

Canada - France
Interparliamentary Association



Association interparlementaire
Canada - France

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation to the 60th Anniversary of the
“Groupe sénatorial France-Canada”**

Canada-France Interparliamentary Association

**Paris, France
November 9, 2011**

Report

France-Canada, A friendship for the future 60th Anniversary of the “Groupe senatorial France-Canada”

The Honourable Jean-Claude Rivest, Senator, Vice-Chair of the Canadian Group of the Canada-France Interparliamentary Association, represented the Association during a seminar held in Paris, in the French Senate, on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the “Groupe sénatorial France-Canada”. Two other Canadian Senators attended the event, the Hon. Serge Joyal, P.C., Senator, and the Hon. Claude Carignan, Senator, who attended as a panelist. Canada’s Ambassador to France, His Excellency Marc Lortie, was also present. Serge Pelletier, Secretary of the Canadian Group, accompanied Senator Rivest.

Three debates were held during this day-long event. The first was on the theme “*La France et le Canada face aux défis du « Vivre ensemble » dans des sociétés interculturelles*” (“*France and Canada and the challenges of “living together” in intercultural societies*”). The second, a lunch session, dealt with “*Les enjeux de l’accord de libre-échange entre le Canada et l’Union européenne*” (“*the issues of the free trade agreement between Canada and the European Union*”). The third and last session was entitled “*La France et le Canada : intervenir militairement ensemble : pourquoi?, comment? Les cas de l’Afghanistan et de la Libye*” (“*France and Canada: joint military interventions: why? How? The cases of Afghanistan and Libya*”). The day ended with a wreath-laying and a “lighting the flame” ceremony at the Arc de Triomphe, in the presence of veterans and senior officers of the French army.

Opening session

Senator Marcel-Pierre Cléach, Chair of the France-Canada Parliamentary Group in the French Senate, opened the seminar with a description of the circumstances behind the establishment of the group 60 years ago, on February 16, 1951, an initiative of Senator Robert Brizard. On that occasion, Senator Brizard stated: [*trans*] “I come to ask all of you who remember the efforts Canada made for us during those dark days and who believe that our profound cultural sympathies, even more deeply entwined by the use of a single language, are sufficient motivation for us to establish a friendship group, to please advise me.” The first meeting was held on May 15, 1951 and dealt with youth and higher education. One of the participants was Msgr. Félix-Antoine Savard, then Dean of the Faculté des Lettres at the Université Laval in Quebec City. The following year, trade issues were considered at the meeting, attended by the Canadian trade attaché in Paris. Senator Cléach discussed the activities of Senator Chauvin, who was Chair of the Group from 1972 to 1986 and who was the architect behind the Group’s joining the France-Canada Interparliamentary Association, thereby giving the organization its bicameral structure. Senator Cléach said that an inter-governmental agreement between France and Canada was signed in 1988 and explicitly recognized

the Association's role in bilateral relations. He described how Canadian soldiers fought on French soil during the First and Second World Wars; the Senator mentioned that the topics of the Association's last annual meeting were of importance to both countries, such as nuclear issues and family policy. He welcomed the frank, direct and constructive dialogue that has developed between the parliamentarians from the two countries. Senator Cléach mentioned that he has chaired the senatorial group since 2002 and announced that he will be stepping down as soon as a replacement is found. In this capacity, he hoped the Group will ensure that the friendship between the two countries continues, that the occasionally conflict-ridden issues will be levelled out, and that parliamentarians will continue to find in the Group a rich source of ideas where the experience and the practices of France and Canada complement each other.

Senator Jean-Claude Rivest thanked Senator Cléach for organizing the seminar and offered warm greetings on behalf of the re-elected Chair of the Canadian Group of the Association, the Hon. Claudette Tardif. Senator Rivest noted that the France-Canada Senatorial Group is particularly active. He added that the two countries have the same perception of the major international issues, as they were founded on similar principles of civilization and humanity.

According to Canadian Ambassador Marc Lortie, the 60th anniversary of the group is something to be celebrated. He pointed out that 2012 will mark the 95th anniversary of Vimy. Moving on to the negotiations toward a Canada-European Union free-trade agreement, the Ambassador said the deadline is approaching, and that there are still some difficulties to be worked out. He hoped that the Association would follow the negotiations closely. Mr. Lortie praised the concept of parliamentary diplomacy, calling it irreplaceable in the sound management of bilateral relations, in opening up new avenues and in the resolution of difficulties.

1. France and Canada and the challenges of « living together » in intercultural societies (*La France et le Canada face aux défis du « Vivre ensemble » dans les sociétés interculturelles*)

The first debate was led by François d'Alançon, a journalist with the daily *La Croix*.

a) School: success, equal opportunity, diversity

Senator Jacques Legendre (UMP-Nord), Vice-Chair of the Senate Cultural Affairs Committee, presented the findings of the Committee's fact-finding mission that he led to Canada on April 2, 2010, and whose results were presented in a report published in December of the same year entitled: *De l'éducation au jeu vidéo, pourquoi le Canada est-il parmi les premiers de classe?* ("From education to video games, why is Canada among the leaders?") The mission visited educational institutions in three Canadian provinces: Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia and a number of cities. The mission's objective was twofold: 1) to explore Canadian initiatives in remedial education; and 2) to examine the factors underlying the remarkable adjustment to new technologies in the cultural industries sector. Senator Legendre's presentation focused on the first point.

In its conclusions, the senatorial delegation said it was impressed by the results that stem from Canada's proactive political and pragmatic approach to education. Faced with the challenges of multiculturalism and multilingualism, and children with educational difficulties, Canada nonetheless comes second in solving these issues according to an OECD study, providing a number of Asian countries are excluded. While recognizing that there is a taboo in France in this area, Canada, for instance, identifies the origins of the students in difficulty - Francophone, aboriginal, immigrants, rural - and tailors its educational actions to suit the students. Moreover, Canada spends a higher proportion of its GDP (6.5 % and 11.8 % of its public spending) than France does (6 % and 10.6 % of its public spending). The delegation also noted that in British Columbia, for instance, promoting the virtues of multiculturalism among the students has contributed to a lower number of school dropouts. Early school leaving is a real problem, particularly in Quebec and among boys, but it is often nothing more than a pause between two periods of study, and the government of Quebec has taken a number of remedial actions to resolve this problem. For its part, Ontario has developed a network of model schools for children from poor environments. Schools provide resources for parents to help them raise their children: daycare centres, nutrition and physical exercise, learning of the official languages, first aid and so forth. In conclusion, the Canadian model for educational achievement is based on rapidly identifying children in difficulty, involving families closely with education, the serious contribution of school officials and teachers, regular meetings between teachers and parents, a comprehensive child-centered approach for schoolwork, extracurricular activities, health, nutrition and so on, rapid detection and treatment of eyesight and hearing problems and poor nutrition, pragmatism and sharing of best practices.

Professor Michel Janosz at the Université de Montréal presented the findings of the study entitled "*La stratégie d'intervention – Agir autrement (SIAA 2002-2008)*" (*intervention strategies - acting differently*). The purpose of the study was to establish methods of overcoming the gaps between students from poor areas and those who were more fortunate. The study enabled the government of Quebec to earmark \$25 million over five years starting in 2008 for improving school results at the secondary level, targeting 30,000 students, 4000 staff members and 70 schools. The life experiences in poor areas are complicated and tied in with factors such as the student's life at school (subject failure, lateness, low motivation); personal and interpersonal factors (high-risk lifestyle, drug addiction; difficult relationships with peers and adults, violence); family (parents' low level of schooling, poverty, poor perception of the usefulness of school, isolation, limited guidance for children); social factors (lack of guidance for young people in the community, little known or little used services); and finally school itself (staff mobility, school climate, management of learning and behavior, collaboration between the school, the family and the community). These problems are exacerbated by the distance to schools, the environment where the student lives and lifestyle. Three years after the program was implemented, Mr. Janosz feels that the climate in schools has improved in places where the strategy was followed, truancy and violence at school have decreased, and support for students in difficulty has increased. Delinquency, truancy and drug use has also decreased. On the other hand, educational practices have not changed. The programs had no effect on learning and motivation. The program failed where it was implemented too rashly, where schools did not have

the anticipated support, where the objectives were made wider, where experts were not available, and where staff turnaround was high. Professor Janosz insisted that it was not a question of throwing more money at the problem. According to the educational expert, only optimal (but difficult) coordination between the Ministry of Education, school boards, school officials, the community, teachers, parents and students will ensure the program's success.

b) Social housing and diversity

Senator Cléach (UMP- Sarthe) gave a presentation on the subject. After giving an overview of the French real estate sector, which has tripled in size since the end of World War II, he estimated that 3 million French people are poorly accommodated and 30,000 have no fixed address. The French spend about 30% of their income on accommodation. The concept of social housing developed in Europe after 1945 to fight against the shortage of housing and it was intended for middle-income households. Today, in view of the general level of salaries and the income ceilings set in order to be considered for social housing, nearly 80% of the French population can claim to be entitled to social housing. Between 1995 and 2010, Senator Cléach chaired the OPAC Sarthe Habitat through the department's council, and he noted that 58% of renter households have a monthly income of less than 1,150 euros. Despite what one hears, the proportion of wealthy people with accommodation in HLMs is very small, and social housing does fulfill its goal of providing housing for the less fortunate. The Senator noted that private sector contributions go to house many disadvantaged citizens. In this regard, he noted that social housing in restored heritage buildings, whether public or private, are equivalent, and said that efforts must continue in order to integrate measures designed to save energy and reduce CO₂ emissions into renovation projects. Another objective for the social housing of the future is social diversity, but the cost of land (which is dependent on its location) determines price levels and is an insurmountable obstacle to reaching this goal. He added that with mounting immigration and urbanization, city suburbs have become separate communities, with their own rules. Unemployment has led to widespread non-payment of rent, and the owners therefore have fewer resources with which to improve the buildings. Renters have fled from public housing projects, abandoning housing where criminal gangs are present and the crime rate is increasing. This is why the goal of social diversity in housing has failed. Citing a recent report, Senator Cléach wondered whether this is because diversity implies a certain agreement on morals, a certain level of education, a sense of moderation and responsibility, and these are rare virtues today; social housing cannot be asked to perform miracles, nor has it. But we must keep our sense of proportion, because the problem suburbs are only one part of society's real estate assets and the HLM movement has had remarkable success in some areas of France. For instance, unlike the private sector, the HLM movements have enhanced their mission, including important social assistance and mediation activities, which lead to social stability. In conclusion, not only has social diversity not been achieved, the term itself is no longer even used.

c) The city: shared space or a sense of disconnectedness?

Seine St-Denis Senator Claude Dilain (Socialist Party, Seine St-Denis), former Mayor of Clichy-sous-Bois, painted a rather bleak portrait of this recent enclave, a city where 30,000 people live, the poorest in the department (60% of the residents live under the poverty line), and where there are few businesses. Private condominiums are one cause of problems. There are very few social housing units in Clichy-sous-Bois. The abstention rate in elections is more than 70% and anti-education, anti-police and anti-institutional statements are common. It is a refuge for religious identity and there is no will to offer reasonable accommodation.

For her part, Anie Samson, Mayor of the St-Michel district on the island of Montreal, which covers the areas of Villeray, St-Michel and Parc Extension, described the areas as three worlds apart. The Mayor pointed out some of the problems in this densely populated urban territory of 150,000 inhabitants, half of whom are under the age of 30, and which is inhabited by 100 cultural communities, the largest one made up of people originally from the Maghreb. The district is aging and community associations and movements are thriving. In the past, problems with integration, early school leaving and street gangs were characteristic of this area, but 10 years of efforts made by the municipal authorities, community associations and the police have resulted in a drop in the crime rate and delinquency. Emphasis is placed on prevention rather than repression through community outreach and policing. For instance, the police are often coaches for sports teams and they view this as an opportunity to discuss issues with young people. The district looks for ways to occupy young people and to help the communities mingle. An open conflict between those from the Maghreb and from Italy, for instance, was resolved by calling one of the streets "little Maghreb". Over the years, a higher electoral turnout has been noted in the various ethno-cultural communities.

d) Guaranteeing security - two field experiences

Jean-Pierre Blazy, Mayor of Gonesse, a former deputy (Socialist Party – Val d’Oise), described his commune, which was similar to Clichy-sous-Bois from a number of viewpoints. As Mayor, he worked closely with the police and his goal was to reduce the number of school dropouts. He feels that the debate over security in France has been manipulated by the politicians. In his view, there is a need for a greater consensus in the political class between security policies that are either too lax or too stringent. Since the 2007 law on security came into effect, legislative inflation has occurred. The Mayor has become a virtual guide on whom it is all too easy to rely. Mr. Blazy feels that the French police are too reactive and should be more proactive. The local police are under the authority of the municipalities. Video surveillance is increasing but, according to Mr. Blazy, police and teachers cannot be replaced by cameras. Judicialization is excessive, he feels. In conclusion, what must be done is to balance prevention and repression, prevent young people from dropping out of school, take action on health and poverty and balance individual and collective rights.

Canadian Senator Claude Carignan recently held the position of Mayor of St-Eustache, a suburb northwest of Montreal. Senator Carignan proposed four solutions to the problems of community security: 1) consultation and coordination with all those involved; 2) making each and every resident accountable; 3) continuity in action,

whether it be prevention or repression; and 4) leadership by elected officials at all levels (municipal, provincial and federal). St-Eustache is a municipality with 45,000 inhabitants, made up essentially of families and where there are few immigrants. He gave an example of a type of public intervention that was successful in his municipality. Old St-Eustache went through a period of vandalism by young people, the homeless and the unemployed. The city proposed a project that involved painting 15 houses over a three-year period. The result: the vandalism stopped. Another initiative was to identify security issues and consult with citizens on their perception of crime, only to realize that certain behavior (clothing, vandalism, graffiti, and so on) was worrying to people, and that a number of incidents had not been reported. According to the former Mayor, all municipal programs, such as urban planning, public works and recreation must take the security issue into account. For instance, with regard to recreation, the municipality set up a program where team sports would be free of charge. It established a "crime observatory" to identify and reference criminal acts in the municipality. Finally, the Senator mentioned that the Conservative Party of Canada, which he represents in the Senate, has introduced Bill C-10, which contains a number of legislative measures to promote security.

The discussion took place on this wide range of subjects among all those present. Senator Dilain explained that in 2005 in Clichy-sous-Bois there were no police stations and no police. The state was entirely absent. Mayor Samson stressed the need for political people to be present in the field. Senator Carignan suggested that staff be reassigned, for instance, by replacing one policeman by three street outreach workers. A number of those present highlighted the lack of assistance available for dealing with these problems, which result in social and economic ghettoization.

2. Lunch debate on issues in the free trade agreement between Canada and the European Union

The friendship group held a lunch debate in the Senate on issues in the free-trade agreement between Canada and the European Union. Nearly 100 people were invited to this event including many French parliamentarians, Quebec's Delegate General, the President of the France-Canada Chamber of Commerce, senior officials and business people. Senator Cléach and Ambassador Lortie introduced the subject and presented Philipp Dupuis, assistant negotiator for the European Commission. Senator Cléach pointed out that the agreement under negotiation is of considerable importance for French and Canadian businesses that need to be able to strengthen their exports by winning new markets. The agreement raises some concerns, such as the treatment of cultural property in French, the recognition of protected geographical indications, and the consideration of the specific circumstances of the two countries and territories, including St-Pierre-and-Miquelon.

Mr. Dupuis presented an overview of the negotiations and gave an up-to-date report on the progress made. He delivered a constructive message about the benefits of the agreement for Europe. He said that Canada and the countries of the EU share a history, relations and economic interests. Canada has a GDP that is higher than the European

average and is very rich in resources. The potential for the development of trade is considerable. Canada is the fourth largest foreign investor in Europe and the EU is the second largest investor in Canada. The figures for bilateral trade would be five times higher if branch office sales were considered. Studies of the economic impact of the potential agreement forecast a €20 billion increase in the EU's GDP, and an increase of 25% in European exports. The idea of a free trade agreement emerged in 2007 following a joint study which showed its potential in terms of public procurement and intellectual property. The European Union is seeking access to federal and provincial government procurement contracts, services and investments. It wants to protect registered designations and reduce customs duties on certain items (dairy products and processed agricultural products, for example). Canada is looking to the EU to diversify its export markets, to export its services industries, to access the agricultural market, and to increase professional mobility and the mutual recognition of professional credentials. In answer to a question from the audience, Mr. Dupuis confirmed that the EU will not ask for Quebec's Société des alcools du Québec or Ontario's LCBO to be dismantled.

After two years of negotiations, the parties have completed nine rounds and have entered the final phase. The target for the agreement to be signed has now been set for mid-2012. The work on the legal text is quite far along and the current difficulty is harmonizing rules of origin, which are more rigorous in Canada. Market access on both sides has opened up impressively, but a few difficulties remain. Mr. Dupuis provided reassurances to the audience in terms of cultural services: cultural diversity is not in question and cultural subsidies will not be affected, cultural content and property will be respected. Negotiations are ongoing with regard to geographical indications for products such as wine, cheese and deli meats. Audience members asked Mr. Dupuis questions about certain aspects of the agreement.

3. France and Canada: joint military intervention: why? how? The cases of Afghanistan and Libya

The afternoon debate dealt with the theme of France and Canada: joint military interventions: why and how? The cases of Afghanistan and Libya. For this occasion, a group of senior officials from the French and Canadian Armed Forces, as well as experts from the two countries, had been invited to take part in this discussion.

Susan Sachs, a journalist with the Canadian daily *The Globe and Mail*, led the debate.

a) Intervening: is it legitimate? Is it a question of interest or principle? Real politick or responsibility to protect?

Former Canadian diplomat Jeremy Kinsman, a professor at the University of Berkeley in California discussed the new international concept: our "responsibility to protect". Prof. Kinsman defended Canada's foreign policy in Afghanistan and Libya. He noted his satisfaction with the bilateral military cooperation between the two countries, a new field of action. He noted that Ottawa and Paris mirrored each other in military cooperation,

with the aim of transforming military strategies and methods. The interventions in Afghanistan and in Libya constituted two precedents under Article 5 of the Charter of the United Nations, and rests on a new doctrine cited by France, the “responsibility to respond“. The intervention by the Coalition in Libya was a success. Was it a matter of protecting civilians and their cause? Was it a matter of safeguarding democracy? Was the intervention a distortion of the humanitarian role? These questions were asked because Libyan society was a particular case: that of a civilian population threatened directly with mass murder by the dictatorial regime in place and its army, the lack of civilian organizations, and the inability of the forces to stop the uprising are some of the specific elements that the Coalition had to consider in taking its action. After Kosovo, after Rwanda, experience has shown that non-interference is no longer acceptable, which led to some proactive measures, the need to convince countries that were reluctant to act and of the rightness of the interventions on a case-by-case basis. In this regard, US President Barack Obama’s strategy to leave the United Kingdom, France and Canada some room to maneuver was decisive in terms of the operation’s success. In the future, the international interest of Canada and France will be consistent, and based on respect for human rights.

Patrice Paoli, Director, Northern Africa and the Middle East, French Department of Foreign Affairs, confirmed that Canada and France shared a common standpoint on Libya. He went into detail about the notion of the right and duty to intervene. The occupation of Kuwait by Iraq gave rise to this concept in 2005. If a country refuses to protect its civilian population, the international community, through the Security Council, has the right and the duty to intervene. Mr. Paoli suggested that the Western world is in no position to preach: what it can do is help build democracy and stability through partnerships. The situations in Syria and Yemen constitutes special cases that prevent Coalition action as in Libya, primarily because of the veto by certain countries in the Security Council, but sanctions have been taken against these countries by the Arab League, the UN Human Rights Commission and the Council of the European Union, and other alternatives are being considered such as sending in observers or a United Nations special rapporteur. There are still thorny issues about the Libyan conflict: What are we prepared to do to improve future governance, and how can we build a foundation for democracy in a country that has no tradition of civil society participation?

b) Libya - Coalition action

Vice-Admiral Denis Rouleau, Canada's military representative to NATO, Colonel T. Aiguebelle, Colonel A. Michel and Captain Rey, all of whom are French, gave presentations on the military cooperation between Canada and France during the operation in Libya. Vice Adm. Rouleau explained that the backbone of the operation was NATO, the military organization which, after the Cold War, now defends values such as democracy, the rule of law, liberty and the responsibility to protect a country's citizens. NATO's action resides in "hard power" and "soft power". In Libya, hard power was applied, but the Vice Admiral explained that Libya is not a model for future interventions. Collateral damage was minimal and authorized strikes intentionally kept away from protected areas such as sewers, buildings, infrastructures and airports.

For his part, Col. Michel focused his presentation on the Coalition's aerial response, which was based on shared political, military, strategic and operational objectives. A number of conditions of success were met: 1) mobility capacities, knowledge of the terrain and anticipatory capability; 2) interoperability in supply, in positive identification of targets, in rules of engagement and in estimates of collateral damage identification; and 3) confidentiality, through encrypted channels. Captain Rey explained the specific role of the frigate *Le Forbin* off the coast of Libya in defending the cities of Benghazi and Misurata. Colonel Aiguebelle provided details of the air operations - 40 missions, 320 sorties, 430 missiles, 13,500 shells, 1550 rockets, 600 targets destroyed, and never was there any collateral damage among civilians. He also discussed NATO's audio messages and leaflets intended for Khadafi's troops.

c) Afghanistan, the experience of a field commander

Colonel B. Gardy, former commanding officer 7th Alpine Troops Battalion, gave evidence of his recent personal experience in Afghanistan. After 10 months of preparation, the battalion of 800 French troops that he led spent six months in operations in Afghanistan, in the zone devolved to France in eastern Afghanistan. It was a difficult experience in the field and there were daily battles. The overall strategy was to weaken the insurgency, but aimed primarily at protecting the civilian population and conduct development activities rather than destruction. He pointed out that there was a local character to the fight against the insurgency: the insurgents were mixed in with the civilian population and found refuge when necessary in the villages or in the mountains close by. In Afghanistan it is normal to carry a weapon. It had never been possible for the British, for the Soviets or for the NATO Coalition to conquer the operational area for which he was responsible. The insurrection was nourished by poverty and illiteracy. The civilians were sitting on the fence, waiting to see which side would turn out to be the stronger. According to Colonel Gardy, the situation is evolving, slowly but surely. Ultimately, the solution will be political, not military. At the present time, the main obstacle for the NATO Coalition is the shortage of time, with the announced troop withdrawal scheduled for 2014. The colonel mentioned the soldiers' courage, for the risks are very real. Two soldiers died during the mission, four have been severely paralyzed, and a number suffer from psychological injuries. But he added that the soldiers knew before they left that they were volunteers, they were passionate, they believed in their mission, as though they were defending the people of France.

The various presentations were followed by a question period.

The seminar on Canada-France cooperation in Libya and in Afghanistan concluded with agreement on the issue of protecting civilians during military operations, recognition of the importance of the Coalition action that allowed for optimal exploitation of the specific strengths of each of the partners. In the case of Libya specifically, the experience was such a positive one that it strengthened collaboration between the two countries.

5. Wreath-laying and lighting the flame

Senator Rivest and Senator Joyal accompanied a delegation of French parliamentarians, including Senator Marcel-Pierre Cléach and Deputy Georges Colombier, and veterans to the Arc de Triomphe, for a wreath-laying and lighting the flame ceremony, as part of the Remembrance Week activities and on behalf of the Canada–France Interparliamentary Association.

6. Conclusion

The seminar was a resounding success both with regard to the participation of parliamentarians and other speakers and to the level of quality of the statements by the various speakers. A true exchange of information at the highest level took place on bilateral cooperation, and military, economic and social issues, confirming the excellent relationship between Canada and France.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable Claudette Tardif, Senator
President, Canada-France Interparliamentary Association

Travel Costs

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| ASSOCIATION | Canada-France Interparliamentary Association |
| ACTIVITY | 60th Anniversary of the “Groupe sénatorial France-Canada” |
| DESTINATION | Paris, France |
| DATES | November 9, 2011 |
| DELEGATION | |
| SENATE | The Honourable Jean-Claude Rivest |
| HOUSE OF COMMONS | N/A |
| STAFF | Mr. Serge Pelletier, Association Secretary |
| TRANSPORTATION | \$ 5,570.59 |
| ACCOMMODATION | \$ 950.52 |
| HOSPITALITY | \$ 0.00 |
| PER DIEMS | \$ 746.08 |
| OFFICIAL GIFTS | \$ 0.00 |
| MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES | \$ 0.00 |
| TOTAL | \$ 7,267.19 |