

## Values and Rights - Denied

The Systemic Exclusion experienced by a Québécoise resident of anglophone/francophone Canadian origin, married to a native Beauceron and implicated in the Beauce for the past 25 years.

### **A comparative illustration of how attitudes have changed and declined between 1990 and 2003 from the perspective of a non-immigrant.**

My name is Monica Henry. I live in Saint Joseph de Beauce and am therefore Québécoise ... the francophone in my mind is implied ... I am originally from London, Ontario. I have been married to a man from the Beauce for 25 years and have relocated here, twice. The first time from 1982 until 1990, and most recently from 2003 until the present. We have raised two children here. My mother is originally from Québec and my husband is one of 16 children, all married with families, all in the area. I am bilingual, of anglo-franco Canadian origin, Roman Catholic, and therefore not in need of Quebec cultural accommodation. I am however, apparently in urgent need of Beauceron cultural accommodation and inclusion today, that I did not require between 1982 and 1990.

The discrimination here today, is at an institutional level rather than a social level, and it is flagrant and most alarming, accepted and unapologetically promoted.. My experience here, from 2003 until the present, as opposed to my earlier relocation between 1982 and 1990, demonstrates that the Code and the Charter are both consistently and opening ignored, by publically funded or elected bodies mandated to support and advance the initiatives of Economic Development and Employment Initiatives.

I was astounded to find that I was one of the few naive people here to be unaware of the discriminatory attitude that prevails today. I continue to experience exclusion even though I have lived and been implicated here for 25 years. I have seen it reported throughout the Beauce. It is not limited to immigrants but rather pertains to 'anyone not from here'. More frustrating, these same bureaucrats and industry leaders constantly lament the shortage of qualified experienced workers with specialised skills.

The distorted and illegal position appears to be advanced as a matter of cultural protection and national pride. Excluding me from gainful employment in my particular field of expertise or from entrepreneurial services that would allow me to create my own opportunities, has the effect, of denying my family the opportunity to secure a gainful living above the poverty level.

It imposes a level of isolation and uncertainty in otherwise productive, confident, socially oriented people wishing to participate in the community. It wounds the spirit of every member of the family, in a frighteningly real sense. It disallows equality. It damages children.

In practical economic terms, it negates the specific contribution I can make, by means of my acquired competence, to the economic development in the area. '**Le manque de main-d'œuvre, un frein au développement des entreprises de la région dans la Beauce.**' Can it be that 'cultural purity' is a higher priority than 'economic security' ?

It is one thing to meet individual's with reservations based on confronting the unfamiliar. It is quite another to face direct discrimination at a systemic level based on the notion that 'a pure race' must be maintained. So alarming is that possibility that I resisted believing the implications of my own repetitive experiences, coupled with the matter of fact disclosures of those living here. It seems that everyone knows it exists and there is nothing to be done about it, whether one agrees or disagrees. The extremely detrimental consequences appear to be unknown or not considered, by these otherwise compassionate, generous people, who seem reconciled to the perception that they are 'powerless'.

**THE URGENT NEED FOR ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY AND REFORM AT THE SYSTEMIC LEVEL BY COMMUNITY LEADERS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.**

I am a Quebecer and a resident of Saint Joseph de Beauce. My husband of 25 years is a member of one of the largest families in the area, he is one of 16 children, all married, with children and grandchildren in the area, as well as many aunts, uncles, cousins etc. It is safe to say that I am either related to or familiar with pretty well everyone in the area.

I am bilingual, originally from London, Ontario. My mother is francophone, originally from the Beauré area. Following her academic studies, she moved to southern Ontario in 1952 to begin her career as a medical laboratory analyst. Imagine that - a young woman in a career position who spoke no English. I am almost embarrassed to lament my circumstances in light of the obstacles my mother had to face. Thankfully her courage and strength meant that she succeeded, met my father. An Irish Catholic, and had a family of 7 children. My father was born in the London area, but ironically, in terms of our ethnic background, we were in the minority in Ontario.

Our community in Ontario is 75% immigrant, Portuguese and Dutch, mainly Catholic but many other religions as well. Our family is spread throughout the country, unlike this area. Employment requirements often require skills in the cultural languages of the area. Again, unlike here. Second generation immigrants did mix well with the rest of us, however many families still used their native languages in their daily lives - public and private, and were accommodated. It meant separation - events, services etc. However the second generation served to bridge the gap. Today, the closest large city, London Ontario is officially bilingual - English and French. All services municipal and provincial are required in both official languages and every employee is required to speak both languages. My mother is older now and completely bilingual of course, however she has always been an active member of the francophone community in Ontario as well as comfortable with her culturally mixed environment. My mother served as an excellent example for me, and is very proud of the environment I have provided for my own children, who are both perfectly bilingual and Quebecois. I met my husband, a Quebecois, in Ontario. He had been living and working there for several years and was bilingual. We moved here to the Beauce so that I could know his large family. We were married here. Our first child was born and educated here. Our second child was born in

Ontario 15 years later which impacted our decision to move back to the Beauce when the opportunity presented itself.

### **MOVE TO THE BEACE - THE FIRST TIME**

We lived and worked in Saint Joseph previously, from 1982 until 1989. I absolutely loved it. I had an excellent job as internal sales and marketing coordinator, serving the English market in Canada and the US. I travelled. I taught English to superior court judges in the evenings. I loved it here. The beauty, the traditions, the close family ties. Our son was born and educated here. My family loved coming here and were always welcomed. Socially, I have never been excluded. In 1989 we returned to Ontario. My twin was diagnosed with terminal cancer and I wanted to share the final years.

### **RETURN TO ONTARIO**

Professionally, I offer 15+ years experience and specialised training - industrial manufacturing - strategic and operational re-engineering and process integrations, from long-term positions in the automotive industry - Meridian Global Technologies and Magnesium Diecasting, Strategic Planning / Total Quality Management - General Motors Defense : International Contract Administration, Client Liaison - Extended Value Stream Process Integration, Coordination, Training and Project Administration

Our daughter was born in Ontario. Although we returned to the Beauce 4 or 5 times a year, our daughter did not speak French well and we decided to return to Quebec, now that we were free to do so. In 2003 we sold our home and moved. My husband had been offered a job that combined with my EI benefits (GM Defense had been sold) would allow us to live and settle. Our daughter would have the summer to spend with her many cousins and integrate before school began. We packed what we could transport and hit the road. We were welcomed warmly by all of our family, neighbours and friends who were particularly pleased to have our daughter here.

### **BACK TO THE BEAUCE FOR GOOD - WHAT IS GOING ON**

This was not a cultural change for me. I did not require any accommodation or particular integration considerations. I did need to update my language skills and I went to Emploi Quebec with that goal in mind. Actually I contacted them from Ontario before we moved, and was told to come to the office when we arrived, which I did.

I was told that, unlike immigrants, there were no services for anglophone Canadians in the Beauce. Anglophones were not required here. She said I should be in an 'anglophone community' or in the 'city'. I explained that we came here specifically because our family is here and it was my second time living here. She gave me a registration form to complete and said she would contact me. I never heard from her again. She would not even look at my curriculum vitae.

I found a french course offered by the local Cegep that I could take online. I made another appointment and went to request it. She refused to allow me to take it. She did not consider my experience valid. She did not understand my c.v. I had to call the Minister to intervene, which he did, and the next day I received my approval to take my course. My agent was not pleased. The course she provided was a debutante course, from France, designed for tourists. She would only allow me to complete one module. It did not assist me one bit.

I continued to look for work. I found a professional training center that I could attend, not to update my skills but to integrate into a french business culture. I saw the agent again and requested enrollement. I had a letter of recommendation from the Program Director so she agreed. I completed the 3 month program, ended my social isolation, and improved my conversational skill. I had not yet found employment.

I decided to create my own income opportunity and solicited a contract from a company in Quebec City to translated their Quality Manual and administrative documents from french to english. I did it online for approximately 3 months.

I then found a job as Production Manager for a small manufacturer in the area. I worked there for 4 months - Production Scheduling, Inventory, Purchasing, and Logistics. The company had financial problems, began to close their out of province operations and I was one of the last administrative people to be laid off after only 6 months.

By this point our standard of living was becoming quite dismal. We were using the money set aside for the eventual purchase of a home to supplement the income I was unable to secure. By the end of 2005 - our savings were depleted and I was still unemployed.

I enrolled in an insurance brokers course at the Cegep, on the advice of a counsellor at the school. My agent agreed that bilingual brokers were in great demand. I completed the intensive course. I then learned that there was no need for bilingual brokers in the Beauce where the clientele is french. The opportunities for me were in the city or closer to Montreal. My agent told me to move. I could not and did not want to move. My daughter had by now integrated completely, had good friends, and spoke more french than english. We are in the Beauce precisely because we have family and friends here. The agent would not pay for my exam at the AMF so I have completed the course but no longer qualify for the license to practice.

By now our situation was desperate and I was applying for every and any job. manual labor, temporary work, anything. I did not know whether my age, sex, or what the reason was for my exclusion. I continued to read about 'shortages of qualified people in manufacturing' and I was so frustrated. No one called for an interview.

In January 2007, I considered creating my own opportunity once again, this time with the local CLD. When I went to their website I saw that it was available in french and spanish. I saw an opportunity to meet the business community for employment networking

purposes. I contacted the Director and offered to translate their website to english, as a civic gesture, for free. I was not prepared for his response. He was offended by my offer, indicating that Quebec is francophone and there is no need for english - it is not bilingual here like in Ontario. I tried to explain that I assumed economic development and tourism would require service or contact with the english market. That only annoyed him further so I dropped the subject.

I went on to create a very detailed and well researched business plan, to become self-employed. I could not think of another thing to do to improve our situation. We were by this point - poor - actually burning branches from the overgrown decorative woodlot behind our apartment. I had never been that low in my entire life - ever. We lost our telephone service and cable. We ate and we paid the rent. My husband had a low salary and was often laid off. I could not find a job of any kind.

I sent my business plan - an ecommerce cooperative venture for other woman such as myself and the opportunity for other families to sell their personal items online through our cooperative. My plan involved the 5 year expansion to a training facility involving students to work in french, english and spanish in all aspects of international ecommerce, as well as a retail facility. It was an absolutely brilliant multi-faceted opportunity, with very low start-up costs, an implementation plan that was slow and systematic, and something not yet available in the local area to serve the high market demand. I did very detailed research and product identification and procurement cycle analysis, it was just so clear to me how it would all work. I translated the entire submission from english to french. It was alot of work, but it was also inspired, genuine, and provided sustained value in various areas.

No one read it at Empoi-Quebec. They told me that since I had never completed my insurance exam I could not receive any further support. They told me to go directly to the CLD. The CLD is the man I offended just months earlier. But I did send my proposal there. I had no choice and I didn't imagine that one email exchange would leave any detremental impression. Instead I was told that the CLD could not accept proposals without approval from Emploi Quebec. It was an unending cycle of rejection. My submission went nowhere.

By April 2007, almost 4 years since arriving, I had completed 4 language training courses and a diploma program at a professional level in french, I had created a shortterm self-employment opportunity for myself without any support, and I had prepared a feasible detailed business plan that was rejected - twice - without consideration. I had sent 456 employment applications in the local area and had received not one invitation to interview. We were too poor to move back to Ontario. My daughter dressed in clothes that were given to us. Meals were even given to us. My life had become nothing more than an effort to survive. I was becoming isolated and depressed. I had not been able to go back to Ontario to see my parents since the summer of 2003. My father was dying.

**FINALLY A JOB**

In May 2007, I got an email from the Director of Développement PME in Sainte Marie de Beauce - a para-public organisation involved in economic development. He said he was very interested to meet me. I said I had to make an urgent trip to see my father in Ontario. He was not expected to live much longer. We agreed to meet upon my return.

When we returned I met with the Director 3 different times. He encouraged me to take the job throughout the process. He asked to conduct the interview in English. He took me to lunch in a very nice restaurant. He was thoroughly impressed with my employment history and training. He asked me why someone like me was not working, considering the urgent demand in the Beauce? I indicated that I didn't know. I explained my experience, as I just did for you. I said I didn't know if the problem was my age, the fact that I'm a woman, perhaps my experience is not relevant here, and then I told him the story about offending the CLD and their response. His reaction was the same as mine, concerning economic development. DPME is a para-public organisation, funded by Economic Development Canada and others, to assist manufacturers in the Beauce improve their productivity through various initiatives - Lean Manufacturing, Supply Chain Development etc., International marketing and exportation. He said the attitude at the CLD is the attitude we would change. They would be one of our regional partners.

The Director explained that in the productivity department, there were 2 young, highly motivated people, who were limited in experience, one was a qualified industrial designer and the other had experience as a manufacturing representative, but little technical training. They required direction and structure. They were currently working independently, with no planning, and no oversight. He himself was new to DPME and mandated to restructure and improve the image. I could serve to implement structure and provide technical direction to project initiatives.

I was hired and began work in May 2007. I was able to share the news and my relief with my dad before he died one month later.

I loved my job. I love the field anyway and am very comfortable in it. I had kept my knowledge base up to date and maintained my resource memberships. The organisation was entirely mismanaged and the administrative environment reminded me of Meridian when I began there. The office was beautiful but basically used as a stop in point for people working independently, and most often 'on the road' trying to sell 'Lean à la carte' continuous improvement projects to enterprises throughout the Chaudière Appalaches, through cold calls and aggressive tactics. They did manage to acquire a limited number of sporadic 'contracts' that they would then have to quickly assemble and implement. There was no development plan, enterprise profile, nothing ... and the waste in mileage from roaming around the country was incredible.

I loved my work because for someone like me, just the thought of the restructuring required implied unending opportunity for implementation of order, the execution of planned strategies, integration of functions, knowledge transfer throughout the processes, and the satisfaction of resulting impacts and sustained value. This was exactly where I needed to be to contribute and proudly serve and demonstrate my own value. I literally

took the initiative and worked every evening and every weekend from the day I started. I was highly motivated, and personally the distraction from unending traumatic stresses since arriving was the medicine I required. I was very happy and for the first time - secure.

I got along well with everyone at work. The office in Saint Romuald was more involved in exportation and the staff there were my age. My office were young woman but I was normally alone with my research and planning while they were on the road. My first 'client' was accidental, who realising that I was an anglophone, asked me to review the translation for various projects. Everyone practiced their english language skills with me internally, and I insisted on responding in french so that I was continually improving. My research was done in either language and I would translate my own english text to french, in an effort to improve in the area I most need it. Everything was great.

The Director restructured the geographic assignments and we were each assigned our own region to represent the services of DPME. We were to work closely with the CLD to target appropriate companies. The Director was trying to restrict and justify costs. My colleague was not at all happy to be limited. I was assigned to the MRC where I live, because I did not have a driver's license. The Director had never mentionned the 'on the road selling' part of the job. He had only asked me which office I wanted to work from and I said Sainte Marie. Assigned to the town I lived in was an appropriate solution since I would only have to meet with the CLD once a week. I would likely travel with my colleague to any training events since she would be presenting the content I created. She was comfortable in the language of the area 'Beauceron' and I had the qualifications to create content according to idustry standards and best practices. It was an excellant arrangement where my colleague could keep as much mileage as she wanted.

### **CONFRONTED BY RACISM FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER**

There was a meeting of the various CLDs and our organisation at which I was introduced. During the social part of the event, I went to speak to some of the representatives. My colleague was also there. The gentleman, our partner, told me directly that no one in the area would work with someone that is 'not from here'. I thought he was kidding. He was not. My colleague joined in to agree with him. They were both very serious. They said it was offensive to hire people from 'the outside' who 'steal the jobs' and that 'english' is not required. My colleague assured him that he could continue to work with her if her preferred. She was a Beauceron 'pur laine'. I was shocked that the attitude was expressed so openly, at a para-public level, and accepted. I knew that private enterprise would do whatever they wanted and that most progressive companies would not hold a restrictive view, but I never considered that such an attitude of exclusion would be accepted or promoted at the level of government funded institutions.

My Director and I were alone for much of July and August. I worked closely with him in regard to promotional activities that would be presented to our partners in late August. I mentionned the incident to him and he was as surprised as I was, and told me to consider

it an isolated event and ignore it. He said he would speak to my colleague. That an attitude like that is not acceptable for DPME.

I was asked by the SDE to meet with a large company in Levis who required my services. They needed strategic analysis of their processes related to the automotive industry. I went and was able to secure my first contract and it had extensive service implications for DPME. People were emailing me to congratulate me. I was very satisfied. A few days later, after I had received confirmation from the client that the project would go ahead, I learned that the project would be taken from me and implemented by a man from Saint Romuald. My Director gave me no explanation for why this happened, he announced this reversal unexpectedly at a meeting and it was embarrassing when he said that my credibility with the client was not a priority.

### **VICTIM OF PERCEPTION**

I was then very surprised when my Director asked me to go with him to Thetford Mines to meet with the SDE. It is the same place where our partner made it very clear he did not want to work with me. I asked why I was going where I wasn't wanted and not going where I was expressly requested, and he just said not to talk during the meeting so they wouldn't know I was English, and just observe his presentation. We met another person and I have no idea what he thought of my accent because I didn't say a word. I expressed my increasing confusion and discomfort with my Director and his answer was that change comes slowly and to trust him. To continue implementing structure and ignore any resistance.

I had completed my research on the enterprises in my MRC, their operational profile and market area, and the area they intended to develop. I was ready to meet with my partner at the CLD, and this time we would discuss export potential outside of Quebec. I looked forward to the exchange in light of the interaction in January concerning his website. I wondered if he would remember me and I thought I could win him over at a personal level.

### **THE EXCLUSION ESCALATES**

I didn't get the chance. Apparently he saw my introduction published throughout the Beauce and recognised the name. We had never met so my picture wouldn't give me away. He called my Director and repeated what he said to me about not interested in doing business outside of the area. He said that I was not welcome in his area because I had offended him and that he didn't understand why DPME would hire someone other than a francophone from the area.

I was shocked. I was scared. I needed my employment position. I could not lose it based on discrimination and exclusion. My Director assured me that my position was secure but that we had to accommodate this partner. I did object to accommodating a discriminatory practice advanced within a public mandate but My Director made it clear that there was no discussion. I was assigned to another MRC. I went and I was well received. There

were apparently only 2 regions in which I was not welcome that I new of - actually 2 individual's and the one colleague.

### **HARASSEMENT BECOMES DIRECT AND INTERNAL**

The colleague, hearing of the change in assignment, escalated her campaign and her resentment of my involvement with any client or partner. She considered it a limitation on the activity she controlled exclusively before I arrived. She did not receive any kind of change or structure well and I had to tactfully present my ideas so as not to offend. I had to hide my accent at meetings. My Director was becoming convinced that I might be a liability to advancing the partnerships he was trying to advance. My colleague was assisting in advancing the perception.

I continued to work on content. my Director continued to direct me to do what I was doing. He said he was afraid that my colleague did not understand project management principles of process implementation, and I confirmed it. I also indicated that I had to insist that industry standards be followed and that a collaborative approach be adopted to project creation. I needed to know what she was presenting to clients so that I could justify it. She resisted and a silent confrontation began.

I Tried very hard to complete my work, a very structured model that would serve to train her while providing the client with a tangible instrument for future development following our involvement. My CLD loved the approach and said it distinguished us in the market. I worked night and day and thought that once I gave her the completed package she would understand that my contribution complimented her efforts and that I was not in any way her 'competition'.

She requested the information everyday - to correct it. I resisted because I did not want her to change anything without my knowledge. It had to be collaborative. She did not recognise my qualifications and considere herself more knowledgeable of the local enterprises who don't want 'systems'.

She had paying contracts - I did not. She told me that DPME needed her contracts to meet their obligations. The implication was clear.

The Director went out of town and the harassment became blatant. I was told I was not needed. My presence was offensive. That she was the only one willing to tell me. She was tasked with buying new office furniture and did so for everyone but me. I had a chair with 3 wheels and a desk with a hole in it. She rearranged offices to ensure that mine was in the traffic flow next to office equipment. She wanted to make my office a waiting room since I am always there. She told me not to use the printer. She checked my calendar and made entries without telling me. It was constant and unrelenting. It was childish and unending.

I was ill one day. I have palsy in one leg and I have only ever had one incident but I lost the feeling in my leg and it was swollen. I called Mr. Gilbert's telephone and she

answered. He was still away. She called me to tell me that she took the messages from my telephone and that it would be better if she attended my appointments the following day. I said that it wasn't necessary and I would be there.

I was not able to be there and I could not find her. Someone else would replace me. I returned to work the following day and she said nothing to me but wanted the entire content package for our project. I gave her what was ready. She became very upset and blasted me on the email. This time, on the advice of a colleague in Saint Romuald, I stood my ground and told her she would get it as it was completed, that she would not change anything until we reviewed it together.

### **ACCOMODATING THE RACISM**

I mentioned that I was invited to attend two events in the town where I lived, that involved local business people. I was asked because people knew I finally found a decent job and thought it was a good way for me to meet people I needed to know. She told me directly and firmly that I was not allowed to attend anything business related in the town where I live. I was not to risk offending the partner from the CLD. Not even in my private life. That she was assigned to the area and only she would go. Then she told me that she had already attended events in my area, that I was unaware of, because it was important for someone to go.

It was clearly an escalation of the sabotage and harassment meant to discredit me, it was childish but consistent and taken together extremely irritating and counter production. I was constantly on the defensive at work, and working at in the evening to complete my work. My director already seemed to accept the limitations perceived to be attached to me. Nothing was being done to stop her and she still had her small but paying service contracts. My project was not yet deliverable. I explained my concerns to a colleague and asked if it was appropriate to get the advice of the Executive Committee we were told were available as recourse. He agreed and told me to ask the Director how to contact them.

### **ATTEMPTING TO FIND A REMEDY**

When the Director returned the following day, he was jovial and we spoke briefly. Then I mentioned that I wanted to get clarification from the executive committee regarding the appropriate response to the limitations I was facing. I made the request in writing and gave it to him at lunchtime.

At 4:00 pm the same afternoon, August 30, 2007 - he gave me a letter refusing my request and terminating my employment because 'I did not meet the culture'. He told me to leave everything and get out. He told me that repeatedly as I tried to understand what was going on. I tried to pick up my personal belongings and he continued to tell me to leave now. I said I had a right to take what belonged to me. He continued to stand and tell me to leave. It was humiliating. My colleagues were there.

I begged him to let me finish my probationary period so that I could qualify for EI benefits. I told him that my family needed my income. He said that was not his problem. He said if he had known that hiring me would be a problem in the region he never would have done it. I asked to retrieve my personal files from my laptop. He refused and told me to get out. I said that I had no choice but to contact Economic Development Canada and he said contact who the hell you want. I was shaking. I was stunned. I left.

A colleague was concerned enough to send the police to my home to ensure that I was okay.

## **LOSING EVERYTHING DESPITE TRYING TO ACCOMODATE AND PROTECT IT ALL**

No one will speak to me from the office. I contacted the Executive Committee and Economic Development Canada and they say they have no oversight. I see Mr. Gilbert in the paper regularly, promoting projects and services that I have the experience to deliver. My qualifications were never in question and remain ideal for international initiatives and senior level initiatives. My profile has been removed from the website. Another personal has been hired, as a consultant but assigned to marketing. Coincidentally she lives in the same apartment building as my colleague and is the partner of another DPME employee based in Saint Marie. They are are group of young friends, all about the same age.

I saw my project promoted at a cost 5 times greater than that offered for a similiar certified course from the institute, and emploi-quebec offers another for free. I have no idea what my colleague did to the content or what the final project will look like. All of my reference material and research, months of endless work above and beyond my scheduled hours, including very personal files concerning my father's death were taken from me.

I cannot leave my home. I feel quite ill and I am extremely embarassed and humiliated. I am also panicked considering how long it took to secure a position and the devastating situation we face again now that I no longer have it. And the perception is out there to limit my chances further. Who will hire me now. They tell me that I can file a claim for wrongful dismissal but that no employer will touch me after that. It is the only way to have my position restored but I would not likely be successful given the 'systemic exclusion' in this area that appears to be blatant and accepted. I seem to be the only one who didn't know about it.

## **THE SICKENING IRONY**

I happened to finally see the man from the CLD who initiated the campaign of exclusion. He was with Mr. Maxime Bernier, our federal MP, at a local event. I did not approach him, but my husband did. Mr. Bernier sent me a very nice letter when he saw that I was hired. I had also sent a note to his office prior to my termination, outlining the less than comforting work environment and the way I was trying to accomodate the discriminatory sentiments. Now he was learning I was fired 3 months later and for very unacceptable

reasons. He is no longer Minister of Industry though. The man from the CLD said he didn't realise which family I was related to and that he would call my Director to rectify the situation. I have no idea if he did or didn't but nothing has changed. He has no idea what his telephone call to my boss did to me, to my family and to any chance we had to survive here. I had never even met the man. I made an honest civic gesture. I do not deserve this and it is something that didn't need to happen.

His intervention was deliberate. This is not about trying to get ahead. This is about basic survival. ? Through no fault of my own, we have nothing now. There is no acceptable reason for it. It must be recognised and rectified. I have the skills that are said to me urgently required. Systematic discrimination and exclusion of people 'not from here' must be eliminated. I need no accomodation and I have never requested any. I am Quebecois and share every common value described - including relegious heritage and cultural traditions and history. This is devastating.

Then ironic thing is that the man who fired me - coldly, cruelly, without cause, notice or explanation, from the one and only position for which I am ideally suited, for the simple reason that I am perceived to not fit the cultural profile - is himself from France ... I'm Canadian ... my mother is from Québec, as is my husband and both of my kids ... I am not culturally alien to this region, I have been here for 25 years, these are my relatives ... but his is a name common in this area ... and mine is not ...

The Director is new in his job and extremely driven to meet the requirements of partners implicated in the development of DPME initiatives - including exportation.

### **WHERE ARE MY RIGHTS AS A QUEBECOIS ?**

Given the circumstances presented here, I must do something to correct this. I am one person with few resources. I didn't deserve this. It does not make any business sense at all. It is purely discrimination and the effect is absolutely devastating. I have seen now that this 'exclusion' of anyone 'not from here' exists, is promoted and accepted at an institutional level in the Beauce as well as by the ordinary citizen as a fact of life here.

WHERE IS THE CHARTER, THE CODE ... why is this allowed to happen. Forget about equality between the sexes which is accepted. What about flagrant disregard of our basic rights and the damage it causes countered by the arrogant laments that there is a shortage of qualified people. There is no shortage as long as I am unemployed and living below the poverty level, month after month.

I need to work. I deserve to work. My skills are needed. I have no recourse but to make this situation known publically and hope that someone from a related group will recognise and assume a responsibility to speak up and ask what is going on. There must be some accountability somewhere for this para-public organisation.

### **DESPERATE FOR THE VOICE OF REASON AND THE POWER TO RECTIFY**

I am trusting that there is some compassion and empathy available, that my contribution is valued, and my right to equal treatment absolute particularly when I cannot enforce it myself.

As sure as I am that this discrimination exists at an institutional level, I am unsure to what extent it actually applies to the private sector enterprise. I am sure that this behaviour is not condoned by my social acquaintances and that most people I have told are offended by it. On the contrary, I have reported this matter to the various funding and partner groups, and there has been no reaction whatsoever. It is ignored and the injustice and devastating consequences do not even merit a response. ... I am here ... I am qualified ... I am employable ... and I am a responsible, person of integrity facing a situation beyond my control or influence or remedy. My daughter will once again be, after intensive effort to adapt and conform, she will once again be the new kid, with the accent, who is also poor. I don't know how much more I can take much less a young girl who absolutely loves it here. I am unvalued and non-existent as a citizen, even resentful for the fact that I even exist here. Yet I require no accommodation and I share every cultural value common to the society.

The question must then be asked. Is anyone other than a Beauceron 'pure laine' acceptable and recognised here? The exclusion is not limited to 'immigrants'. How can it be that the very institutions charged with enforcing the Charter and the Civil Code and ironically, this Commission, able to be indifferent to the hypocrisy and maintain their legitimacy in light of the injury to human dignity and the denial of basic survival, their indifference causes.

I would have liked to present my 'memoire' myself because I speak French fairly well. However I am not able to write very well and isolated as I am, there was no one to assist me. I do hope this situation is mentioned, because I intend to follow the discussion closely as I have been throughout. Of course my problem would be complaining to the current government about their own programs and officers, however I still remain convinced that this is a regional problem - and a very dangerous mindset for anyone to advance, much less at an institutional level where people feel powerless against anything and everything. And now sadly, myself included. I have no solutions except to say that basic human rights must be enforced by the collective society, there should be no identification of citizens that serves to segregate: Quebeckers of Origin, Quebecers francophone or anglophone ... we're all Québécois n'est pas?, and one other thing bothers me, I know how profoundly important my father's religion was to him, all the symbols and all the traditions of Catholicism, I cannot imagine him even considering living somewhere he was required to disown his deepest beliefs, ... Given that immigrants apply to come here, and are selected to come, does anyone mention that they will be expected to set aside their religious practices, or do we just surprise them with that after they are here ... Do we tell them that they will be expected to adopt our culture or just our common beliefs, laws and standards ... the same laws and standards that are so blatantly denied those of us 'not from here' by the institutions in the Beauce held by Quebecers of origin themselves ... how hypocritical are we ... shouldn't we all be held to the same standard, at least in terms of our common beliefs - like for instance 'equality' ... does

anyone understand that lives are being destroyed for the sake of 'cultural purty' ... it's alarming to me ...

Thank you for your time and attention.

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