory of the Revolution was articulated most forcefully by the abbé Augustin Barruel, a French emigré, and by John Robison, professor of chemistry at Edinburgh University. According to these writers the man who made the Revolution was a Bavarian professor by the name of Adam Weishaupt, founder of the secret order of the illuminati. The order had penetrated and controlled the German masonic lodges and carefully chosen the masons most susceptible of moral corruption to induce by degrees into the higher ranks. Pretending to approve Christianity Weishaupt and his henchmen gradually converted their disciples to atheism and a

21 John Robison, Proofs of a conspiracy against all the religions and governments of Europe, carried on in the secret meetings of Free Masons, Illuminati, and Reading Societies, 2nd ed. (London, 1797); Augustin Barruel, Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du jacobinisme, 5v. (Hamburg, 1798-99). A less complete version of the Mémoires (and simultaneously an English translation) had been published in London in 1797.
hatred of monarchy and all class distinction. Only a handful of close confederates were aware of the professor's real plan: to induce universal libertinism in Europe which would facilitate the overturn of all established governments, the destruction of the Christian religion and bring about the world dictatorship of Weishaupt and his associates. The Duc d'Orléans, Grand Master of the French masonic lodges, became the dupe of Mirabeau, an illuminatus, who in turn took his orders from Weishaupt. Together with other masonic plotters, such as the abbé Siéyes and Condorcet, Orléans had channelled the energies of a malleable and unsuspecting membership at the election to the Estates General, corrupted the Gardes Françaises at the time of the Bastille and subsidized the October march of women on Versailles. Weishaupt and his little circle of co-conspirators had been the mysterious influence behind the Girondins and Jacobins and were currently engaged in dictating the policies of the Directory with a view to promoting revolution throughout the civilized world. In virtually every country or colony, the Directory could count on the support of a tightly organized and clandestine cell of adherents to the international revolutionary sect. Citing McLane's intrigues, Barruel included Lower Canada in his geographical review of the tentacles of the Weishaupt conspiracy.

In Britain the views of abbé Barruel and Professor Robison were addressed to a sympathetic audience and were
sufficiently persuasive to exert a definite influence on the Combinations Act of 1799 which outlawed secret societies. A less demented interpretation of the Revolution was kept alive by the Foxite opposition. In Lower Canada, however, there could be nothing but universal and profound conviction in the conspiracy interpretation. There was no significant Foxite opposition among the English; indeed it appears, no debate at all on the Revolution within the English community after the September massacres. Bishop Mountain was probably articulating the obvious when in a sermon preached at Quebec on January 10, 1799 he praised the outstanding scholarly achievements of Barruel and Robison who had laid bare the

... long and infamous labours by which they [Weishaupt and associates] introduced infidelity and Anarchy;—the Conspiracy directed with remorseless treachery, with envenomed malice, and with unwearied perseverance, not only against all established forms of Christian Worship, but against the Religion of Jesus Christ itself, are now known to all the world. The progress which they have made, in this diabolical warfare, is recorded in characters of blood.

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22 Barruel's Mémoires was published in two translated British editions prior to 1800. Robison's book went through four British editions before the turn of the century. His first edition published in 1797 was sold out almost immediately (Proofs, 499). The influence of these writers—and the climate of opinion they articulated—on the Combinations Act is evident from the report of a secret committee of the Common recommending the legislation, 15 March 1799: Parliamentary History, v. 34: 579-656. The report might have been written by either Barruel or Robison.


24 PAC, CO 42, v. 112: 103. This sermon was published at the request of the congregation. For other examples illustrating the influence of the ideas expressed by
Conviction in the plot interpretation of the French Revolution, in the continuing attempts of the plotters to foment world-wide revolution and in the efficacy of conspiracy is a master key which unlocks many of the mysteries surrounding the exaggerated fear of the English throughout the war against Revolutionary France. It helps explain how the garrison mentality could develop despite what a twentieth century historian might regard as very little provocation and despite also a conviction on the part of the English that the Canadian people were privileged to belong to the British Empire. The fact that the Canadian lower classes were thought to have no substantial grievances was irrelevant since, like the masses everywhere, their ignorance and shortsighted selfishness enabled designing men to convince them they suffered unbearable injustice. It mattered not at all that the plot and plotters could seldom be discovered since by definition the conspirators worked in secret, often escaped the detection of the authorities, and indeed even obscured their real aims from the persons who carried out their orders. The assumptions derived from the conspiracy interpretation of popular historical movements, moreover, included the very frightening possibility that one man or a small group of men could gain control of the masses and manipulate them at will. As will become apparent

Barruel and Robison on the English see p. 152-54 below. Dozens of examples of the belief in the power exercised by a small group of conspirators are given in this chapter and in ch. 7.
in the text, this assumption was twice translated into the belief that a tiny band of conspirators had brought the colony to the verge of rebellion.

The physical situation of the English made them think that an insurrection had every chance of success. They were outnumbered fifteen to one by former subjects of France, most of whom lived along the St. Lawrence where the French fleet was recurrently expected. Many owned hunting guns. As the Leveillé, militia and Road Act riots dramatically demonstrated, minimal protection was afforded the English in case of riot or insurrection by the rudimentary police organization of unpaid magistrates assisted by unpaid citizen constables in the towns and the captains of militia—theirself thought to be disloyal—in the countryside. Throughout the period there were only between 1,500 and 2,500 regular troops to defend a colony which stretched over six hundred miles along the St. Lawrence from Gaspé to Beauharnois.27

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25 See Appendix I.

26 Ordinances of Quebec, 27 Geo III (1787), ch. VI. Persons appointed as constables by the magistrates were obliged to serve for a period of one year or forfeit £20. A similar system obtained in many British cities and in virtually all counties. See Sidney and Beatrice Webb, English Local Government from the Revolution to the Municipal Corporation Act, 9 v. (London, 1906-29), II, III. For examples of opinion on this point see Monk to Dundas, 17 June 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 352-53; David Alexander Grant to Simon McTavish, 10 July 1794, PAC, Collection Baby, v. 11: 6593-94.

27 For troop strength see e.g. Dorchester to Dundas, 25 Oct. 1793, PAC, CO 42, v. 97: 153-56; "State of the Troops in North America commanded by the Right Honourable Lord Dorchester," 5 Aug. 1794, enclosed in Dorchester to Dundas
ment officials and others constantly complained that reinforcements were desperately needed to impress the futility of rebellion on the Canadians. Nor were the regular troops wholly reliable. The proximity of the American border was often an irresistible temptation to those subjected to the harsh discipline and abominable conditions of service in the regular army. In the winter of 1792-93, for example, a mutiny and planned mass desertion in the Duke of Kent's Seventh Regiment at Quebec was only averted at the eleventh hour by the arrest of the ringleaders. Throughout the war desertion was a constant lament of the military commanders in the colony.

The English could not help being greatly alarmed by

6 Aug. 1794, ibid., v. 100: 69; Prescott to Portland, 22 Aug. 1798, ibid., v. 111: 8-9. Troop strength in Upper Canada varied from about 600 to 1,350.

28See e.g. Monk to Dundas, 30 May, 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 324; D.A. Grant to McTavish, 10 July 1794, n. 26 above; Osgoode to , 13 Oct. 1796, PAC, CO 42, v. 22: 52-55; Prescott to Portland, 22 Aug. 1798, n. 27 above.

29"Canadian Letters: description of a tour thro' the provinces of Lower and Upper Canada in the course of the years 1792 and '93," Canadian Antiquarian and Numismatic Journal, 3rd series, 1912, 85-168 at 90; Quebec Gazette, 28 March 1793.

the weaknesses of the civil and military means of maintaining order, for they held the view that once rioting began it would inevitably spread by example throughout the colony unless vigorously repressed. The militia riots, for example, were thought to have been encouraged by the failure of the magistrates to punish the Leveillé rioters. The later and more extreme phases of the Road Act riots in the Montreal area were attributed by many to the magistrates' temporary suspension of the enforcement of the Act early in October. This sense of the fragility of the social order was deeply imbedded. Many of the loyalists had had personal experience of rioting in the American Revolution, and some, like Jonathan Sewell, had been in England at the time.

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31 See e.g. Monk to Dorchester, 25 May 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 101: 12-13; Same to Same, 18 June 1794, ibid., v. 100: 53 (reporting the opinions of Sewell and Judge James Walker of Montreal); D.A. Grant to McTavish, 10 July 1794, n. 26 above.

32 See e.g. Osgoode to , 13 Oct. 1796, PAC, CO 42, v. 22: 54 ("The prevailing opinion is that the magistrates have not been sufficiently firm--"); Prince Edward, Duke of Kent to John Young (merchant, Executive Councillor), 6 Feb. 1797, PAC, Young Papers, v. 4: 114-15 (referring to Young's opinion).

33 In Sept. 1774 a revolutionary mob had attacked the Sewell family home in Cambridge, Mass., smashing several windows. Only the beating inflicted by the male occupants (including a "Mr. Coffin") on those who forced their way into the house and the warning that others would be shot, averted worse destruction. Jonathan Jr., then a boy of eight, was present: see untitled document with the marginal notation "Tea Notes 1774", PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 14: 7337. The account by an eyewitness has been printed in L.F.S. Upton, ed., Revolutionary versus Loyalist (Waltham, Mass., 1968), 4-10.
of the Gordon riots, while the French Revolution which had overthrown the centuries-old Bourbon monarchy was an object lesson everyone could understand. "True humanity," wrote John Richardson in 1797, "requires every possible energy at the commencement of civil Commotion." Years later Jonathan Sewell articulated the creed of law enforcement dominant among the English minority throughout the war against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France. In his charge to the grand jury at the September assizes shortly after the opening of the War of 1812, Sewell, then Chief Justice, warned that:

Popular tumults at this Crisis, may justly be suspected to be excited by emissaries from the Enemy and indecision may be highly dangerous—Tumults so excited

34Jonathan Sewell, Sr., writing about two years after the Gordon riots succinctly expressed the creed of many of his fellow loyalists: "The mass of people can never disturb the mildest Government, without able leaders to direct their fury, which is no more than brutal—the mere Effect of Instinct & passions—These, when put in motion by ambitious politicians, form a leviathan whose strength is irresistible, but the Demagogues who raised the Tempest can, at all times 'ride in the Whirlwind & direct the storm' at their pleasure—and when their Ends are obtained, can bridle, saddle ... ship & spur, this mighty Beast—the vulgar, with as much ease ... as if they were a herd of Jack-Asses.... This opinion is founded on my own Experience, on both sides of the Atlantic, & on the History of all Ages ... from the time of Moses to the present day": Sewell to Ward Chipman, n.d., PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 2: 367-68. The year 1782 is written on p. 368 and Sewell mentions (p. 365) that the last letter he received from Chipman (with whom he regularly corresponded) was dated 9 Dec. 1781.

35Richardson to Jonathan Sewell, ibid., v. 3: 1055.
are intended to lead to revolution—and revolutions should be strangled in their Birth—minds yet in amazement must not yet have time to grow familiar with their guilt—The Ringleaders must not have time to confirm their power—The People must not have time to learn to obey new masters—and the acquisition of this time must be prevented by the activity and decision of the magistrate.  

It was natural also for the English to take a pessimistic view of the fate in store for them if the Canadian rebellion succeeded. In the years after the September massacres the local press expended hundreds of thousands of words detailing the atrocities perpetrated by the French revolutionaries and the "inhumanity and barbarity of France" became a compelling theme of conversation among the English and a favourite topic of their private letters, sermons and letters to the editor. Very little imagination was needed to apply the lessons of France to their own situation. If any further stimulus was needed it was provided by the bloodthirsty slogans and

36 Ibid., v. 12: 5952.

exhortations which revolutionary sympathizers occasionally indulged in, such as the carpenter Dumontier's promise to make "une marque à tous ceux qui prenent les interets du Gouvernement comme les habitants faisoient à leurs moutons afin de les faire expedier quand les François seroient ici." Many of the English must have shared the opinion of one resident who in 1793 was convinced that "the moment a Descent was made by the Republicans of France that the French Inhabitants would Cut the throats of all that they thought to be in the British interest." Only reliable information on and careful assessment of the degree of habitant disloyalty might have prevented the development of a garrison mentality. Some of the most revealing sources at the disposal of the present-day historian—such as Rousse's opinion—were not available to contemporaries, while others, such as Le Fer's report, were made long after English attitudes had become firmly fixed. Very few English residents, moreover, lived in the rural areas in the region of the seigneuries. There were about forty English seigneurs but for class and

38 Deposition of Richard Corbin, 11 June 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 365.

39 Quoted in Mason Wade, "Quebec and the French Revolution," 364. The Loyal Association campaign provides further evidence of English nervousness about the fate in store for them (p. 128 below). As the text will make clear, the possibility of massacre was frequently referred to by the English during 1796-97.

40 According to lists published by the Quebec Gazette (11 Dec. 1788) there were then about 165 seigneurs in the colony, 38 of them English.
ethnic reasons they had little contact with the habitants. As late as 1801 there were in the whole colony not more than fifty English censitaires. In any case few, if any contemporaries indulged in a systematic analysis of the security problem. The situation was ambiguous—even to a number of Canadians—and as human beings caught up in the rush of events often do, the English tended to accept the superficial or obvious interpretation as the correct one. The revolutionary slogans were deemed to be representative; the distinction between rebellion à la justice and insurrection, overlooked.

When the news reached Lower Canada that war had been declared few among the English doubted that French emissaries would attempt to subvert the government of the colony and some believed that these attempts might succeed

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41 Jonathan Sewell to Milnes, n.d.[1801], Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 264-65. At the time the population of the colony was over 200,000: ibid; Ouellet, Histoire économique, 599.

42 For examples of Canadians who thought there was some danger of rebellion during the war see curé J.M. Verreau (Montmagny) to Bishop Hubert, 1 Nov. 1793 ("Revolle appréhendée") quoted in Léon Trépanier, "Dambourges le 'Balafré'," Les cahiers des dix, 1954, 233-66 at 241; Bishop Hubert to curé Edmund Burke, 4 July 1794, RAQ, 1931-32, 303; P.-I. Aubert de Gaspé to , 7 July 1796, BRH, 1936, 379; Coadjutor Bishop Denaut to Piessis, 18 Oct. 1796, AAQ, Cartable, Évêques de Québec, II, 114; Judge De Bonne's address to the prisoners convicted at the March assizes, 3 April 1797, Quebec Gazette, 6 April 1797; Gaspard de Lanaudière to Madame Lanaudière, 13 April 1797, PAC, Collection Baby, v. 12: 6900; Louis Labadie to John Neilson, 4 May 1797, PAC, Neilson Collection, v. 1: 64.

43 See e.g. JHALC for 1792-93, 9 May 1793, 690 (Clarke's speech from the throne closing the session); Quebec Gazette, 21 May 1793 (Chief Justice William Smith's
among a people who were culturally French and had, only a
generation before, owed allegiance to the enemy. Montreal
merchant Samuel Gerrard, for example, was concerned about
"the disagreeable situation into which this country is
involved by the declaration of War." He informed his
correspondent of "the partiality of the Canadians to
their former Government, many, nay the greatest part of
whom can scarcely be persuaded that the great and mighty
King of the French had been put to Death by his own
Subjects." The Governor, Lord Dorchester, reflecting
a commonly held opinion, believed that "Jacobin" ideas
had penetrated "the lower class of people" and those
"young men of better condition who were too dissipated to
enter Commerce or such Employments as the nature of the
Country affords." Even before the militia riots
Dorchester was worried that the seditious literature
circulating in the Province and the agitation of some
censitaires on the question of illegal rents, might result
in "the Party distinction of Aristocrat and Democrat" with all that implied at a time when dozens of the French
nobility were daily guillotined in Paris. The militia
address to the grand jury of Quebec, 27 April 1793).

44gerrard to , 25 April 1793, PAC, Collection
Baby, v. 11: 6469.

45Dorchester to Dundas, 23 Oct. 1793, PAC, CO 42,
v. 97:126-27. See also references in n. 1, 14 above.

46Dorchester to Dundas, 24 Feb. 1794, ibid., v. 98:
and the Road Act riots turned suspicion into conviction.

Throughout the spring and summer of 1794 the English in Lower Canada lived in a state of almost constant alarm. At the time of the militia riots Colonel R.G. England, Indian Agent at Detroit, informed Lieutenant-Governor Simcoe that "my letters from Quebec and Montreal represent the miserable Canadians in a state little short of rebellion." The seigneur, David Alexander Grant, was of the opinion that if the Americans or French attacked Lower Canada, "it is gone; the Canadians are either disaffected or indifferent." His uncle, William Grant, a merchant-seigneur and assemblyman, felt the situation sufficiently serious to warrant empowering the Governor and Executive Council "to proclaim ... the law marital, whenever the Province in his and their judgment and discretion, is in ... imminent danger of invasion, rebellion or insurrection." Solicitor-General Jonathan Sewell, reported the District of Montreal "in a state of almost universal and alarming disaffection"—the work, he claimed, of a single conspirator. There was, he had heard, "some leading Character ... at Montreal, who guides the Canadians to their disloyalty and disaffection, and

47 22 July 1794, Cruikshank, Simcoe Correspondence, II, 334.
48 To Simon McTavish, 10 July 1794, PAC, Collection Baby, v. 11: 6593-94.
49 JHALC for 1794, 22 May, 1794, 304.
is relied upon 'That the French are coming'. Attorney-General Monk thought 5,000 additional troops must be sent to the Canadas immediately. Otherwise their defence could not be guaranteed even if relations between Britain and the United States improved. Genet's emissaries had "infected and prepared the people, to follow the example of France with constant assurances, to these deluded peasants that the French would come to relieve them in Canada!" The danger was acute since the habitants appeared receptive to the new doctrines:

... seditious and Treasonable pamphlets have been artfully dispersed in different parts of this colony among His Majesty's new subjects and it appears that they have been listened to with a silence and concealment, that too much evinces a readiness in those subjects, to credit a foundation for prospects of benefit, and a utility in "change" or causes of complaint....

Despite the fact that the habitants under the British regime lived in the best of all possible worlds and had only "distant specious causes of complaint to urge," the emissaries, "subtle enemies", had convinced them that

50 Monk to Dorchester, 18 June 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 52-53 (paraphrase of a report received from Sewell). The "leading Character" was not discovered.

51 Monk to Dundas, 30 May 1794, ibid., 324.

52 Ibid.

53 Monk to Dorchester, 25 May 1794, ibid., v. 101: 11. See also The Times-Cours de temps, 4 Aug. 1794 (anonymous letter).

54 Monk to Dundas, 6 June 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 329.
they were "greatly oppressed." Monk noted in particular that the

Rents and services exacted by the seigniors, forms that
ground of complaint by the Peasants, which the Enemies
of His Majesty's Government, do not fail to assimilate,
to the Kingly Government of France, and foment to the
utmost, as the best means of detaching His Majesty's
Subjects from their Loyalty, to acquiesce in, or wish,
or aid a Revolution! The Attorney-General was also struck with the revolutionaries appeal to violence with their references to house
burning, decapitation, disembowelling and carrying the
refractory heads on a pole. "It is surprizing," he wrote
Dundas, "(in so short a period for corruption) to find the
same savage barbarity exercized in France ... so early
manifest itself in the present stage of Revolt." By
June the Attorney-General discovered an additional source
of the troubles. The masonic lodges in Montreal, he
thought, had been carrying on a treasonable correspondence
with their counterparts in Vermont.

The Governor had at first been willing to attribute
the Canadian's refusal to ballot to "a long disuse of
military services, rather than a spirit of discontent or

55 Monk to Dorchester, 29 May 1794, ibid., 6.
56 Monk to Dundas, 6 June 1794, n. 54 above. Government
officials were sufficiently alarmed to write into
the Judicature Act of 1794 a provision removing the doubts
which had arisen whether the courts could exercise all the
powers of the Intendant: ibid; Const. Docs., 1791-1818,
128. This of course did not touch the root of the prob-
lem, namely the high cost of litigation.
57 Same to Dundas, 30 May 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100:323.
58 Monk to Dorchester, 18 June 1794, ibid., 54.
disloyalty^59 and would later return to a similar view.60 In the days following the riots, however, he was caught up in the general alarm. He could not send further reinforcements to Prince Edward, the Duke of Kent, commander of the British forces at Halifax, because "the temper of the Canadians is so refractory and prepared for insurrection that a considerable Reinforcement is necessary for the preservation of the Province."61 There was no question, he wrote Dundas, but that "an eye was had to the Proceedings at Paris."62 Nor was there any doubt that the assemblies of armed habitants at Charlesbourg and Côte des Neiges had been organized by Genet's agents as "Tryals to discover the effect of their intrigues, and how far the disposition of the People was favourable to their purposes."63

That government officials were seriously alarmed at the possibility of rebellion is well illustrated by the passage and enforcement of the Alien Act.64 This

^59Dorchester to Dundas, 24 May 1794, ibid., v. 101: 5.

^60Osgoode to Simcoe, 7 July 1796, OH, 1954, 151.

^61Dorchester to Prince Edward, 7 June 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 25.

^627 June 1794, ibid., 2.

^63Dorchester to Dundas, 21 June 1794, ibid., 47.

statute, which was drafted by Attorney-General Monk, permitted the Governor to summarily deport aliens, suspended habeas corpus when magistrates arrested persons suspected of treason, and imposed severe penalties (including transportation for a second offence) on any who held "seditious discourses ... maliciously spread false news" or in any way lessened "the affections of his Majesty's subjects."

The Canadian radicals in the Assembly vainly attempted to limit the suspension of habeas corpus. Monk gloated over the failure of the opposition:

Our late made Judge, Panet (who is considered a Democrat) opposed to the Judicature Bill, before and since a Judge. And would have done the same on the Alien bill, if he had dared. He refused to second the Bill--purposely tried--and at first declared his design to oppose some parts, particularly the suspension of the hab. corp. act, but in this last he dreaded to embark on a useless effort and design, and voted for the measure.65

The Alien Bill was passed with only three dissenting votes,66 and proved to be of great assistance in ridding the colony of emissaries and restoring order.67

From May to November the government arrested between fifty and one hundred suspects under the Act,68 although


66 JHALC for 1793-94, 26 May 1794, 308.

67 Monk to Dorchester, 2 Oct. 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 106.

68 Same to Same, 15 Nov. 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 55.
few were brought to trial, apparently for fear of renewed agitation. In the District of Quebec alone, fourteen out of twenty-one persons charged with offenses against the government—including five Charlesbourg habitants indicted for high treason—were incarcerated for several months but never tried.

Stephen Thorn of Granville, New York, a decided advocate of a Franco-Vermontese attack on Lower Canada, visited the colony in the late summer or early autumn of 1794 and noted that it was "a crime to think as a republican and high treason to speak as such." Law enforcement had indeed taken on the character of a witchhunt. A master shipwright, John Black, employed by Monk to ferret out the disloyal among the Quebec artisans, overplayed the role of agent provocateur and was himself arrested in June. Notwithstanding the fact that his prospering shipbuilding business was in jeopardy he was refused bail. Although many of the prominent merchants who employed him had never had doubts of his loyalty, in the words of merchant and Executive Councillor John Young who knew Black well, he was "branded as a rebel & traitor

69Dorchester to Dundas, 21 June 1794, ibid., 47.

70Attorney-General's "State of the Prosecutions in His Majesty's Court of King's Bench, November Term 1794," ibid., v. 101: 57-59; Ryland to Sewell, 21 March 1795, PAC, G Series, 15.C., v. 3: 6-7.

to his King & Country, discountenanced by those who could serve him." Others were more fortunate than Black. Although he had nothing to do with the militia riots, John Neilson, the printer of the Quebec Gazette, thought he might be imprisoned:

... seeing a number of people sent to prison without knowing the cause, and being afraid it might soon come to be his turn ... as he understood he had the Character of a Democrat, he thought it prudent to avoid the danger by withdrawing from the Province....

Accompanied by Alexander Menut, Jr. he fled the colony on horseback in early September and took up a brief residence in New Jersey. Jean Arnous, a native of France who had settled in the colony as a farmer in 1786, anticipated arrest as a republican. Leaving his family behind and after many narrow escapes, he crossed the provincial line into New York. Neilson, Menut and Arnous were only three of dozens who found it imperative to head for the border.

To complement the effects of Monk's round-up of suspects, English leaders organized Loyal Associations.

The main objects of this endeavour were to provide a


73 Declaration of John Neilson, 30 May 1795, PAC, RG 4, B. 45, "Declarations of Aliens" (n.p.).


75 Monk to Dorchester, 2 Oct. 1794, n. 67 above.
means of identifying the disaffected, to propagandize the Canadians on the horrors of revolution and, if large numbers subscribed, to discourage emissaries and agitators.\textsuperscript{76} Parent associations, initiated and controlled mainly by prominent English officials and merchants, were established in Quebec, Montreal and Three Rivers and, working through the curés and Canadian assemblymen, attempted to organize associations in the rural parishes. The local notables were instructed to collect signatures to a declaration of thanksgiving for the benefits of British rule\textsuperscript{77} and to take pains "de détromper les ignorans, qui, par des insinuations et artifices également faux et specieux, auroient pu être induits dans les opinions injurieuses ... et qui pouvoient être entraînés dans les malheurs qui ont desolé la France."\textsuperscript{78} The campaign was, ostensibly at least, a success with as many as two-thirds of the Canadians, according to Monk, becoming subscribers.\textsuperscript{79} The Montreal Association went

\textsuperscript{76} Dorchester to Dundas, 12 July 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 99: 299-300; Monk to Dorchester, s.d., ibid., 301-02; circular letter of the Quebec Association to the rural parishes in the District of Quebec, ibid., v. 100: 369; circular letter of the Montreal Association to the rural parishes in the District of Montreal, 5 July 1794, R\&Q, 1948-49, 258-59; report of the Quebec executive committee to the Association, 18 Oct. 1794, \textit{Quebec Gazette}, 23 Oct. 1794.

\textsuperscript{77} The declaration was printed in \textit{Quebec Gazette}, 3 July 1794.

\textsuperscript{78} Circular letter of the Montreal Association, 5 July 1794, n. 76 above.

\textsuperscript{79} Monk to Dorchester, 2 Oct. 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100:103.
so far as to claim that the habitants would now defend the province against Revolutionary France, while the Quebec Association asserted that the "ignorant and deluded part of the community" had had their eyes opened to "the destructive consequences which must ... arise to all Religion, Liberty or property on adoption of the ... principles" which "hired foreigners ... and ill designing subjects" had attempted to spread about. One cannot, however, take these public expressions of confidence as indicative of any profound change in English opinion, for, as pointed out earlier, one of the objects of the campaign was to broadcast to French officials, emissaries and revolutionary sympathizers that their intrigues were doomed to failure. It is certain that neither the Attorney-General nor the English in Montreal had been convinced that the internal security problem had disappeared. Just as the Loyal Association campaign was coming to an end, Montrealers learned that not all of "the ignorant and deluded part of the community" had put aside their delusions. The prosecution of offenders against the government at the September assizes in Montreal had, according to Monk, proved most unpopular:

80 James McGill (president of the Montreal Association to Dorchester, 6 Nov. 1794, RAQ, 1948-49, 272.

81 Draft report of the Quebec Association to Dorchester, 15 Oct. 1794, PAC, S Series, v. 60: 19309-10. See also final report of the executive committee to the Association, 18 Oct. 1794, Quebec Gazette, 23 Oct. 1794.
... so soon as the Judgments were passed ... the disaffected of some four to six parishes round and near to the city of Montreal, actually meditated a most daring and violent effort generally to rise in arms and force the prison, and set the prisoners at liberty. Speedy and effective exertions were made by the Magistrates and others, and the rebellious were awed or restrained from putting their designs to the hazard of execution. It is proper to explain that this design went so far, as that of Couriers riding thro' the Country exciting the people to arms. And that design announced with menaces of burning the houses of, and killing those who, should refuse to join, in the intended "revolt to take the City and set the prisoners Free."  

The agitation against the arrests was quickly interpreted as meaning that the whole District was in arms. Montreal lawyer Stephen Sewell, the Solicitor-General's brother, and merchant James Ogilvie were assigned the task of making cartridges to repel the impending attack, which soon proved to be a nightmare without substance:

... most assuredly during Saturday and the night following we were in an alarm ... thank God it seems to be entirely subsided and ... we begin to think there never were more than twenty men throughout the whole Country who had serious intentions of an attack on the town.  

During the Road Act riots of 1796 and for months afterward it was a commonly held opinion among the English that emissaries and revolutionary sympathizers had convinced the mass of the Canadians of the material benefits which would result from French reconquest and, exploiting "pretended grievances" against the Act, had manipulated

82 Monk to Nepean, 19 Sept. 1794, PAC, CO 42, v. 100: 379.

them to a state of frenzy bordering on rebellion. Quebec merchant and Executive Councillor John Young and the Attorney-General Jonathan Sewell, for example, interpreted the riots as an attempted overthrow of the government which had been planned in advance by Ducalvet and had been greatly stimulated by revolutionary propaganda. To Chief Justice Osgoode, the "Ignorance and Disaffection of the Whole Race" was "beyond Conception." The agitation of Papineau and Panet had brought the colony to the brink of civil war and had convinced the habitants that all their problems would be solved if France attacked:

... they firmly believe that ... under French ... Government they should be exempted from the Payment of both Tythes & Rent--It has been effectually impressed on their minds that their greatest enemies are their Priests & Land lords [.] instead therefore of having any respect for these Characters or any Confidence in their advice they are the Objects of Detestation & Abhorrence.

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86 Osgoode to ____, 13 Oct. 1796, ibid., 53-55. Osgoode claimed there was "but one Idea prevailing among all Considerate persons in the province which is, that open Resistance to all Civil subordination is prevented merely by the presence of the Troops that are quartered among us."

87 Ibid.
It was also a commonly held opinion that a bloody uprising had been averted in the Montreal District only by Prescott's dispatch of troops to the city. According to magistrate William Lindsay the presence of the regulars had temporarily frustrated the "Junto in this neighbourhood" which was "planning the destruction of the English within the walls." Lindsay—and many others, he claimed—believed that the conspirators could best be thwarted by the formation of voluntary armed associations among the English and those Canadians whose loyalty was beyond question.\(^88\) Montreal merchant John Richardson agreed that Prescott had saved the province,\(^89\) but thought that only a declaration of martial law could adequately protect the people of property from "all the horrors of assassination."\(^90\) It was clear to Attorney-General Sewell as well that Prescott's regiments had averted a massacre, for in his gloomy view McLane's pikes were "not to be opposed to the musket or bayonet, but appropriated ... for the more dreadful Purpose of assassination."\(^91\)

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\(^{88}\) Lindsay to Jonathan Sewell, 1 Dec. 1796, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 1017-19.

\(^{89}\) Richardson to Same, 9 Jan. 1797, ibid., 1044. See also Kent to Young, 6 Feb. 1797, n. 84 above.

\(^{90}\) Richardson to Jonathan Sewell, 6 Feb. 1797, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 1054-55.

\(^{91}\) McLane's trial, 790 (Attorney-General's statement to the jury). For other opinions that the Canadians had been on the verge of rebellion see Stephen Sewell to Jonathan, 17 July 1797, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 1104; Joseph Chew to Edward Winslow, 17 Dec. 1797, PAC, Winslow
himself attributed the riots to the work of Adet's emissaries and thought the colony on the verge of insurrection. The secrecy which attended the circulation of Ducalvet's addresses, the universal failure of Canadians to inform on the emissaries and their enthusiastic response to the news of Richery's attack on Newfoundland left no doubt in his mind that the Canadians were almost all "disaffected" and highly partial to the revolutionary cause. The situation would be critical if French troops managed to reach the colony, since "His Majesty's English subjects here compared to the former [Canadians] are not in a Greater Proportion than as Seventy to Two Thousand." Months after the riots Prescott remained nervous. He urged the Colonial Secretary that the practice of billeting soldiers one or two to a house was exceedingly

Papers, v. 7: 78. Letters and reports from the colony conveyed this idea to residents in other parts of British North America (where the news was something of a sensation) and to French officials in the United States. See e.g. Kent to Young, Halifax, 6 Feb. 1797, n. 84 above; Edward Winslow to Jonathan Sewell, Kingsclear, New Brunswick, 14 Jan. 1797, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 1039; Richard Cartwright (merchant) to Messrs. Davison & Co., Kingston, 4 Nov. 1797, C.E. Cartwright, ed., Life and Letters of the Late Hon. Richard Cartwright (Toronto, 1876), 75; Consul-General Létombe to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 28 June 1797, AHAR, 1903, II, 1042.


93 Same to Same, 28 Oct. 1796, n. 92 above.
dangerous "as it renders it easy for their arms to be seized by the People with whom they are lodged." This idea, Prescott noted, "was very generally entertained by the disaffected at Montreal last autumn." 94 The Lieutenant-Governor nearly had apoplexy when he learned that French prisoners of war, sent from Britain to strengthen the garrison at Quebec, had arrived in the colony. Convinced that they would prove unrepentant revolutionaries and warned that they might incite a mutiny among the Canadian soldiers in the Sixtieth Regiment and the Royal Canadian Volunteers, he sent the unwanted recruits packing in the first ship home, much to the relief of "His Majesty's loyal subjects and the members of the legislature." 95

Fear of that "diabolical trunk of anarchy and bloodshed," as Richardson called Adet, and the "still more diabolical Directory" 96 coloured many aspects of life in the colony in the years 1796-97. The witchhunt atmosphere of 1794 revived. In one case where loose conversation at a café had created a suspicion that a young Canadian law student was disloyal, the man who had made

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94 Same to Same, 27 May 1797, PAC, CO 42, v. 109: 37.


the offensive remarks publicly apologized by writing to the Quebec Gazette. Those seeking the slightest favour from the government or the justices of the peace made sure to stress loyalty as their prime qualification. To help one Thomas Booth obtain a license to operate a ferry on the Ottawa river near Montreal, his captain of militia wrote the quarter sessions a letter in which he dwelt on the applicant's "zèle dont il a donnés des marques dernièrement [during the Road Act riots] en arrêtant des prisonniers dangereux." Even the humour of the local literary wits reflected the tension. The Quebec Gazette attempted to jolly up its subscribers at the New Year, 1797, by roasting "Johnny Crapaud" in verse:

Lo, a New Year! and, strange to tell!
I find you, Sirs, alive and well,
Regaling on bak'd, boil'd and roast,
And briskly pushing round the toast,
Giving to your wine a zest
With the jocund song and jest;
You, who by this time, in minc'd meat,
By Sans Culottes ought to be eat....

At the level of personal relations between Canadians and English in the cities humour was sorely lacking. Young John Neilson of Quebec had followed the time-honoured

97 June 1797 (letter of P. Laforce to Pierre Vezina).

98 Philippe Despelteau to Montreal magistrates, 10 Oct. 1796, Judicial Archives, Superior Court, Montreal, Quebec.

99 Jan. 1797 ("Verses of the Printer's Boy who carries the Quebec Gazette to the Customers").
pattern of the Scottish immigrant by marrying a Canadian. Informing his mother of the event in 1797, he lamented the "monstrous prejudice between the natives and the Europeans which is so hurtful to their respective interests and even dangerous to their safety." 100 The Attorney-General was sorry to have to report to Prescott that while there had

... always subsisted among the Canadians and the English settled at Montreal a certain degree of Intimacy and Friendship—At this moment there is no Intercourse and the most ancient and established Friendships appear entirely interrupted. 101

Informers took good advantage of the nervousness of the authorities. John Black managed to obtain a grant of the township of Bedford in recompense for his services. 102

In November 1796 Cushing approached Stephen Sewell and revealed the existence of "a plot to extirpate the English," embellishing the truth by suggesting that he had seen citizen Adet in Montreal two weeks before. Sewell hurried him down to Quebec where he refused to indulge the curiosity of the Attorney-General until well rewarded. He demanded the government promise a patent of title and grant immediate possession of the township of Shipton and bestow the same rights over the township of Brampton on his friend Barnard. Governor

100 PAC, Neilson Collection, v. 35: 8.


Prescott, Civil Secretary Herman Ryland, Chief Justice William Osgoode and the Attorney-General decided the information sufficiently important to justify acceding to Cushing's demands. Cushing and Barnard thereupon deposed to the details of McLane's recent visit to Montreal. 103

The preoccupation with security was also manifest in the government's handling of the 1797 session of the Legislature. With a French invasion expected, it was essential to again suspend habeas corpus, 104 and to ensure that there was minimal agitation in the Assembly on the question of the Road Act. Neither prospect seemed likely to succeed. Government supporters had lost their majority in the House, which would now be controlled by those who were suspected of active disloyalty. Many of the English in the colony likely shared the view of Osgoode and John Young that the general election of 1796 had amounted to nothing less than a purposeful vote by the Canadian habitants in favour of treason. 105 The destruction of the seigneurs as a significant political force, moreover, appeared to be a textbook preparation for revolution.

103 Stephen to Jonathan Sewell, 14 Nov. 1796, PAC, S Series, v. 65: 20706-08; Jonathan Sewell to Samuel Gale, 9 July 1799, ibid., v. 68: 21772-76.

104 The section in the Alien Act suspending habeas corpus had been repealed in the 1795 session: Statutes of Lower Canada, 35 Geo. III (1795), ch. XI.

105 Osgoode to Simcoe, 7 July 1796, OH, 1954, 151; Young to Ryland, 9 June 1798, PAC, CO 42, v. 111: 470.
The Canadian contingent of the Assembly would be composed mainly of lawyers and notaries, who like Papineau were of humble social origin, shopkeepers, artisans and habitants. The English reaction followed Edmund Burke's famous analysis of the class composition of the French National Assembly and particularly his claim that among the revolutionaries were the low-born, small town attorneys. "The fomenters and conductors of the petty war of village vexation," he had written, had nothing to lose by revolution and indeed had a natural interest in promoting it to "lay open to them those innumerable lucrative jobs which follow in the train of all great convulsions ... in the state." Burke had also noted that the illiterate peasants and the petty shopkeepers in the Assembly were "more formed to be overborn and swayed by the intrigues and artifices of lawyers than to become their counterpoise." In a letter prominently displayed in the Quebec Gazette, "A Good Citizen" attributed the agitation against seigneurial candidates to the "machinations ... of Bad Men" who were attempting "to raise themselves and serve their own private interests." If successful they would "establish a System of Equalization which would at once dissolve the cement of Society."  

106 See p. 86-89 above; Appendix II.  
107 Reflections on the Revolution in France (Dublin, 1790), 61-04.  
108 23 June 1796.
Osgoode thought the voters had returned "a very extraordinary description of persons," particularly the seven "unlettered gentry", but was hopeful that the "Disaffected from want [of] experience" would be unable "to give Parliamentary Form to any of their ... wild projects." The new members were, Prescott thought, "of a Rank and Description but ill suited to their Situation." Many of them, he was sure, were "Promoters of disorder and sedition" who entertained high hopes "that the Assembly may be brought to serve ... their purposes."

The government's strategy was worked out by Richardson in January 1797. The revolutionary gardeners, the Provençales, who had listened to Ducalvet's plans to establish a fifth column of Canadian officers in the Army of the Republic, should be arrested and the "plot" revealed before the Legislature was prorogued. If the Assembly conspirators still opposed the suspension of habeas corpus they would be shown up in their true colours. In early February the arrests were made.

109 Osgoode to Simcoe, 7 July 1796, n. 105 above.


112 Same to Same, 6 Feb. 1797, ibid., 1053. Bizette and the two Provençales were tried for treason in Sept. 1797 and acquitted: Quebec Gazette, 14 Sept. 1797. According to Sewell's calendar of cases heard at the March assizes in Quebec and Montreal (RAC, 1891, 76-78) forty
Richardson inquired of the Attorney-General what the response had been: "Pray how does Papineault look since these discoveries—the Democrats here since the arrests, wear faces almost a yard long—Guilty consciences perhaps tell them their turn may not be far off." Various documents—including the indictments of the Provençales—were sent to Sewell, but even "all this artillery," as Richardson called them, had little immediate effect. Papineau opposed the renewal of suspension of habeas corpus proposed by Judge De Bonne and William Grant in committee of the whole on March 27th and attempted to introduce liberalizing amendments to the bill. Confronted with Papineau's opposition, Sewell beat a tactical retreat and, hopeful of a change in attitude on the part of the Assembly, prepared a separate bill dealing exclusively with the suspension of habeas corpus. This bill, which became the Act for the Better Preservation of His Majesty's Government as by Law Happily

Canadians were charged with various offences arising out of the riots. Almost all of those tried were convicted. The usual sentence was a fine of £1 to £20 and imprisonment from three to twelve months.

114 Same to Same, 23 March 1797, ibid., 1080.
116 JHALC for 1797, 3 April, 111; Richardson to Sewell, 23 March 1797, n. 114 above.
Established, permitted three members of the Executive Council to issue warrants of arrest without trial against persons who were suspected of treason or treasonable practices. 117 One feature of Sewell’s bill was undoubted-ly kept a closely-guarded secret. It did not expressly provide—as British statutes suspending habeas corpus always did—that the Assembly must give its consent to the detention of one of its members. Instead the operation of the bill was made subject to the “privileges” of the House. This vague proviso which satisfied the Canadian members, as yet unfamiliar with many aspects of the British constitution, proved to be quite useless some years later, as it was surely intended to be by the suspici-ous Attorney-General.

Richardson was not wholly confident that the Attorney-General would succeed:

I really did not think he [Papineau] had impudence enough after what has happened, to venture openly to oppose the Alien Act—If the Habeas Corpus Bill contemplated by you, should fall through, it will evince not only the extent of our danger, but that the imperious majority in the Assembly, are determined under cover of their Legislative liberty of action, to deliver us over (as far as in them lies) bound hand & foot to the Sans Culottes. 118

Fortunately for the peace of mind of the English, Papineau had by April, for reasons which remain obscure, become a

117Statutes of Lower Canada, 37 Geo. III (1797), ch. VI.

118Richardson to Sewell, 30 March 1797, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 1084.
supporter of Sewell's bill, even seconding the Attorney-General's motion to have it engrossed.\textsuperscript{119} There remained one unpleasant possibility, that Papineau and his supporters might be able to amend the Road Act. On Monday May 1st a motion by Alexandre Dumas that the chairman of the Road Bill committee report the following day was carried against the votes of government supporters.\textsuperscript{120} Before the Assembly could take up the report on Tuesday, the Legislature was prorogued by the Governor.\textsuperscript{121} The "Jacobins" of the Assembly had been deprived of their legislative forum for another year.

With the members safely home, Prescott decided the time had come to terrorize enemy agents, disloyal habitants, and democratic politicians alike by a public execution of the captured spy, David McLane. As a French invasion force might appear during the summer and "the spirit of the Times calling forcibly for an immediate Example," it was imperative not to wait until the November assizes. On the advice of Chief Justice Osgoode, Prescott issued on May 24th a special commission for the trial, appointing every member of the Executive Council except Bishop Mountain to try the case.\textsuperscript{122} There is no question

\textsuperscript{119}Same to Same, 6 April 1797, ibid., 1092: \textit{JHALC} for 1797, 17 April, 129.

\textsuperscript{120}\textit{JHALC} for 1797, 1 May, 197-99.

\textsuperscript{121}Ibid., 2 May, 199-201.

\textsuperscript{122}Prescott to Portland, 27 May 1797, PAC, CO 42, v. 109: 40; McLane's trial, 721.
McLane was guilty: Adet ordered the French consul at Philadelphia to pay him for his espionage services. The law of treason required only that the Crown prove an intention to overthrow the state and an overt act to realize that intention. Mere verbal discussion of treasonable plans with associates or would-be associates constituted an overt act. Technically at least, McLane also had a fair trial. Had he been innocent, however, or had he or his lawyers come up with the possible defence that he was merely a dupe of the Vermonters, unaware of their real intentions, the man would still in all probability have been hanged, for in Lower Canada, as in any garrison state, justice was administered first and foremost in the interests of security. With the existence of civilized society apparently at stake, the eyes of Themis became quite unbandaged.

The grand jury was sworn on June 12th. Its foreman was the Lieutenant-Governor of Gaspé and Adjutant-General of the British militia, François Le Maistre.


124Rex v. Charnock (1694) 2 Salk. 633. In Rex v. Delamotte (1781) 22 State Trials, 808, it was held that the collecting of information for the use of the enemies of the state constitutes an overt act, even though the information is never sent to them.

125McLane's trial, 722.
Among its members were George Allsopp; Peter Stuart, whose servant, one Levesque, had raised havoc with the Quebec militia in 1794 by shouting "vive les francois;" the loyalist lawyer, Inspector of Police in Quebec and Surveyor-General of Woods, John Coffin; the Commissary-General John Craigie; and the merchant Georges Lecompte Dupré, a justice of the peace, colonel of militia and Inspector of Police in Montreal whose outstanding quality, according to his obituary in the Quebec Gazette, was "that of knowing and rendering the justice due to his Britannic Majesty's government, which he considered as the most solid basis of the welfare of his countrymen." 126 Alexandre Dumas, the anti-Road Bill agitator and people's choice of Dorchester Country was safely isolated among his betters. On June 14th the grand jury unanimously found a true bill of indictment against McLane for treason and the court appointed George Pyke and George Francklin to act as counsel for McLane. 127 Pyke, then twenty-one years old, confessed his inexperience at the trial. 128 Francklin, admitted to the Bar only five months before, subtly apologized to the jury at the trial for appearing on behalf of the defendant. 129 He had articled in the law office of

126 7 Dec. 1797.
127 McLane's trial, 731.
128 Ibid., 784.
129 Ibid., 786.
Attorney-General Sewell from January 1792 to January 1797 and had been living in the latter's home for the past five years. Counsel were certainly unimpressive since they failed to convince their client that the evidence against him could not be explained—as the Attorney-General soon showed—by his story that he came to Lower Canada to elude his creditors and ascertain business prospects with a view to possible immigration.

The trial jury appears to have been carefully chosen. Not a single Canadian—who might have jeopardized the chances of a unanimous verdict—was sworn. Many of the jurymen were prominent import-export merchants in the colony and one of them, the magistrate John Blackwood, had already assisted the government in gathering evidence

130 PAC, Series 3.8, v. 18 (Petition of George Germaine Sackville Francklin to be admitted to the Bar, 3 Jan. 1797, certificate of admission to the Bar, 21 Jan. 1797, indenture between Francklin and Sewell, 1 Jan. 1792, certificate of Sewell, 2 Jan. 1797); Francklin to Jonathan Sewell, 22 June 1794, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 851-54; Same to Same, 15 Aug. 1798, ibid., 1189-92. In the letter last cited Francklin, then moving out of the Sewell home, thanked Jonathan for treating him with "a Tenderness of Conduct, that I could only expect from a near Relation." Although his first name was not given in the trial report the only Francklin admitted to the Bar up to and including 1798 was George Germaine Sackville Francklin: PAC, RG-6, A. 10 ("General Index to Commissions, Quebec and Lower Canada").

131 McLane's trial, 747. The fact that the prisoner's native language was English was undoubtedly also an important consideration.
against McLane. It was vital to insure that the jury would be reliable, for only three years before, Horne Tooke, Thomas Hardy and other English radicals had been acquitted of high treason—in the face of persuasive evidence, according to the Attorney-General.

In his opening statement, after a masterly exposition of the law of treason, Sewell outlined for the jury and a large crowd of spectators the grisly result had McLane succeeded:

... our properties, our lives, and, what is still more valuable than either, the happy constitution of our country, all that man can value in civil society, all that attaches us to existence, ourselves, our nearest and best connections, our government, our religion, our rational liberty, which we boast as British subjects, all must have been laid at the mercy of the French republic—What that mercy is, the black annals of the republic can best tell; it is there indelibly recorded for the horror and execration of posterity, in the blood of their lawful sovereign, in the blood of their nobility, in the blood of their clergy, in the blood of thousands of the best and most innocent of their citizens.

Well blooded, the jury was treated to an exceedingly able presentation of the case by the thoroughly prepared Sewell. The Crown witnesses told a logical, believable story and the Attorney-General deftly quashed procedural and evi-

132 John Hunsdon to John Blackwood, 14 June 1797, PAC, CO 42, v. 109: 63; In addition to Blackwood, merchants Henry Cull, John Mure, John Painter, James Irvine and David Munro were members of the jury.

133 McLane's trial, 792-93.

134 Ibid., 754. According to Chief Justice Osgoode (to John King, 22 July 1797, PAC, CO 42, v. 22: 69), the trial was "attended by the most numerous audience ever assembled in Quebec."
dentary objections from the opposition. Both Barnard and Cushing braved a charge of perjury and conveniently denied having received promises of townships or other rewards for the information they gave the authorities, thus forestalling any need to rule such suggestive questions out of order, which Osgoode was prepared to do.135

The authorities had provided John Black with a constant bodyguard to protect him from assassination136 and found the expense well worth it as he confirmed the evidence given by Cushing, Barnard, and Frichette137 and added details as to the exact nature of the intended uprising with its laudanum, pikes and five hundred Canadians.138

In his closing statement the Attorney-General exposed the gaping hole in the story of McLane the innocent merchant escaping from his American creditors, who made such a long sightseeing tour on Montreal mountain and repeatedly returned to the United States.139 To contain any possible sympathy for McLane's plight Sewell referred to Edmund Burke's opinion of the state trials

135 McLane's trial, 765, 769.


137 Frichette was later convicted of treason and sentenced to life imprisonment. Shortly after his trial he was pardoned and released: Christie, A History I, 185.

138 McLane's trial, 776-78.

139 Ibid., 789-93.
of 1794 that "public prosecutions are become but little better than schools for treason, of no use but to improve the dexterity of criminals in the mystery of evasion, or to show with what impunity men may conspire against the government and constitution of their country." The Chief Justice summed up. He made sure to indicate his belief in the credibility of Cushing and Barnard, to remind the jury that it had been established that neither witness had been promised anything by the government and to elevate Black to a new level of social respectability—and credibility—by praising his zealous conduct. He made it clear that McLane's tale was a tissue of lies and that there was no rational alternative to the prisoner's guilt.

After deliberating for about twenty minutes the jury returned a verdict of guilty and the Chief Justice decreed the sentence:

That you, David MacLane, be taken to the place from whence you came, and from thence you are to be drawn to the place of execution, where you must be hung by the neck, but not till you are dead; for, you must be cut down alive and your bowels taken out and burnt before your face; then your head must be severed from your body, which must be divided into

140 Ibid., 792-93.

141 Ibid., 799-807. Osgoode disagreed with Richardson's opinion that McLane was a harmless fool and his plan for taking Quebec totally unrealistic: Richardson to Jonathan Sewell, 29 May 1797, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 1102; Osgoode to John King, 22 July 1797, PAC, CO 42, v. 22: 68.
four parts, and your head and quarters be at the king's disposal; and the Lord have mercy on your soul. 142

This was the mandatory sentence in British treason cases although it was modified in practice by allowing the prisoner to die before he was eviscerated. The quartering was symbolic rather than actual. The exercise of royal mercy to commute the sentence to hanging and beheading was common. 143 The Governor's "example", however, would not be as effective without the full treatment recognized by practice and no commutation was extended. On July 21st McLane was bound, feet forward, to a hurdle and dragged by a horse "in a slow solemnity to the place of execution, attended by the sheriff and peace officers of the District, a military guard of fifty men and a great multitude of spectators." After prayers, invocations to God and an obscure warning to the troops that they were insecure even with their arms, McLane's head was covered and the executioner turned him off the platform. The report of the trial records the remainder of the spectacle:

The body hung for five and twenty minutes and was then cut down. A platform, with a raised block upon it, was brought near the gallows, and a fire was kindled for executing the remainder of the sentence. The head was cut off, and the executioner holding it up to

142 McLane's trial, 826.

An incision was made below the breast and a part of the bowels taken out and burnt; the four quarters were marked with a knife but were not divided from the body.\footnote{144}

As an example McLane's trial, conviction and execution made a considerable impression on the habitants.

The famed mildness of His Majesty's rule and the equally famed "lenity"\footnote{145} of British criminal law now wore a somewhat different aspect. Stephen Sewell assured his brother shortly before the execution that

> It must be evident to every one that the Energy of the government at this day has saved the province. It is astonishing what an alteration there is in the Canadians in this district (I will not say in their principles for those I am sure are not changed) but in their behavior, they are more observant of the laws than can be expected of the best subjects, they work when and wherever they are commanded ... and the roads are universally good in consequence.\footnote{146}

Joseph Chew, Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, reported the same phenomenon to his correspondent Colonel Edward Winslow, a New Brunswick loyalist: "... our Canadians since the execution of McLane if not altered in Sentiments take care to behave more quietly and are more submissive to order and Government, they seem to be convinced our Governor will not trifle with them."\footnote{147} The

\footnote{144}McLane's trial, 826-28.
\footnote{145}The word used in the Quebec Act to contrast the assumed merits of the British and French criminal law.
\footnote{146}17 July 1797, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 1104.
\footnote{147}17 Dec. 1797, PAC, Winslow Papers, v. 7: 78.
Canadians undoubtedly agreed now with the assessment of Prescott made earlier by the seigneur Gaspard de Lanaudière: "notre General ne badinne pas."¹⁴⁸ The Governor ordered the report of the trial and execution printed to impress the point on as many as possible.¹⁴⁹

But with McLane dead and the habitants doing their road duty, the English suspicions did not die. Nor did Le Fer's report, the province-wide celebration of Nelson's victory of the Nile, or the fact that the colony was free of rioting after 1796 substantially alter opinion. In 1798 Governor Prescott was still smarting over the Canadians' decided "propensity to Insurrection" that had "fully evinced itself in the year 1796."¹⁵⁰ The Canadians, he was sure, were even "more attached at present to France, than they were even before the Revolution," a state of affairs which had been "effected by secret Emissaries, who ... have found means to introduce their Poison among them."¹⁵¹ The military force at his disposal was sufficient to deal with the Canadians should they attempt to rebel without waiting for the invasion, but would be


¹⁵⁰ Prescott to Portland, 1 Oct. 1798, PAC, CO 42, v. 111: 21. See also Monk (then Chief Justice of Montreal) to Dundas, 14 Aug. 1798, ibid., 491.

hopelessly inadequate if the smallest army under French auspices appeared in the colony. Reinforcements were desperately needed, particularly for Upper Canada, which might be attacked by way of the Mississippi. Prescott could spare no troops for the upper province since all available men were needed to garrison Quebec and Montreal where "a considerable Force must necessarily be stationed to awe the Habitants of that vicinity who have in more than one Instance evinced a refractory spirit."152

In January 1800 Civil Secretary Ryland, acting under Lieutenant-Governor Milnes' instructions, requested Solicitor-General Louis C. Foucher to obtain information on a "Club des douze Apôtres" in Montreal. The twelve apostles, who included five Canadian and two English officers of the Royal Canadian Volunteers, as well as a Canadian justice of the peace and the wealthy, retired fur merchant, Jean-Baptiste Durocher, dined together once a month. Ryland allowed that it was "possible that their views may be merely of a convivial nature." The name the members had chosen, however, suggested "a Disposition to ridicule things sacred and it has been but too clearly proved by the late events in Europe that persons so disposed are little to be depended on as Friends of regular and orderly Government." The Lieutenant-Governor and his Civil Secretary were soon

152 Same to Portland, 22 Aug. 1798, PAC, CO 42, v. 111: 8-9; Same to Same, 1 Oct. 1798, n. 150 above.
satisfied that the members were apostles strictly of good food and drink.\footnote{153} Later in the year Milnes reported to the Colonial Secretary that the fear of a habitant uprising was still "strongly impressed on the Minds of the best Friends of Government."\footnote{154} One of these best friends, Stephen Sewell, had no doubt in March 1801 that Joseph Papineau was busily preparing the populace for revolt and thought that he might well succeed.\footnote{155}

Officials interpreted the dangers posed by Ira Allen's Civil Society\footnote{156} very seriously. Attorney-General Sewell, for example, claimed that Rogers, the local president, intended to reveal his subversive aim only to an inner circle of conspirators. The mass of an expanding membership was to be controlled by midnight meetings, "Ceremonies and mummary," and Rogers' delphic utterance that the hunt for treasure involved "a greater work than any of you think" and was directed by a supernatural power. It was clear to Sewell that the "most effective Engine employed by France in subverting so many of the Governments of Europe" had made its diabolical appearance

\footnote{153}Ryland to Foucher, 6 Jan. 1800, PAC, Collection Baby, v. 13: 7366; Foucher to Ryland, s.d., ibid., 7367-68.


\footnote{156}See p. 46-48 above.
in the colony. The "principle of Illuminism and of the Irish and British Political Societies is distinctly visible." It had been the "regular connection from the primary Societies of Ireland in regular succession to the Executive Directory in France tho' unknown to the mass of members, that gave exertion, consistency, solidity and force to the late Rebellion in that Kingdom." The danger had been averted only through the vigilance of government and the Better Preservation Act, which should be supplemented, Sewell thought, by an act outlawing secret societies. 157 Panic was by no means confined to officials. When they first became aware of the plot, English Montrealers reacted in such terror they frustrated the intention of the magistrates to delay arresting those involved with a view to obtaining conclusive proof of treason. As Milnes explained to the Colonial Secretary:

... the alarm gained ground so fast in the City of Montreal from the exaggerated Reports that prevailed respecting the Secret Society that the Magistrates were apprehensive of the Consequences as it was doubtful, in case of Fire or any other Emergency whether any one (from fear of their personal safety) would venture to give any assistance, they therefore determined with the advice of the Attorney General ... to apprehend the Leaders immediately... 158


Doubtless many shared Richardson's reaction to the news of the peace, that everyone could finally cease worrying about the Canadians provided Frenchmen were kept out of the colony.159

The dozens of expressions of fear quoted or cited in this chapter indicate that several individuals, officials, professionals, judges, magistrates and seigneurs, were genuinely afraid of insurrection. Much of the proof is taken from private letters in which the authors had little reason to distort their opinions. The prevalence of a belief in the inordinate powers of a small group of conspirators, moreover, provides an explanation of the English tendency to exaggerate which is incompatible with the notion of opportunism. Given the available sources it is impossible, of course, to prove statistically that the garrison mentality was shared by a majority of the English but the evidence offered creates a high degree of probability that this was so. Senior government officials at Quebec and the magistrates at Montreal—mainly wealthy merchants—were continually alarmed by the threat of rebellion. As these men were

159 Richardson to Ryland, 22 Feb. 1802, PAC, S Series, v. 76: 23767. For examples of the feeling that any contact between Frenchmen—even the emigré clergy—and Canadians would be dangerous, see p. 233-36 below. La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt was prohibited from entering the colony for reasons of security: Dorchester to Portland, 25 July 1795, PAC, CO 42, v. 102: 259-60.
among the most prominent members of the English upper class in the two cities, it is difficult to conceive that their views were not quickly absorbed by a large portion of the English community generally. Unless one is prepared to believe that the destruction of documents dating from the period has occurred in an impossibly selective manner, it seems reasonable to conclude that the examples of fear which have come down to us are representative.  

160 When researching this chapter I attempted to find examples of individuals who thought there was no serious internal security danger. Not one such was discovered, unless one includes Dorchester's view in 1796 (radically different from his earlier opinion) that the Militia Act scare had been manufactured largely by Monk in order to increase his chances of being appointed Chief Justice of Montreal: Osgoode to Simcoe, 7 July 1796, OH, 1954, 151.
CHAPTER 5

THE EFFECT OF THE GARRISON MENTALITY ON
ENGLISH-CANADIAN RELATIONS, 1793 - 1801

Once the existence of a garrison mentality is accepted
and the effects it had on English attitudes to the Canadians
are understood, all idea of an "age of good feelings" must
be set aside. The fear of insurrection during the war
embittered relations between the nationalities, eliminated
any possibility that the new constitution would operate
harmoniously, and destroyed English tolerance of the con­
tinued existence of a distinctive Canadian culture. The
years which featured the militia and Road Act riots, the
election of 1796 and the generation of near panic among
the English can hardly be called ones of "calme" and "con­
corde" between the nationalities.1 The evidence suggests
that English fears had a detrimental effect on personal
relationships between the English and the Canadians living
in the cities.2 Nor was there anything resembling political
cooperation or "l'accord idéologique" on the constitution
between the political leaders of the Canadians after 1796
and the English community generally. In early 1804 Lord
Selkirk, noting that there was "an English and a French party"
in the Assembly, learned from English residents that the

1Ouellet, Histoire économique, 165-67.
2See p. 135-36 above.
political division along ethnic lines had originated in the 1790's with attempts by Canadian members to further their revolutionary aims and the determination of the English assemblymen to thwart these attempts. There seems to be no reason to doubt that, as Selkirk's diary suggests, the garrison mentality contributed greatly to this development.

It is clear that by 1796 the political alliance between the Canadian middle class and the English merchants—which dated back to the early years of the struggle for representative government and had survived down to the election of 1792—was shattered beyond repair. To Richardson, McGill, John Young, and other leaders of the mercantile community, the Assembly had become a potentially dangerous forum for disloyal demagogues, and Papineau almost certainly a traitor. More generally, the English assemblymen had from the first session under the new constitution been united in looking to the Governor for protection and in fearing the type of moderate liberalism represented by Papineau and Panet. In the first two Legislatures the English members were almost unanimous in defending the executive branch against any diminution of power and on every controversial issue involving a

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4See e.g. Montreal Gazette, 24, 31 May, 7, 14 June 1792. Papineau supported the candidacy of Richardson and McGill in this election.

5For examples, in addition to those already provided, see Appendix III.
obvious government interest, they voted—with few exception—for the government's position. With the demise of the seigneurs as a significant political force in 1796, moreover, controversial issues almost always divided the Assembly along ethnic lines with cross-ethnic voting—except among Canadian government officials—a rarity. During the second Legislature (1797-1800), for example, eighty-four percent of the Canadian votes were cast for the "dominant Canadian position" and ninety percent of the English votes were cast for the "dominant English position". During the second and third Legislatures English members and the Canadian Assembly leaders also struggled to gain control of the House, with each side trying to better its position by attempting to alter the obligations, rights and qualifications of assemblymen. It seems reasonable to conclude that well before the Gaols Act dispute, the garrison mentality helped destroy any chance there was that the political leaders of the English and Canadian communities could work together to liberalize the operation of the constitution or cooperate to achieve any set of

6See Appendix III.

7See Appendix III, issues 3(i) (unsuccessful proposal by Papineau, 1799, for the payment of members) and 4(ii) (unsuccessful proposal by John Young (1800) to have a committee of the Assembly investigate the necessary qualifications of members, presumably including literacy, bilingualism, ownership of property, etc.); JHALC for 1802, 13 Feb., 86-96, 15 Feb., 92-96, 8 March, 214 (unsuccessful proposal by M.-A. Berthelot d'Artigny for payment of members); JHALC for 1803 (first session), 4 March, 172-76, 5 March, 180-86 (unsuccessful attempt by Bédard to have the House enforce attendance by members).
legislative objectives. Equally important in terms of long-range consequences was the intensification during the war of English demands that the Canadians be anglicized.

It is true that many of the English, even before the war, hoped that in time the Canadians would be culturally assimilated. There was no dearth of projects. Deputy Postmaster General Hugh Finlay, for example, thought:

> We might make the people entirely English by introducing the English language. This is to be done by free schools, and by ordaining that all suits in our Courts shall be carried on in English after a certain number of years.\(^8\)

Chief Justice Smith had worked out a "grand design" consisting of a secular university, the abolition of the seigneurial system, and the application of the common law to His Majesty's old subjects, all with the object of attracting massive immigration of American settlers. Smith hoped these reforms and a federation of British North American colonies, would create a strong, prosperous British dependency which would overshadow, and perhaps ultimately absorb the United States.\(^9\) A large proportion of the merchants were inclined to favour the abolition of the seigneurial system. Many were themselves seigneurs and under freehold they would become outright owners of the unconceded lands. Moreover, freehold would open vast tracts to American settlers, who had an ingrained aversion to anything resembling feudal tenure. The merchants generally

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very likely agreed with Adam Lymburner that "nothing remains of the old feudal System that can render it advantageous to the government or beneficial to the people."\(^{10}\)

There were many in the colony, too, who shared the interpretation of the American Revolution which had become standard among the loyalists and those British politicians and officials who concerned themselves with colonial affairs. According to this view the differences in the colonial constitutions from the British model, the absence of a landed aristocracy and the weakness of the Anglican Church had greatly facilitated the work of the revolutionaries. The more a colony's institutions of all kinds were patterned after the British model, and the more colonial residents culturally resembled the citizens of the mother country, the more secure the imperial tie.\(^{11}\) Attorney-General Monk was only stating the conventional wisdom when he wrote that "it is political to assimilate this to the other and neighbouring colonies of Great Britain in laws and Government, manners and customs."\(^{12}\)

\(^{10}\)Quoted in Creighton, The Empire, 114. See also e.g. Quebec Herald and Universal Miscellany, 29 June 1789 (letter of "Junius").

\(^{11}\)See on this Vincent T. Harlow, The Founding of the Second British Empire, 1763-1793, 2v. (London, 1952/64), II, ch. 10, section 2, passim; Nelson, American Tory, ch. 9, passim.

While many of the English favoured assimilation the question was not one of great urgency, as evidenced by the fact that many of the projects in the late 1780's, although extensive, were incomplete. Chief Justice Smith was willing to allow the Canadians their civil laws. Hugh Finlay saw no reason to insist upon the suppression of the Canadian law of real property, including the rules governing the seigneurial system.\(^{13}\) No one seems to have suggested the enforcement of the supremacy.\(^{14}\) The merchants may have wished for assimilation in general, but they were preoccupied only with insuring the introduction of the commercial laws.\(^{15}\) While they hoped the seigneurial system would be abolished this was considered of low priority. In their petition of November 1784, which remained the basis of their constitutional and political claims throughout the 1780's, they specifically requested that the seigneurial system be retained.\(^{16}\)

\(^{13}\) Finlay to Nepean, 9 Feb. 1789, n. 8 above.

\(^{14}\) Monk specifically excluded any interference with the Church in his proposals for assimilation: see Monk to Baron Maseres, 3 Nov. 1788, PAC, Monk Papers, v. 2: 80.

\(^{15}\) This conclusion results from the reading of several documents expressing the merchants' grievances which are printed in Const. Docs., 1759-1791, II, pamphlets published to support the merchants' case for an assembly, and the letters of John Richardson, particularly that of 10 April, 1787 to John Porteous, PAC, Richardson Letters, 31. It is clear from these documents that the question of the laws was deemed vital and all other aspects of assimilation of secondary concern.

\(^{16}\) Const. Docs., 1759-1791, II, 744.
Assimilating pressures were kept in check by the restrictions imposed upon the merchants by their political alliance with the Canadian bourgeoisie and also by the fact that there was little economic need for assimilation. The diplomatic situation, moreover, was such that Canadian cultural particularism did not appear to be any great liability. During the American Revolution the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Comte de Vergennes, had decided that France must abandon any idea of reconquering Canada and his policy remained the orthodoxy in the French foreign office until the Revolution. As a result France showed little interest in Quebec during the 1780's. From 1789 to mid-1792 France, in the throes of Revolution, appeared utterly impotent to undertake any war, which indeed the revolutionaries had renounced as an instrument of policy. On the other hand the American Revolutionary Army had invaded the colony in 1775-76 and American negotiators at Paris in 1781-82 had attempted to have Quebec included as a part of United States' territory. In the ten years after the war relations between Britain and the new republic were severely strained by a series of acrimonious disputes over loyalist claims, maritime rights

17 On the diplomatic situation as it related to Quebec see Marcel Trudel, Louis XVI. le Congrès américain et le Canada, 1774-1789 (Quebec, 1949); Burt, The United States, Great Britain and British North America, ch. I-VII.

18 See e.g. Brown, The French Revolution, 37-38; William Grenville (Colonial Secretary) to Dorchester, 20 Oct. 1789, Const. Docs., 1759-1791, II, 970; John Richardson to John Forteux 20 Oct. 1789, PAC, Richardson Letters, 44 (re opinion in Montreal).
and the western posts. Thus in the late 1780's and early 1790's, America, rather than France, appeared to pose the greater threat to security, and the assertion of the French Party under the leadership of Dr. Adam Mabane that the Canadians, because of their "Religion, Language Laws & Customs are the class of men the least likely to coalesce or unite with the Neighbouring States of America" made some sense. This consideration—which implied that the lessons of the American Revolution had no application in Quebec—had convinced a number of English, Finlay regretfully noted, that "the natives of this Province ought ... to be kept unmixed and unconnected with the other Colonists, to serve as a strong barrier, between our Settlements and the United States." In summary, while

19A search of the CO 42 series and the newspapers for the years 1788 to mid-1792, Const. Docs., 1759-1791, II for the years 1784 to 1791 and sundry manuscript and printed collections of letters has yielded only one explicit statement by an English resident that the Canadians should be assimilated in view of a possible war with France: the letter of Isaac Ogden, cited in n. 12 above. Finlay, for example, wrote over a dozen letters to Evan Nepean, Undersecretary of State, advocating various assimilating measures, but never once made use of the argument employed by Ogden. In the absence of French intrigues to stimulate the imagination, some at least of the English believed that the Canadians were quickly losing their attachment for the former mother country: See e.g. William Smith to Dorchester, 5 Feb. 1790, L.F.S. Upton, ed., The Diary and Selected Papers of Chief Justice William Smith, 1784-1793, 2v. (Toronto, 1963/65), II, 272.


21 To Nepean, 13 Feb. 1787, ibid., 844.
most English in the late 1780's and early 1790's were predisposed to the idea of assimilating the Canadians, few felt it to be an urgent question and an influential minority contested the whole concept.

With the development of the English fear of rebellion after 1792, attitudes to Canadian cultural survival hardened. Where the merchants and officials had earlier been prepared to live with the seigneurial system, English assemblymen in 1795, claiming feudal tenure endangered the security of the colony, attempted unsuccessfully to find a means to introduce freehold. More generally, the loyalist idea of cultural unity within the Empire gained relevance in a situation in which France, rather than the United States, was seen as the main external threat and habitant anglophobia was believed to be a serious internal menace.

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22 JHALC for 1795, 21 Jan., 5, 23 Jan., 19; Garneau, Histoire, III, 112. For another example of changing opinion see Monk to Nepean, 13 March 1793, PAC, CO 42, v. 22: 221-23 (advocating the enforcement of the supremacy to guarantee Canadian loyalty, see n. 14 above).

23 It is noteworthy in this connection that the "French" Party among the English bureaucrats disappeared with the death in 1792 of its leader Mabane: see Osgoode to Burland, 27 Oct. 1795, PAC, CO 42, v. 22: 28-30; Civil Secretary Ryland's change of opinion may have been typical of those who had earlier seen some logic in Mabane's idea, that the Canadians should be kept culturally distinct as a protection against the United States. When he first arrived in the colony in 1793, Ryland later claimed, he had been a firm believer in the Quebec Act policy, but within two or three years, i.e. the years of the militia and Road Act riots, he had become an anglicizer on security grounds: to Robert Peel, 27 June 1811, Christie, A History, VI, 226.
Even before the war—but at a time when France had promised aid to people who rose in revolt—the attitude of the English to Canadian cultural survival was made clear. One of the main arguments used by the English spokesmen claiming that English must be the sole official language of the Legislature was that the loyalty of the Canadians could be guaranteed only by their total assimilation.\(^24\) Equally significant was the marked suspicion that any manifestation by Canadians of a desire to preserve their culture concealed an admiration for Revolutionary France. Richardson, for example, thought many of the opponents of official unilingualism were "infested with the detestable principles now prevalent in France."\(^25\) James McGill ascribed Canadian opposition to the fact that the "French revolution and Mr. Paine's Book on the rights of man have turned peoples Heads."\(^26\) The same points of view were manifest in the newspaper debate which dragged on into May 1793.\(^27\)

One important indication of the changing opinion on Canadian cultural survival was the colonial government's

\(^24\)Quebec Gazette, 31 Jan. 1793 (speech of Chartier de Lotbinière), 14 Feb. 1793 (letter of "A Bye Stander"), 21 Feb. 1793 (lengthy preamble read by John Richardson prior to introducing a motion to establish English as the sole official language).

\(^25\)Richardson to Alexander Ellice, 16 Feb. 1793, Kennedy, Statutes, 213.

\(^26\)McGill to John Askin, 20 Jan. 1793, Quaife, Askin Papers, I, 459-60.

\(^27\)See e.g. Montreal Gazette, 4 April 1793 (letter of "A True Hearted Briton"), 9 May 1793 (letter of "Your Hearty Well Wisher").
decision, towards the end of our period, that the rationale behind the Quebec Act policy was no longer tenable. Lieutenant-Governor Milnes and his advisers, in the years 1799 to 1801, worked out a series of interrelated policies which aimed at the creation of a rural England of the St. Lawrence. To achieve this aim it was necessary to establish a system of public schools under the control of the state, to set events in motion which would lead to an abolition of the seigneurial system and to enforce the royal supremacy. These policies would have many short-range security advantages and eventually would bring about the total cultural assimilation of the conquered subjects, which alone, it appeared, would guarantee the safety of the English minority and insure that Lower Canada remained within the Empire.

It has often been suggested that the Education Act of 1801 was designed by Bishop Mountain to provide a means of proselytizing Canadian school children. It has also been contended that the Act was not greatly influenced by assimilationist ideas but was simply an attempt to promote the economic development of the province by reducing illiteracy. Neither of these interpretations is supported.

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28 See e.g. Chapaï, Cours, II, 99-106; Bruchesi, Histoire, 374; Manning, The Revolt, 19. Professor Wade (The French Canadians, I, 102-04) leaves the same impression, although he suggests in passing that the Act may have owed something to Milnes' fear that the illiterate habitants were prey to demagogues.

29 See e.g. Lower, Colony to Nation, 155-57; Audet, Le système scolaire, III, passim but particularly at
by the evidence, which indicates that the Education Act was primarily a product of the garrison mentality. It is true that Bishop Mountain hoped to use the schools, as he had put it some years earlier, to induce the "Inhabitants to embrace by degrees the Protestant Religion." It was Mountain also who initiated the idea of publicly financed elementary and secondary schools in all areas of the province, with the teachers obliged to give instruction on the English language free of charge. These principles, embodied in a plan Mountain submitted to Milnes in 1799 and approved of by him and by a committee of the Executive Council, were ultimately incorporated in the Act of 1801. But Bishop Mountain was not the government. His plan had to be acceptable to the members of the Executive Council, to the Lieutenant-Governor and to Attorney-General Sewell, who in those years was Milnes' most influential adviser on education policy. Mountain was successful, not because

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30 Mountain to Dorchester, 17 July 1795 quoted in Audet, Le système scolaire, III, 10 n. 8.

31 Audet, Le système scolaire, III, 11-16. A French translation of Mountain's plan is printed at 11-14 (hereafter "Mountain's plan").

the bureaucracy shared his anger at what he took to be the degrading position of the Anglican Church relative to its rival, but because of the prevalent concern for Canadian disloyalty. The members of the committee which approved the plan—Osgoode, Thomas Dunn, John Young—and the Attorney-General had long assumed that the root of the internal security problem lay in the illiteracy of the mass of the Canadian population. Sewell was only expressing the commonplace view on this point when he observed after the Road Act riots that

Ignorance, profound Ignorance is too surely the characteristic of the Canadians and certainly renders them liable to be imposed upon by the grossest assertions. But whether their conduct proceeds from Ignorance or disaffection, the Danger to Government has been and will on all future Occasions be equally Great.

In all they wrote on education policy Judge Osgoode, Sewell and Milnes stressed security not economic develop-

certainly Sewell drafted the government bill which became the Act: see Audet, Le système scolaire, III, 87.

Dunn had been the president of the Quebec Loyal Association. For the views of Osgoode and Young see ch. 4 above.

Sewell to Prescott, 12 May 1797, RAC, 1891, 76. It is evident from Milnes' dispatch of Nov. 1, 1800 that this was an accepted truth among officials at the time when the details of education policy were being worked out: Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 250-51.

ment, as the overriding motive. Nor is there any suggestion in the extant documents that either Milnes or Sewell desired to establish state schools for religious reasons. Certainly they never seriously considered some of Bishop Mountain's more extreme ideas—such as appointing English speaking Protestants to teach in the Canadian schools. Both realized that such a direct assault on the Roman Catholic religion would endanger the whole project.

As Milnes and his advisers viewed it, once the school system was in operation the security problem would be on the way to being solved. The spread of the English language would help reduce tensions between the nationalities. Increasing literacy would help insure that the Canadian lower classes would be less prone to be manipulated by demagogues and be more deferential to their social superiors. That this was a prime motive behind the Act is indicated

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36 The only clear reference to the connection between education and the economic development of the province in the extant writings of those who helped formulate the policy behind the Act of 1801, is Mountain's statement in 1795 that subsidized schools would stimulate the "Industry" of the Canadians: to Dorchester, 17 July 1795, quoted in Audet, *Le système scolaire*, III, 10-11 n. 9.

37 Sewell's notebook, 9; Milnes to Portland, 23 Feb. 1801, PAC, CO 42, v. 116: 101; Same to Same, 10 June 1801, ibid., 192. The teachers appointed to teach in the few royal schools established for Canadians during the ten years after the Act were Roman Catholic and French speaking: Audet, *Le système scolaire*, III, 136.

38 Mountain's plan; Milnes to Portland, 5 April 1800, n. 35 above.
by the fact that Sewell, in his notebook cited with approval Adam Smith's arguments in favour of elementary education.\textsuperscript{39}

An educated populace, Smith had written,

\ldots feel themselves, each individually, more respectable, and more likely to obtain the respect of their lawful superiors, and they are therefore more disposed to respect those superiors. They are more disposed to examine, and more capable of seeing through, the interested complaints of faction and sedition, and they are, upon that account, less apt to be misled into any wanton or unnecessary opposition to the measures of government. In free countries, where the safety of government depends very much upon the favourable judgment which the people may form of its conduct, it must surely be of the highest importance that they should not be disposed to judge rashly or capriciously concerning it.\textsuperscript{40}

Ultra-loyal teachers appointed by the government would indoctrinate Canadian children in the manifold blessings of the British conquest.\textsuperscript{41} A revealing example of official hopes along these lines is provided by the government's response to the devoted service in the cause of François Malherbe, school master at Rivière Ouelle. At a review of the militia by Milnes in August 1802, the school children were formed into ranks by the curé, Michel Masse, and their schoolmaster. One of the children recited an address the young scholars had purportedly written:

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{39}Sewell's notebook, 12.
\textsuperscript{41}For the English appreciation—at times material—of the ultra-loyal Canadian school teacher during the war against Revolutionary France see Amédée Gosselin, "Louis Labadie," TRSC, 1913, I, 97-123, passim. Labadie was known as the "maître d'école patriotique."
Ils savent que rien ne la flatte tant que la bonne éducation des jeunes gens de ce pays, qui ne peuvent par cette voie que profiter des avantages inestimables de cette constitution libre, qu'il a plu à Sa Très Gracieuse Majesté le Roi du royaume uni de la Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande d'accorder à ses fidèles sujets de cette colonie. La prospérité et l'abondance dont elle a joui sous cette constitution au milieu des calamités de la guerre longue et sanglante, font espérer à ses habitants qu'elle prospérera d'avantage dans la paix, que ses armes victorieuses viennent de procurer à toute l'Europe.... Ils ne peuvent que supplier la divine Providence de conserver pour le bien de son peuple Notre Très Gracieux Souverain et Son Très digne représentant.

This demonstration of Malherbe's pedagogical virtues was given publicity in the semi-official Quebec Gazette under the title **Bons Effets de l'Education**. The pupils of Rivière Ouelle, the writer rejoiced, "viennent de donner une preuve éclatante qu'il ne manque aux Canadiens que les secours d'une éducation plus étendue, et les occasions de développer cette loyauté que leurs ancêtres ont toujours manifestée envers leur Roi et leur pays." Government officials, clearly, agreed that Malherbe was the kind of teacher they were looking for and in 1805 his school was brought under the administration of the Education Act and he was given a salary of £54 per annum.

One means of inculcating loyalty which would be heavily stressed was the glorification of the British constitution with its ordered liberty, aristocratic social

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42 *Quebec Gazette*, 5 Aug. 1802.


base, and balance of powers. The striking contrast to the republican and democratic excesses of the French and American constitutions had, from 1792, become for the English the centerpiece in the propaganda display. So superb was the British system of government that once a man was enabled to understand it even slightly, he could be nothing but actively loyal.\textsuperscript{45} Sewell's preoccupation with public education arose largely from a conviction—which he claimed was widely shared—that the "security of the Government of Canada under the New Constitution ... depends much upon the discernment of its Excellency."\textsuperscript{46} Although not explicit on the point it is almost certain Milnes shared Sewell's opinion. In his dispatch of Nov. 1, 1800 the Lieutenant-Governor referred to the proposed school system as one means to "secure the affection and loyalty of the rising Generation."\textsuperscript{47} From other portions of the same dispatch it is clear that he thought it his urgent duty to foster "a Spirit of Zeal and Loyalty for Monarchical Government" among the Canadians and to inoculate them against "that spirit of democracy which has lately gained so much ground

\textsuperscript{45}For examples see JHALC for 1792-93, 3 April 1793, 407-09; Quebec Loyal Association Declaration, Quebec Gazette, 3 July 1794; prospectus of The Times-Cours de temps, 23 June 1794; Montreal Gazette, 14 Jan. 1799 (letter of "A Canadian").

\textsuperscript{46}Draft report to Milnes on the Jesuit Estates, 16 Nov. 1799, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 1341.

\textsuperscript{47}Milnes to Portland, 1 Nov. 1800, Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 254.
Many of those who influenced the government's education policy also hoped that the spreading knowledge of the English language would gradually lead to total anglicification. Bishop Mountain had long held the view that English instruction was an important means whereby the government might confirm the "loyalty of the people by the gradual introduction of english acquirements, english habits & English sentiments." Chief Justice Osgoode, too, had for years advocated that to insure the security of the colony it was essential to "introduce our Language by the Establishment of schools and thus by degrees to accustom the people to the Notions Habits and Attachments of British subjects." Admiralty judge Isaac Ogden, whom Milnes consulted on education policy in 1800, had long been an exponent of the same idea. Although no proof directly on point has been found, it is almost certain from statements written by Sewell in 1801, that the Attorney-

48. p. 252-53. This feature of the proposed school system was considered of primary importance in relation not only to the education of Canadians but of the English as well. Both Mountain (plan) and Milnes (p. 254) were worried that unless the number of secondary schools could be rapidly multiplied, more and more English parents would be forced to send their children to schools in the United States, where they would undoubtedly absorb dangerous republican principles.

49. Mountain to Dorchester, 17 July 1795, quoted in Audet, Le système scolaire, III, 10-11 n. 9.


General entertained a similar view.\textsuperscript{52}

To reinforce the effects of its education policy the government also attempted to provide for the gradual disappearance of the seigneurial system.\textsuperscript{53} It had become abundantly clear during the militia and Road Act riots that French emissaries might effectively exploit habitant resentment against the Canadian seigneurs and that the latter could exercise no restraint on the habitants' affection for France or their propensity to disobey unpopular laws. The election of 1796 simply confirmed that the seigneurs could not control the votes of their censitaires. As Osgoode observed, even before the election, the Quebec Act policy of permitting the Canadians to retain their distinctive culture while relying on the influence of the seigneurs to protect British interests was totally discredited:

\[\text{... the Body of the people are not anglicised at all. The ruling Policy has been unaccountable...} \]

\textsuperscript{52}See p. 180 below. There is no way of being certain that Milnes agreed on this point with his advisers, although he saw the spread of the English language as the main object of the bill: to Portland, 5 April 1800, PAC, CO 42, v. 114: 180-81.

\textsuperscript{53}The means devised by Milnes and Sewell to bring about the abolition of the seigneurial system have been examined in detail by frère Marcel-Joseph ("Les Canadiens veulent conserver le régime seigneurial," RHAF, 1953-54, 45-63, 224-40, 356-91, 490-504 at 46-56), who does not, however, bring out the influence of security on their thinking.
the people this policy might be justifiable but the Contrary is the fact. the Seigneurs are universally unpopular throughout the Country. 54

Milnes, writing to the Colonial Secretary in 1800, reported the common opinion that the English minority was endangered by a system of tenure in which the small farmers, far from being subject to a healthy, coercive power exercised by the landed upper classes, were virtually owners in perpetuity of their lands. This basic defect was compounded by the economic position of the seigneur. Because of the Canadian law of succession which permitted the division of seigneurial estates on death and the disinclination of the seigneurs to engage in trade, the "Canadian Gentry have nearly become extinct." Few of those who resided on the estates had the "Means of living in a more affluent and imposing Style than the simple Habitants who feel themselves in every respect as independent as the Seigneur himself." Unless the government quickly adopted policies to foster a much greater inequality of property, which Sewell called "the first cause and best support of an effective aristocracy," 55 there was every chance of a rebellion at some future time, for the "Canadian Habitants ... are, from their want of Education and extreme simplicity, liable to be misled by designing and artful Men."

54 Osgoode to Burland, 27 Oct. 1795, n. 50 above; See also Same to , 13 Oct. 1796, PAC, CO 42, v. 22: 53.

The control of the Assembly and indeed the colony, was also at stake since very few seigneurs or their nominees could get elected, and the foundation of the constitution "must rest upon a due proportion being maintained between the Aristocracy and the lower Orders of the People, without which it will become a dangerous Weapon in the hands of the latter." Milnes and his advisers were also concerned that the eventual assimilation of the Canadians through education would not be wholly effective unless the habitants were brought into contact with resident Englishmen in the region of the seigneuries. As Sewell expressed it, "those who are acquainted with Canada, must know of how much importance it is to unite the English and the Canadian character, which can never be done unless they are brought together." This could only be achieved by abolition of the seigneurial regime for "the Englishman detests the feudal tenure" and as a result there were not more than fifty English censitaires in the colony and "very few indeed of the Seigniories are in the hands of English Landlords." 

A frontal attack on the seigneurial system had to be avoided as the habitants greatly valued a tenure which incorporated the idea of land held in trust for future

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56 Milnes to Portland, 1 Nov. 1800, Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 249-51.

generations.\textsuperscript{58} The Lieutenant-Governor and his Attorney-General searched for a scheme which would conceal their ultimate purpose from the Canadians. They found it in the Crown's long-standing neglect to enforce the right to mutation fines in the royal seigneuries. After the Conquest very few of the lods et ventes had been collected from the King's censitaires in the City of Quebec, where most of the Crown's seigneurial land was located. In some cases property had been transferred so often that the mutation fines owing amounted to more than its market value. Even if the collection of lods et ventes were restricted to future transactions, the effect on commerce would be very serious since the mutation fine—one-twelfth the purchase price minus the customary rebate of one-third—was calculated on the value of buildings and other improvements as well as on the value of the land.\textsuperscript{59} A bill for the purpose of enabling the Crown to enforce its rights as seigneur passed through the Legislature without arousing any opposition from the Canadian members.\textsuperscript{60}

The Lods et Ventes Act, Milnes was certain, would prove to be "a material step towards abolishing in this

\textsuperscript{58} Richardson to Ryland, 1 Dec. 1799, PAC, S Series, v. 70: 22082; Sewell's report, 264.


\textsuperscript{60} An abstract of the Act is printed in \textit{Const. Docs., 1791-1818}, 259-62.
As soon as the tenants of the Crown—particularly the merchants—were convinced that the mutation fines would be collected, they would soon become "clamorous for a ... conversion of their tenure into free and common soccage." The Crown would accede to these requests and regrant the lands in freehold. Once this example was set in the royal seigneuries—which would "prove by facts the practicability of a conversion ... and the benefits arising from it"—conversion would be demanded in all parts of the province. From Sewell's notebook it is apparent the government envisaged a subsequent statute which would enable seigneurs to commute (for a fixed rent) with the Crown for the quint and with their censitaires for the lods et ventes. Thereupon the seigneurs would become absolute owners of the unconceded lands, which they could sell or lease.

When conversion became widespread, "English gentlemen resident in Canada" would become purchasers of large tracts and an "English Yeomanry and peasantry" would begin to settle in the region of the seigneuries. The

\[61\text{Milnes to Portland, 16 April 1801, Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 258.}\]

\[62\text{Sewell's report, 265-66. See also Milnes to Portland, 10 June 1801, PAC, CO 42, v. 117: 66-67; Richardson to Ryland, 1 Dec. 1799, n. 58 above.}\]

\[63\text{p. 21-23.}\]

\[64\text{Sewell's report, 265.}\]
Lieutenant-Governor foresaw that this would eventually result in the creation of an English aristocracy, whose wealth, education, and style of living, would generate deference from tenants and small proprietors alike. Their influence at election time would rival that of the county families in England. Attorney-General Sewell also looked at conversion in terms of security:

... Government would in the first instance where the Canadians are disaffected have the benefit of information and intelligence as to their conduct (of which the want has at all times been sensibly felt) and of that restraint which a body of resident English would impose upon them.

Ultimately the Canadians residing in the countryside would be assimilated:

The necessary consequence of a conversion of tenure would be the intermixture of the English and Canadians throughout the different Seigniories of the Province, the introduction of reciprocal confidence, of the English Language, of the English System of Agriculture, and an assimilation of manners and pursuits.

Then and only then would the government "reap the solid advantages of a numerous and well affected militia in the heart of the Country." The policy of permitting the Roman Catholic Church internal self-government inherited from Lord Dorchester was also seriously questioned by government officials and others

65 Milnes to Portland, 10 June 1801, n. 62 above.
66 Sewell's report, 265.
during the later stages of the Revolutionary War. The clergy, it was thought, deliberately kept the people ignorant. Unless brought under the control of the Governor they might oppose the establishment of the royal schools. Government officials had long suspected that some of the curés, because of their religious bias, neglected the duty of indoctrinating their parishioners in the virtues of British civilization and instead were fostering Canadian hostility to the English residents in the colony. Such activities were held partly responsible for the fact that government supporters were unable to secure a majority in the Assembly. In the late 1790's and early 1800's some of the English even persuaded themselves that a portion of the clergy—particularly among the emigrés—would favour French reconquest, a belief which was probably fostered by the moderation of

67 The attempt by Milnes and Sewell to limit the autonomy of the Roman Catholic Church has been examined in detail by Jean-Pierre Wallot ("Sewell et son projet d'asservir le clergé canadien (1801)," RHAF, 1962-63, 549-66), who does not, however, deal with the influence of security considerations.

68 See e.g. John Cosens Ogden, A Tour through Upper and Lower Canada (Litchfield, Conn., 1799), 24-25; Milnes to Portland, 23 Feb. 1801, PAC, CO 42, v. 116: 101.


70 See n. 72 below and references in p. 233 n. 60.
religious persecution under the Directory and the negotiations begun by Napoleon in June 1800 which would lead to the Concordat with Rome. Something of the English attitude to the clergy in the early 1800's is revealed by Stephen Sewell's response to the activities of curé Cazeneuve of St. Laurent, near Montreal. In 1800 Cazeneuve had incurred the displeasure of Lieutenant-Governor Milnes by opposing the project of one Durham to open a tavern near the parish church. In doing so the curé reportedly cast aspersions on the moral standards of the Anglo-Saxon race. Stephen, having learned further details of Cazeneuve's behaviour from a Canadian informer, wrote his brother:

... this opens such a scene of villainy practiced by the priest at St. Laurent (and he says there are many of the same class) which made me shudder.... This he said, that the priest[s] in the parishes back of Montreal were devoted to [ulpineau].... My man concluded with saying if God does not punish and put a stop to the iniquity of these villains in less than five years the English must feel the Effects of it for no opportunity is lost to excite the people to a revolt. [ulpineau] is determined to be Buonaparte in the province.72

Milnes informed the Colonial Secretary, the Duke of Portland, in November 1800 that only the enforcement of the supremacy would foster "that Consideration which the Priests themselves ought to feel, and to encourage in


their Parishioners for the Executive Government."\textsuperscript{73} Portland agreed that enforcement was "indispensably necessary" and urged the Lieutenant-Governor "to effect it by every possible means which prudence can suggest."\textsuperscript{74} Milnes lost little time in setting Attorney-General Sewell the task of reporting on the means at the government's disposal.

Sewell's report, dated May 29, 1801,\textsuperscript{75} was based on the premise that the "general system of the Church of Rome is an Imperium in Imperio." The obvious "tendency of [such] principles is to create a distinct Ecclesiastical power to intervene between the Prince & the people, by which that perfect union of Church & State which as the example of England demonstrates constitutes the true interests of Government, is prevented." It was essential that the autonomy of the Roman Catholic clergy be curtailed—the "independent spirit which in the Priesthood is too apparent, must be subdued"—and the Church recast in a safe Erastian mold. The model would be Britain where control of preferment gave ministers of the Crown great political influence over the clergy from the Bishop's bench in the Lords to the lowliest curate, an influence which could be

\textsuperscript{73} Portland to Milnes, 6 Jan. 1801, \textit{Const. Docs.} 1791-1818, 256.

\textsuperscript{74} See n. 69 above.

\textsuperscript{75} See n. 69 above.
effectively exploited at election time.76

Sewell agreed with Milnes and Portland that the supremacy should not be enforced without the Bishop's consent: "nineteen-twentieths of the Inhabitants of Canada are Roman Catholics, & Frenchmen—Their prejudices, Religious & Political must be encountered." Nor could it be expected that Bishop Denaut would be enthusiastic: "his own dissatisfaction, might by an artful man in such a Country as Canada be greatly extended beyond the circle of his immediate friends & connections." Sewell suggested that it be made clear to Denaut that only by agreeing voluntarily to accept the new arrangements could he avoid the possibility of administrative chaos. The entire legal authority of the Bishop to appoint, discipline and remove priests, to erect parishes, which were the units for collecting the tithes, and so on, was in serious doubt, for the Act of Supremacy prohibited the exercise of any ecclesiastical jurisdiction derived from the Pope. The Bishop and his Coadjutor should also be tempted by an offer of high salaries and appointments to the Executive and Legislative Councils. To make the hierarchy high-living pensioners of the state and "political characters" would hold them up to "criticism, as men of the world," and "sap the very foundation of their present influence." Once caught in the net the Bishop would never have the moral

76See Norman Sykes, Church and State in England in the XVIII Century (Cambridge, 1934), ch. II.
stature to work effectively against the Government. Having made the Bishop see where his interests lay, the Lieutenant-Governor, Sewell suggested, should request an act of the imperial Parliament recognizing the offices of Bishop and Coadjutor, and declaring them to be in the absolute appointment of the Crown. The Bishop, although consecrated by the Pope, would become, in effect, the head of a government department, much like the Archbishop of Canterbury. The curés and other clerics would be appointed by the Crown and hold their livings at the Crown's pleasure.

Sewell took great delight in contemplating the advantages of this system in terms of security. The hierarchy "once embarked in public politics will act like other individuals, their dependence upon the Crown will ensure their support in all governmental measures." Since "the spirit of the R.C. religion exacts a rigid obedience to Episcopal authority," the spiritual influence of the Bishops probably would "in all cases be sufficient to direct the inferior Clergy." The government appointment of the curés, moreover, would "in no small degree contribute to the good conduct of the inferior Clergy, all of whom will live in expectation of promotion to better livings should they merit them by good behaviour." Some of "the more distinguished among them will regard elevation to Episcopal Dignity as an honour within their reach attainable by loyalty & exertion in support of Government."

These exertions would bear fruit since the "profound
ignorance & superstition of the Country enable every Parish Priest to lead & govern his flock as he is directed."
Sewell concluded his argument by noting that only through the measures he suggested could the government gain its proper influence in the Legislature and insure the safety of the colony should it again be faced with a "serious commotion" similar to the riots of 1794 and 1796.

Thus the government anticipated that the enforcement of the supremacy would result in the weeding out of the disloyal clergy, greater efforts at the inculcation of loyalty and an Assembly easily controlled by the Governor. Just as one inherent defect of the Constitution of 1791 was to be rectified by the creation of an English aristocracy, the other—the absence of sufficient "influence"—would be corrected by exploiting the considerable patronage enjoyed by the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Such an Assembly—besides eliminating a forum for demagogues—could legislate such further steps in assimilation as required. Moreover, while neither Sewell nor Milnes mentioned it, the enforcement of the supremacy would enable the Governor to appoint liberally minded curés to livings who would gradually "introduce a Reformation of the Romish Church."\(^{77}\)

For a variety of reasons not relevant to this study, the policies worked out by Milnes and his advisers in the years 1799-1801 ultimately failed. The fact remains, however,

\(^{77}\)Mountain to Milnes, 6 June 1805, PAC, S Series, v. 80: 24975. See also Ryland to _____, 23 Dec. 1804, Christie, A History, VI, 72-73.
that the demand for anglification originated primarily as a response to the assumed danger of French attack and Canadian rebellion. The conviction that anglification was urgently required in the interests of security was to remain a preoccupation of the English to the end of our period of study, and would contribute to the emergence of the first self-conscious ideology of Canadian nationalism.
CHAPTER 6

NAPOLEON AND LOWER CANADA, 1803 - 1811

Given the exaggerated nature of their fears the English were naturally certain Bonaparte would make an attempt on Lower Canada, and believed that the Canadians, almost to a man, would rally to the tricolour. A highly inflated idea of the importance of Lower Canada in Napoleonic strategy, a conviction that the habitants would actively support a French invasion, a continued sense of being surrounded by hostile forces, particularly the unassimilated conquered subjects, and a belief in the efficacy of conspiracy combined to sustain the garrison mentality at a time when France took little interest in the Canadians, the internal threat to security was diminishing yearly, and the province was free of rioting. Yet the English doggedly found some basis for fear in a variety of situations they could easily misinterpret. An understanding of Bonaparte's intentions toward Lower Canada and the likely response of the Canadians if his troops should have found their way into the valley of the St. Lawrence provides background to an appreciation of the garrison mentality and the combination of fact and myth on which it was based.¹

¹The most thoroughly researched account of France's Canadian policy and the intrigues of its agents in the colony during these years is contained in Stuart Webster's unpublished Ph.D. thesis, "Napoleon and Canada". The highly detailed narrative, while extremely useful for reference purposes, suffers from a document to document approach, a failure to establish Rousse's credibility and
Shortly before the news reached Lower Canada that

a reluctance to generalize. Webster does not attempt to relate the intrigues to Canadian or English opinion. Clark in *Movements of Political Protest* (p. 193-94) mentions that there were French intrigues in 1803 and cites a few examples from the Q Series. Benjamin Suite asserted that Napoleon and his officials in the United States showed no interest whatsoever in attempting the conquest of Canada: "La conspiration de 1806," *BRH*, 1898, 41-46. His later study ("Les projets") which tended to refute this assertion is an unfootnoted jumble of facts. Claude De Bonnault's article, "Napoléon et le Canada," relies largely on Suite and other secondary authorities. E.A. Cruikshank's "The Administration of Sir James Craig" (*TRSC*, 1908, II, 61-87) related some of the highlights of Turreau's interest in the colony. The Canadian reaction to Napoleon has engaged little attention from historians. Wallot (Intrigues) refers in passing to the general hostility to Bonaparte but beyond some very general points (e.g. strength of monarchicalism, admiration of the British constitution, the propaganda of the elite) does not analyze it. De Bonnault concludes confidently from a review of the secondary sources that if Napoleon's troops had entered the colony "les troupes anglaises n'avaient même pas eu besoin de se montrer. Les habitants s'étaient chargés eux-mêmes de rejeter les Français à la mer." J.-Edmond Roy's article "Napoléon au Canada," (*TRSC*, 1911, I, 69-117) contains interesting and quite complete detail on opinion—almost universally hostile—which appeared in the form of newspaper editorials, songs, doggerel, etc. Roy adduced proof to support many sound, if obvious, judgments, viz. the seigneurs' tendency to think of Bonaparte as the "usurper" and the Popular Party's hostility to the dictatorial aspects of the imperial regime. Although citing little evidence beyond de Gaspé's Mémoires, he also made the qualifying point that the Canadians generally admired Bonaparte's military genius. He attributed the relative silence of Le Canadien on Bonaparte's atrocities and the negligible Canadian reaction to Trafalgar not only to a feeling of alienation caused by the machinations of the "parti-bureaucrate," but also—and more doubtfully—to the effect the Concordat had on opinion, particularly that of the clergy. A few English speaking historians have made largely unsubstantiated statements implying that the habitants were enthusiastic at the prospect of French reconquest (see e.g. Cruikshank, "Administration of Craig," 68; Morton, *Kingdom of Canada*, 186. French Canadian historians dealing with the point have usually contented themselves with general statements which assert or imply that the habitants were hostile to the idea (see e.g. references to De Bonnault, Roy and Wallot above; Chapais, *Cours*, II, 213-14.
Britain was again at war with France, officials learned that French emissaries were in the colony and that the common talk in Paris suggested Napoleon would soon make some attempt at reconquest. Although as usual nothing materialized, Lieutenant-Governor Milnes and his advisers decided it was essential to find some certain means of determining the intentions of the French government towards the Canadas. Richardson was appointed the task of employing Jacques Rousse as a double agent. The bargain was effected in February 1804 and the new spy was given the immediate task of discovering whether any attack was in the offing. Rousse, posing as a francophile seeking employment as an emissary, proceeded to Washington and was granted an interview by citizen Pichon, the French Chargé d'affaires who had been a consul under Genet and knew Rousse personally. Pichon confided that there had been "an idea of attempting the Invasion of Canada by some of the Embarkations intended for St. Domingo, on the

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2Daniel Sullivan (a resident of St. Johns) to Richardson, 21 May 1803, PAC, S Series, v. 80: 24866-68; Same to Same, 20 June 1803, ibid., 25043-48; Milnes to Lord Hobart, 1 June 1803, PAC, CO 42, v. 121: 125-34; Richardson to Ryland, 27 June 1803, PAC, S Series, v. 80: 25083-84.

3Stephen to Jonathan Sewell, 26 May 1803, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 4: 1637-38; Milnes to Hobart, 1 June 1803, n. 2 above; Richardson to Ryland, 13 June 1803, PAC, S Series, v. 80: 25003.


5Richardson to Ryland, 20 Feb. 1804, ibid., v. 83: 25709-12.
breaking out of the War but that the idea was dropt from various causes." The plan to attack was suspended for the present and "certainly could not be executed this year, as England was too powerfull at sea, and matters of greater Importance were in contemplation." The Chargé d'affaires urged Rousse that "the Friends of France in Canada" should "remain quiet and avoid every thing which could make them suspected." If the Ambassador who would soon replace Pichon had orders to prepare the colony for insurrection, Rousse would be sent for immediately.

In November 1804 General Louis-Marie Turreau presented his credentials as Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States. Richardson, acting on Milnes' instructions, sent Rousse to probe the latest developments in France's Canadian policy. Turreau was interested and completely taken in by the former agent of Genet. Rousse returned on May 7th and gave Richardson an account of his mission. Turreau had indicated that although his superiors had

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6 Same to Same, 17 May 1804, ibid., 25957-60. Richardson, who since the Bouc affair in 1801, was sceptical of the "Cock and a Bull kind of information" sometimes retailed by informers (see to Ryland, 22 Sept. 1803, ibid., v. 81: 25398) was well satisfied that Rousse's story was accurate.


given some thought to the question there was no immediate design on the province. The decision to invade would depend on the circumstances of the war in Europe. Part of the plan was to use a French fleet but, to minimize risk, it would sail away immediately upon landing troops. No emissaries would be sent into the colony in the near future, as some who had gone in previously were unauthorized adventurers and had done more harm than good. While awaiting the time of liberation Rousse should help keep the Canadians quiet, but if events, nevertheless, approached the point of revolution, Rousse was to keep the Minister informed.  

In September 1806 Turreau received a letter requesting an interview from a Joseph Perrault and one Finlay du Gros Pin claiming to be delegates of a general council of the Indians "des Nations du Nord" which had resolved "déterrer cette hache meurtrière teinte si souvent du sang de l'Anglais." To do this they needed the assistance of the "Regisseur de l'Univers." The revolutionaries had neglected to give Turreau their New York address and in his efforts to trace them in that city he discovered they had returned home. At about the same time the Minister received another offer of assistance. A discharged officer

10 Richardson to Ryland, 9 May 1805, PAC, CO 42, v. 127: 148-50. Richardson and Milnes (to Lord Camden, 21 May 1805, ibid., 146-47) were confident Rousse's report was accurate.

of engineers at Quebec, Samuel Turner, entrusted a letter to Turreau to a man named Johnson. Turner confidently asserted that a successful revolution would be a simple matter. The plotters had detailed information about fortifications and garrisons, could supply pilots if needed and could enrol a large number of Canadians as troops. They would be strong enough to garrison the colony until France could send aid. Johnson, in an interview with Turreau, seconded Turner's rosy opinions, and asked for assurance that the insurgents would be authorized to govern the colony provisionally in the name of France. In addition, arrangements should be made by the Minister to pay and supply rations to the Canadian militiamen who enrolled for service. Turreau was sceptical that the plans of his Canadian contacts had been properly thought out. He nevertheless informed Talleyrand, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, that other information corroborated the statements that France could easily take the Canadas from the British. While awaiting Talleyrand's instructions he would give all encouragement to those who wished to restore French sovereignty in Canada. If revolution succeeded he felt he would be able, on his own authority, to promise the Canadians that French troops would be dispatched forthwith to protect the colony against British

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12 Turreau to Talleyrand, 3 Nov. 1806, n. 9 above; Bord, "Le Canada," 98-99. The government of Lower Canada does not appear to have known of the intrigues of Perrault, Gros Pin, Turner and Johnson.
During the next two years Turreau largely neglected the Canadian question but had his interest re-awakened early in 1809 when he received a letter from a French general by the name of Saint-Hilaire who asked the Minister to advance eight thousand francs to his cousin the Chevalier Le Blond de Saint-Hilaire. When the Chevalier appeared he informed the Minister that, as he had friends and even relatives of his wife in Lower Canada, he should be sent there on a mission to organize insurrection. Turreau agreed and confidently instructed his agent "de tout préparer pour un insurrection, mais non pas de l'effectuer avant que le Gouvernement Français eût pris un parti et fut déterminé à la soutenir." Saint-Hilaire, it appears, did visit the colony, returning to the United States in March 1810. In December of that year he gave Turreau an optimistic account of the political sentiments of the Canadians:

Une expédition contre le Canada, poursuivit le chevalier de Saint-Hilaire, n'est pour la France qu'une prise de possession. Tous les coeurs et tous les bras non seulement des habitants du Canada mais encore des sauvages qui les environnent sont dévoués à l'Empereur. Les Anglais sont si bien convaincus de cette disposition que si le Pavillon Français paraissait à l'embouchure de la rivière de Saint-Laurent, les troupes dispersées en petit nombre, se retireraient immédiatement à Québec et à Halifax, et l'on deviendrait maître du bas Canada peut-être sans brûler une amorce, etc., etc.. Les ordres, m'a-t-il assuré, ont

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13 Turreau to Talleyrand, 3 Nov. 1806, n. 9 above.
14 Bord, "Le Canada," 100.
Saint-Hilaire promised to return to Lower Canada to establish contact with sympathizers, but died before he could do so.\textsuperscript{15}

During Turreau's term of office (1804-1811) his superiors in Paris took little interest in the Canadas. In November 1806 the Ambassador complained to Talleyrand that in the summer of 1805 he had had to cancel a fact-finding trip to the Canadian border because not a "sou" had been set aside for secret service expenses.\textsuperscript{16} In January 1808 the vice-consul at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, G. Cazeau, acting on the instructions of Talleyrand, submitted to the Ministry a series of commercial and political reports on New England and British North America. Two years later he had still received no response from Paris.\textsuperscript{17} In March 1810 Talleyrand's successor, the Duc de Cadore, acting on Napoleon's instructions, did employ Aaron Burr, former Vice-President of the United States, to draft a plan for invading the Canadas, but with the deterioration of the French position in Spain in late 1810, the Emperor abandoned any designs he might have had to liberate the

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., 100-101. There is no evidence corroborating his claim to have entered Lower Canada, except that the government authorities were certain there were emissaries in the colony (see p. 251 below). It seems unlikely, however, that Turreau could be taken in on such an elementary point.

\textsuperscript{16}Turreau to Talleyrand, 3 Nov. 1806, n. 9 above.

\textsuperscript{17}Webster, "Napoleon and Canada," 178-80.
Perhaps the safest generalization which can be made on the subject of the Canadian policy of Bonapartist France is that there was none. "Policy" amounted to encouraging individuals to prepare the Canadians for insurrection and a willingness to collect political and military information which at some future time might prove useful. Napoleon, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and French officials in the United States occasionally contemplated the possibility that a safe way could be found of sending a small French force to assist the Canadian rebels. British sea power and the distractions of the all-important European theatre insured that these hopes were never translated into actual attempts or even military preparations. About the only effect of France's mild interest in her former subjects was to help sustain the nervousness of the English.

Despite Turreau's wishful thinking, a French military presence on the banks of the St. Lawrence would likely have raised something less than a chorus of enthusiasm from the Canadians. There is little doubt that of those Canadians who reflected on the possibility, the majority did not desire a Napoleonic Lower Canada. It is probable that a French attacking force would have confronted an unfriendly Canadian elite and an indifferent peasantry.

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18 Ibid., ch. 1; Nathan Schachner, Aaron Burr (New York; 1937), ch. XXVIII.
The deterioration of relations between Paris and Rome after the Concordat of 1801 insured that the hostility of the Canadian clergy to France was not seriously modified during the period under consideration. Napoleon's "organic articles" unilaterally brought the French Church under the detailed supervision of the state. One of the first results was a new catechism with references to Bonaparte which made it difficult to discover wherein he differed from the Deity. Pius VII was publicly humiliated in 1804 when Napoléon crowned himself Emperor, in early 1808 when the Emperor incorporated the Papal States into the Kingdom of Italy, and again in 1810 when the pliant French hierarchy nullified the marriage with Josephine. In June 1808 the Pope excommunicated Bonaparte, who responded by imprisoning him. The Pope remained a state prisoner until Napoleon's abdication in 1814.19

The Canadian clergy had no liking for Bonapartist France. Bishop Denaut was shocked by the organic articles,20 while Coadjutor Plessis in 1805 thought Napoleon no better than a heretical prince.21 The emigré priest Jacques de Calonne, chaplain of the Ursuline Convent at Three

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19 The material in this paragraph is based primarily on J.M. Thompson, Napoleon Bonaparte: His Rise and Fall (Oxford, 1952), ch. 7, 10.

20 Denaut to Pope Pius VII, 26 April 1803, RAQ, 1931-32, 204.

21 Plessis to Roux, 3 June 1805, AAQ, Evêques de Québec, III, 139.
Rivers, detested Bonaparte as "le chef de ceux qui ont détroné et decapité mon roi ... qui persecute la religion que j'aime." When the Pope was imprisoned at Savona, Bishop Plessis wondered if he would meet with foul play: "... les prisonniers d'Etat de Napoléon sont autant d'êtres que l'on revoit pas." One could not forgive "à ce misérable le traitement horrible qu'il fait endurer au Souverain Pontife." It is quite likely that the hierarchy and the lower clergy shared the suspicion, which de Gaspé claimed was common among Canadians of all classes, that Napoleon might be the anti-christ foretold in the Book of Revelation. Chapter thirteen seemed to contemporaries to be most explicit. Verse one referred to the Emperor's Corsican origin and his nepotism with crown and sceptre ("And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns"), the tribulations of Pius were mentioned in verse seven ("And it was given unto him to make war with the saints"), and the continental system prophesied in verse seventeen ("And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast").

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23 Plessis to the Bishop of Nisibe, 8 Feb. 1810, RAQ, 1927-28, 270.
24 Plessis to curé Edmund Burke, 18 Feb. 1810, ibid., 271.
25 De Gaspé, Mémoires, 496-98.
The seigneurs, like the clergy, were hostile to the idea of French reconquest. This is hardly surprising for in addition to religious motives many of them held government positions or commissions in the regular army. It was crystal clear to Legislative Councillor Chartier de Lotbinière, for example, that "notre bonheur public & individuel est ... lié à la prospérité de l'Empire Britannique." He hoped that "tous sera pour le mieux & que nous ne serons pas troublés dans notre pays." To Legislative Councillor Paul-Roch de St. Ours the evolution in France from democratic anarchy to dictatorship revealed that the French national character was inherently defective. The Peace of Amiens, he suggested to François Baby, would enable

... les Français respirer plus à leur aise, après de violentes convulsions, sans leur donner, sous leurs nouveaux régimes, un gouvernement plus solide ni moins despotique, que celui dont ils se plaignaient, sous leurs anciennes monarchies ... preuve incontestable de la légèreté nationale et après avoir parcouru, avec une rapidité inconcevable, toutes les carrières de l'erreur.27

St. Ours thought Napoleon's assumption of the imperial title was the final proof of folly: "l'on peut bien dire que la france en couronnant le nouvel Empereur met le

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27 June 1802, quoted in Wallot, Intrigues, 107.
The monarchist bias was, as always, very strong, and many must have shared de Gaspé's detestation of Napoleon, the "usurper." As Judge de Bonne's newspaper, *Le Vrai-Canadien*, stated in 1810, the war represented a "grande lutte qui existe depuis plus de vingt ans entre la rébellion et la légitimité." There is no doubt which side the seigneurs favoured.

The Canadian middle class abhorred the idea of a Napoleonic Lower Canada almost as much as the seigneurs and the clergy. The viewpoint of the constitutional moderates was reflected in the pages of *Le Courier de Québec* under the principal editorship of Doctor Jacques Labrie. *Le Courier*, vitriolic in its condemnation of Bonapartism, continually impressed upon its readers that "son regne ne pourra jamais faire l'objet de nos désirs." Under the British constitution "l'autorité du chef est tellement restreinte, qu'elle n'a force de loi, qu'autant qu'elle est secondée par l'approbation des représentants du peuple, et que l'équilibre des pouvoirs est strictement observée." In Europe by contrast, Napoleon's merest whim was law, enforced by his armies "qui portent au loin la terreur et font couler des ruisseaux de sang." Even the most absolute of the kings of France never exercised such

28 St. Ours to de Lavaltrie, 17 Sept. 1804, n. 26 above.
30 29 Aug. 1810.
an arbitrary power as the parvenu Corsican: "Sujets, alliés, amis même, personne ne peut se flatter de pouvoir s'y soustraire, sa funeste influence se fait sentir du centre de sa capitale jusqu'aux extrémités du monde."31 To the young political conservatives who founded the short-lived Société littéraire de Québec in 1809, Canadians should be ever grateful to "le maître des Rois" for the British Conquest, since they had thereby been spared the ravages of "un homme né pour la terreur du genre humain."32

Nor was Bonapartism attractive to the leaders of the Popular Party in the Assembly.33 The immense gulf—geographical, historical, social and constitutional—between Lower Canada and contemporary France was fully recognized. An assemblyman, Denis-Benjamin Viger, expressed it in 1809:

Nous sommes relégués dans un coin isolé du monde.... nous sommes par notre position géographique destinés à former un peuple entièrement différent des Français.... La nature de notre sol, la différence prodigieuse de nos besoins et de notre agriculture, doivent nécessairement mettre entre nos moeurs et celles des autres

31 21 Jan. 1808.

32 Séance de la Société Littéraire de Québec tenue samedi, le 3e juin, 1809 (Québec, 1809), 11-12. The passages quoted are taken from a speech by secretary Louis Plamandon (a law student) which the Society ordered printed. The founding members included François Romain (president), curator of the public library at Quebec, Dr. Jacques Labrie, law students Louis Moquin, de Gaspé, Jr., and Joseph-Remi Vallières de St. Réal. The political conservatism of the members is evident from the publication of Plamandon's speech—a eulogy of George III which included fulsome praise for Governor Craig—during the 1809 election campaign.

33 We have the evidence of General Turreau himself that the leaders of the Popular Party were not in contact with agents of Bonaparte: Bord, "Le Canada," 100-01.
Socially conservative, the Popular Party leaders could hardly be attracted to Bonaparte's domestic policy, particularly as expressed in the Code Napoléon (1804) which maintained many of the legislative innovations of the Revolution. Civil marriage and divorce for cause would hold little appeal to those engaged in the defence of the rights and privileges of the Roman Catholic Church. Defenders of the idea of land held in trust and protection of the family could not be enthusiastic about the doctrine of private property in land. Constitutionally radical the Popular Party leaders were also repelled by Napoleon's dictatorship. According to Le Canadien in 1808 the British navy was "maintenant le boulevard contre la tyrannie écrasante et les usurpations du chef sans loi de la France." Some months earlier the

Un Canadien, M.P.P. [D.-B. Viger], Considerations sur les effets qu'ont produit en Canada, la conservation des établissements du pays, les moeurs, l'éducation, etc., de ses habitants ... (Montreal, 1809), 32-33. For the constitutional programme and conservative social ideology of the Popular Party in the 1800's see Lawrence Smith, "Le Canadien and the British Constitution," CHR, 1957, 93-108; Ouellet, Histoire économique, 196-212; Wallot, "La Crise sous Craig," passim.

24 Sept. 1808.
paper had printed, a little prematurely, a rhyming version of Bonaparte's last will and testament:

Je lègue à l'Europe asservie
Tous les regrets de se voir avilie:
Je lègue et laisse aux malheureux français
Le repentir de leur honteux excès:
Je lègue et laisse au corps diplomatique
La nullité de sa conduite oblique....
Je lègue au Pape un brevet de coureur
Etant venant me sacrer Empereur.
Je lègue et laisse aux gens que je ruine
L'espoir prochaine d'une belle famine:
Je laisse enfin d'excellentes leçons
aux amateurs de révolutions. 36

Such comments in Le Canadien, although rare, did not represent mere window dressing. The same sentiments were sometimes expressed in private letters. When, for example, Napoleon's suicide was rumoured during the winter of 1814, Jacques Viger, a former editor of the paper, was ecstatic: "Bonaparte," he wrote to a friend, "est mort! d'un Tyran exécrable, C'est l'acte le plus sage ... et le seul excusable." 37

If the Canadian elite did not want a Napoleonic Lower Canada, there were times when they could not restrain their admiration for the man and his achievements, Le Canadien in merely reporting the military news without

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36 28 March 1807. See also ibid., 6 Feb. 1808; Viger, Considerations, 48. An address by the Assembly to the King on the fiftieth anniversary of his reign (1810) read in part: "... we glory in being an appendage of that empire which so magnanimously bids defiance to the boundless ambition of the common enemy of the civilized world": quoted in Christie, A History, I, 297.

37 Viger to J.-D. Mermet, 18 Feb. 1814, quoted in Ouellet, Histoire économique, 231.
distorting comment made Napoleon appear invincible. Many of the Canadians felt Bonaparte was a magnificent commander. On the eve of Austerlitz and Ulm, the seigneur de Gaspé was of the opinion that "Alexandre et ses cosaques n'étaient pas de taille à lutter avec Napoléon, qui, dans la première guerre d'Italie, a défait successivement, avec trent mille hommes seulement quatre armées autrichiennes, deux fois plus nombreuses que la sienne." In January 1809 abbé Jacques de Calonne probably expressed a common view of Napoleon's inability to crush the insurgents in Spain. The abbé felt that the inaction of the French army was part of Bonaparte's plan to dampen the enthusiasm of the Spaniards and divide the citizenry. At the appropriate instant he would strike successfully, for "son inaction finissoit toujours par des coups d'éclat." To one Canadian at least, Napoleon in 1811 was simply unbeatable. After subjugating Europe, he would carve out an empire in North and South America and ultimately rule the world.

In some cases the attitude described merely reflected a greater detachment from the war than the emotionally-involved English were able to muster. De Gaspé, for

38De Gaspé, Mémoires, 205. See also ibid., 202-03.
40Quebec Mercury, 23 Dec. 1811 (letter of "A Canadian").
41The English commonly struck the pose that Bonaparte was a mere soldier of fortune, of no particular brilliance even as a strategist: See e.g. Quebec Mercury, 10 April 1809.
example, could abstract Napoleon the general from Napoleon the tyrant whom he detested and certainly hoped would be defeated. In other instances though, Napoleon's victories—and his defeats—evoked a deeper feeling. Only the English upper class and the military celebrated Nelson's victory at Trafalgar which suggests an ambivalent response by many Canadians to Napoleonic France. As John Henry, a Montrealer, explained it, many of the Canadians had

... mourned at the success of a monster, who has spread rapine, violence and misery far and wide. The baleful effects of these events, have been as correctly estimated by the friends of religion, morals and humanity in Canada as in any part of the world. Yet since such things were permitted by Providence; and the mind abstracted the mere struggle for superiority from all its evil consequences, it was not easy for the best of them to avoid reflecting with complacency, that Frenchmen triumphed!

42 De Gaspé, Mémoires, 202-05.

43 Quebec Gazette, 16, 23 Jan. 1806; Quebec Mercury, 13 Jan. 1806; Montreal Gazette, 3 Feb. 1806; Roy, "Napoléon au Canada," 114. Perhaps the most interesting piece of evidence on this point dates from after our period. Andrew Cochran, Assistant Civil Secretary to Governor Prevost: during the War of 1812, was struck by the unenthusiastic response of some Canadians to the news that Bonaparte was on Elba: "The sensation created here has been great; but I confess to You I doubt whether joy has had much share in the sensations of the Canadians;—they may perhaps rejoice in it—as surely they ought—but I have heard many say that they have still so much of French feeling left as to lament what they consider a diminution of French glory,—and I myself have been able within my own experience to remark that I have never heard one Canadian testify the smallest satisfaction at the extraordinary occurrences in France, although I have talked to many about them": Cochran to his mother, 29 May 1814, PAC, Cochran Papers, 642.

44 An Enquiry, 30. Henry was an Irish adventurer who had settled in Montreal in 1807. He wrote numerous letters to the Mercury stressing the commercial backwardness of the
Canadian ambivalence, as J.-Edmond Roy long ago pointed out, was almost certainly also a response to the English tendency to ridicule everything French. Napoleon in battle represented something patently successful and—if less patently—something French. As long as he did not threaten Lower Canada, one could receive vicarious satisfaction—indeed a sense of revenge—from his successes.

Nor could half a century of British occupation, whatever the Canadian intellect might perceive to be its advantages, totally eradicate some lingering affection for France. Somewhere, perhaps below the level of consciousness, the collective soul of Crémazie's "vieux soldat Canadien" stirred, ever so gently, in the valley of the St. Lawrence.

The attitude of the habitants to Napoleon is impossible to establish with precision. There were no serious riots and relatively few French emissaries entered the colony. There were, moreover, no elaborate government investigations of habitant loyalty and there was little

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Canadian and the revolutionary aims of Bédard. He was held in high esteem by the Montreal merchants—particularly those of the North West Company who tried to have him appointed a judge—and the bureaucracy. Henry was employed as a spy by the Lower Canada government in 1808-09 to sound opinion in New England and, in anticipation of war, to open negotiations with Federalist leaders. He was thus able to bring a certain expertise to the task of assessing political attitudes. As Henry's object in writing the pamphlet, moreover, was to bring about constitutional changes which would favour the English, it was not in his interest to qualify Canadian disloyalty in the manner he did.

45 See n. 1 above.
extensive or concrete comment in the letters of contemporaries. The opinions of the English, the French officials in the United States, and Canadian francophiles have, of course, to be taken with high discount, unless relating to specific facts and corroborated by other evidence. The habitants in the militia exhibited unimpeachable loyalty upon the discovery of the Civil Society in 1801. They responded with alacrity to the call out of the militia during the Chesapeake crisis. Shortly after our period they willingly defended the colony during the War of 1812. These examples, however, tell us nothing about probable habitant response to the French, for in each of these cases they were demonstrating their attachment to the Crown in the context of an actual or possible invasion by Americans. In the face of these difficulties only the most general trends of opinion can be established with any confidence.

Such evidence as there is suggests that habitant enthusiasm for the idea of French reconquest was gradually diminishing in this period, as a result, probably, of the cumulative effect of propaganda and the changing age composition of the population. Year by year from 1792 the number of adults effectively propagandized by the Canadian elite must have been growing. Moreover, children indoctri-

46See e.g. Louis Guy to François Baby, 13 Feb. 1803, PAC, Collection Baby, v. 13: 7718; A.-L.-J. Duchesnay to François Baby, 23 Oct. 1803, ibid., 7801; Chartier de Lotbinière to Jonathan Sewell, 8 May 1805, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 4: 1715-16; Le Courrier de Québec, 6 Feb. 1808 (private letter to one of the editors, later printed by the paper).
nated in 1792 or 1793 by the few teachers in the rural areas or by the curés would have little effect on habitant opinion in the 1790's, but a great deal more in the latter years of our period when many would be in their twenties or thirties. 47 Year by year the number of those who could remember the French regime from personal experience diminished rapidly. From one in five adult habitants in the early nineties, the proportion dropped in 1804 to about one in ten, and in 1811 to fewer than one in twenty. 48 Stephen Sewell learned from Canadian informers in 1801 and again in 1810 that the oldest of captains of militia in the countryside were the most disloyal of the habitants. 49 The one example which has been discovered by historians of a positive habitant response to Napoleon also suggests there was a connection between age and disloyalty. A letter sent from "les habitants du Canada" in 1805 to the French Emperor was signed by twelve residents of the parish of Saint-Constant. They complained that, notwithstanding representations made to the French consul at New York five years earlier, they had not received "des fusils pour nous armer, et frapper un coup sûr." They

47 The British traveller Hugh Gray noticed that the habitants referred to Frenchmen as "nos pauvres gens": Letters from Canada (London, 1809), 334.

48 See Appendix I.

49 Stephen to Jonathan Sewell, 19 March 1801, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 4: 1515; Same to Same, 21 June 1810, ibid., 1950.
were, nevertheless, always ready "à tout entreprendre à la première vue des Français que nous regardons toujours comme nos frères." It is not surprising that the postponement of liberation was causing concern to these would-be rebels since three of them were seventy or over and their average age was just under sixty!50

But if there was no tendency to support, there was no readiness to oppose. Almost certainly, for example, the habitants would not have taken arms against a French invader. This was the case even as late as the War of 1812. A few months after hostilities broke out Chief Justice James Monk was able to quote the "frequent remarks, by Canadians" that "heureusement les Francois ne sont pas joint aux Americains pour debaucher nos habitants."51 It seems likely that Chartier de Lotbinière was correct in assuming that most habitants would remain neutral in action and indifferent in sentiment in case of French attack, provided of course that the government avoided "des innovations & ... des nouveautés qui pourroient faire murmurer le peuple, & le mettre de mauvais humeur."52

50 The letter has been printed in Wallot, Intrigues, 139-41. Government officials, it appears, did not know of the existence of the letter.


52 De Lotbinière to Sewell, 8 May 1805, n. 46 above.
Even the least alarmist among the English must have wondered what would happen if a French attacking force, commanded perhaps by the Canadian-born François-Joseph Chaussegros de Léry, had found its way to the colony. Would the momentary emotion of old memories generate a pro-French sentiment among the habitants and among significant numbers of the Canadian elite? Would rumour of some impending oppression by the British and tales of Bonaparte's benevolent intentions towards the habitant spread through the countryside? Although perhaps unlikely, all these reactions were more than merely remote possibilities, particularly in the aftermath of the poor harvests of 1804, 1809 and 1810. Much would have depended on the relative strength at the outset of the French and British forces. If the invaders appeared to be stronger, the prospective change of governments might well have inspired a prudent enthusiasm among the habitants.

53 De Léry (1754-1824) was the son of Joseph-Gaspard, a Legislative Councillor from 1778-1797. He had remained in France when his father returned to Quebec shortly after the Conquest. Rumours were common in Lower Canada that de Léry would lead the expected French attacking force: see e.g. Richardson to Ryland, 1 May 1803, PAC, CO 42, v. 121: 133-34; [a resident of Quebec] to R. Mathews, 27 Jan. 1807, ibid., v. 135: 202-05. To judge from his military career de Léry would have been competent for the task. He commanded a division at Austerlitz and an engineering corp in Spain (1813). In 1811 he was created a baron of the Empire.

54 Ouellet, Histoire économique, 184-87, 196-97.

55 Milnes expressed this opinion in a dispatch to the Colonial Secretary, Lord Hobart, 24 June 1803, PAC, CO 42, v. 122: 13-14. Oscillation of habitant loyalty with the changing aspect of the battle during the American invasion
the colonial government had attempted to call out the Canadian militia its chance of holding the colony would have been slim. Almost certainly riots against militia duty would have been common and likely would have ended in rebellion. An incident illustrative of what might have happened throughout the province occurred during the Chesapeake scare at Yamaska, one of the few areas where rumours circulated that the militia might have to fight French troops. Colonel J.-M. Tonnancour, informed Ryland that habitant resistance to the militia ballot was grounded on the belief that "les Americains sont soutenus par les francois et peut être qu'ils viendront ensemble." The habitants were saying that

... les Anglois nous ont pris, s'ils trouvent Que nous leurs soyons utiles qu'ils nous gardent, nous ne demandons pas mieux, nous leur aiderons tant qu'il ne faudra point se battre; s'ils veulent nous abandonner nous ne voyons pas ce que nous avons à y perdre.

They preferred "Rester a cultiver leur Terres que d'aller se faire Tuer pour un démelé où ils n'ont rien à gagner et Que si on les force à prendre les armes ils les Tourneront contre ce qui les contraindront."56 The garrison mentality, even in the Napoleonic period, was not founded entirely on myth.

567 Aug. 1807, n. 51 above.

of 1775-76 is treated in Lanctot, Canada and the American Revolution, ch. 4-11, passim.
CHAPTER 7

THE GARRISON MENTALITY SUSTAINED, 1803 - 1811

As war approached in 1803, there was every expectation of a French invasion which would spark a Canadian uprising. Stephen Sewell, for example, was certain,

"... Buonaparte will make every possible Exertion to land troops in the Province at the risk of the loss of his ships.... this country is represented to B. as the Garden of Eden of America and that the people wait anxiously for the arrival of the troops and in fact in the extensive views which his mind embraces this must be the [most?] desirable Conquest...."

"Depend on it," Stephen warned his brother, "the Canadians will join them in numbers I mean the lower class which is the bulk of the people.... I think we stand on the brink of a convulsion here, but God grant I may be mistaken."¹

The "convulsion" appeared to have arrived in the summer of 1803 when large sections of Montreal were devastated by a series of fires. Between two and three o'clock in the afternoon of June 6th a fire broke out in the Saint Laurent suburbs north of the city and consumed fifteen homes. While one of the water engines was busy in the suburbs, the roof of the prison downtown caught in flames. The prison, the Anglican church, a Roman Catholic chapel and at least eleven houses were destroyed. Suspicion of arson was aroused by the fact that the wind had been blowing in a direction which made it impossible for sparks to have

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travelled from the suburbs to the prison. Confirmation of
a "plot" was soon forthcoming when an English farmer
located a live coal, wrapped in a handkerchief and rammed
under the eaves of a stable near the prison. Stephen
Sewell was convinced the fire was "connected with the
great design which the emissaries of France have on this
country ... Heaven only knows if we do not stand on the
brink of destruction."2 When Montreal experienced no less
than eight different fires in August it was clear to
retired fur merchant Alexander Henry "that it has been
done on purpose.... it must be french agents."3 Louis
Labadie, a Canadian school teacher, described the near
panic in his journal:

on supconne les Américains qui sont tou jours du parti
de l'infame David Maclyne. Je crains que la ville ne
devienne un théâtre de cendre. Maintenant plusieurs
personnes transportent ce qu'ils ont de plus précieux
en compagne chez leurs amis ou parents....4

Even when the expected invasion of 1803 did not
materialize—and even after Trafalgar—the English remained
apprehensive of French policy. War being a time of rumour,

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2Stephen to Jonathan Sewell, 9 June 1803, PAC,
Sewell Papers, v. 4: 1645-50; See also Milnes to Hobart,
13 June 1803, PAC, CO 42, v. 121: 224.

3Alexander Henry to John Askin, 16 Aug. 1803,
Quaife, Askin Papers, II, 394. See also magistrates of
Montreal to Ryland, 8 Aug. 1803, PAC, CO 42, v. 122: 181;
Montreal Gazette, 8 Aug. 1803, Milnes to Hobart, 12 Aug.
1803, PAC, CO 42, v. 122: 176; Edward Edwards to John
Neilson, 22 Aug. 1803, PAC, Neilson Collection, v. 1: 446.

4Journal of Louis-Généreux Labadie, PAC, August,
1803.
sometimes the wildest stories were credited. In Montreal in early March 1804, for example, it was believed that France had invaded England and King George had been killed while personally commanding the British troops. Rumours of Napoleon's intention to take Lower Canada were common throughout the war, and were made the more credible to government officials by the opinions of Pichon and Turreau, and to the public generally by the knowledge that emissaries were from time to time intriguing in the colony.

An exaggerated sense of their own importance made it easy for the English to ascribe any number of serious motives to supposed French policy: the destruction of the timber trade which after 1806 was vital to Britain's naval effort, the possession of a convenient base from which to coerce or conquer the United States, the exploitation of a new source of provisions and manpower for the Grande Armée, and so on. Governor Craig, who on this as on so many points, reflected the common English opinion, informed the British Minister to the United States in 1808 that,

... it is impossible not to include among them [expectations] ... the appearance of the French on this Theatre—Bonaparte never loses sight of an object on which he has once fixed his attention—perhaps in

5Jonathan Sewell to his wife Harriet, 1 March 1804, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 4: 1667.

6It was public knowledge, for example, that emissaries were in the colony in 1803 and 1810: Stephen to Jonathan Sewell, 26 May 1803, n. 1 above; proclamation of Governor Craig, 21 March 1810, RAC, 1921, 138-41.
sound policy, this Colony should be the first object of his attempt.... He would find a healthy climate and... not an unfriendly population, but at any rate such as would furnish him in future with great resources of men, as the Country would of provisions of all sorts, so that he could not have a more convenient station in which to establish himself, and from which to carry on his future plan of coercing America.\textsuperscript{7}

Nor did Napoleon's insatiable ambition for territorial conquest go unnoticed. Alexander Henry, for example, was "much afraid Bonaparte will over run the old World, and then step over the water to pay us a Visit."\textsuperscript{8} The British merchant, Hugh Gray, who lived in the colony from 1806 to 1808 learned that

Some people think there is more to be apprehended from Bonaparte than from the Americans. His ambition and thirst for domination are pretty evident; he would rejoice to get possession of Canada: he wants colonies and commerce. It is thought that a few thousand French troops, could they find their way into Canada, would be well received by the Canadians and would very soon possess the country.\textsuperscript{9}

There was some reason for the English to believe the conquest would not present insuperable difficulties. The fortifications at Quebec were in ruins\textsuperscript{10} and the colony

\textsuperscript{7}Craig to D.M. Erskine, 13 May 1806, PAC, CO 42, v. 136:184. See also e.g. Milnes to Hobart, 24 June 1803, n. 1 above, 12; Quebec Mercury, 18 Nov. 1806, 6 April 1807; Gray, Letters, 367-68; Isaac Brock to his brother William, 31 Dec. 1809, Ferdinand Brock Tupper, ed., The Life and Correspondence of Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, K.B., 2nd ed. rev. (London, 1847), 75; Stephen to Jonathan Sewell, 23 Aug. 1810, PAC, S Series, v. 110: 35076-77.

\textsuperscript{8}Henry to John Askin, 18 Jan. 1806, Quaife, Askin Papers, II, 500.

\textsuperscript{9}Gray, Letters, 367-68. See also Stephen to Jonathan Sewell, 26 May 1803, n. 1 above.

\textsuperscript{10}Isaac Brock to Dunn, 17 July 1807, PAC, S Series, v. 94: 29363-64.
was inadequately garrisoned. At the time the war was renewed there were fewer than 1,000 regular troops in the colony.\textsuperscript{11} Even after reinforcements sent from Britain and Nova Scotia during the Chesapeake crisis had eased the situation somewhat,\textsuperscript{12} Governor Craig still estimated in February 1809 that he needed an additional 12,000 troops to guarantee the defence of the Canadas.\textsuperscript{13} Moreover the high rate of desertion indicated clearly that the reliability of such troops as there were was exceedingly doubtful.\textsuperscript{14} In these circumstances it was felt that the French would need only a small force of between about five and ten thousand men. The English and some of the Canadian office holders spoke of a "coup de main", a sudden assault designed to conquer the colony instantly. Judge Pierre Panet noted that

Pour conserver le Canada à l'Angleterre, il ne suffit pas de sa marine formidable. Car un Coup de main réussirait à l'enlever, si les français étaient favorisés des habitants Canadiens, mais il faut dans cette province une force militaire suffisante pour


\textsuperscript{12}J. Mackay Hitsman, Safeguarding Canada, 1763-1871 (Toronto, 1968), 70.

\textsuperscript{13}Craig to Castlereagh, 13 Feb. 1809, PAC, Q Series, v. 109: 17.

\textsuperscript{14}For the very serious desertion problem see e.g. Isaac Brock to the Duke of York, n.d., Tupper, Brock Correspondence, 35; Richardson to Ryland, 9 Feb. 1804, PAC, S Series, v. 83: 25689-90; William Smith to Jonathan Sewell, n.d. (postmarked 14 Feb. 1804), PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 4: 1658-61; Statutes of Lower Canada, 44 Geo. III (1804) ch. XXXI. Even public executions of deserters, it appears, had little effect on the desertion rate: Journals of Samuel Southby Bridge (a timber merchant), PAC, MG 24, I.20, v. 2, 13 Sept. 1809, 16.
Despite the British victory at Trafalgar it was conceivable that a few French warships or privateers, or even ships built in the United States, might succeed in penetrating the St. Lawrence or ascending the Mississippi. In the first months of 1808 government officials took seriously a rumour that a French force under General Moreau would attack the Canadas via the Mississippi. In the summer of 1810 Stephen Sewell could not help thinking that the conquest of Lower Canada was "an object of the greatest importance to Buonaparte, not only for preventing the Great (and encreasing) trade of Great Britain in this province, but to run over the United States." In a letter to his brother he described how the French could carry it off:

... it can only be effected by a coup de main.... the footing of 10 or 12 thousand french troops in Canada in the disposition of the Canadians... is the next thing to Conquest.... The french in such an entreprise would neither care for the sacrifice of ships or troops provided they could only get a few with officers into the Country.

France might not even have to use a fleet since it was thought that the American government would join Bona-

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16 D.M. Erskine to George Canning, 6 March 1808, PAC, FO 5, v. 57: 104; Craig to Erskine, 13 May 1808, n. 7 above.

parte in attacking the Canadas. This idea reflected a tendency to exaggerate French influence on American policy, a suspicion aroused initially by the generosity of the Louisiana cession. Richardson, for example, saw Napoleon's hand behind a bill introduced in Congress in 1804 to punish trespass and tort committed by British officers aboard American ships on the high seas. He could not "but consider Bonaparte at the Bottom of the Bill... ostensibly to protect Am: Seamen but really to strike at the root of our maritime strength; and I think this will one day come out in the shape of secret Articles in the Louisiana Treaty--" Richardson also felt that as part of the Louisiana bargain France might have promised to assist the United States to extend her borders to the north. The key figure in the plot was General Victor Moreau, who had defeated the Austrians at the battle of Hönhinden (December 1800). Implicated in a royalist conspiracy to assassinate Napoleon (1803), Moreau was exiled to the United States. It was apparent to Lower Canada's intelligence chief that he had been sent out to intrigue with the American government with a view to a joint expedition against the Canadas, and their incorporation as states of the union. A few years later, at the time of the Chesa-

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18 Richardson to Ryland, 1 March 1804, PAC, S Series, v. 83: 25754.
19 Same to Same, 5 Nov. 1804, ibid., v. 84: 26307-08.
peake scare, the intrigues of Moreau had, in the minds of some of the English, undergone considerable development. The Quebec Mercury assured its readers of the credibility of a current rumour that

BONAPARTE & MOREAU are reconciled

If Moreau can persuade America to break with England, ten thousand french troops are, in conjunction with the Americans, to drive the English from the continent -- Canada and Nova Scotia are to be erected into a Monarchy, and Moreau to be crowned King of Acadie and Both the Canadas. America is to have the Floridas as well as Louisiana; and the Island of Porto Rico, or some other valuable West India Island....

The Government of America not having sufficient energy by the present constitution, the President to be supported in his endeavours to change it, and a new form of legislation adopted; in which the chair is to be assumed for life.

The only difficulty is stated by the American Government to arise from the Northern States; who might be averse to such a neighbour as the Kingdom of Acadie and Canada governed by a Frenchman; but this may possibly be overcome -- if the war with England can be made a popular one. 20

This astonishing flight of fancy was a reflection of the times. With the United States caught in the ever-tightening vice of British maritime supremacy and Napoleon's continental system, it was natural to assume that sooner or later the republic would have to align itself militarily with one side or the other. 21 The American Embargo Act of 1808 implied a willingness to do so 22 and the lessons of recent


21 See e.g. Richardson to Ryland, 9 Nov. 1807, PAC, S Series, v. 96: 30092.

22 This implication was admitted by a committee of the House of Representatives in a report dated 22 Nov. 1808, quoted in Burt, The United States, Great Britain and British North America, 284-85.
history must have been apparent to many. In the 1790's the United States, in similar circumstances, had chosen to ally herself with Britain. Then, however, the Federalists had been in power. Now the presidency was held successively by Jefferson and Madison, both francophile Republicans representing the interests of the southern planters, heavily in debt to British supply houses. If the American government ever decided to risk war it was inconceivable that Jefferson or Madison would hesitate a moment in choosing to join France.23

Even if the American government did not actively join France in an expedition against the Canadas it might connive at a French attack originating on its territory.24 It might also be helpless to prevent the organization of a mixed force of French soldiers and American volunteers. In January 1807, a long-time resident of Quebec expressed such a view:

It has been reported that on board every vessel from France to the United States, from twelve to twenty soldiers arrive, and that New York is at this moment full of French Officers.... I should ... not be surprised to hear of a second Miranda, or Burr25 starting

23See e.g. Richardson to Ryland, 9 Nov. 1807, n. 21 above; Same to Same, 16 Nov. 1807, PAC, S Series, v. 96: 30109-10; Isaac Ogden to , 25 Jan. 1810, ibid., v. 106: 33761.

24See e.g. Richardson to Ryland, 9 Nov. 1807, n. 21 above.

25Francisco de Miranda was a Venezuelan patriot who in 1806 had unsuccessfully attempted to liberate his country from Spanish rule by organizing a military expedition from the United States. In the autumn of 1806 Aaron Burr led a small armed force down the Mississippi towards New
up at the head of these Fellows, and of Their marching towards Canada— They will find enough of the Vermon-
ters to join Them, even for the sake of plunder, for it would appear that the American Government, has not sufficient energy to prevent its Citizens forming similar Expeditions, and why not against a British colony ... as well as a Spanish one.26

As in the Revolutionary period the main internal danger in case of French attack would lie in the reaction of the rural portions of the colony. The English could place no confidence in appearances or in statements by Canadians that there was no serious problem. The habitants after all had openly declared for France in 1796, after outwardly supporting the Loyal Association campaign. The loyalty of the Canadian militiamen in 1801 and 1807 was of course irrelevant, for the English distinguished between the habitant's assumed attachment for France and his traditional dislike of the Americans.27 The anglophobia

Orleans. Although his ultimate objectives are unknown, many in the United States believed he intended to establish an independent republic in the American southwest.

26 Extract of a letter from an unidentified resident of Quebec, 27 Jan. 1807, in a letter from Mathews to a Colonel Gordon, 25 April 1807, PAC, CO 42, v. 135: 202-05. Mathews thought the Duke of York might be interested in the views of his correspondent whom he described as "a well informed, observing man, an old resident, and well acquainted with the people." Mathews informed Gordon that he had "seen many of our most respectable Fur, and other Traders from Canada this winter— They all declare the evident and growing defection (even to insolence) of the Canadians— In Vermont (the green mountain Boys) 10,000 men, hardy vagabonds, may be got together in three days— On the other side, Upper Canada is equally assailable."

and gullibility of the Canadian farming class continued to nurture English fears. According to Governor Craig the general view among the English was that the "Jealousy and ... Ignorance" of the habitants "is more prejudicial than even any bad design with which we may suppose them to be inclined." 28 The situation had degenerated to the point where the "lower class of people to strengthen a term of contempt add Anglois." 29 With the influence of the Canadian seigneurs negligible, the way was open for conspirators to paint a rosy picture of Napoleonic rule for those who could not read. Craig thought that among the habitants "there would not ... be Fifty dissentient voices to a Proposition ... for their reannexation to ... France, even in its present form." 30 The "great Mass of the people," he observed, ...

Quebec Mercury, 31 Aug. 1807; Brock to Lt.-Col. J.W. Gordon, 6 Sept. 1807, Tupper, Brock Correspondence, 65; Mountain to Gray, Letters, 366-68; Craig to Castlereagh, 4 Aug. 1808, PAC, CO 42, v. 136: 216-17. For opinion on the point during the War of 1812, see p. 264 n. 18 below.

28 Craig's instructions to Civil Secretary Ryland (on the eve of the latter's departure for London. Hereafter "Craig's instructions to Ryland"), 10 June 1810, PAC, Ryland Papers, v. 1: 1-2.

29 Craig to Liverpool, 1 May 1810, Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 388.

nature of the French System, they would have not an idea that a change of Rulers would produce any alteration in their situation, and tho' if you argue with them they are ready to admit that they are happy, and in a State of prosperity ... they do not conceive that they would not have been equally so had they remained Subjects of France.31

Holding such views the English had not a shadow of a doubt that the habitants would be unreliable if the French attacked. Indeed, a call out of the Canadian militia might well precipitate disaster. John Black submitted written observations on the political state of the province to the Duke of Kent, in which he pointed out that in "case of Insurrection Rebellion or Invasion by a Foreign Enemy ... a great proportion ... of the aid in which under such circumstances the Country reposes speaks the same language and receives the same word of command as the assailants." The consequences, Black concluded, "of such a system are not so difficult to foresee as they are to contemplate with Horror."32 Even if the Canadian militia were not employed in defence, the habitants with their hunting guns would pose a serious danger. Lord Selkirk, visiting the colony in the winter of 1804, learned that "no arms are put into the hands of the Canadian Militia." It was, he commented, a "precaution which is just sufficient to insult them, without being any security as most of the peasantry have

31 Same to Liverpool, 1 May 1810, n. 29 above, 391. The views expressed in the dispatch, Craig claimed, were shared by the entire English community: p. 391, 395.

guns of their own.\textsuperscript{33} Obviously the government and the military assumed that, far from remaining neutral, the habitants would fight for France. Brigadier Isaac Brock thought that even "a small French force, 4 or 5,000 men, with plenty of muskets, would most assuredly conquer this province," as "the Canadians would join them almost to a man."\textsuperscript{34} Governor Craig observed that the "general opinion among the english part of the Inhabitants is, that they [habitants] would ... join an American Force, if that force were commanded by a french officer."\textsuperscript{35}

The garrison mentality was, as ever, stimulated by the cultural distinctiveness of the Canadians and their refusal to adopt British characteristics. The preservation of differences between conqueror and conquered was thought to result in a dangerous mutual antipathy which kept alive a latent francophilia amongst the Canadians. Lord Selkirk recorded that:

\begin{quote}
There is but one opinion as to the universal disaffection of the French Canadians to the British Government.... The English at Quebec and Montreal cry out in the true John Bull style against their obstinate aversion to institutions which they have never taken
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{33}White, \textit{Selkirk's Diary}, 10 Feb. 1804, 218. See also Brock to Castlereagh, 25 July 1807, Tupper, \textit{Brock Correspondence}, 63.

\textsuperscript{34}Isaac to William Brock, 31 Dec. 1809, Tupper, \textit{Brock Correspondence}, 75. See also Stephen to Jonathan Sewell, 26 May 1803, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 4: 1637-38; Same to Same, 23 Aug. 1810, PAC, S Series, v. 110: 35076-77; Gray, \textit{Letters}, 367; Craig to Castlereagh, 4 Aug. 1808, n. 30 above, 216; Same to Liverpool, 1 May 1810, n. 29 above, 391-92.

\textsuperscript{35}Craig to Castlereagh, 4 Aug. 1808, n. 30 above.
any pains to make them understand—& are surprized at
the natural & universally experienced dislike of a
conquered people to their conquerors & to everything
that puts them in mind of their subjection—. In these
ideas some individuals of great good sense & liberality
(among others Bishop Mountain & Ch Justice Elmsley)
join to a surprising degree.36

In the tensions of wartime the apparent similarity of
Canadians to Frenchmen generated profound distrust. Lawyer
and assemblyman Ross Cuthbert, in a pamphlet published in
1809, explained habitant disloyalty as a natural outcropping
of a "French" countryside:

A Stranger who should travel through the Province,
without entering the towns, would be persuaded he was
visiting the interior of France. The language, the
manners, and every symbol from the weathercock, down
to the sabots, would unite to deceive him.... On entering
a house french civility, french address, french vesture,
would meet his eye. In one of the best french dialects,
he would hear, of savon francois, soulier francois; and
every thing else, that it might be desirable to distin-
guish, he would find elevated, by the adjective, francois.
Should one of the tender shoots, of the family, attune
her voice, he would probably hear the pretty pastoral,
of, "Sur les bords de la Seine," or some other stanzas,
that would convey him to the delectable vales of old
France. On surveying the "chambre de compagnie," among
many other saints he would see the portrait of
Napoleon.37

Jonathan Sewell, then Chief Justice of the province, summed
up the garrison's credo in 1810:

36 White, Selkirk's Diary, 10 Feb. 1804, 216-17.
John Elmsley, a native of Middlesex, was Chief Justice
of Lower Canada from 1802-1805.

37 Cuthbert, An Apology, 20. In a footnote to the
passage quoted Cuthbert observed that "the pretended
portrait of that fiend, may be found in many country
houses.... It cannot be supposed these portraits are
procured as a mere historical memento."
The great links of connection between a Government and its subjects are religious [sic], Laws, and Language, & when Conquerors possess the same religion, and use the same Laws and the same Language as the Conquered, the incorporation of both into one political body is easily effected: But when they are at variance on these points, experience seems to have demonstrated in Canada, that it cannot at all be effected while this variance subsists. Obedience may be rendered by conquered subjects under such circumstances, but it is the obedience of a Foreigner to a Government which in his estimation is not his own, and he views it as an alien power, there is no attachment, no disposition to unite with those who constitute the Government or its natural subjects.

Unless the Canadians were totally anglified, "no hopes can be entertained that French predilections can be obliterated;" in fact they would "continue to augment until by some crisis, force will be required and the future state and condition of Canada will then be decided by a recourse to arms."38 Timber merchant Samuel Bridge required no such elaborate argument to convince himself the Canadians were disloyal. Having learned two weeks after his arrival in the colony that the crafty habitants sometimes put stones in the butter and maple sugar they sold on the Quebec market, he recorded in his journal that "they are terrible imposing Rascals (I mean the Habitans or French Canadians) who are Frenchified looking Fellows & half of them I believe would prove Rebels should the French send a Force here."39

The retention of the French language was thought


to be particularly ominous. Writing to the *Mercury* in March 1807, "A.Z." expressed disgust at the fact that even English members of the Assembly forsook "the language of Chatham, Burke, Pitt and Fox, for that of Mirabeau, Marat, Robespierre and Talien."\(^{40}\) The British traveller, "Jeremy Cockloft", was certain that since French was spoken in the countryside, the habitants must have "a strong predilection for the French."\(^{41}\) A more sophisticated explanation of the connection between language and disloyalty was offered by John Henry who was able to quote Talleyrand on the point:

"An insurmountable barrier (says he) is raised up between a people of a different language, who cannot utter a word without recollecting that they do not belong to the same country; between whom every transmission of thought is an irksome labour, and not an enjoyment; who never come to understand each other thoroughly; and with whom the result of conversation after the fatigue of unavailing efforts, is to find themselves mutually ridiculous"

In proof of this hypothesis, Tallyrand [sic] cites the present state of the people of Canada, whom he considers "as completely and entirely Frenchmen as they were in the year 1760."\(^{42}\)

The continued autonomy of the Roman Catholic Church in Canada—an impenetrable barrier to the gradual lessening of religious differences—appeared to threaten the security of the English. "Scevola", for example, warned that Minorca had been lost to the French in 1756 primarily

\(^{40}\) 16 March 1807.

\(^{41}\) "Jeremy Cockloft, the Elder, Esq. M.A.P.C.", *Cursory Observations Made in Quebec, Province of Lower Canada, in the year 1811* (Bermuda, n.d.), 27.

\(^{42}\) Henry, *An Enquiry*, 29. There were dozens of similar reflections published in the *Mercury* during the years 1806-1810. See e.g. the letter of "Anglicanus" in the issue of 27 Oct. 1806.
because nothing had been done to assimilate the Spanish Catholic inhabitants. Because of "their hatred to the protestant religion, they were generally averse to the English government, although they had lived happily and grown wealthy under its influence." As will be shown presently, the English even believed many of the clergy were working for Napoleon.

Cultural difference made the English suspect that even the Canadian seigneurs might adopt a neutral attitude if France attacked. Governor Craig believed that although the "better sort of Canadiens" understood the "misery that would ensue" upon French reconquest, they nevertheless retained a "natural affection toward what they still consider as their Mother Country." Lately, Craig noted in 1810, the upper class Canadians had fewer and fewer social contacts with the English. Some attributed this to the gradual decline in the economic position of the Canadian seigneurs but "the observation has been made also, that this abstraction has taken place exactly in proportion as the power of the French ... has become more firmly established." General Brock likewise interpreted the

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43Quebec Mercury, 3 April 1809. See also Mountain to Camden, 24 Oct. 1804, PAC, Q Series, v. 96: 172-75; Viger, Considerations, 14-27; Craig to Liverpool, 1 May 1810, Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 392; quotation from Lambert, p. 229 below.

44See p. 231-36, 245-47 below.

45Craig to Liverpool, 1 May 1810, n. 43 above, 388, 391.
contemporary version of the two solitudes as a prudent withdrawal:

The idea prevails generally among them [Canadians], that Napoleon must succeed, and ultimately get possession of these provinces. The bold and violent are becoming every day more audacious; and the timid, with that impression think it better and more prudent to withdraw altogether from the society of the English, rather than run the chance of being accused hereafter of partiality to them. The consequence is, that little or no intercourse exists between the two races.46

English opinion on the loyalty of the Canadians in the Napoleonic era was, of course, not unanimous on all points. A significant minority for example held that while there was every reason for alarm, the Catholic clergy, whatever their other faults, were loyal to the British government.47 British traveller John Lambert may have learned from one of the more clear-sighted English that "if the Roman Catholics were really such a desperate body of people as they are represented to be, I am really astonished that the Canadians have not long ago cleared the colony of every English heretic that had set foot on it."48 The owner-printers of the Quebec and Montreal Gazettes, John Neilson and James Brown, thought the fear of disloyalty

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46 Isaac to William Brock, 31 Dec. 1809, Tupper, Brock Correspondence, 75-76.

47 See e.g. Cuthbert, An Apology, 13-14; Henry, An Enquiry, 28; Quebec Mercury, 24 Nov. 1806 (letter of "Akritomuthos").

48 John Lambert, Travels through Lower Canada and the United States of North America in the Years 1806, 1807, and 1808, 2 v. (London, 1810), 1, 343-44.
was ridiculous,⁴⁹ as did a few of Brown's correspondents.⁵⁰ Other examples could undoubtedly be found, but it is significant that at a time when letters to the editor were written pseudonymously, only a handful of English correspondents argued the case for Canadian loyalty. In the Quebec Mercury, for example, only one correspondent in the years 1805 to 1811—of dozens who wrote on the issue of Canadian loyalty—appears to have revived the argument of the French party that the maintenance of the cultural distinctiveness of the Canadians was wise policy: "Would it not be more expedient to raise a mound ... against the intrigues of our neighbours, than to facilitate an intercourse with them, by disseminating their language?"⁵¹ To most of the English this argument made little sense, for the real danger, as "Anglicanus" saw it, was not American but French invasion.⁵² The former would be a military

⁴⁹For the views of Neilson and Brown, see Montreal Gazette, 18, 23 Dec. 1818.

⁵⁰See e.g. letters of "Publius" and "Zanthus", 19 Sept. 1808, 19 Feb. 1810.

⁵¹18 Nov. 1806 (letter of "Anglo-Canadiensis").

⁵²Quebec Mercury, 24 Nov. 1806. There are numerous sources—in addition to those quoted from in the text (e.g. Selkirk's Diary)—which state or imply that the English were nearly unanimous in expressing the view that large numbers of Canadians were disloyal and must be assimilated in the interests of security. See e.g. Christie, A History, I, 313, 345; Viger, Considerations, passim; Gray, Letters, passim but particularly 328-37; "Prenez-vous par le bout de nez" (an electoral broadsheet which was being printed at the offices of Le Canadien when the government seized the press in March 1810); Ryland to Craig, 4 Aug. 1810, Christie, A History, VI, 24.
contest, pure and simple; the latter would involve an armed uprising.

The English believed the emissaries of Bonaparte would recruit willing conspirators from among the ranks of the Roman Catholic clergy, an idea based on the assumption that the Pope was little more than the political tool of the Emperor. Papal influence might be used in Lower Canada to facilitate a French "coup de main". When, for example, the Pope, returned to Rome after the coronation, expressed the hope that a new era for the French Church had begun, Ryland glumly foresaw a popish plot in the valley of the St. Lawrence: "Let those who wish to intrigue with Papists, and weakly sacrifice to them the Rights of the Crown as established by the statute of Elizabeth, read the allocution published by the Pope on his return from Paris..." The danger to Lower Canada was obvious, since "the patronage of the Romish Church in this Colony" is "completely derived from the same holy Personnage who crowned the pious Emperor of the French!" Only the enforcement of the supremacy could assure the safety of the English. Ryland's sentiments were echoed by John Black. The "impropriety" of allowing the Canadian Church to remain self governing "under the present calamitous

53 This was a regular theme of newspaper editorials and articles. See e.g. Quebec Mercury, 26 Jan., 5 March, 8 June 1805; Quebec Gazette, 8 April, 13 Oct. 1806.

54 Ryland to Mountain, 29 Oct. 1805, QDA, Mountain Papers, C Series, v. 5.

55 Same to Same, 26 Jan. 1806, ibid.
situation of public affairs is notorious." The Roman Catholic Bishop "has the rousing of passions at his disposal, he is appointed by the Pope who is a slave to the will of Bounaparte, the acknowledged Enemy of the human race." In 1810 Governor Craig reported to Colonial Secretary, Lord Liverpool, the general opinion of his advisers that the "attachment to France" of the lower clergy was "undoubted." Since the Concordat they looked upon Bonaparte as the "Restorer of the Roman Catholic Religion." The imprisonment of the Pope in 1809 only increased the unpleasant possibilities, and two years later it was even rumoured in the colony that Bonaparte had somehow brought the Lower Canada hierarchy under the authority of the pliable French Bishops with Bishop Plessis becoming a "suffragan of a Metropolitan in France."

56 Black's observations submitted to the Duke of Kent, circa 1 Oct. 1806, PAC, CO 42, v. 135: 376. This portion was not printed in Const. Docs., 1791-1818.

57 Craig to Liverpool, 1 May 1810, Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 389.

58 Stephen to Jonathan Sewell, 30 April 1810, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 4: 1927. See also Craig to Liverpool, 1 May 1810, n. 57 above, 398. For additional proof of the English suspicion that the clergy were disloyal and/or of the belief that the enforcement of the supremacy was considered essential in the interests of security, see White, Selkirk's Diary, 10 Feb. 1804, 216-19; Quebec Mercury, 25 April 1808 (letter of "A Subscriber"); Viger, Considerations, 27; Bishop Mountain to John King, 6 March 1810, QDA, Mountain Papers, C Series, v. 6; Jonathan Sewell to Craig, May 1810, Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 403-05; John Antrobus to Louis Foy, 14 June 1811, PAC, S Series, v. 113, n.p.; p. 231-36, 245-47 below.
The ecclesiastical problem was gravely compounded in the minds of the English by the presence of about thirty French emigré priests in the colony who were thought to represent a potential fifth column, a possibility which had been foreseen in the late 1790's. An anonymous correspondent writing to the Montreal Gazette in January 1799 expressed a common concern that with some new turn of the political wheel in France, proscription of the non-juring clergy would cease and the new regime would hold forth persuasive and encouraging motives in all emigrant and banished subjects to return.... The love of their country will rekindle in the hearts of these expatriated men... this will soon alter gratitude, and by an easy transition of mind, from wishing to return to their country, they will wish also to purchase its applause by injuring its foes.

The Concordat and the return to France of three of the emigré priests during the Peace of Amiens seemed to fulfill this gloomy prediction. One of those who returned was the

59 For the settlement and activities of the emigré clergy see N.-E. Dionne, Les Ecclesiastiques et les royalistes français ré fugiés au Canada à l'époque de la révolution (Quebec, 1905); M.G. Hutt, "Abbé P.J.L. Desjardins and the Scheme for the Settlement of French Priests in Canada, 1792-1802," CHR, 1958, 93-124.

60 Jan. 1799. An identical view was expressed by Bishop Mountain in a letter to Portland, 15 April 1799, PAC, G Series, i. v. 1: 227, xiii. For other examples of the distrust inspired by the emigré priests in the late nineties see Prescott to Portland, 23 Aug. 1797, PAC, CO 42, v. 109: 108; Jonathan Sewell to Solicitor-General Louis-Charles Foucher, 22 Nov. 1798, PAC, St. Sulpice Papers, v. 5: 1423-24; Hutt, "Abbé P.J.L. Desjardins," 118-21. From 1797 the continued protests of the Governors to the Colonial Office insured that few emigré priests were permitted to settle in the colony: ibid; Dionne, Les Ecclesiastiques, 105-113; Milnes to Sir George Shee, 18 May 1806, PAC, CO 42, v. 131: 369.
abbé P. J. L. Desjardins, the Vicar-General of Quebec, who had been the leader of the emigré group which was settled in the colony in 1793 and 1794. Desjardins was thought to be working for Talleyrand in planning an ecclesiastical conspiracy to coincide with the expected French attack. Ryland, reflecting opinion at the Chateau, warned Richard­

son of the possibility in December 1803:

It may be proper to apprize you that the Abbé Des­

jardins, who resided so long in this Province, has made

his Peace with the French Government, and fills at this
time an important Ecclesiastical situation in the Diocese
of Autun formerly that of Mr. Talleyrand, and it seems
not very unreasonable to apprehend, if any attempt is
actually in contemplation for the disturbance of this
Government, that Mr. Desjardins, and those persons with
whom he was most intimately connected here, may be
engaged as Parties in the Business.  

If indeed Desjardins, or any other Frenchman, was
intriguing with the emigré clergy, the possible damage was
incalculable. As educated Europeans holding many of the
most important ecclesiastical offices in the colony they

See also Milnes to Sullivan, 21 Oct. 1803, PAC, CO 42,  
v. 123: 28-29. Desjardins actually became Grand Vicar of
the diocese of Orléans, not Autun. Milnes believed that
Desjardins might work through his brother, abbé Louis­  
Joseph, then an assistant at the Quebec Cathedral. Des­
jardins later corresponded with the abbé Antoine-Bernadine
Robert, who was Superior of the Quebec Seminary from 1802
to 1805 and from 1809 to 1815: 26 Jan. 1806; undated letter
written in or after 1809; 21 Oct. 1809, Archives of the
Quebec Seminary, Lettres, carton T., nos. 85, 89, 88.  
These letters which deal, inter alia, with the problems
faced by the French clergy and the writer's hopes for
peace, contain no hint of political intrigue. On Napoleon's
orders, Desjardins was imprisoned from 1810 to 1814.

62 Abbé Jean-Henri Auguste Roux, who held a doctorate
from the Sorbonne, was Superior-General of the Sulpician
Order in Montreal and a Grand Vicar. Another Sulpician,
abbé Jacques-Guillaume Roque, who, prior to the Révolution
had considerable influence over the Canadian clergy and laity. This was noted by the English who thought that the resistance of the hierarchy to the enforcement of the supremacy could be traced to their efforts. The influence of the emigrés in the field of higher education was considerable. Some had taught in the Quebec Seminary during the 1790s and while there appears to have been none doing so during the period under consideration, the Superior from 1805 to 1809, abbé Jean-Baptiste Lahaille, was a native of France. Almost one-half of the total of the emigré priests were members of the Sulpician Order in Montreal. Mgr Jean-Henri Auguste Roux, the Superior-General of the Order, abbé Antoine-Alexis Molin, the bursar, and the large majority of the professors at the college were emigrés. The Sulpician fathers were the wealthy seigneurs of the Island of Montréal and enjoyed a monopoly.

had been Director of the Seminary of Angers, was the Director of the Soeurs de Hôtel Dieu from 1796 to 1806 and in the latter year was appointed Grand Vicar. Abbé Antoine-Alexis Molin was the chaplain of the Hôtel Dieu and the Hôpital-Générale in Montreal as well as bursar of the Sulpician Order. The abbé Jacques de Calonne, brother of the pre-Revolutionary finance minister, was the almoner of the Ursulines at Three Rivers. The abbé Pierre-Joseph Malavergne, a native of Bordeaux, was chaplain of the Hôpital Générale in Quebec from 1797 to 1809.

See e.g. Milnes to Sir George Shee, 18 May 1806, PAC, CO 42, v. 131: 369; Jonathan Sewell to Craig, May 1810, Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 405; Craig to Ryland, 4 June 1811, Christie, A History, VI, 222.

In September 1803 Plessis estimated that there were twenty-five emigré priests then in the colony, of whom twelve were members of the Sulpician Order: Plessis to Ryland, 1 Sept. 1803, PAC, S Series, v. 81: 25356.
of higher education in the district. Strategically located in what was considered the most disaffected area of the province, their notary and surveyor was none other than that arch-conspirator Joseph Papineau. It is not surprising that an intelligent man like Jonathan Sewell—who was no religious bigot—could write of the émigré clergy that they were "Enemies by birth" and urge Milnes in 1801 to have them deported, or that in 1810 he could refer to the seminaries as "the foster parents of French predilections, and of a Natural Antipathy against England and its heretical Government." Many of the English towards the end of our period believed the Sulpician fathers were plotting with Turreau and indeed sending him money.

The English discovered a second set of conspirators among the leaders of the Popular Party. That they were "using every endeavour to pave the way for a change of Dominion, and a Return under that Government [France]," Governor Craig wrote in 1810, "is the general opinion of all ranks with whom it is possible to converse on the Subject." The popular leaders were simply the contemporary edition of that "strong Jacobin party" which "shewed itself,

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67 Sewell to Craig, May 1810, Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 405. See also Craig to Liverpool, 1 May 1810, ibid., 400.
68 Draft letter from Mgr Roux to the Governor, n.d., PAC, St. Sulpice Papers, v. 5: 1676. Internal evidence indicates the letter was drafted sometime after Governor Craig's departure in 1811.
and was with difficulty kept under" in the 1790's. The fact that most were lawyers or notaries of humble social background provided whatever corroboration was needed to nurture English suspicion. As they had "no property of any sort," the Popular leaders had "everything to gain, and nothing to lose by ... any state of Confusion into which they may throw the Province." Historians have with good reason accepted at face value the many professions of loyalty made by the Popular Party leaders during the Craig period. It was much more difficult for an English resident of the time to reach a similar conclusion. Britain appeared to be fighting for her very existence against Napoleon and, as is usually the case in wartime, the slightest inclination to neutrality implied treason. As one English resident told the painter William Berczy:

... il fallait nourir le désir de pouvoir massacrer ... ceux qui nourrissent quelques sentiments ou compassion pour un français; si l'on voulait avoir le droit de prétendre au titre de Chrétien ou de sujet Britannique.

69 Craig to Liverpool, 1 May 1810, Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 390-92.

70 Ibid., 390; Craig to Bunbury, 21 Feb. 1810, PAC, CO 42, v. 141: 27-33. Craig's dispatches and letters are full of references to this point: see e.g. to Castlereagh, 5 Aug. 1808, ibid., v. 136: 221-24. Edmund Burke's interpretation of the role of lawyers at the outbreak of the French Revolution had long been applied by the English to Lower Canada politics: see p. 137-39 above. For other examples see Henry, An Enquiry, passim; letter quoted at p. 245 below; Quebec Mercury, 4, 18 July, 1 Aug. 1808; Montreal Gazette, 5 March 1810 ("Chanson").

71 Berczy to his wife, 18 Aug. 1808, PAC, Collection Baby, v. 26: 16338.
The speaker might also have added to the list of the guilty anyone who spoke favourably of Napoleon's military ability. The atmosphere in the colony was such that any suggestion along these lines was treated as an indication that persons making it hoped that France would win the war. As stated in a previous chapter many Canadians admired Bonaparte's military genius, while *Le Canadien* reported the military news free from distorting comment and seldom indulged in denunciation of the Bonapartist regime in France. Almost certainly these facts suggested to the English that the Popular Party harboured treasonable designs. In all probability it also appeared to many that there was something sinister in the coincidence of the growth of opposition in the colony and Napoleon's extraordinary success from Austerlitz to Wagram, namely that with Bonaparte's victories the Popular Party leaders were becoming ever more confident that the Emperor would liberate them. Finally, professions of loyalty made no impression on those who believed so strongly in conspiracy. In the English perspective, conspirators always masked the real transaction by public profession of the opposite. Recent history appeared to bear out the theory. Professor Weishaupt had undermined Christianity in Europe by pretending to preach

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73 For examples see Isaac to William Brock, 31 Dec. 1809, Tupper, *Brock Correspondence*, 76; Bishop Mountain to John King, 5 March 1810, QDA, Mountain Papers, C Series, v. 6; Craig to Liverpool, 1 May 1810, n. 69 above, 390-91.
the purest version. Until the Declaration of Independence, the Adams, Franklin, Jefferson and the rest had allegedly plotted their revolution while insisting on unimpeachable loyalty, and the regicides in France had started off in 1789 as publicly-declared monarchists. John Henry was repeating the faith when he compared the "loyal" Popular Party members, the poor man's friends who taxed the rich and always had "la douce humanité" in their mouths to the "men who meditated the massacres and confiscations in France." They had been "in their outward behaviour the mildest, gentlest, tamest creatures in the world.... YET WE HAVE ALL SEEN WHAT HAS HAPPENED."

The constitutional demands of the Popular Party were seen as an integral part of the French plot. The aim of Turreau and his assistants among the Canadian politicians was to insure that those favourable to French reconquest gained unchallenged authority in an Assembly enjoying the maximum constitutional power which could be obtained. The claim that the Assembly could define its own privileges, agitation to exclude judges from the Assembly, the expulsion of Ezekiel Hart in 1809 and Judge

74 See p. 109-10 above.

75 An Enquiry, 16. See also Ryland to Mountain, 3 Feb. 1806, QDA, Mountain Papers, C Series, v. 5.

De Bonne in 1810 were interpreted as part of the plot.77 If the Assembly were permitted to exercise the privileges of expulsion, there was little doubt, at least among government officials, that the Popular leaders would use it to exclude members who might not agree with their disloyal aims.78 Once Bédard and his associates were in a position of absolute control of the House, it was assumed they would allow the Alien and Better Preservation Acts to lapse.79 There was little doubt, either, why the Popular Party was claiming for the Assembly the right to arrest for contempt. Ryland, for example, thought that if the attempts of the "House of Assembly, to assume Privileges at the Expence of the Crown, are not firmly resisted, the Means will gradually be prepared whenever a crisis should happen, for the overthrow of His Majesty's Government in this Province." The latter was the real, if unavowed, object of the party leaders and for that reason they revealed an "eager desire to exercise the high

77Ryland to Mountain, 27 April 1806, QDA, Mountain Papers, Series C, v. 5; Le Canadien, 9, 12 March 1808 (report of the Assembly debate on the bill to exclude judges), 9 Oct. 1809; Quebec Mercury, 4, 18 July, 1 Aug. 1808, 29 Jan., 19 March 1810; Isaac to William Brock, 31 Dec. 1809, n. 73 above; Craig to Castlereagh, 5 June 1809, Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 360-63; Same to Bunbury, 21 Feb. 1810, n. 70 above, 21-30; Same to Liverpool, 30 March 1810, Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 372-78.

78Craig to Bunbury, 21 Feb. 1810, n. 70 above, 26.

and dangerous Power of Arrest, Fine and Imprisonment."  

The claim that the Assembly could impeach the Governor's advisers and the 1810 offer to pay the civil list were interpreted by government officials and others as attempts to reduce to nil the authority of the Governor and the Legislative Council.  

It was also the firm conviction on the part of many of the English that the Popular Party, in preparation for the French attack, was attempting to impress upon their constituents that the Assembly alone governed the Province. According to Ryland each claim for additional power, if granted, would facilitate the spread of this notion and thereby make it impossible "for any Governor to draw forth the Energies of the Country with effect, either to repress internal Commotion or to repel external attack."  

Any issue on which the Popular Party triumphed over the opposition of the government, for example the bill to exclude judges, would, according to Craig, "be represented as an instance of the efficacy of the power possessed by the Assembly" and the corresponding weakness of the execu-

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80 Ryland to Mountain, 27 April 1806, n. 77 above.  
81 Reports of Assembly debates in Le Canadien, 9, 12 March 1808, 26 April 1809; Quebec Mercury, 5, 19 March 1810; Le Vraie-Canadien, 10 March 1810; Craig to Castlereagh, 5 Aug. 1808, PAC, CO 42, v. 136: 224; Same to Bunbury, 21 Feb. 1810, ibid., v. 141: 21-30; Same to Liverpool, 30 March 1810, Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 373-77; address of the residents of Terrebonne to Craig, 5 March 1810, PAC, S Series, v. 107: 33948-50.  
82 Ryland to Mountain, 27 April 1806, n. 77 above.
tive to check it. Contemporaries noted also that Popular Party members rarely mentioned the role of the Legislative Council and Governor in the constitution. When *Le Canadien* referred carelessly to the Assembly's right to pass laws rather than bills, Thomas Cary, editor of the *Quebec Mercury*, claimed that the "trick" was intentional:

> Its object is to confirm the ignorant multitude in the belief that the house is every thing, possessing all power. Who ever hears from the mouth of Canadians, when speaking of our legislature, a word of any branch but the Chambre! 84

The fact that the Assembly had apparently become, as Ryland put it, "the center of sedition, and a receptacle for the most desperate demagogues in the Province," 85 came as no surprise to those of the English who had some acquaintance with the operation of the British constitution. What could one expect, John Henry wrote in 1810, from an Assembly which resembled a common stagecoach, filled with "notaries, attornies ... clerks, country clowns, dram sellers and bankrupts" and was elected by "poor, ignorant wooden-shoed" peasants. The Canadian seigneurs exercised little electoral influence and the patronage resources of the Governor were negligible. Only a minute proportion of the population in Britain had the vote or "any thing to do with the laws but obey them." In addition, of the "represe-

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83 Craig to Liverpool, 30 March 1810, n. 81 above, 374.
84 10 July 1809.
tatives of these five hundred thousand in the House of Commons, at least six tenths are under the immediate influence of the crown and of illustrious families." The remaining members owned sufficient property to be "deeply interested in the safety, tranquility and glory of the nation." Had the "quacks" of parliamentary reform succeeded in placing "the democratic branch as completely in the hands of the great mass of the population as it now is in Canada, Old England might now be sought for only amidst the rubbish of revolution." Many agreed with Henry's assessment. During the latter half of the first decade of the nineteenth century, the idea became prevalent among the English that their safety, as well as their economic progress, depended on a return to government by Governor and council, or the union of the two Canadas with representation suitably arranged to guarantee an English majority in the united assembly.

One function Napoleon had purportedly assigned to his sympathizers in the Popular Party was to spread dis-

86 An Enquiry, 11, 12.

87 See John Black's observations submitted to the Duke of Kent circa 1 Oct. 1806, PAC, CO 42, v. 135: 376 "A British Settler" [John Fleming], Some Considerations on this Question: Whether the British Government Acted Wisely in Granting to Canada her Present Constitution? (Montreal, 1810), passim; Quebec Mercury, 16, 23 April 1810; Jonathan Sewell to Craig, May 1810, Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 400-05; Craig to Liverpool, 1 May 1810, ibid., 395; Same to Same, 1 June 1810, PAC, Q Series, v. 112: 193-95; Same to Ryland, 9 Nov. 1810, Christie, A History, VI, 147-49.
content with British rule and to impress upon the populace that they were still Frenchmen. This point of view was manifest in the English response to the founding of *Le Canadien*. Its appearance and that of *Le Courier de Québec*, were immediately interpreted as proof of Bonaparte's interest in the colony. Upon reading the prospectus of *Le Courier* "Akritomuthos" had pondered long over the "secret machinations of our truly formidable adversary, Napoleon."

If, as was probable, he hoped to conquer the United States, Lower Canada would be "a very promising door for the introduction of his designs," and a "gallicizing" paper in the French language would be an obvious first step. The publication of *Le Canadien's* prospectus moved "Akritomuthos" to return to the charge. He found it curious that the editors had promised to send the paper to areas where there were only a handful of subscribers. Since "lucre cannot be the desired effect" it was clear that "this Canadien must be a mysterious engine of the Buonaparte construction formed to avenge." One could predict that a dangerous nationalism would be trotted out for exhibit, an attempt to "prove ... that Canada has her learned characters, her politicians, her jurisprudential men, even her warriors in common with other nations." It was likely that the editors would "pretend to open the eyes of the Canadians and stir up a general revolt." In January 1807 an unidentified resident of

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8818 Nov. 1806.
8924 Nov. 1806. See also the issues of 27 Oct., 10 Nov. 1806.
Quebec, reflecting an opinion common among the merchants of the colony, thought it evident that

... steps are taking to animate the minds of the Canadians from their fellow subjects—two newspapers, wholly in French, which have a strong tendency that way, have lately started up—The Editors are those firebrands of society (Lawyers) who make themselves so conspicuous in all civil commotions, which frequently end in subverting the Government.... It is known that General Turreau ... made a fruitless attempt towards establishing a newspaper in French at New York, but it is strongly suspected he has been more successful here, as the Types from one, if not both these papers, were sent from the States....

English suspicion that Napoleon, acting through Turreau, exerted a decisive influence on the editorial policies of Le Canadien was not shaken until well after the end of our period and indeed was likely reinforced by the tendency of the paper to praise the Canadian way of life as superior to the British.

Government officials also feared that the Roman Catholic clergy were working hand in hand with the politi-

90 See n. 26 above.

91 to R. Mathews (extract), in Mathews to Colonel Gordon, 25 April 1807, PAC, CO 42, v. 135: 202-05. According to one rumour an agent, sent to the United States by the promoters of Le Canadien, met with President Jefferson and Turreau (or their subordinates), who furnished him with types of French manufacture. The types were supposedly smuggled into the province in barrels of black lead. See the account by editor James Brown (Montreal Gazette, 16, 23 Dec. 1818), which also demonstrates that the rumour had no foundation in fact. The types had belonged to Charles Roi, the first printer of Le Canadien.

clans to prepare the populace for French reconquest. Not
only was it suspected that Napoleon could easily influence
the political activities of the Church, it was assumed
as well that the curés were inclined to dabble in sedition
as a result of their lowly class origins and family con-
nections with the Popular Party. The loyalty of the
hierarchy was suspect for similar reasons. Bishop Plessis
could not be trusted, according to Craig, because he was
the son of a blacksmith. Coadjutor Bishop Bernard Panet
was of a slightly higher social rank but still of a "new
family which has risen in the law." He was "the Brother
of the leading Demagogue [J.-A. Panet] of the Democratic
Party," a perfect example of the "wonderful connection"
between the Church and the politicians. There had
indeed long been serious concern in government circles
that the relationship between the Coadjutor and Speaker
could prove exceedingly dangerous if Napoleon were to
make a serious attempt on the colony. Ryland's reaction
to the appointment of the Coadjutor in 1806 was typical
of official thinking and a revealing example of the pre-

93 See references in n. 58 above.

94 See p. 231-32 above.

95 Craig to Castlereagh, 4 Aug. 1808, PAC, CO 42,
v. 136: 215. To cite but one example of family relations-
ships, two of Pierre Bédard's brothers were rural curés in
1806.

96 Craig to Liverpool, 1 May 1810, PAC, Q Series,
v. 112: 127. This portion of the dispatch is not printed
in Const. Docs., 1791-1818.
valent belief in conspiracy:

Mr. Panet ... is Brother to the Speaker, and Your Lordship knows enough of this Man's Character to judge of the Consequences which may naturally be expected from giving such great additional Influence to him and his Connexions. If on the 24 June 1792, according to an affidavit made in December 1794, and which I have ever since had in my Possession, he felt himself bold enough publicly to declare at the Church Door of Charlesbourg, "Que s'il pouvoit faire entrer Monsieur Berthelot dans la Chambre d'Assemblée ils fouleroient les Anglois sous les Pieds" what may he not now venture on when he sees the whole Patronage of the Romish Church throughout the Province, and the Prodigious Influence attending it, eventually vested in his Family.97

At election time the Popular Party alleged that government officials and the English politicians were determined to attack the rights of the Roman Catholic Church, and other elements of the culture, to tax habitant lands in order to multiply the number of useless office holders, to impose additional military obligations on the Canadians, and so on.98 Le Canadien was filled with diatribes against the "gens-en-place", particularly Judge De Bonne. "Le grand chouayen" or traitor to his race, as

97 Ryland to Mountain, 3 Feb. 1806, QDA, Mountain Papers, C Series, v. 5. See also Milnes to Sir George Shee, 14 June 1806, PAC, CO 42, v. 131: 388. The suspicions of officials were reinforced by the fact that a few of the curés made it clear to their parishioners that they favoured the constitutional and nationalist doctrines of Le Canadien: Plessis to Mgr Roux, 4 Dec. 1809, RAQ, 1927-28, 270. See also Same to Same, 22 March 1810, ibid., 272.

98 See e.g. Le Canadien, 7, 21, 28 May 1808, 3 March 1810; "Votre ami sincère" [Pierre Béard], "A tous les électeurs du Bas Canada," (Quebec, 1810); "Prenez-vous par le bout de nez," n. 52 above; Craig to Castlereagh, 4 Aug. 1808, PAC, CO 42, v. 136: 213-215 above; Jacques to J.-B.-O. Perrault, 18 March 1810, PAC, Collection Baby, v. 14: 8366.
De Bonne was known, was portrayed as a lecherous atheist who decided cases in accordance with the political stripe of the litigant. His conscience had been bought with a judgeship and ever since he had been a leading exponent of anglification.99 At times the paper attacked the Governor. During the 1809 election, for example, historical articles left the impression that Craig was acting very much like James II.100 The next year it was spread about in the constituencies that the Governor himself approved of the idea of imposing a land tax in order to multiply the number of office holders and hoped to be able to conscript the sons of habitants into the regular army.101 Popular candidates running against English opponents often appealed to habitant anglophobia.102 There was much talk too of the English as "intrus" or "étrangers" who monopolized government positions,103 and of "la nation canadienne", meaning that Lower Canada should be the home almost exclusively of the Canadians.104 Occasionally a

99 See e.g. the issues of 14, 21 May 1808, 1 July 1809, 3, 14 March 1810.

100 June 1809.

101 Le Canadien, 3 March 1810; proclamation of Governor Craig, 21 March 1810, RAC, 1921, 138-41.

102 See e.g. Le Canadien, 28 May 1808; p. 250; 253 below.

103 See e.g. Jacques Perrault to J.-B.-O. Perrault, 18 March 1810, n. 98 above.

104 See e.g. Craig to Liverpool, 1 May 1810, Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 392-93.
candidate or his supporters would speak loosely of abuses serious enough to justify revolution.\textsuperscript{105}

These electoral tactics combined with the overwhelming success of the Popular Party, quite unnerved the English, who interpreted verbal excess as presaging the long-feared uprising. In each of the three general elections during the Craig period the government's supporters—excluding almost the entire English voting population—\textsuperscript{106} portrayed the Popular Party leaders as dangerous and disloyal "sans culottes"\textsuperscript{107} and there is little reason to doubt that the great majority of the English believed this was so. A most revealing example of the English reaction to the electoral activities of the Popular Party was the response of Montreal lawyer David Ross to the 1808 election in the County of Leinster. The candidates for the two seats were Ross' brother John, a Quebec lawyer; Popular Party supporter Joseph Faribault, a magistrate and notary; and magistrate Joseph Turgeon, an independent. Faribault was elected by acclamation. When it appeared that Ross might win the second seat, the Canadian politicians went into action:

\textsuperscript{105}See e.g. Paul-Roch de St. Ours to Ryland, 20 June 1808, PAC, S Series, v. 100: 31199; p. 253 below. See also \textit{Le Canadien}, 18 Sept. 1809 (re Locke and the right of revolution).

\textsuperscript{106}Christie, \textit{A History}, I, 313.

\textsuperscript{107}See e.g. \textit{Le Canadien}, 4 June 1808, 9 Oct. 1809; references to \textit{Quebec Mercury} in n. 70 above; Louis-Joseph Papineau to Antoine Menard, 22 March 1809 [1810], PAC, Collection Baby, v. 14: 8294.
Mr. Faribault ... instantly addressed the people from the Hustings and told them that altho he had been elected he would not attend the Provincial Parliament ... if they did not—Elect a Canadian with him—after this most seditious reflection thrown upon the English—Turgion ... immediately addressed the people in these words—"Mes amies, on vous forge des feres, Je vous en dit pas plus long, mai m'effiez vousIII—" I suppose the annals of the late Revolution in France cannot furnish two speeches that had a more diabolical effect upon the minds of the people, than these above mentioned—It seemed to have electrified things and gained ground like wild fire, the people seemed perfectly convulsed and apparently seemed to think that the two magistrates ... were informed of some black design against the inhabitants of this Country that they dare not then develop, every man seemed to distrust his neighbour and a general wonder & movement took place—and I am informed ... a cry, here and there amongst the people, of, point d'anglois, point d'anglois!!! In a short time the dye seemed to be cast and the Inhabitants were apparently soon united, as if in the defence against a common Enemy ... the people of the County if they had been left to themselves would have upon this occasion acted without partiality or party spirit— But, when that is raised ... and set in motion ... by the officers under Government—allow me to ask what is to become of us?108

The reaction of government officials and the English generally to the election of 1810 provides a final example of the strength of the garrison mentality in the last years of the period. As they had done for years, officials assumed that Napoleon, working through Turreau, the clergy and Bédard—whom the English language press compared to Wat Tyler and Robespierre—109 was preparing the mass of the Canadians for insurrection. Turreau, it seemed clear,


109Montreal Gazette, 5 March 1810 ("Chanson"); Quebec Mercury, 19 March 1810 (letter of "Camillus").
had sent emissaries into the colony, was financing the printing and circulation of the Popular Party's electoral literature and, quite probably, was paying salaries to some of the party leaders. Acting on these assumptions Governor Craig and the Executive Council on March 14th ordered the seizure of *Le Canadien* and the arrest of its printer Charles Le François. On March 19th the principal editors, Pierre Bédard, Dr. François Blanchet and Thomas Taschereau were arrested on suspicion of treasonable practices and held without trial under the Better Preservation Act. The arrest of three Popular leaders in the Montreal area soon followed. There was no hope that the election results would be affected, Craig later wrote, but

110 See Thomas Barclay (British Consul-General at New York) to Craig, 22 Nov. 1809, PAC, RG 7, G 15, B. v. 1: 112-13; Daniel Sullivan (a resident of St. Johns) to G.O. Radford, 24 Jan. 1810, PAC, C Series, v. 673: 156-60; William Thornton (military secretary) to Major-General Drummond, 5, 18 March 1810, ibid., v. 1216: 135-36, 143-44; Ryland to James McGill, 15 March 1810, PAC, RG 7, G 15, C, v. 12: 188-89. Officials assumed—erroneously—that the French vice-consul Cazeau (p. 195 above) was in the colony. Most likely their suspicions were aroused by the activities of the Chevalier de Saint-Hilaire (p. 194 above) or his sub-agents. Saint-Hilaire himself thought so: Bord, "Le Canada," 100.

111 See e.g. George Heriot (Deputy Postmaster General) to Edward Winslow, 19 March 1810, PAC, Winslow Papers, v. 10: n.p.; proclamation of Governor Craig, 21 March 1810, RAC, 1921, 138-41; Craig's instructions to Ryland, 10 June 1810, PAC, Ryland Papers, v. 1: 2; Ryland to Robert Peel, 11 Feb. 1811, Christie, A History, VI, 193. The Halifax Gazette printed a letter written from Quebec on March 21st which alleged that "several persons have received money from the usurper of Europe": quoted in Webster, "Napoleon and Canada," 188-89. In far off Hyderabad, East Indies, Major Charles-Michel d'I. de Salaberry read in one newspaper that "there was a conspiracy discovered which was to murder all the English Inhabitants": to his father Louis, 21 Dec. 1810, BRH, 1936, 563-64.
it was certain, he thought, that the party leaders would "be more guarded in their future violence." The arrests would nip the rebellion in the bud, that is before French officials in the United States and their local sympathizers could bring their plans to maturity. Although confident he had succeeded in this, Craig took no chances. To insure that Popular supporters did not get hold of them, the Governor instructed François Baby, the Adjutant-General of the Canadian militia, to remove for safekeeping several dozen muskets which were used for training purposes. Until the end of the month special military patrols marched about the capital. As late as July 1810 Brigadier Brock found it impossible to obtain leave to go to England. The Governor, still worried about possible insurrection, wished to retain as many experienced officers as possible in the colony.

The fact that no evidence of a French plot was uncovered on the seizure of the press did not affect the attitudes of government officials in the least. Bédard,

112 Craig to Liverpool, 24 March 1810, PAC, Q Series, v. 112: 57-58.
113 De Gaspé, Mémoires, 348.
115 Brock to his sister-in-law, Mrs. W. Brock, 8 June 1810, Tupper, Brock Correspondence, 76; Same to his brother Irving, 9 July 1810, ibid., 77-78.
for example, long remained a traitor in their eyes. In Montreal the Executive Councillors resident in the city examined a number of witnesses who related tales of the electoral activities of two of the prisoners, a François Corbeil, habitant of Ile Jésus, and notary Pierre Laforce of Terrebonne. Most of the evidence indicated that these two had, in the excitement of the moment, been highly indiscreet, nothing more. Laforce, for example, had gone up and down the streets of Terrebonne saying that if an Englishman were elected it would be "la perte du pays" and had dared argue that Bédard knew as much about the constitution as Craig. Corbeil had allegedly told several Canadians that the method of choosing government officials must be radically changed. To clarify the point he had suggested that "il y a eu ... rebellion en France, en Angleterre, et en Amerique, et il en faut une ici." Laforce was said to have used the identical expression and also to have received a letter from France. When examined on March 27th by the Montreal Executive Councillors, Corbeil denied all charges and Laforce admitted the substance of what might be called the political charges, but denied any which had a treasonable tinge. They nevertheless remained in jail, for the Councillors had more than enough information to feed a mentality which saw conspiracy every-

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117 The depositions and examinations of Corbeil and Laforce are found in PAC, S Series, v. 108: 34109-34222.
where. McGill explained in a letter to Ryland:

The Members of the Executive Council who are here, under a full consideration of the whole testimony, and bringing all the facts to one single & great point of ultimate design have concluded that these two Persons come within the Letter & Spirit of the Act under which they are now confined; and that their Imprisonment under that Law became indispensably necessary to the public safety—and they can not forbear to add that La Force appears to be of an intelligent, warm active Character, possessing the power to produce every great injury—and from the oaths of the witnesses, he seems to have done so, in preparing the general mind for more nefarious purposes than he had openly avowed.118

There is little doubt that the large majority of the English in the colony were convinced the arrests were justified in the interests of security. Brock appears to have expressed a very common sentiment:

We have been in a bustle and on the alert for the last ten days.... The spirit of insubordination and revolt was advancing so rapidly among the Canadian population of the province that it became absolutely necessary for the peace to put a check to it, and fortunately a person was found at the head of the Government of sufficient energy to meet and crush at once the monster who strived to draw the people ... to all the horrors of civil commotion.119

Craig later wrote that it was the universal conviction of the English that "such is the state of the People's minds that, sooner or later, Revolution may be looked for.... the proceedings of the Party all tend, to facilitate and pre-

118 29 March 1810, ibid., 34203.
pare the way for it." Given the argument and evidence presented throughout this thesis, one cannot doubt that Craig's reference to the English is far closer to the truth than the impression left by later historians that the Reign of Terror was the response of an eccentric, suspicious, ageing general, the dupe of a handful of self-seeking advisers. Craig's Reign of Terror reflected a long-standing conviction prevalent among the English generally that the Canadians, sooner rather than later, would rise in arms.

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120 Craig's instructions to Ryland, 10 June 1810, PAC, Ryland Papers, v. 1: 2.
CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION:

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GARRISON MENTALITY CONCEPT

The political, constitutional and ideological history of Lower Canada during the years 1793-1811 cannot be understood without taking the garrison mentality into account. The positions taken by government officials and English assemblymen on a host of major political issues were influenced by it. This has been illustrated many times in the text with reference to the language dispute, the regulation of seigneurial rents, the suspension of habeas corpus, the enforcement and amendment of the Road Act, the Education Bill of 1801, the exclusion of judges from the Assembly and the Reign of Terror. Aspects of other well-known issues such as Prescott's stand against officials speculating in public lands,\(^1\) and the bureaucracy's acceptance of import duties during the Gaols Act dispute\(^2\) were also affected in some degree by the assumptions which lay behind the garrison mentality. English fears, moreover, were manifest during most, if not all, of the elections in the period. The garrison mentality insured that the Constitution of 1791

\(^1\)See e.g. Prescott to Portland, 1 Oct. 1798, PAC, CO 42, v. 111: 22. Prescott was enraged that land speculation was discouraging rapid settlement of the Eastern Townships by British and American farmers, the core, he hoped, of a loyal militia.

\(^2\)See p. 261 below.
would not operate harmoniously. It destroyed any chance there was that influential English and Canadian politicians could join in a common political party with the aim of creating a more responsible government. Indeed every claim for additional power for the Assembly during the period was vigorously opposed by the English. The garrison mentality reduced to nil any possibility that the bureaucracy would attempt to solve the constitutional problem by bringing a few Canadian assemblymen into the Executive Council as Bédard advocated, or even, as the Colonial Secretary. Lord Liverpool suggested to an astonished Ryland in 1810, by offering civil service positions to the Canadian politicians. One does not, as Richardson, Sewell, Ryland, John Henry, and doubtless many others, agreed, bring traitors into the government. Such a conciliatory policy would simply encourage more dangerous opposition on the part of those assemblymen who had been passed over for appointment. The garrison mentality also contributed to the conviction among the English that the answer to the constitutional problem was either union of the Canadas or the elimination of representative insti-

3 Le Canadien. 24, 31 Jan. 1807.

4 Ryland to Craig, 10 Aug. 1810, Christie, A History, VI, 131; Same to Same, 22 Aug. 1810, ibid., 142.

5 Richardson to Jonathan Sewell, 6 April 1797, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 3: 1092; Ryland's letters cited in n. 4 above; Henry, An Enquiry, passim; Sewell's notebook, PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 1: 75-82 (circa 1812).
tutions in Lower Canada. These remained the favourite solutions of a large majority of the English throughout the period of the Constitutional Act and this threat to Canadian cultural survival strained relations between the nationalities down to the Rebellion. Ideologically, the garrison mentality helped generate the conviction that the Canadians must be assimilated. The attacks on Canadian culture naturally produced a reaction. Prior to the war against Revolutionary France Canadian politicians themselves talked of eventual assimilation. By the 1800's *Le Canadien* was articulating the notion that the Canadian way of life was superior to that of the English, that it was the individual's highest secular duty to protect that culture, and that la nation canadienne was to be the home exclusively of Canadians. Thus by the first decade of the nineteenth century the political representatives of the Canadians and the English were calling for the destruction of the opposing group as a distinct cultural entity in Lower Canada, a development at least partly due to the garrison mentality.

The description and analysis provided in the previous chapters suggests that the existing interpretations

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of the period cannot be accepted without serious qualification. The approach of the older French Canadian historians and Kingsford is too simple, while the connection between the garrison mentality and assimilationist sentiment raises doubts about the neo-nationalist assertion of inevitable clash on the grounds of ethnic difference. Without doubt, the mercantile-agrarian thesis of the economic school describes a major area of conflict between the English and the Canadians, a conflict which was first clearly manifest in 1805 and which lasted down to the Rebellion of 1837. One cannot quarrel with the validity or importance of this thesis, but one can question the tendency to use it as the main explanation of the political, constitutional and ideological history of the period. The attitudes which are summed up by the concept of garrison mentality are at least of equal—and probably greater—importance to an understanding of the period.

Well before the Gaols Act the garrison mentality had embittered relations between the nationalities and had stimulated the emergence of anglification as an urgently desired reform. The economic motive thus did not create the conflict; it simply reinforced an existing one. The suggestion of the economic school that the nationalist reaction of Canadian politicians was unjustified because the desire for assimilation was limited to economic reform is also untenable. The demand
for assimilation was total, and it was total because it
developed not simply to fatten pocketbooks but to insure
the safety of the English and their descendants.

The garrison mentality not only antedated the
emergence of the economic motive but the assumptions on
which it rested were more generally held, even after 1805.
The leading merchants were as much afraid of Canadian
rebellion as of the loss of profit from the maintenance of
a distinctive Canadian culture, while government officials
were preoccupied with the problem of internal security.
The latter doubtless sympathized with the aims of the
merchants, but hardly considered them of vital importance.\(^7\)
One can read, for example, the many dozens of letters and
reports written by Sewell, Ryland and Mountain in the
1800's without finding more than the occasional passing
reference to economic development. The officials, moreover,
did not hesitate to give priority to policies designed to
promote the safety of the colony, even when such policies
detrimentally affected the interests of the Lower Canadian
businessmen. Despite the pleas of the merchants, officials
on the Executive Council, fearing insurrection, refused to
permit the export of grain in August 1796.\(^8\) In 1801

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\(^7\)Although more research must be done on this point,
there appears to have been a tendency on the part of some
officials to think of themselves as a class apart (Christie,
A History, I, 347-48) and even to scorn those engaged in
trade (see Osgoode to John King, 19 Feb. 1796, OH, 1954,
149.

\(^8\)See e.g. Osgoode to John King, 3 Aug. 1796, PAC,
CO 42, v. 22: 49.
Attorney-General Sewell was prepared to tax the merchants as a means of bringing about the abolition of the seigneurial system. Even during the Gaols Act dispute officials opted for security, convinced that well-constructed prisons would be essential in case of riot. Nor is there any evidence that Governor Craig, "cherished the nineteenth century middle class ideals of education, respectability and material progress." He was an eighteenth century career officer with the social instincts of an English country gentleman or Scottish laird. Everything he wrote while in Canada reflected his view that birth, not business success, was the main determinant of a man's worth. Almost every line of Craig's well-known dispatch of May 1, 1810—which runs to more than seven thousand words in Doughty and McArthur—refers to the security problem, while fewer than one hundred fifty words refer to the Canadians retarding the economic pro-

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9See p. 178-79 above.


11Creighton, The Empire, 161.

gress of the colony. When it is remembered that the Governor and his official advisers, far more than the merchants, determined the "English" political position on various issues, for example the arrest of the editors of Le Canadien, one can make a persuasive case that the garrison mentality, rather than the ideal of the commercial empire of the St. Lawrence provides the more comprehensive explanation of the political history of the Craig period.

The garrison mentality concept may prove useful to students pursuing a variety of studies in Lower Canadian history during the period of the wars against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France. Its importance would seem obvious for the social historian studying interpersonal relations between English and Canadians (for example, what effect, if any, it had on intermarriage) and for ecclesiastical, military and diplomatic historians. Two branches of institutional history would seem to require that the concept be taken into account: local government and the administration of justice. The justices of the peace, particularly in Montreal, several times exhibited fear of revolution, while a letter by Osgoode suggests that the fear of demagoguery prevented the incorporation of the city of Quebec in 1795. The McLane trial, the

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13These words (including oblique references) are found at p. 392, "the composition ... to come"; p. 393, "tho' it would be highly ... means"; p. 394, point 11; p. 395, "& the furtherance of its prosperity!!".

14Osgoode to Simcoe, 30 Jan. 1795, OH, 1954, 86.
opinions of leading bureaucrats, and, one might argue, the denial of habeas corpus to Bédard in 1810, indicate that the administration of justice was affected by the garrison mentality. A few years after our period the King's Bench Court of Quebec took the position that whenever the security of the colony was involved, it would be guided in its interpretation of the law by the policy decided on by the Colonial Office. It is possible that the garrison mentality helps explain why during the period of the Constitutional Act, decisions involving the political interests of the government were almost without exception decided in its favour. Two other aspects of the administration of justice which might be investigated with the garrison mentality in mind: the extent to which the Bench attempted to anglicify the civil law and the enforcement and interpretation of the criminal law.

The student of Lower Canadian political history in the period after 1811 may also find the concept of some use. It is likely, as French troops were not involved, that the assumptions on which the garrison mentality rested


17There are at least nine such cases reported in George Okill Stuart, ed., Reports of Cases argued and determined in the courts ... of Lower Canada (Quebec, 1834).
were not seriously affected by the War of 1812 and the writings of some of the bureaucrats and leading merchants indicate that this was so.\textsuperscript{18} One can detect after the war a continuing exaggeration of the Canadians' propensity for rebellion, which Lord Durham noticed as late as 1838.\textsuperscript{19} Occasionally, too, the idea was expressed that Canadian politicians were hopeful of convincing France to reconquer the colony.\textsuperscript{20} The garrison mentality in some form thus continued throughout the period of the Constitutional Act, although with reduced intensity after 1815 because there was far less danger that France would invade. There are indications that it played a role in rallying support among the English for the Union Bill of 1822\textsuperscript{21} and in determining government policy during the financial struggle of the 1820's.\textsuperscript{22} It is even possible that Gérard Filteau's interesting idea that the Rebellion was the result

\textsuperscript{18}For many examples illustrating the persistence of the garrison mentality during the War of 1812 see PAC, Sewell Papers, v. 1 and 5; PAC, S Series, volumes for the years 1812-1814.


\textsuperscript{21}See e.g. "Petition from Eastern Townships for Unión" (1822), ibid., 131-36; Papineau to Wilmot, 16 Dec. 1822, n. 20 above.

\textsuperscript{22}See e.g. Richardson's comment (1822) that the accounts committee of the Assembly was "perhaps a committee of public safety": Christie, A History, II, 372.
of a bureaucratic plot\textsuperscript{23} may have validity, in the sense that, expecting full-scale revolt, the Montreal magistrates were determined—as Craig had been a generation before—to crush it before the rebels matured their plans.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDICES
APPENDIX I

POPULATION STATISTICS

A. Proportions of rural-urban and English-Canadian population.

The two most useful sources from which to estimate the English-Canadian population breakdown during the early years of Lower Canada are the census of 1790 and Governor Dorchester's dispatch of 8 Nov. 1788 to Lord Sydney (Const. Docs., 1759-1791, II, 958). Dorchester's estimate of the English population was probably close to the truth. As Governor he had a responsibility to report the facts as accurately as possible and he had little political reason to do otherwise. On almost all political issues between seigneurs and merchants he tended at that time to adopt a neutral position. Dorchester pointed out that the English in the central portions of the province (excluding Gaspé and the districts which became Upper Canada) were concentrated in the urban areas of Quebec, Montreal, Three Rivers, William Henry, the village of Terrebonne and the villages along the Richelieu River. He estimated the overall proportion of English to Canadians in the central portions of the province to be one to fifteen. In the rural portions of this central area he estimated the proportion to be one to forty.

The census of 1790, which was based on figures compiled by the curés in 1789 and 1790, gives the total popu-
lation of the central portion of the province referred to by Dorchester as 161,311. The total population of Quebec City (14,000), Montreal (18,000), Three Rivers (1,213) and William Henry (1,208), (hereafter "urban population"), is given as 34,421. The population of the small village (as opposed to the parish) of Terrebonne and that of the villages along the Richelieu cannot be estimated from the census. In the calculations below, the parishes in which these villages were located are counted as rural parishes. This distorts slightly the results of the calculation as does the fact that the few hundred residents of Gaspé are also excluded from the calculations. According to Dorchester the proportion of English to Canadians in the District of Gaspé was two to three.

Calculations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Canadian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>161,311</td>
<td>(11/16 x 161,311) = 10,082</td>
<td>151,229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural population</td>
<td>126,890</td>
<td>(1/41 x 126,890) = 3,095</td>
<td>123,795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban population</td>
<td>34,421</td>
<td>(10,082 - 3,095) = 6,987</td>
<td>27,434</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fifteen to one proportion of Canadians to English must have remained substantially the same until the 1800's,
when the Eastern Townships first began to be settled in any numbers. It may even have grown larger in the late 1790's due to the high Canadian birthrate, although Governor Prescott's estimate in 1796 that "His Majesty's English subjects here compared to ...[the Canadians] are not in a Greater Proportion than Seventy to Two Thousand" (to Portland, 28 Oct. 1796, PAC, CO 42, v. 108: 16) seems highly exaggerated. As late as May 1810--after a few years of very rapid immigration (Eastern Townships, timber merchants, merchants from Vermont, etc.)--Governor Sir James Craig estimated the proportion at between eleven to one and nine to one (more than 250,000 total, 20,000 to 25,000 "English or Americans"): to Liverpool, 1 May 1810, Const. Docs., 1791-1818, 387-88.

B. Proportion of adult habitants who in 1789, 1804 and 1811 respectively, had lived sixteen years or more under the French regime.

Notes

These persons in 1789, 1804 and 1811 were at least forty-six, sixty-one and sixty-eight years of age respectively. Sixteen years during the French regime has been chosen because boys were enrolled in the militia at that age. This means that the large majority of these persons had performed military service against the British during the Seven Years War (see text p. 75). The Conquest is dated at 1759, rather than 1760 or 1763.
Adult habitant is defined as one of eighteen years of age or more. This is done for two reasons. Because of the way in which the censuses of 1790 and 1825 are organized (that of 1790 dividing the population by age at 16-17, that of 1825 dividing the female population at 18-19) the age of majority (21) cannot be used. Eighteen was the age at which young men were enrolled in the militia during the 1790's and 1800's (Statutes of Lower Canada, 34 Geo. III (1794), ch. IV). Since the opinions of men in the militia were important factors in determining habitant attitudes to France, it is reasonable to include those eighteen to twenty among the adult group. The dates chosen are in part dictated by the way in which the censuses break down the age composition of the population. Thus 1789 rather than 1793 has been chosen since the census of 1825 has a category "over 45" (for females only), while neither census divides the population at age fifty. The census of 1790 (and 1825 as well) has a division "over 60", which accounts for the choice of 1804. The census of 1825, it should be noted, gives urban populations only for Montreal, Quebec and Three Rivers.

Assumptions

1. The age group proportions among the habitants were the same as those among the rural population generally. As the habitants and their families made up the overwhelming majority of rural residents, little distortion is introduced by relying on this assumption.
2. The age group proportions in 1825 among the female residents of rural areas were the same as those among rural residents as a whole. This assumption is necessary since only the statistics on female population (1825 census) can be used to calculate the desired proportion as of 1789.

3. The age group proportions among the habitants did not change over our period or up to 1825. There was of course change. For example the proportion of rural males over sixty to the total rural male population was about one in thirty-five in 1790 and one in forty-one in 1825. This assumption, however, is essential for my purposes since there was no census taken between 1790 and 1825. The assumption also enables me to use the census of the latter year with its convenient division of the female population at forty-five.

4. Canadian population as of 1790 or 1825 included no individuals who had immigrated to the colony. As there was little immigration in the last generation prior to the Conquest and few French speaking settlers entering the colony after the Conquest, little distortion results.

Calculations

1. 1789 (46 years of age and over). Source: Census of 1825.
   a) Females over 45 residing in rural areas ..... 21,685
   b) Females 19 to 45 residing in rural areas ..... 79,492
   c) Total female population (19 and over) in rural areas ..... 101,177
d) Proportion of females over 45 residing in rural areas to total over residing in the rural areas:

\[
\frac{21,685}{101,177} = \frac{1}{x} \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots 1:4.6
\]

e) Proportion of adult habitants in 1789 who had lived 16 or more years under the French regime \ldots \ldots \ldots slightly less than 1:4.6

Note: slightly less because 18 year olds could not be included in the calculations

2. 1804 (61 years of age and over). Source: Census of 1790.

a) Rural residents over 60 \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots 6,713

b) Total adult rural population (17 and over) \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots 61,381

c) Proportion of rural residents over 60 to total adult rural population:

\[
\frac{6,713}{61,381} = \frac{1}{x} \ldots \ldots \ldots 1:10.14
\]

d) Proportion of adult habitants in 1804 who had lived 16 or more years under the French regime \ldots \ldots \ldots slightly more than 1:10.14

Note: slightly higher as the 17 year olds could not be excluded from the calculations

3. 1811 (68 years of age and over). Source: Census of 1790 and Census of 1825.

Assuming that one-half of those over 60 were between 61 and 67—which is a conservative estimate—then in 1811 there were fewer than 1 adult habitant in 20 who had lived 16 or more years under the French regime.
C. Habitant Literacy.

In 1789 several residents of Quebec attempted to estimate the number of Canadians per rural parish who could read and write. Isaac Ogden, a loyalist lawyer, chose three as his figure (Quebec Herald and Universal Miscellany, 26 Jan. 1789); Chief Justice William Smith, fewer than six (Neatby, Quebec, 245); and the Roman Catholic Bishop Jean-François Hubert, twenty-four or thirty (to Smith, 18 Nov. 1789, Têtu and Gagnon, Mandements, II, 390). As the Bishop was anxious to put the best face on matters in order to lay to rest the common English charge that the clergy purposely kept the people ignorant, the average of his figures, twenty-seven, can be used as a maximum number on which to base a calculation of the habitant literacy rate. From the census of 1790 it appears that there were 135 parishes in the rural areas of the central part of the colony of Quebec (the area of the future Lower Canada). Thus a maximum of 3,645 rural Canadians could read and write. According to the census the total rural population was 126,890. Subtracting first 3,095 for the English population (see section A above) and then subtracting 1/6th of the remainder for those under school age (Audet, Le système scolaire, II, 301-02), one obtains a figure of 103,162 representing the Canadian rural population of school age or above. This works out to a maximum rate of one habitant in 28.3 who could read and write. It should be noted that the rate would be much lower if Hubert's
estimate (which was phrased in very general terms) included seigneurs, curés, shopkeepers, notaries, etc.

There was little or no improvement in the literacy rate to the end of our period. From his study of the documentation relating to the large and populous seigneur of Lauzon J.-Edmond Roy (Seigneurie de Lauzon, III, 342-44) concluded that at the end of the eighteenth century only about 1/10th of the rural population could even write their names. A few new elementary schools were opened in rural areas during the first decade of the nineteenth century, but hardly enough even to keep pace with population growth: see Audet, Le système scolaire, II, 342-48, III, 135-42; Daniel Wilkie, A Letter; Most Respectfully Addressed to the Roman Catholic clergy and the Seigniors of the Province of the Province of Lower Canada (Quebec, 1810).
APPENDIX II

SOCIAL COMPOSITION OF THE CANADIAN MEMBERSHIP ELECTED TO THE ASSEMBLY IN 1792 AND 1796

1. Tabular view of the change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1792 rural</th>
<th>1792 urban</th>
<th>1792 total</th>
<th>1796 rural</th>
<th>1796 urban</th>
<th>1796 total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Noblesse</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seigneurs or sons of Seigneurs</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Military Officers</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Justices of the Peace</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upper strata of Canadian Society</strong></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Middle and Lower Strata of Canadian Society</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Explanation, Amplification and Proof

Of the 32 Canadians elected for rural constituencies in 1792, 13 were seigneurs or sons of seigneurs, 12 held

1Unless otherwise specified this Appendix is based on the biographical sources listed in the bibliography.

2They were: Nicolas Boisseau (Orléans), P.-A. De Bonne (York), Antoine-Juchereau Duchesnay (Buckinghamshire), Joseph-Hubert Lacroix (Effingham), Pierre-Paul Margane de Lavaltrie (Warwick), Pierre Legras-Pierreville (Kent), Michel Chartier de Lotbinière (York), Pierre-Louis Panet (Cornwallis),
commissions in the British army and 16 were justices of the peace. At least 11 were members of families which had been of the noblesse in New France or could trace the origins of their families to the French nobility. Of those engaged in trade, 4 were merchants, 3 of whom were justices of the peace, and 7 were country merchants and shopkeepers. Of these latter, 6 were described by Francis-J. Audet and Judge Surveyer as among the most prosperous Canadians of the time. All 6 were men of high social standing in

J.-B.-M. Hertel de Rouville (Bedford), Louis de Salaberry (elected in both Quebec County and Dorchester), Gabriel-E. Taschereau (Dorchester), and J.-M. Godefroy de Tonnancour (Buckinghamshire). De Salaberry is counted twice for this purpose and in n. 3, 4, 5, and 9 below.

The members listed in n. 2 above were military officers with the exceptions of Boisseau, Lacroix, Legras-Pierreville, Panet, and Taschereau. The following were also officers: François Dambourges (Devon), Guillaume de Lorimier (Huntington), Pierre Marcoux (Hertford), and Philippe-F. de Rocheblave (Surrey).

The justices of the peace (hereafter "J.P.") elected were Dambourges, De Bonne, Duchesnay, Georges-Hypolite Le-compte Dupré (Huntington), Pierre-Guillaume Guerout (Richelieu), Lacroix, François La Rocque (Leinster), de Lavaltrie, de Lotbinière, François Malhiot (Surrey), Marcoux, de Rouville, de Salaberry, Taschereau, and de Tonnancour.

De Bonne, La Rocque, Duchesnay, de Lavaltrie, de Lotbinière, de Rocheblavé, de Rouville, de Salaberry, Taschereau and de Tonnancour.

Louis Dunière (Hertford), Dupré, Lacroix, Marcoux. "Merchant" used alone refers to a person engaged in the import-export trades and as it is not always possible to decide whether a man was actively engaged in e.g. the fur trade after 1790, those classified as merchants may include some who in 1792 or 1796 had retired.

All but Dunière.
the counties they represented. No city shopkeepers were elected. All in all the rural voters elected 24 Canadians from the upper strata of Canadian society. Only 8 rural members were drawn from the middle and lower strata.

Of the 3 Canadians elected for urban constituencies, 1 was a wealthy merchant, 1 a military officer and justice of the peace and the third a lawyer and seigneur, son of a former judge.

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8 See the works of Audet and Surveyer listed in the bibliography. The 6 were: René Boileau (Kent), a close friend of the de Salaberry family; Guerout, a J.P; La Rocque, who could trace the origins of his family to the nobility in Gascony; Legras-Pierreville, a seigneur and member of the exclusive social set at Boucherville; Malhiot, a J.P. and reputedly one of the most learned of Canadians (Quebec Gazette, 4 Feb. 1808); Bonaventure Panet (Leinster), son of a former judge who was appointed to the Executive Council in 1791. The seventh was Louis Olivier (Warwick), son of a soldier.

9 For the purpose of this Appendix, a Canadian is only considered a member of the upper strata (seigneurial class and upper bourgeoisie) if he was of noble status or could trace the origins of his family to the French nobility, or if he was a justice of the peace, or if he or his father was a seigneur, military officer, government official or merchant (as defined in n. 6 above). The 24 were those listed in n. 2 and 3 above, and Boileau, Dunibre, Dupré, Guerout, La Rocque, Malhiot and B. Panet.

10 They were: Pierre Bédard (Northumberland), lawyer and son of a baker; Jean Boudreau (Hampshire) and Jean Digé (Cornwallis), both river pilots; Benjamin Cherrier (Richelieu), surveyor, son of a notary; Joseph Dufour (Northumberland), a habitant; Olivier (n. 8 above); Joseph Papineau, notary-surveyor, son of a cooper; Augustin Rivard-Dufresne, occupation unknown (hereafter "O.U."), son of a habitant.

11 Jean-Baptiste Durocher (Montreal, West Ward).

12 Nicolas Gorge de Saint-Martin (Three Rivers).

13 Jean-Antoine Panet (Quebec, Upper Town).
Of the 30 Canadians elected for rural constituencies in 1796 only 4 were seigneurs or the sons of seigneurs. Only 2 were military officers and/or of noble status. Of those engaged in trade, 4 were merchants and (the son of a habitant) was a retired fur trader or fur merchant (it is not clear which). 1 was a country merchant and shopkeeper, and 3 were shopkeepers in Quebec. Only 1 of the mercantile group, indeed only 1 of the entire Canadian contingent was a justice of the peace. Although the evidence is often incomplete and for some members there is no information at all, it would appear that only 10 of the rural members were drawn from the upper strata of Canadian society; while at least 16 were drawn from the middle and lower strata.

14 Lacroix (York), Charles-Gaspard de Lanaudière (Warwick), Nicolas Montour (St. Maurice), and Joseph Périmault (Huntington).

15 De Lanaudière and de Rocheblave.

16 Lacroix, Jérôme Martineau (Orléans), Montour and Périmault.

17 Jean-Marie Ducharme (Montreal).

18 Charles-Baptiste Bouc (Effingham): BRH, 1946, 253-70.

19 Nicolas Dorion (Devon); François Huot (Hampshire), son of a habitant: BRH, 1930, 695-702; Alexandre Menut (Cornwallis).

20 Lacroix.

21 The five mentioned in n. 14 and 15 and Louis Dunière, fils (Hertford), O.U., son of a merchant; Étienne Guy (Montreal), student surveyor, son of a merchant; Martineau; B. Panet; and Joseph-François Perrault (Huntington), clerk of the peace for the District of Quebec, nephew of Legislative Councillor François Baby.

22 Bédard, a lawyer (n. 10 above); Charles Bégin, a habitant and probably a tavernkeeper (text, p. 86); François
Of the six Canadians elected for urban constituencies in 1796, 1 was a judge and seigneur, 23 1 the Solicitor-General, 24 1 a lawyer and seigneur, son of a former judge, 25 1 a notary-surveyor, son of a cooper, 26 1 a river pilot, 27 and 1 a carpenter. 28

Bernier (Devon), a habitant (PAC, CO 42, v. 141: 33); Bouc, a rural shopkeeper (n. 18 above); Cherrier, a surveyor (n. 10 above); Nicolas Dorion, a Quebec shopkeeper (text, p. 88); Alexandre Dumas, a notary (text, p. 86-87); Olivier Durocher (Surrey), O.U., son of a rural doctor, grandson of a master draper (BRH, 1921, 78; F.-J. Audet, Contrecœur (Montreal, 1940), 58); Joseph Ethier (York), O.U., son of a rural doctor (J. Ungel Demers, Esquisse monographique de la paroisse de St. Joseph-du-lac (Montreal, 1960), 141); Huot, a Quebec shopkeeper (n. 19 above); Antoine Ménard-Lafontaine (Kent), master builder, father of a carpenter; Alexandre Menut, a Quebec shopkeeper (text, p. 88); Louis Paquet, a habitant (text, p. 87-88); Joseph Planté (Hampshire), a notary, son of a notary; Félix Tétu (Hertford), notary, son of a notary; Jacques Viger (Kent), O.U., son of a master shoemaker and brother of a blacksmith. Three members cannot be identified at all: Charles Millette (Richelieu), Pascal Sirois (Cornwallis), and Joseph Viger (Leinster). The information on Ducharme, n. 17 above, is too ambiguous to attempt his classification.

23 De Bonne (Three Rivers).
24 Louis-C. Foucher (Montreal, East Ward).
25 Jean-Antoine Panet (Quebec, Upper Town).
26 Joseph Papineau (Montreal, West Ward).
27 Augustin Raby (Quebec, Lower Town).
28 Dennis Viger (Montreal, West Ward).
To estimate the degree of ethnic division in the Assembly during the second Legislature it was first necessary to isolate those issues which can be considered controversial. Rather than attempt to use literary sources, which necessarily would have involved a highly subjective judgment, I have examined the Assembly Journals to determine which proposals both generated interest among the members and aroused serious opposition. I have assumed that an issue generated interest when one-third (17) or more of the assemblymen voted on it. Since attendance very often dropped below fifty percent, this figure is not unreasonably low. If one were to apply a figure substantially higher (e.g. one-half) the sample, already small would be unwarrantably reduced, although the results would remain very nearly the same. I have also assumed that a proposal encountered serious opposition where at least twenty-five percent of the members voting were on the losing side. A higher figure, such as one-third (which would also reduce the sample), would have produced results even more striking than those below.

There are certain additional details of method which must be mentioned. First there were many controversial issues (e.g. the suspension of habeas corpus in 1797) which cannot be included in the study, since the Journals do not contain divisions listing the members who voted on them.
Second, procedural issues are almost always ambiguous. An assemblyman, for example, may have favoured a proposal on the merits but have been willing to vote for a brief postponement of the matter. Divisions on procedural questions have therefore been omitted, except where it is clear that such questions went to the substance of the proposals (e.g. an attempt to give the hoist to a bill). Third, the Journals often list several votes on what appear to be substantially the same issue (e.g. votes on an amendment and then on the main motion as amended). In those cases I have chosen the most complete voting list and, provided no members changed sides, I have supplemented the names from the other voting lists. Where one proposal was followed by a different but less far-reaching proposal (e.g. attempt to defeat a bill or amendment, followed by a motion to shorten the duration of the Act), I have used only the votes on the first. Finally, it is well known that Canadian members who were senior government officials (in this case Judge and Executive Councillor P.-A. De Bonne and Solicitor-General L.-C. Foucher) usually felt constrained to vote with the English members. Their voting record is therefore calculated separately.

Each of the twelve controversial issues studied but one (1. v.) involved a contest between a group of assemblymen, the majority of whom were Canadian and another group, the majority of whom were English. This in itself suggests that the ethnic factor was operating but tells nothing of its importance. To measure the degree to which controversial issues divided the House along ethnic lines I have
calculated the percentage of Canadian votes cast for the dominant Canadian positions ("fidelity percentage") and the percentage of English votes cast for the dominant English positions. "Dominant Canadian position" on any issue is the side receiving the majority of Canadian votes. If the two sides included equal numbers of Canadians, the dominant Canadian position was arbitrarily assigned to the winning side. Although arbitrary, this latter procedure obviously does not affect the results in any way. The "dominant English position and the English "fidelity percentage" are established in the same way, mutatis mutandis. It should be noted that if controversial issues had not divided the Assembly along ethnic lines at all, each fidelity percentage would be 50 or a few points above.

Abbreviations

CGO Canadian government officials (De Bonne and Foucher).
DCP Dominant Canadian position
DEP Dominant English position

Issues and votes (with page references to the Journals and literary sources where available)

1. 1797

i) Defeat of a motion by P. A. De Bonne, seconded by John Lees proposing the election of Executive Councillor John Young as Speaker of the Assembly: p. 3-5. Quebec Gazette, 19 Jan. 1797.
ii) Successful motion by Louis Dunière, fils, seconded by Joseph Plante proposing the election of Jean-Antoine Panet as Speaker of the Assembly: p. 3-5. Quebec Gazette, 19 Jan. 1797.

iii) Defeat of a motion by John Young, seconded by William Grant to give the hoist to the report of the committee of the whole recommending amendments to the Road Act: p. 51-53. See text, ch. 3 and 4, passim.

iv) Successful motion by Joseph Plante, seconded by Alexandre Menut that the petition of certain Canadian electors of Buckinghamshire against the election of George W. Allsopp and John Craigie be read: p. 55. For the irregularities allegedly committed by the returning officer, see the petition at p. 55-59 of the Journals. The matter was eventually dropped, p. 61.
v) Successful motion by Joseph Plante, seconded by George W. Allsopp to give the hoist to a bill for the "appointment of inspectors to ascertain the quality and condition of flour for exportation...": p. 83.

vi) Successful amendment of a bill sent down from the Legislative Council, to "prevent persons from exercising certain professions before they have obtained the age of twenty-one years." The amendment, proposed by the committee of the whole, permitted persons to exercise the profession of land surveyor, if eighteen years of age, or married, or legally emancipated: p. 91-93.

2. 1798

1) Successful proposal to amend the Road Act, so as to repeal those portions applying to the cities of Montreal and Quebec (see text p. 84-95): p. 37-39. The Road Act
was eventually amended along these lines: Statutes of Lower Canada, 39 Geo. III (1799), ch. V.

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Note: Speaker Panet cast the deciding vote for the affirmative.

3. 1799

i) Successful motion proposed by John Young, seconded by Attorney-General Sewell to give the hoist to a motion by Joseph Papineau that the House consider providing salaries for the Speaker and members: p. 212.

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4. 1800

i) Successful motion proposed by Pierre Bédard, seconded by Alexandre Menut that the House prepare an address to the Lieutenant-Governor requesting communication of documents bearing on the rights and pretensions of the colony to certain of the properties comprised in the Jesuit Estates: p. 44. For details of this well-known question see Audet, *Le système scolaire*, III, 24-42.
DCP, Winning side  DEP, Losing side

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Calculation of Fidelity Percentages (to the nearest 1%)

1. Canadian members
   - Total votes cast: 222
   - Total votes for the dominant Canadian positions: 186
   - Fidelity %: 84

2. Canadian government officials
   - Total votes cast: 14
   - Total votes for the dominant Canadian positions: 3
   - Fidelity %: 21

3. English members
   - Total votes cast: 108
   - Total votes for the dominant English positions: 97
   - Fidelity &: 90