

The Right Responds to Change: Opposition to the Robichaud Reforms in New Brunswick

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Many observers have pointed out the impact of the Robichaud reforms in bringing about a new, modern, and liberal blueprint for society.¹ This chapter, however, will analyze another aspect of this period — that is, the sometimes virulent reactions which surfaced in response to those reforms. We will examine whether an anglophone minority in New Brunswick simply rejected the idea of change, developing a reactionary discourse which in many respects was reminiscent of the radical right wing of the 1950s and 1960s. This opposition to progress has characteristically been analyzed as a pathological reaction to modernity which, coming from disconcerted and increasingly marginalized individuals, led only to extreme reaction rather than constructive social action.² Such an analysis, however, should be treated cautiously. Indeed, the radical right wing gave expression to a backward-looking, even belligerent reaction on the part of individuals who were anxious about the massive changes taking place. However, the mobilization that took form in the 1960s laid the groundwork for the wave of neo-conservatism that returned in full force in the early 1980s, this time less radical and better prepared for election, as can be seen by the victories gained by Margaret Thatcher in 1976, Ronald Reagan in 1980, and Brian Mulroney in 1984.

As for the New Brunswick context, I will endeavour to demonstrate the existence of a radical right wing which was mobilized against the Robichaud program. This hypothesis will be supported

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1. Robert Young, "Remembering Equal Opportunity: Clearing the Undergrowth in New Brunswick," *Canadian Public Administration* 30 (Spring 1987): 88-102; Robert Young, "L'édification de l'État provincial et le développement régional au Nouveau-Brunswick," *Égalité* (Fall-Winter 1984-85): 125-52; Richard Wilbur, *The Rise of French New Brunswick* (Halifax: Formac, 1989).
 2. Two important books on the radical right wing bring together experts on American political sociology of the 1950s. See Daniel Bell, ed., *The Radical Right* (New York: Anchor Books, 1964); Daniel Bell, ed., *The New American Right* (New York: Criterion Books, 1955).

by two factors. On the one hand, opponents of the reforms developed a classic, radical right-wing argument against the centralization being embraced by the state. On the other hand, some anglophones denounced the recognition of new rights for the francophone minority. As in the United States, the racist or, more specifically, nativist dimension of this discourse was omnipresent, bringing about a deterioration of the political climate.

Before turning our attention to the situation in New Brunswick, it would be pertinent to describe the global context of the rejection of modernization as it was articulated by the radical right wing.

■ The Rejection of Modernization

The 1960s have been described as a turning point because of several major changes that were taking shape at the time, among them the building of the welfare state. This increase in state intervention took place in an economic context of prosperity and growth in the West during the “golden years” immediately following the more difficult postwar period. In political terms, the reality of a passive, rather docile citizen, interested primarily in defending his or her own well-being, corresponded perfectly with the dominant ideology of the time, which consisted in believing that “the political framework stood to gain from lack of political involvement.”³ What is often overlooked, however, is the fact that the liberalization of society brought about a democratization of the political space, leading to the recognition of pluralistic demands from minorities such as blacks, the Spanish-speaking community, and francophones. In reaction, a certain type of white voter began to lose patience, finding it difficult to grasp the changes taking place in society. One theory which seems to illustrate the reaction of the right wing in the 1950s and 1960s is the mass society theory developed by William Kornhauser. This theory maintains that the rapid dislocation of traditional structures can alienate some individuals and lead to a mobilization against the idea of progress.⁴ At a time when there were frequent references to “the end of ideologies,” the radical right wing was perceived as a peripheral ideology that went against the liberal culture of the times and one that was destined to disappear.

3. Pascal Perrineau, ed., *L'engagement politique: déclin ou mutation?* (Paris: Presses de la Fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 1994), 15.

4. William Kornhauser, *The Politics of Mass Society* (New York: Free Press, 1959).

The appearance of a partisan radical right wing affected several democratic societies. In France in the 1950s, the Poujade movement with its “shopkeeper’s discourse” spoke for those who were anxious about or excluded from modernization. According to Michel Winock, “Poujadisme mobilized people who tended to be left behind by these changes as well as the outcasts of society. Its aim was to maintain the traditional structure of the French economy. It opposed modernity, and feared a new world order”⁵ (translation). During the national elections of 1956, the Poujadiste candidates won fifty-two seats in the National Assembly and 11.6 percent of the popular vote. Pierre Poujade channeled not only the traditional views of the rural people against the power of technocrats and major economic interests but also the values of the middle class, who were frightened by the sheer scale of the modernization taking place. While primarily mobilized against fiscal reforms, the movement also contained racist and anti-Semitic elements, which brought it closer to the tradition of the extreme right wing in France.⁶ In the United States, the will of the Democratic party to recognize the civil rights of the black community caused political upheaval. The radical right wing found its niche in the Republican party, supported by various WASP pressure groups such as the John Birch Society and the Christian Crusade.⁷ In 1964 Barry Goldwater was nominated as the Republican presidential candidate through the support of the radical right wing within the party. However, this defender of the white population suffered bitter defeat by President Johnson in the presidential elections. Another more promising political phenomenon was the spectacular rise to power of the governor of Alabama, George Wallace. With his populist discourse and style, Wallace was the perfect spokesman for the ordinary American frustrated by Washington’s egalitarian and liberal politics. During the 1968 presidential campaign, Wallace channeled the fears of the white middle class in the South that they would lose ground to the minorities in American society.⁸ Canada did not escape this general trend. The Social Credit party also underwent a radical shift to the right, primarily in Alberta and Quebec. During the 1950s and 1960s, the premier of Alberta, Ernest Manning, fiercely opposed the

5. Michel Winock, *Histoire de l'extrême-droite en France* (Paris: Seuil, 1994) 226.

6. Pierre Birnbaum, *Le peuple et les gros: histoire d'un mythe* (Paris: Grasset, 1975) 62–64.

7. Seymour Martin Lipset, “The Right-Wing Revival and the Backlash in the United States,” in *Revolution and Counterrevolution* (New York: Basic Books, 1968) 304–32.

8. See Michael Kazin, “George Wallace and the Making of the New Right,” in *The Populist Persuasion* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 221–42.

federal government's interference in the areas of health and employment. According to Alvin Finkel, this policy shift to the right, which saw the party articulating antigovernment, anti-Ottawa, and anti-Semitic views,⁹ was a departure from its reformist stand of the 1930s.

These cases reveal three interesting facts. First, the radical right wing flatly rejected the political and economic reforms of the “new deal” being proposed by the liberal elite, judging them to be collectivist and even socialist. This dimension was very prominent in the anglo-protestant political culture, which emphasizes individual autonomy and prefers a more individualistic political and economic approach over the interventionism inherent in the welfare state.¹⁰ Indeed, a strong mistrust could be observed on the part of the middle class with regard to intervention in society by the state, which it saw as cumbersome and authoritarian. Second, there was apprehension about losing an ideal form of democracy which gives a clear voice to ordinary people at the base of the political system. The populist dimension was prominent within this political discourse. Finally, the radicalism of the discourse could be seen even more clearly in its refusal to recognize the uniqueness of others. In this regard, the radical right wing drew heavily from the nativism tradition, which can be defined as a blend of extreme nationalism with ethnocultural, racial, and religious elements.¹¹ In New Brunswick, a conservative and nativist radical right wing was able to channel the frustration of certain individuals who were worried that the new blueprint for society might be acted on.

■ A Philosophy of Equality: The Robichaud Reforms in New Brunswick

A welfare state was set up in New Brunswick during the 1960s in response to a need for development, with the goal of promoting a massive program to redistribute wealth and create equal opportunities. Going beyond economic concerns, the Robichaud reforms promoted new values which were centred on quality of life, as recognized by the Programme of Equal Opportunity and the equality accorded the two linguistic communities.

9. Alvin Finkel, *The Social Credit Phenomena in Alberta* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989); Michael Stein, *The Dynamics of Right-Wing Protest: A Political Analysis of Social Credit in Quebec* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973).

10. See Jerome L. Himmelstein, *To the Right: The Transformation of American Conservatism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

11. See Trevor Harrison, *The Reform Party and Right-Wing Populism in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 164.

Louis Robichaud's historic victory permitted two things. On the one hand, it accelerated the state building process begun under the Flemming administration (1952–60), a process largely supported by the Diefenbaker government's regional development policy. What set it apart from earlier administrations was the political will of the elite to modernize the provincial government apparatus. On the other hand, this victory awakened the identity of a francophone core in Fredericton and led to its consolidation.¹² As pointed out by Richard Wilbur, New Brunswick was going through its own Quiet Revolution at this time: "The 1960s were the coming-out years for French New Brunswickers. Louis Robichaud was their political proof and he underscored the French renaissance with his program of Equal Opportunity."¹³ The young Robichaud was a man of vision who aspired to create a plan for society that transcended language barriers and thus upheld the principle of justice for all. The leitmotif of the Robichaud reforms was improving the quality of life for every individual, a change which could not be brought about without massive state intervention in society. It should be noted that Robichaud saw these reforms as fitting into the historical context not only of Canada but also of the United States with its massive civil rights movement and President Kennedy's vision of society. In this important transition period, New Brunswick had to set the national example of a province built on harmony between anglophones and francophones: "Our province is a sort of mini-Canada in terms of the proportion and mentality of its ethnic components. Let us endeavour to make the most of this situation, finding mutual enrichment through the advantages offered by both groups, by both cultures. Let us remain united for all time"¹⁴ (translation).

Given the context of strong economic growth, a significant increase in financial support from the federal government, and a shift in economic activity towards the service industries, the provincial government sensed the urgency of ushering in major change. According to the political leaders, the most pressing challenge to be addressed was the issue of regional disparities that existed between the North, which tended to be marginalized, and the South, which was

12. Jacques Paul Couturier, Réjean Ouellette, and Wendy Johnson, "La révolution tranquille acadienne," in *Un passé composé: le Canada de 1850 à nos jours* (Moncton: Éditions d'Acadie, 1996), 330–31.

13. Wilbur, *The Rise of French New Brunswick*, 222.

14. Speech by Louis J. Robichaud, New Brunswick National Assembly, 22 February 1953: cited in Della M. M. Stanley, *Louis Robichaud: A Decade of Power* (Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, 1984), 19.

enjoying growth at a rate that was fairly close to the national average. There was a need, therefore, to introduce a more centralized power structure which would be able to address the basic needs of the population in the areas of health, education, justice, and language rights. The first steps taken towards centralizing the provincial government apparatus were the creation of the Byrne Commission and the introduction of the Programme of Equal Opportunity. The Official Languages of New Brunswick Act, with its recognition of language equality that went beyond strictly economic criteria, could be seen as the culmination of these efforts towards reform. Overall, the vast majority of the New Brunswick population welcomed the government's plans for moderization. The Acadian elite were sympathetic to the Robichaud program because it clearly promoted the principles of equity and equality between individuals.¹⁵ On the other hand, some anglophones saw it as a stark departure from the decentralized political practices of the past and from the administrative autonomy of the counties.

■ The Reactions

During the 1960s, the Robichaud reforms sparked reactions from within both linguistic communities. In the Acadian community, the rise of a modern political apparatus benefited a new secular elite while marginalizing traditional structures such as the church and the community. Sociologists have analyzed this period from the perspective of the secularization of the public space: "The Robichaud reforms displaced the Catholic church as the organizational and ideological basis of Acadian nationalism because they vested decision-making capacity almost exclusively within the provincial bureaucracy."¹⁶ The reaction to this seems to have come from a very small minority, as the Acadian premier had gained the confidence of the Acadian elite. It was not until later that more leftist francophone opposition began to emerge from outside political circles expressing criticism of the political establishment. Conversely, loud and well-organized opposition from an anglophone minority became an obstacle to cooperation. The rise of

15. See, for example, the newspaper *L'Évangéline's* continual support for the Robichaud reforms, especially in the education sector. Alcide Godin and Aldéo Renaud, "L'Évangéline et la réforme Robichaud en éducation au Nouveau-Brunswick, 1960-1970," in *L'Évangéline 1887-1982: entre l'élite et le peuple*, ed. Gérard Beaulieu (Moncton: Éditions d'Acadie, Chaire d'études acadiennes, Université de Moncton, 1997), 322–42.

16. Louis F. Cimino, "Ethnic Nationalism among the Acadians of New Brunswick: An Analysis of Ethnic Development" (Ph.D. thesis in anthropology, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, 1977), 110.

a francophone elite to power caused some consternation among a number of anglophones, who had historically controlled the political and economic levers of power. Two kinds of reaction could thus be identified. On the one hand, there was opposition to reforms aimed at reorganizing powers; on the other hand, there was an anglophone reaction to the Official Languages of New Brunswick Act.

■ Opposition to Centralization

In 1967 the Robichaud program abolished the counties as a government structure under the pretext that they no longer reflected the province's economic and social realities. When Fredericton proposed a new division of powers between the central government and the counties, part of the anglophone population voiced suspicion of centralization, seeing it as a threat to the historical power wielded by the local authorities. Thus, several groups rose up against the Robichaud reforms.

First, there was strong opposition from the business world, which was largely dominated by anglophone interests. The Robichaud government was accused of trying to make the more prosperous counties cover the costs of reform. Some anglophones saw the Programme of Equal Opportunity as an underhanded manoeuvre aimed at improving the lot of the Acadian population at the expense of the anglophone majority. Presented in rather simplistic terms, the view was that the government was "robbing Peter to pay Pierre": "The Equal Opportunity Program was popular with the Acadians who tend to live in the disadvantaged areas of the province to receive immediate benefits of it, and almost treasonable to the Anglophones, who tended to live in the advantaged areas of the province to receive no short-term benefits from it."¹⁷

K. C. Irving, the New Brunswick financier and business magnate, was initially in favour of the Robichaud government's action, but opposed implementation of the reforms. He took issue with the harmonization of property taxes based on real market value because he feared he would lose the fiscal privileges he had acquired in the 1950s' context of decentralization. Faced with the expanding role of the state in society, Irving brandished the "overload crisis" argument, expressing the view that the state constituted a hindrance to the democratic

17. Robert Garland and George Machum, *Promises, Promises... An Almanac of New Brunswick Elections* (Saint John: University of New Brunswick Press, 1981), 42.

forces of the marketplace: “In other words, the government may — if it so wishes — grant some industries the right to remain in business, while retaining the power — a power morally wrong if not illegally seized — to force other industries out of business. Gentlemen, it is difficult to believe that such legislation could be proposed in New Brunswick.”¹⁸ By revealing several flaws in the work of the Byrne Commission, Irving gained the support of the anglophone counties and used the anglophone press, of which he controlled most of the shares, to launch his attacks against the government.

Second, the political elite made its voice heard. The Robichaud reforms established stable and more professional political institutions, in particular by increasing the number of public servants and thereby settling political power in Fredericton. The Conservative party, which formed the Opposition, channeled the discontent of some anglophones. According to the leader of the opposition, Cyril Sherwood, the logic of centralization significantly compromised the capacity of individuals to criticize the political system: “The report’s philosophy [Byrne] is self-destroying, it denies people the right to offer public criticism.”¹⁹ The government’s program also jeopardized the survival of the local structures necessary for democracy: “Local government, as we know it and cherished it, is to be replaced by excessive and arbitrary centralization of control by the Cabinet over local affairs, a restraint, if not denial of a local voice in local affairs.”²⁰ At first, the Conservative party gained the support of local elites who were frightened by the extent of centralization taking place. Under the leadership of the mayor of Fredericton, William T. Walker, the province’s larger municipalities (Saint John, Lancaster, Fredericton, Moncton, Campbellton, and Edmundston) contested the Liberals’ policies.²¹ In 1967 Charles Van Horne, the new Conservative party leader, who was backed by K. C. Irving, voiced opposition to the reforms being implemented, portraying Robichaud as an authoritarian figure: “I see my duty as the complete and absolute suppression of the Robichaud dictatorship.”²² During the 1967 election campaign, Van Horne adopted a populist approach in hopes of representing the aspira-

18. Russell Hunt and Robert Campbell, *K. C. Irving: The Art of the Industrialist* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973), 140.

19. Cited in Stanley, *Louis Robichaud*, 135.

20. Cited in Cimino, “Ethnic Nationalism among the Acadians of New Brunswick,” 98.

21. Richard Wilbur, “New Brunswick,” in *The Canadian Annual Review* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), 135.

22. Quoted in Garland and Machum, *Promises, Promises*, 43.

tions of ordinary anglophone citizens. The Conservatives defended the principle which held that state intervention in economic activity put a damper on initiative and should therefore be discouraged. The Conservatives also accused the Robichaud government of calling on *socialist experts* and of running a policy of economic planning that was close to the theories of social democracy.²³

Finally, a more virulent expression of discontent with the Robichaud reforms, particularly the Programme of Equal Opportunity, could be found in the anglophone press. Irving controlled four of the province's leading daily newspapers, which he encouraged to publish countless letters to the editor. These letters, particularly those published in the Fredericton *Daily Gleaner*, voiced the general outcry of the anglophone population. Based on an analysis of its content, Daniel Peter Dean noted that between 1 January and 26 February 1966, the *Gleaner* published sixty-five editorials, all opposed to Robichaud, and seventy letters to the editor, of which only seven favoured his policies.²⁴ Michael Wardell, who owned the monthly *Atlantic Advocate* and who was responsible for the editorial page of the *Gleaner* until 1968, attacked Robichaud directly. This exuberant and disturbing individual, a personal friend of Irving and tied to conservative Loyalist circles, could not tolerate a minority group being given room to express its uniqueness. Consequently, he set out to battle Robichaud's policies and attacked the Acadians directly: "This is war ... to the death. We are about to see the break-up of the Robichaud government."²⁵ Wardell believed that the Liberal party victory signified "a French takeover" and was detrimental to the Loyalist establishment in the province. This view of events was based on the precedent created during the 1925 provincial election, when the Liberals, under the leadership of Pierre J. Veniot, were said to have defended only the interests of the francophone Catholic community, thus provoking "an English backlash."²⁶ The *Gleaner's* editorials even resorted

23. Anglophone opponents of the Robichaud reforms spread the rumour that the ideological basis of the government's plan was socialist; it sprang from Robichaud's decision to send Alexandre Boudreau, a member of the Byrne Commission, to Sweden to study the social-democratic model in that country.

24. Daniel Peter Dean, "Strategies of Silence: Acadian Images in the New Brunswick Press" (Master's thesis in sociology, Carleton University, Ottawa, 1981), 145.

25. Michael Wardell, *Daily Gleaner*, 22 December 1965.

26. In 1923, after the Liberal premier Foster stepped down, Acadian Minister Pierre J. Veniot became interim leader of the party. On 9 June 1925, Veniot called an election. Following a difficult campaign, the Liberals suffered a bitter defeat, which some observers attributed to the refusal of anglophone Protestants to support a francophone Catholic.

to personal and racist attacks, supported by caricatures by William Werthman. Robichaud was depicted alternately as a little dictator (half Louis XIV, half Napoleon), as industrialist K. C. Irving's lackey, or as the Acadians' victorious leader, bringing his people back from the Deportation of 1755.²⁷ In Wardell's view, Robichaud was crude and arrogant, "a little man with a violently expressive mouth which grimaces as he articulates a torrent of words on any subject in French or English."²⁸ Wardell claimed that the premier would not even be in office were it not for the support of the most influential man in the province, K. C. Irving: "Louis Robichaud seems to have forgotten what he owes Mr. Irving.... If it had not been for the generous help Mr. Irving gave him as a newcomer in 1960, Mr. Robichaud might still be a small-time lawyer in Richibucto rather than the Premier of New Brunswick who has won two elections under false pretences."²⁹

Language tensions could easily have been sparked during this period. However, from 1967 onwards the extremist positions of some anglophone groups were marginalized by the political will of both traditional parties to recognize bilingualism. Advocacy on behalf of anglophone unilingualism, as it existed in several regions of the country, soon took on the appearance of a desperate battle against modernization.

■ Antifrancophone Unilingualism

In Canada, the great majority of anglophones were in favour of Prime Minister Trudeau's uncompromising, if somewhat cavalier, attitude toward Quebec nationalism.³⁰ In the context of building a modern national identity, official bilingualism and multiculturalism were accepted as symbols of national unity. There was opposition, however, from anglophone federal civil servants worried about the new selection criteria to be used in the civil service, and from a fringe of the population suspicious of any federal government intrusion in society. More intense opposition based on principle came from certain traditionalists who accused the Trudeau government of misrep-

27. One caricature that appeared in the *Atlantic Advocate* illustrated Robichaud's victory as a return of the Acadians from the Deportation of 1755, suggesting it represented a threat to the English who had been in New Brunswick since 1784, *Atlantic Advocate*, June, 1960, 23.

28. Michael Wardell, "Responsible Self-Government: Battle Map of New Brunswick," *Atlantic Advocate*, February 1966, 15.

29. *Ibid.*, 15.

30. Roger Gibbins, *Conflict and Unity* (Scarborough: Nelson, 1990), 78.

resenting the foundations of the national culture. Historian Donald Creighton believed quite simply that bilingualism was a myth:

For six years, ever since the lately deposed Premier Jean Lesage won power in the province of Quebec, English Canadians have been subjected to what is undoubtedly the most extreme example of the political hard sell in their experience. For six long years, the advocates of French Canadian nationalism have used every conceivable form of persuasion, compulsion, shock and menace to compel English Canadians to buy a particular view of Confederation and French Canada's place in it.³¹

In New Brunswick, ethnic division over the question of bilingualism might well have led to a deterioration of the political climate. In 1969, however, the two traditional parties avoided addressing the language question from an ethnic point of view, preferring instead to maintain the historical principle of accommodation between the two linguistic communities.³² The new leader of the Conservative party, Richard Hatfield, fully accepted the principle of an official languages act: "We have already taken position that the English and French languages should be the official languages of New Brunswick. We have supported that principle already. We support it today and we will continue to support it."³³ On the other hand, there were objections to bilingualism from outside the political arena, from radical antifranophone groups which were clearly more comfortable on nonpartisan ground.

Several small anglophone groups, such as the Voice of Canada, the Canadian Protestant League, and the Canadian Loyalist Association (CLA), challenged the federal push for two official languages. In New Brunswick, the CLA, also known as the Maritime Loyalist Association, was the most visible and ardent defender of the traditional symbols of the British Dominion, such as the flying of the Union Jack, the singing of "God Save the Queen," and the use of English as the only official language of the country. The CLA, created in 1968, was based mainly in the Moncton area. Numerous letters sent to newspapers by members of this organization urged the population to rise up against a government which it accused of high treason. The following excerpt

31. Donald Creighton, *Toward the Discovery of Canada* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1972), 256.

32. This is the theory defended by Edmond Aunger, *In Search of Political Stability: A Comparative Study of New Brunswick and Northern Ireland* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1981).

33. New Brunswick, *Legislative Assembly Debates* (28 March 1968), 355.

from a letter sent to the premier's office on 5 October 1967 is revealing in this regard:

The Canadian Loyalist Association wishes to congratulate you on the masterful manner in which you have deceived the people of New Brunswick and Canada by leading them to believe that New Brunswick has two official languages. Your senseless, degenerate and ruinous official language act is one of the worst evils anyone ever tried to perpetrate on the citizens of this province.³⁴

The CLA took on anyone involved in this supposed plot to destroy the country, especially Pierre Elliot Trudeau (the great defender of minorities, "Trudeau the legalizer of the sin of homosexuality; Trudeau the friend of France and Communist China")³⁵ and his francophone ministers: "Today, Canada is in the hands of three Frenchmen: Trudeau, Marchand and Pelletier (a hater of all English) and no English-speaking person of consequence is attached to the Prime Minister's staff."³⁶

According to the CLA, bilingualism would lead straight to the French colonization of Canada. There was a fear of being "had" by the francophone: "We refuse to live in a bilingual province. We have built this country only to lose what we have achieved to the French for their benefit."³⁷ This extremist group was bent on fighting this policy by any and all means, often alluding to the risk of violent conflict between the two linguistic communities. According to RCMP documents, the anglophone reaction in Moncton against the demonstration by francophone students at the Université de Moncton was followed closely because of a fear that the anglophone movements might get out of hand: "The League believes that an awakened populace can wield a sound influence upon a problem which if not checked could escalate and blow up into senseless destructive hostilities. While we are yet able, we must unite our Protestant forces to challenge powers which could conceivably develop into a bloody civil war."³⁸

34. Bulletin of the Canadian Loyalist Association, quoted in P. J. Fitzpatrick, "New Brunswick: The Politics of Pragmatism," in *Canadian Provincial Politics*, ed. Martin Robin (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1978), 126.

35. *Ibid.*, 127.

36. *Ibid.*

37. Quoted in Dean, "Strategies of Silence," 171.

38. Quoted in *ibid.*, 167.

The Orange Lodge of New Brunswick, a declining force since the beginning of the twentieth century, also voiced extremist views on bilingualism.³⁹ Division was feared: "We must get away from cloying sentiment and political shenanigans and think of this great country. Bilingualism divides, not unites a country."⁴⁰ The Moncton section of the Orange Lodge wanted a law adopted which would make English the only language in the country: "Common sense indicates that the dual language proposal is impractical and that the solution lies in one language, English, being spoken in every corner of Canada. If this were so, it would not be long before many of the barriers that keep the French Canadians in Quebec isolated from the rest of Canada would be removed, and a great step toward national unity would be taken."⁴¹

Overall, these reactionary ideas seem to have appealed to individuals who were distraught over the sheer scale of the changes taking place. At the end of the 1960s, this radical fringe openly reacted to the recognition of the francophone fact, but never defined a real alternative to the liberal society being implemented. As pointed out by Louis Cimino, these anglophones did not see the necessity of formulating demands aimed at protecting their collective rights: "English-speaking leaders did not aspire to be leaders of the English or to struggle for English communities."⁴² Instead, they expressed mistrust of and frustration with the government, which in their view had abandoned them.

■ Conclusion

The Robichaud reforms were part of a major shift toward liberal modernization. In the space of one decade, New Brunswick embarked upon a complete overhaul of the administrative structure of the

39. In the nineteenth century, the Orangemen swept through New Brunswick. A first violent phase of the movement involved street confrontations between Protestant Orangemen and Irish Catholics in Saint John and Woodstock. In 1870 there were strong religious tensions in the province because of a school crisis over the lack of strictness in the law concerning Catholic religious instruction. Herman Pitt, head of the Orangemen, was elected as an independent MLA in 1892 and made himself the great defender of the Protestant camp. Pitt avowed visceral hatred of Catholics and radicalized the religious divide in political life. See Scott See, *Riots in New Brunswick: Orange Nativism and Social Violence in New Brunswick in the 1840s* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993); Michael Hatfield, "Pitt and Race and Religion in New Brunswick Politics," *Acadiensis* 4 (1975): 46–65.

40. *Telegraph Journal*, 14 February 1964. Quoted in Stanley, *Louis Robichaud*, 180.

41. Quoted in Dean, "Strategies of Silence," 125.

42. Cimino, "Ethnic Nationalism among the Acadians of New Brunswick," 145.

province and adopted the Official Languages of New Brunswick Act as a new symbol that recognized the equality of the two peoples. However, extremist reaction on several levels (economic, political, antifrancophone) provoked tensions between anglophones and francophones and was analyzed as a fierce response to the idea of a centralizing modernization of the political apparatus.

At the end of the 1960s, the anglophone population greeted the Liberal election defeat with a certain relief, and looked forward to a pause in the winds of reform that had been blowing across the province and to a break in the extremist antiestablishment rhetoric. By the end of the decade it was clear that both the government and its leader were exhausted. The victory by the Conservative party and its leader, the young Richard Hatfield, marked an important change in the province's political climate: a silent anglophone majority had taken issue with the departure from established social patterns caused by modernization and were placing their confidence in the representatives of order and security. A similar change could also be seen in other democratic societies — with Nixon in the United States, and de Gaulle in France after the turbulent events of May 1968. In New Brunswick, there is a tendency to overlook the way the Conservative party, seen as a stronghold of anglophone interests, made room in the political apparatus for the francophone fact. Under the leadership of a francophile who showed respect for the Robichaud heritage and for the new spirit of the Canadian nation, the Conservatives continued the effort to promote the language and socio-economic gains of the Acadian population. This francization of the Conservative party provoked a strong reaction among anglophones in the early 1980s, some of whom sought refuge in the creation of a new political party in New Brunswick, the Confederation of Regions party.