

The First French-Canadian National Parks: Kouchibouguac and Forillon in History and Memory

RONALD RUDIN

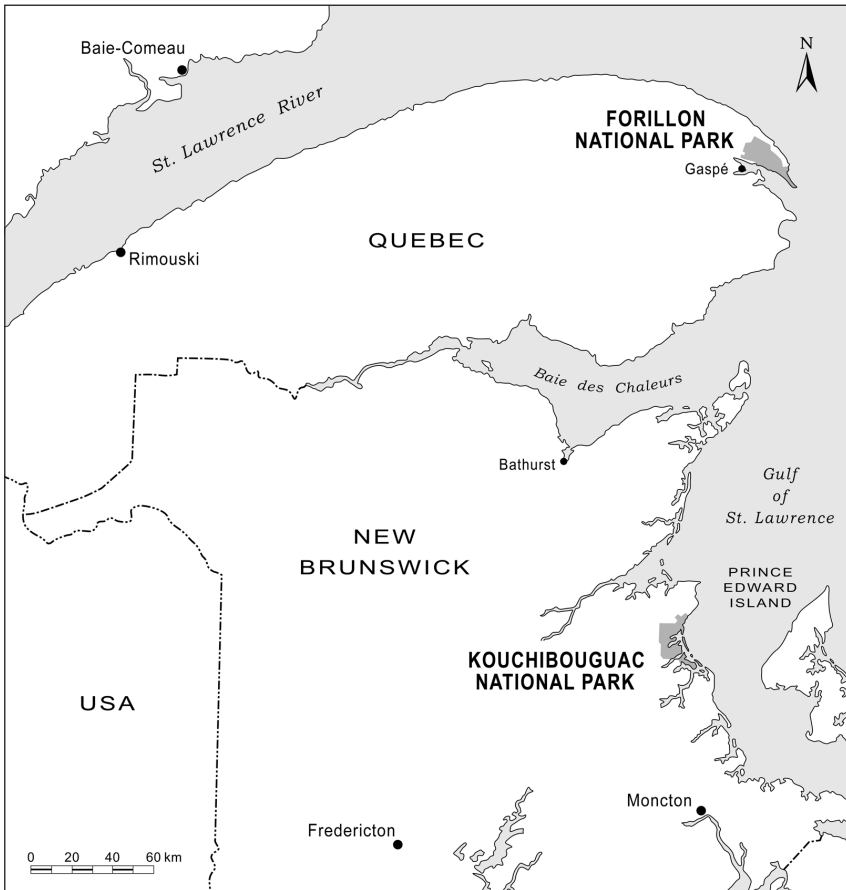
Abstract

Until the mid-1970s, the creation of a national park in Canada meant the removal of the resident population whose presence was viewed as incompatible with the preservation of nature and its presentation to visitors. Like other high-modernist schemes of the time, park projects were conceived by agents of the state whose knowledge trumped that of the people on the ground whose lives were viewed as worthless. The first nineteen of Canada's national parks were created in areas populated predominantly by English-speakers so that it was only with the creation of Kouchibouguac National Park in New Brunswick in late 1969 and Forillon National Park in Quebec eight months later that French-speakers bore the brunt of forced removal. This essay explores the dynamics regarding the creation of the first two French-Canadian national parks, both of which emerged in the midst of révolutions tranquilles, one acadienne and the other québécoise. This context shaped both the process that led to the development of the parks and to the very different ways that they have been remembered over the past forty years.

Résumé

Jusqu'au milieu des années 1970, la création de Parcs nationaux au Canada s'est généralement accompagnée par le déplacement de la population locale résidente dont la présence était perçue comme incompatible avec la préservation de la nature et sa présentation aux touristes. À l'instar d'autres projets modernes de l'époque, ces parcs étaient conçus par des fonctionnaires. Leurs connaissances primaient alors celles de la population locale dont l'expérience était considérée comme inutile. Les premiers dix-neuf Parcs nationaux au Canada ayant été créés dans des régions peuplées majoritairement d'anglophones, ce n'est qu'avec la création du

Parc national de Kouchibouguac au Nouveau-Brunswick en 1969 et du Parc national Forillon au Québec huit mois plus tard que les franco-phones ont été confrontés au choc des déplacements forcés. Cet article étudie les luttes ayant entouré la création de ces deux parcs au Nouveau-Brunswick et au Québec dans le contexte des révolutions tranquilles acadienne et québécoise. Il démontre que le contexte de l'époque a façonné à la fois le processus qui a mené au développement des parcs ainsi que les différentes manières dont la création de ces parcs a été commémorée au cours des quarante dernières années.



Kouchibouguac and Forillon National Parks
(Map prepared by Marilyn Croot)

Over the course of a single week in early 2011, two very different types of events took place within 500 metres of one another in Ottawa, each of which touched on the forced removal of French Canadians to allow for the creation of a national park over 40 years earlier. First, in mid-February the House of Commons unanimously passed a resolution by which it offered an “official apology to the people whose properties were expropriated to create Forillon Park for the unconscionable manner in which they were treated.”¹ Forillon in Québec’s Gaspé peninsula was the province’s first national park whose creation was made possible by the signing of an agreement in 1970 between the federal and Québec governments. Normal operating procedure at the time was for the province to expropriate the land of the residents of a territory slated for park development, with Ottawa then taking possession of the cleared area and investing in the actual construction of the park.²

This process of stripping nature of a resident population had been a staple for the development of parks across large sections of the globe, where the model of Yellowstone National Park, established in 1872, was followed. As Ian MacLaren has put it, national parks allowed visitors to “behold Nature in its sublime purity and experience spiritual enrichment unmediated — unperturbed — by a human dimension.” Even though the nature presented to the tourists drawn to these parks had been shaped by humans, government officials insisted that “the protection of wilderness required the outlawing of permanent human residence.”³ In the case of Forillon, over 200 families were removed, a significant number of whom challenged the terms of their removal in the courts. Even 40 years later, memories still run strong about both the derisory sums they were offered for their lands and the insistence by the authorities that nearly all of the residents’ buildings had to be burned to the ground.

Just days after adoption of the apology to the Forillon residents, the National Arts Centre was home to a presentation of the play *Wolfe*, by the Acadian playwright, Emma Haché.⁴ The Wolfe in question had a connection to yet another national park, in as much as he was the sheriff James Wolfe, who had delivered the order in 1976 to destroy the home of Jackie Vautour, the leader of resistance — through both legal and extra-legal means — to the removal of over 1,200 residents

from the territory that became Kouchibouguac National Park along the eastern coast of New Brunswick.⁵ Wolfe reappeared in the story in 1977 to evict Vautour and his family from the motel where they had been residing since the destruction of their home. The process to create Kouchibouguac started in 1969 following the conclusion of an agreement between Fredericton and Ottawa, only months before the operation began in Forillon, and Vautour was among the last to be forced out, albeit temporarily. He returned to squat on his land in 1978, and remains there to this day. Most of the expropriates were Acadians, and so Vautour has taken on the status of an Acadian freedom fighter and has been the inspiration for music, novels, poetry, sculpture, and film — as well as theatre. Indeed, the character of Jackie Vautour occupies a central role in Haché's play which more broadly explores the difficulties of dealing with dispossession.⁶

In many ways, there was nothing unique about the experience of the people who were removed to make way for these two parks. There was a widespread view beginning in the late nineteenth century that the preservation of nature required the imposition of restrictions on the human use of resources, even when people required these resources to survive. These new rules were usually advanced by people of means living in cities, whose ideas were at odds with those held by individuals whose daily lives had been built around access to land, forests, streams, and wildlife, a process that has been described by authors such as Karl Jacoby, in the American context, and Tina Loo, with regard to Canada. What Loo has noted regarding restrictions on hunting and trapping can as easily be said about the creation of national parks:

Game laws were instruments of colonization, imposing an urban and bourgeois sensibility about wildlife on rural Canada Making a place for wildlife involved pushing some people out of the way. Sometimes they pushed back.⁷

First Nations people and other residents of rural areas who had relatively little power were either pushed off their land or lost access to resources upon which they depended.⁸ These individuals were widely depicted as responsible for the destruction of the natural envi-

ronment, when in most cases their own survival depended on the careful management of resources. Nevertheless, the balance of power worked against those whose local knowledge was ignored so that resources could be marshalled, to a considerable degree, for the benefit of well-to-do tourists.

Quite aside from imposing state control over nature, the removal of the residents of Kouchibouguac and Forillon more broadly reflected the power, especially after World War II, of what James C. Scott has described as “high modernism,” a particularly muscular ideology that touted the ability of the state “to speak with the authority of scientific knowledge about the improvement of the human condition and to disallow other competing sources of judgment.” High modernists were particularly keen to use their expertise to transform landscapes for some “greater good,” sometimes — but not always — for the preservation of nature. Regardless of the specific context, they saw value in pushing out those who used the land in a manner viewed as “primitive, wasteful, and inefficient At its most radical, high modernism imagined wiping the slate utterly clean and beginning from zero.”⁹

Such thinking was on display across the globe, and in Canada played a central role in such postwar cases as the removal of African-Canadians from the Africville neighbourhood of Halifax, which was viewed as a blot on the urban landscape, of the residents of Ste-Scholastique, north of Montréal, for the construction of Mirabel airport; and of the residents of communities in eastern Ontario, for the development of the St. Lawrence Seaway.¹⁰ In all of these cases, the residents’ view of what constituted an appropriate use of their land was trumped by the experts’ certainty that they knew better.

To be sure, the notion that high modernist ideas left no room for local knowledge can be taken too far. As John Sandlos has indicated in a number of different contexts, some local interests (although not usually those who lived off the land) were involved in the creation of projects such as national parks, while state actors were not always on the same page when it came to imposing control over nature. For their part, Tina Loo and Meg Stanley have pointed to the role of the “largely overlooked local knowledge of engineers, geologists and hydrologists,” in the construction of dams in British Columbia.¹¹

Such studies remind us that no matter how powerful state interests may have been, there was a local context that invariably coloured the outcome of any high-modernist project and, in the long term, played a significant role in how such developments were remembered by those who were displaced.

In terms of Kouchibouguac and Forillon, two high-modernist projects, the local context was crucial because these were the first two national parks located in areas predominantly populated by French Canadians.¹² In the case of Kouchibouguac, “85% of the families expropriated were Acadians,” while there were strong French-speaking majorities in most of the communities caught up in the creation of Forillon.¹³ If not for the fact that high-modernist thinking dictated that people needed to be removed so the parks could be created, the identity of those expropriated might not be that important to this story. However, the federal policy, which claimed the presence of people was in conflict with the preservation of nature, did not change until after the resistance to the creation of both Kouchibouguac and Forillon. Indeed, the policy changed because of this resistance; thus, who the expropriates were did matter; and as it turned out these parks were created in the midst of two very different *révolutions tranquille* — one *acadienne* and the other *québécoise*, whose dynamics influenced both the process of removing the resident populations and how those expropriations have been remembered.¹⁴

It was no accident that the memories on display in Ottawa in February 2011 took different forms: in one case, the highest legislative body in the country provided an apology, while in the other a dispossessed people were presented in a theatrical production trying to come to grips with their fate. At Forillon, the creation of which was negotiated with the backdrop of *québécois* constructing a strong state of their own, the campaign for better terms for those removed was conducted through the provincial institutions that formed a significant element of the new, emerging *québécois* identity. Working within the system was ultimately rewarded with an apology. By contrast, Kouchibouguac’s largely Acadian population had no state to call their own, and their demands for redress frequently took the form of resistance to authority and paralleled New Brunswick Acadians’ own increasingly public protests over their second-class status. In that con-

text, no apology was forthcoming and the story has become the subject of works of art often calling attention to “une deuxième déportation.”

Québec’s First National Park

Efforts to create Québec’s first national park began in the early twentieth century, long before either Forillon or Kouchibouguac were on the drawing boards. Until the 1960s, however, Québec’s unwillingness to cede its territory to the federal government scuttled all plans proposed by Ottawa. With regard to one of the early ideas for creating a national park in Québec, J.B. Harkin, the founding commissioner of the Dominion Parks Branch, observed, “Quebec of course is very sensitive in matters of autonomy and might suspect some ulterior motive where there are none.”¹⁵ Québec’s concerns surfaced once again in 1938 with regard to creating a park on roughly the same territory that would become Forillon 30 years later. Following a visit to the Gaspé, Harrison Lewis, a national parks official, expressed enthusiasm about the spectacular landscape, describing “towering limestone cliffs [that] rise vertically several hundred feet.” He imagined “tourists enjoy[ing] the seclusion, the relatively unspoiled character of the area, the beautiful scenery and the sea-birds and seals that play in the clear water below the sea-cliffs.” Shortly after his return to Ottawa, Lewis shared his idea with Charles Frémont, the Québec Superintendent of Game and Fisheries, but did not receive the answer that he had expected. Frémont poured cold water on the prospects for a national park anywhere in Québec, noting that “he was not sure that the Premier of Quebec would approve the establishment of a park under the control of the Dominion Government.”¹⁶

This situation did not significantly change until the 1960s when the dynamics of Ottawa-Québec relations were transformed by the package of developments usually referred to as the Quiet Revolution. During the 1960s, a variety of reforms resulted in the emergence of a powerful state to advance the interests of the only jurisdiction in North America where French-speakers were in charge. A predominantly French-speaking technocracy in the employ of the state

emerged to wrest power from the private sector that had long been dominated by English-speakers. In this context, a Ministry of Education was formed, hydroelectricity came entirely under the control of the province by means of Hydro-Québec, and various plans were devised to use the most advanced techniques of planning to transform the territory of Québec. To this end, the Bureau d'Aménagement de l'Est-du-Québec (BAEQ) was created in 1963 to come up with a plan for a region (of which the Gaspé peninsula was a part), which had long suffered from high levels of unemployment and out-migration, not unlike the situation in parts of Atlantic Canada, such as the territory where Kouchibouguac National Park would be established. While the Gaspé families affected by the creation of Forillon got by from generation to generation by combining activities such as farming, lumbering, and fishing, the new Québec technocrats were focused on the mantra of modernization. As Guy Coulombe, the lead planner for the BAEQ, put it in 1964, the only solution for the Gaspé was through "l'intégration de la société régionale dans la société moderne."¹⁷

In 1966, the BAEQ tabled a plan for a massive redevelopment of the region, which included the closing down of communities that were deemed to have no future and the creation of a national park, what became Forillon a few years later. These plans subsequently received federal financial support by means of a formal agreement between Québec and Ottawa in 1968.¹⁸ Indeed, the federal government was speaking the same language of modernization through plans for various rural developments in the 1960s; and more broadly, both the Québec and Canadian preoccupation with planning, often without concern for the people whose lives hung in the balance, reflected a shared commitment to the precepts of high modernism.¹⁹

To use James Scott's expression, Québec's new masters were now "seeing like a state," so that they were determined to use the powers at their disposal to transform the province's landscape. Nevertheless, their enthusiasm for the actual development of a national park remained tempered by a longstanding reluctance to alienate the territory of the province. This sensitivity was heightened by the late 1960s due to challenges from Ottawa, most notably the extension of federal infrastructure for the National Capital Region to the Québec

side of the Ottawa River. This intrusion led the province in 1966 to create the Commission d'Étude sur l'Intégrité du Territoire du Québec; and in the following year, at the start of discussions that would eventually lead to Forillon, the federal minister in charge of parks, Arthur Laing, told Québec Premier Daniel Johnson:

You mentioned that the present climate in Quebec to-date is not receptive to the idea of National parks in your province. I am not quarrelling with that statement, for obviously you are best able to judge the mood of your people. But I do grieve at the shortsightedness of such a sentiment, if you will permit me to speak frankly.²⁰

The discussion over Forillon began to change when the idea emerged in early 1968 that the Québec government could assemble the lands for the park (normal operating procedure) before “these would be transferred for a period of time to the Federal Government.” Such a “temporary” transfer of Québec territory, which was without precedent in negotiations for establishing new national parks (and which would not be seen again), was recognition that Québec possessed a certain “special status,” although Ottawa was at pains to deny that this was the case.²¹ In fairly short order, federal and provincial bureaucrats agreed that Ottawa would lease the land for 99 years, with Québec retaining the right to reclaim it at the end of the period, as long as the territory of Forillon remained as parkland.²² While the bureaucrats quickly found an acceptable formula, some of Québec's political leaders remained suspicious about the whole affair, particularly after the arrival of the Trudeau government in April 1968. More than 40 years later, Marcel Masse, who was responsible for the Forillon dossier in the Union Nationale governments of the late 1960s, still bristled at what he saw as the actions from Ottawa under Trudeau, which were “très aggresifs, très provocateurs envers le Québec sur la question de l'intégrité territoriale.”²³

Finally, in April 1969, exasperated by Québec's stalling, Jean Chrétien, the minister responsible for Canada's national parks, made a speech in Gaspé, to tell “la vérité” about the dossier. He cut to the chase noting that the Forillon project had been stalled by those (such

as Masse) who viewed “le gouvernement canadien comme une puissance étrangère nourrissante des desseins sinistres et des projets machiavéliques à l’égard de la population du Québec.”²⁴ Shortly after, Québec proposed an amendment to the deal so that it would have the right to repossess the territory after only 60 years, with the understanding that it would, as Chrétien put it, “continue to use the land for conservation and recreation purposes, in perpetuity, and also compensate the Federal Government for all the expenses incurred during the sixty years.” Chrétien saw an opportunity for “the Quebec government to keep face in its present conflict with the federal government”; and while he did not like “giving the Quebec government an overly special status,” he was prepared to take the deal as a means of allowing the creation of further parks down the line, in the process improving “the image of the federal government in Quebec.”²⁵

Even with that concession, no deal was signed until after the government, of which Masse was a part, was defeated in April 1970. At roughly the same time that the terms of the lease were being ironed out, Masse granted a permit to Laduboro Oil for oil exploration within the territory slated to become Forillon, in spite of long-standing rules preventing commercial activities within national parks, a matter that would also surface with regard to Kouchibouguac.²⁶ Given the Pandora’s Box that he would open, Chrétien was not about to back down on this occasion. Instead, Masse dropped this demand, but only a few days after the 1970 election had been called and the Union Nationale government faced the prospect of being tarred with having killed the park. This gesture could not save Masse’s party, and so it was the new Liberal government that finally signed the agreement with Ottawa in June 1970.

Debate now shifted to the Québec Assemblée nationale, which had to turn the province’s obligations — to expropriate the property of the residents and then transfer the land to Ottawa — into law. In this as in other contexts, while concerns were expressed about the violation of Québec’s territorial integrity, there was no word about the plight of the more than 200 families that had to find new homes, nor did the debate take into account still other families that would lose woodlots that were essential to their livelihood.²⁷ The integrity of

these lands (as opposed to the territorial integrity of the province as a whole) did not appear to be an issue. The only deputies to vote against the legislation were from the Parti Québécois, including Bernard Dumont, who complained that the governing Liberals had sold out “nos droits pour un plat de lentilles,” and Camille Laurin, who was shocked by the submission of the provincial Liberals to the federal government, which had held “le couteau sur la gorge [québécoise].”²⁸ But even these opponents to the legislation under scrutiny seemed to accept the premise that the residents of the Gaspé needed the park in order to better their economic circumstances, with scarcely a word to suggest that a new set of problems might be created by their displacement.

The closest that any member of the Assemblée nationale came to raising concerns about those who would be removed from their lands was when Marcel Masse, now in opposition, complained that the current minister responsible for the dossier was ignoring those who lived in the territory where the park would be established. In a heated exchange, Masse lectured his successor: “Pensez un peu à la population qui vit là. Ne traitez ces gens comme le Parti libéral fédéral vous traite.”²⁹ It is difficult, however, to take Masse’s outrage too seriously given that he had been developing the expropriation procedures while still in government and voted subsequently for the Liberals’ legislation.³⁰

The Lawyer from Cap-des-Rosiers

With the necessary legislation in place, the removal of the families from their lands began, a process that the Québec government undertook with a level of determination commensurate with its long-held concern about retaining control over its territory. Papers were quickly filed making the landowners occupants on the government’s land; and the government made it clear that it was not about to tolerate the exploitation of its newly acquired resources while the former landowners were still in place. The expropriation orders had not even been delivered to the residents when they were informed that “même durant la période où se feront les transactions pour que les propriétés passent au gouvernement, il ne sera pas possible de piller

le territoire du parc ... LES AUTORITÉS GOUVERNEMENTALES ... NE TOLERONT AUCUN BRACONNAGE.”(emphasis in original)³¹

At the very end of the process, just to leave no doubt that the government was in charge, most of the homes on park land were burned to the ground, a procedure that guaranteed no one could profit from dismantling, let alone moving, a building that no longer belonged to them. The federal-provincial agreement that had foreseen the creation of Forillon called for the concentration of the population of the region in a few selected towns, and so it would have made no sense to permit people to move their homes near the boundaries of the park. The technocrats viewed the park's creation as “une occasion privilégiée de favoriser l'objectif d'urbanisation du territoire en stimulant la concentration des populations autour des centres administratifs et des services de la région.”³²

While the technocrats had their vision for the region, the burning of the houses by work crews that included members of expropriated families remains a bitter memory for former residents 40 years later.³³ For instance, Réal Element remembered working with his father on a crew that destroyed as many as five houses per day. One day they found their own house on the work list, but “ça faisait trop de peine à mon père pour brûler sa propre maison. Ça fait que j'ai dit à papa: 'Va-t-en.' J'ai dit: 'Je vais l'allumer, moi, la maison, je vais la brûler.'” For her part Yvette Element, Réal's mother, observed: “Moi sur ça, je trouve que c'est pire que la déportation des Acadiens. Parce que la déportation des Acadiens, ça s'est fait par un autre peuple disons, par les Anglais, hein.”³⁴

As for the terms under which the residents were compensated for their property, the Québec government once more took the hard line with a population that it sized up as having “un bas niveau de scolarité” and little in the way of pre-existing organizations to provide support in negotiating with the province.³⁵ In an information package sent to all expropriates, they were told, “l'offre préliminaire d'indemnisation qui vous sera faite dans une lettre que vous recevrez bientôt pourra être discutée avec un représentant autorisé du GOUVERNEMENT DU QUÉBEC” (emphasis in original).³⁶ Given that most would have been intimidated by the power of the state, the

majority settled for whatever the province offered, and so by the fall of 1970, government officials were feeling that they had the situation well under control: “Quantité acceptée à date est considérée comme un grand succès si on tient compte du contexte politique difficile où nous avons dû évoluer au début Les chefs contestataires ont été, dès le départ, rencontrés avec succès réduisant dès lors l’opposition.”³⁷ Nevertheless, behind the scenes and largely out of public view, roughly 100 of the 500 expropriates were refusing to accept their offers (which combined compensation for lost property and a small sum for resettlement) and were turning to Lionel Bernier, a young lawyer and son of an expropriate, to champion their cause.

A graduate of law school at Université Laval (itself closely connected with the emergence of the new Québec technocracy), Bernier returned to practice in the town of Gaspé, only a short distance from the proposed park. He did not seek out the role that fell upon him and was pressured by officials in Québec City, who wanted him to abandon his support for those being driven from the land. Instead, he became even more determined to stand up for them and by early 1972 (when everyone was supposed to have left the territory) was ready to take their cases to the Régie des services publics, the provincial tribunal with the power to adjudicate compensation following an expropriation.

In order to make the process manageable, Bernier and the government lawyer agreed upon bringing six test cases before the Régie in August 1972, a situation made difficult by the province’s refusal to provide all the information Bernier required. As if this was not enough of a problem, the Québec government had a rather significant advantage in terms of resources, which allowed experts to be hired and large dossiers to be compiled. Bernier was up against the machinery of the state that was the embodiment of the Quiet Revolution; he feared that “il n’avait pas l’expertise pour attaquer le volet scientifique de la méthode gouvernementale La démarche scientifique ... donnait au tout une apparence d’objectivité difficile à contester.”³⁸

Recognizing the power imbalance and perhaps tipping his hand, Judge Guy Dorion adjourned the process until late October to allow Bernier more time to prepare, at which point the selected expropriates had their opportunity to tell their stories. Gaston Bouchard, for

instance, described his 211 acres, which included “une terre à bois, un peu de terre en culture, la maison, puis une grange.”³⁹ The government originally offered Bouchard roughly \$16,000, but following Bernier’s arguments, which pointed to a series of government errors, Judge Dorion nearly doubled that offer.

In his judgment issued in March 1973, Dorion lambasted a bureaucracy that had arbitrarily ignored its own long-standing rules regarding compensation in cases of expropriations prompted by road construction, disregarded norms for the payment of interest, and neglected to consider what costs would be incurred by expropriates trying to attain a level of comfort comparable to what they had had before their removal. In this last regard, Dorion imagined that a resident of Forillon could have a property that was “quasi invendable,” but which still allowed “une famille d’y vivre, bien que durement.”⁴⁰ As result, he recommended significant increases for specific types of property, increases that were reflected in the revised settlement for Gaston Bouchard.

The story did not end here for the 100 expropriates whose futures were linked to Dorion’s ruling on the test cases. Intransigent to the end, the Québec government appealed, and it was only in April 1975, two years after the Régie had spoken, that the Québec Cour d’Appel found unanimously for the expropriates, in the process taking the government to task for its involvement in “une déportation.”⁴¹ Finally, recognizing that it was playing a losing hand, the Québec government decided not to appeal to the Supreme Court, so Bernier was able to resolve most of the remaining 100 cases out of court on the basis of the Dorion ruling.

The resolution of the cases of those who stood up to the government came, according to Bernier, as “le choc le plus brutal” for the vast majority of residents who had accepted the government’s offer at the very start of the process. “Ils avaient soudainement la confirmation qu’ils s’étaient fait flouer honteusement et la colère longtemps contenue embrassa les esprits comme un incendie de forêt alimenté par des vents chauds et puissants.” Bernier recognized “l’ampleur du défi” in reopening files that had already been closed and for which the property owners had been compensated, however miserly.⁴² Nevertheless, by late summer 1975, with the Québec government having decided

not to appeal the test cases to the Supreme Court, Bernier pushed on, supported by the province's *Protecteur du Citoyen*.

Louis Marceau wrote to the minister that these cases needed to be reconsidered because "c'est le système de négociations ici qui a été fautif Je puis affirmer que les méthodes utilisées par les agents du ministère, pour inciter les gens à accepter, n'étaient certes pas de nature à susciter des accords libres et éclairés."⁴³ Marceau suggested (and the government agreed) to increases for various forms of property, although not at the same level for those who had taken their cases to the *Régie*. Nevertheless, such adjustments would go a long way to eliminating, in Bernier's words, "la discrimination entre les catégories d'expropriés."⁴⁴

At the very start of this process, Québec had set aside \$5.3 million to acquire the property that would be transferred to Ottawa, a sum that was roughly doubled as a result of the various challenges led by Bernier.⁴⁵ In the end, of course, no amount of money could ever replace the lives that had been destroyed in the process of creating Forillon. However, for Bernier, it was important to remember that a measure of dignity had been restored to people who "avaient osé s'attaquer au gouvernement par la voie périlleuse des tribunaux Ils l'avaient fait sans violence, dans l'ordre, respectueux des règles établies, même si, parfois, certains désespérés avaient été tentés de sortir les fusils."⁴⁶ In short, the means by which the residents of Forillon had resisted was as important as the success they had achieved.

New Brunswick's Second National Park

Much like Québec, New Brunswick viewed the prospect of a national park in the late 1960s largely as an opportunity to draw on federal funds for the development of infrastructure in order to attract tourists and the economic activity that would come with them. Fundy National Park — on New Brunswick's southern coast — was created in the 1940s; so when the federal government indicated an interest in a second park for the province in the 1960s, attention turned fairly quickly to the province's eastern shore, and more specifically to the shoreline in Kent County, which lay within the constituency of Premier Louis Robichaud, the first Acadian elected to that position.

Robichaud, not unlike his counterpart Jean Lesage in Québec, was involved in bringing a *révolution tranquille* to New Brunswick. His Program of Equal Opportunity was designed to use the machinery of the state to reduce the rather stark inequalities in a relatively poor province heavily dependent on its natural resources. A raft of studies produced in the late 1960s suggested that nowhere was this poverty clearer than in Kent County. A 1968 study carried out for the federal government described the county “as a depressed area on a socio-economic level [It] still lives in the nineteenth century.” A study commissioned by the provincial government indicated that over two-thirds of the families in Kent County, and 80 percent of those in the territory slated to become parkland, earned less than \$3,000 per year. By contrast, only 39 percent of New Brunswickers and 24 percent of Canadians earned so little.⁴⁷

This official profile of poverty was at odds with the understanding residents had of their own lives, which they generally remember as sometimes difficult, but not at all unpleasant. For instance, Madeleine Hébert Stever explained how her father Pierre Hébert owned an acre of waterfront property in the community of Fontaine, where he fished throughout the year. In addition, he supported his wife and six children by digging for clams, hunting and trapping, and harvesting potatoes, blueberries, apples, and a wide array of plants and herbs. Most of his activities did not register with government authorities, who generally restricted themselves to collecting evidence of full-time employment, and so the Héberts could be deemed poor and in need of the benefits from creating a park.⁴⁸

Kent County was also marked by the fact that the Héberts and most of their neighbours were Acadians. In order not to appear to be favouring “his own”, Robichaud tried to avoid singling out Acadians for any special treatment. Nevertheless, his efforts to reduce inequalities could not help but play a role in their attempts to emerge from the second class status that they had long occupied. For instance, although Acadians constituted roughly one-third of the population of New Brunswick, they secured a university of their own only in 1963 with the creation of the Université de Moncton; and while it is true that Robichaud simultaneously introduced his plans for a new English-language university campus in Saint John, the effect of

finally having a foothold in higher education had considerable symbolic value for Acadians, as did Robichaud's proclamation of the province as officially bilingual in 1969. Implicitly if not explicitly, the creation of a second national park was another development plan along the same lines, albeit one that seemed blind both to how residents of Kent County viewed their lives and how a people marked by deportation might respond to yet another forced displacement.^{49x}

Once agreement was reached on the location for the park, the process at Kouchibouguac was much like what had taken place at Forillon, but without the haggling over the province's territorial integrity. The 1969 accord between Ottawa and Fredericton gave the province responsibility for buying out the residents, before turning over the land to the federal government. As in the Québec case, the expropriates were made offers for their lands that would barely allow them to re-establish themselves elsewhere in the region; and there was little evident concern about how the population would get by without the right to fish in park waters, a practice which, like all commercial activity, was forbidden within national parks.

There was nothing humane about the process that led to the creation of Kouchibouguac National Park, and yet New Brunswick's intentions were fundamentally different in one significant respect from those that had been displayed by Québec. In the case of Forillon, the provincial government was interested in providing greater economic opportunities (however illusory) to the people who would be displaced. It did not, however, show any particular interest in "improving" them. If anything, the Québec government's complicity in burning the expropriates' dwellings and its determination to fight them in the courts underscored a disregard for them as individuals. That the New Brunswick government was taking a different approach was reflected in its decision to allow expropriates to move their houses to new locations just beyond the park's boundaries, an option that did not exist at Forillon. From the start, Fredericton believed that the park offered an opportunity to uproot people from existing communities, in the process not only providing them with better job prospects, but also making them "better" people. Allowing expropriates to keep their homes was part of an effort to draw them into a web of paternalistic programs to improve them as individuals.

Over a year before the official announcement of the creation of the park, New Brunswick officials were busily devising plans for the future of the 236 households (with 1,227 people) that would eventually be removed, which was the destruction of eight long-standing communities.⁵⁰ In the late summer of 1968, even before the precise boundaries for the park had been determined, the people who lived in the area had already been defined by provincial bureaucrats as “displaced persons [who needed] rehabilitating.”⁵¹ In a 1968 study for the federal government, Pierre-Yves Pépin described the “social disintegration” of the community where Pierre Hébert and his family lived, describing it as “almost repulsive for someone who was not born here.”⁵² Such studies, which pathologized the local population, provided justification for an exercise in social engineering that determined how the story played out.

The dimensions of this exercise became clear in a report prepared in September 1968 by Dollard Landry, a rural development officer for the province. Part of Landry’s task was to create a social profile of the residents, in order to indicate how needy they really were. He provided data that showed a population with large families, low levels of education, high levels of illiteracy, and poor living conditions. While these results were fairly clear-cut as far as Landry was concerned, there were some aspects of the situation that genuinely puzzled him. For instance, he discovered that well over half of the residents of the park territory were satisfied with their homes in spite of the absence of a wide variety of amenities commonplace in Canada in the late 1960s. Since Landry’s task was to find evidence that would lead towards the “rehabilitation” of the population, he dismissed this inconvenient discovery, noting that it “might be explained by the fact that over 80% of the heads of family were born there.” When many people did not indicate where they would prefer to live after their removal (probably because they really wanted to remain where they were), Landry saw this as proof that they constituted “the poorest and most desperate cases.”

Having established that these people were desperately in need of help, Landry outlined his solutions: “If no information or special rehabilitation program was offered to these people, most of them would be settling in little rural villages. In a period of a few years, conditions would be as bad, and maybe worst [*sic*] than they are

now.” In order to cure “that disgrace [that] lies in Kent County,” Landry proposed intrusive measures that included hiring home economists “who should be specially assigned to work with the women of the National Park, as they are generally in charge of the homes. This should prepare them for their entering their new homes.”⁵³

As for the men, Landry vaguely suggested offering them “special leadership training” to allow the community to look after itself. What this suggestion entailed became much clearer in the spring of 1969, when New Brunswick officials briefed their federal counterparts about their “experimental project in social and economic rehabilitation,” with its goal of allowing “residents in the area an opportunity to better themselves.” Central to this plan was the role given to the Conseil Régional d’Aménagement du Sud-Est (CRASE, established in 1966), which would be responsible for “social animation The program would stimulate local participation in government programs, and would develop and train local leadership.”⁵⁴

CRASE and four parallel organizations in other parts of the province were created by the provincial government with funds provided by the federal government, which was looking for solutions for rural communities across Canada.⁵⁵ The various *conseils régionaux d’aménagement* were inspired by a technocratic vision of rational planning that might result in the radical transformation (even closure) of some communities. However, over time, they often became instruments for community leaders who used their positions on the *conseils* to advance the interests of “des ruraux attachés à leur lopin de terre et à leur style de vie.” In the end, community participation produced “des fruits inattendus: la mobilisation des éléments les plus populaires des comités locaux,” leading in some cases to the expulsion from the *conseils* of those with the technocrats’ perspective.⁵⁶ This process was evident in the northeast corner of the province where CRAN (Conseil Régional d’Aménagement du Nord) organized protests in 1972 against large-scale layoffs;⁵⁷ and it was visible in the region served by CRASE, which provided “une animation quelque peu bruyante” on behalf of the expropriates from Kouchibouguac.⁵⁸

When CRASE was provided funding in 1968 to participate in creating the park, the province believed that it would help the expropriates’ “rehabilitation” without complicating the process of removing

them from their lands.⁵⁹ In an information booklet aimed at the residents of Kent County, social animation was described as “a process for organizing people so they can learn to understand and find solutions to their problems.”⁶⁰ While CRASE was identified as a tool to resolve those problems, the organization had a larger vision than what the province had in mind. Elaborating on the text from the booklet, CRASE observed, “l’animation sociale s’appuie sur le principe que la collectivité ou le groupe produit plus que l’individu.” It anticipated conflicts due to the fact that the various government programs for the expropriates were designed to deal with “l’individu tandis que l’animation sociale vise le groupe ou la collectivité.”⁶¹

CRASE’s role went largely unnoticed during the first stage of the expropriation process that began in 1969, which proceeded relatively smoothly: by and large, the residents accepted the payments they were offered and left quietly. The dynamics of the process and the role of CRASE were transformed, however, when the next phase of expropriations began in fall 1970, involving the poorest communities, which were most in need of rehabilitation. As a New Brunswick government report noted: “Most of the families still to be moved reside in the communities of Fontaine and Claire Fontaine — long considered the two most depressed communities in a generally depressed area The residents are ill prepared educationally, psychologically and financially to cope with the movement from their accustomed positions and patterns.”⁶²

At roughly the same time that the profile of the expropriates changed, so too did the leadership of CRASE. Paralleling the transformation of other *conseils régionaux*, the arrival of Paul-Eugène LeBlanc as executive secretary early in 1971 marked a turn towards more direct action on behalf of the residents. LeBlanc had been involved with the student movement at the Université de Moncton in the 1960s that had campaigned for Acadian rights on various fronts. He looked forward to his new position to put to the test “in the real world what he had learned at the university.”⁶³ This was made possible when CRASE received an increase in New Brunswick’s funding, which permitted hiring two social animators, one of whom was Jackie Vautour, a central character in the theatrical production described at the start of the essay.⁶⁴

In the years that followed, CRASE played a major role in supporting the expropriates' demands for better compensation for their losses, a far cry from the original paternalistic vision for CRASE envisioned by the provincial government. It was instrumental, for instance, in creating citizens' committees, which in turn were able to lobby for increased compensation for both lost property and relocation expenses (the only categories that existed at the outset). In addition, CRASE helped secure recognition that other categories needed to be added, such as compensation for lost income from activities, such as blueberry harvesting, which were common in the area.

Even more significant was the role that CRASE played in lobbying the federal government to abandon its hard line with regard to compensation for the loss of commercial fishing rights in the park. At the outset, Ottawa felt no responsibility to compensate the expropriates this lost right since the provincial government was supposed to provide the federal government with the land, free of all obligations to those who had been removed. However, faced with pressure from various sources, including CRASE, the federal government ultimately agreed to provide compensation in return for the extinction of fishing rights; then, faced with even further pressure, agreed to allow commercial fishing under certain circumstances, even though compensation for its abolition had already been granted.

Aided by the support from CRASE, the compensation package for the expropriates from Kouchibouguac, originally set at \$2.75 million reached \$8.5 million by the end of the 1970s. If this increase were the complete story, the situation might parallel the one at Forillon, where the expropriates worked within the system to achieve a better settlement. However, the much improved package was not secured solely on the basis of polite lobbying, but as a result of tactics outside normal legal channels; and that story — and more broadly the public memory of the Kouchibouguac story — cannot be understood without focusing on the role of one individual in particular.

The Acadian Freedom Fighter

The most visible CRASE agent during the 1970s was Jackie Vautour, until 1971 just one of the expropriates, owner of two largely wooded lots in Fontaine, which included shore frontage. Like most of his neighbours, Vautour eked out his existence from a variety of activities including “le jardinage, la pêche, la chasse, ainsi que la cueillette de fruits sauvages (surtout les bluets).”⁶⁵ However, as the expropriation process reached his community, he emerged both as an employee of CRASE and as president of a newly created Citizens’ Committee for the residents of Claire-Fontaine. By 1973, he was the leader of such a committee for the entire area of the park and always signed correspondence with this, and not his CRASE, title. Nevertheless, Vautour embodied CRASE’s social animation mission as he organized local residents and gave them a voice.

The voluminous files that have been compiled on the Kouchibouguac story in various archives are full of documents written by Vautour during the early 1970s. He played a significant role in creating what he described as a paper trail, “assez large, pour couvrir le Trans-Canada, d’un bout à l’autre de la province.”⁶⁶ Sometimes supporting an individual claim and other times defending groups of expropriates, Vautour generally wrote — in both French and English — in measured tones to convince the relevant authorities of the issue at hand. As Vautour put it matter-of-factly in 1975, “Since early 1971, I have been presenting cases of the expropriates to the provincial government as well as to the federal government on various land problems, fishing rights and loss of income problems deriving from types of losses and rights businesses.”⁶⁷

Most of Vautour’s correspondence that ended up in the New Brunswick Archives pertains to his support of individual expropriates. For instance, there was the case of CC (referred to here by his initials to conceal his identity), who was originally offered \$4,300 for his house, but nothing in terms of relocation expenses since the government determined that he had moved to Ontario before the park was created.⁶⁸ Vautour entered the scene at this point, explaining how CC and his wife had moved temporarily, leaving a nephew in their house to keep it in good shape. He concluded: “Now gentlemen does this

not show that the intention of the man was to come back to New-Brunswick once he could come out of debt? He has received an offer for his property and should qualify for the Relocation Program.” In the end, CC received a package of compensation worth over \$22,000, half of which came from the relocation grant that Vautour insisted was in order.⁶⁹ There were many other such files that allowed Vautour to act as an advocate who, not unlike Lionel Bernier, worked within the system. There was, however, another — and much better known — Vautour who worked outside the system.

While most of the expropriates quietly headed to their new homes, a small group, including and often led by Vautour, closed (or threatened to close) down the park on several occasions during the early 1970s, primarily in order to pressure the federal authorities with regard to the fishing rights issue. In the spring of 1972, as the fishing season was about to begin and as a cessation of commercial fishing in park waters (already once delayed) seemed imminent, Vautour emerged as the voice for fishers who wanted to secure adequate compensation for their losses before the ban came into effect. In early May, he noted menacingly that if matters were not settled soon, “things could get a lot worse.”⁷⁰ A week later, the president of CRASE added his voice, warning the relevant federal ministers in an open letter:

Do not say that you did not know or that you had not been warned. You have pushed these honest people to the limit of human endurance, and all the events that follow are entirely your responsibility. The fishermen are now going to take action, and whatever that action may be, CRASE owes it to them to help.⁷¹

Action did take place when park offices were occupied for several weeks by roughly 80 expropriates. Vautour emerged as the group’s spokesperson, proclaiming: “We’re not moving out until the federal authorities announce in the press changes for the fishing settlement and employment opportunities,” the latter a reference to another long-simmering grievance that jobs in the park were being given to people who had not been residents, contrary to the impression conveyed when the park was first announced.⁷² Once installed in the

main park building, Vautour tried to prevent work crews from going to their jobs in the park, on one occasion threatening to overturn the foreman's "car if he didn't leave with his men."⁷³ At one point, Vautour raised the stakes even higher, noting that fires set in the area were "probably caused by people who support us in our struggle I am afraid we could have a black park before this finishes."⁷⁴

After nearly two weeks, federal officials and a small group of fishers reached an agreement — negotiated during the occupation — to take the disputes over compensation for the loss of fishing rights to an arbitrator; shortly afterwards the occupation ended, although not before the park offices were sacked.⁷⁵ Direct action had produced results and some leaders of the expropriates, including Vautour, concluded that further pressure would lead to even greater concessions.

The deal negotiated during the closure of the park was ultimately rejected in an open meeting of fishers, who objected to compensation based on the production of financial records that most did not have. They sought instead a flat rate that would be provided to fishers who fit into a variety of categories; but efforts to get the federal government to listen largely failed until there was another closure of park offices in January 1973, this one lasted six months. In the previous November, the superintendent of the park, J.J. McIsaac, advised his superiors to ignore Vautour and CRASE, but once the park was closed McIsaac's minister, Jean Chrétien, wrote directly to Vautour, offering much of what the fishers had been demanding.⁷⁶

Recognizing that the government was prepared to deal, Vautour and his supporters held out until an arbitrator to their liking was appointed in April, who met with fishers throughout the spring (while the park remained closed) and whose recommendations in July went far beyond anything the government had offered at the start of the process. Chrétien's proposal in January would have cost the government an additional \$1 million, a figure that would likely double. R.H. Kendall, an official with Parks Canada, probably spoke for most of his colleagues when he wrote:

If I felt that the payment of \$2 million would mollify the fishermen and we would get no adverse reaction from other groups, I would recommend its acceptance even though I believe the

just and equitable total should be approximately one third. However, there is no guarantee that other groups will not now make their voices heard, and we may find that compensation for the fishermen is only the start of a series of claims.⁷⁷

Kendall understood very well that money would not necessarily resolve the problem. Indeed, in January, just after the barricade had begun, Vautour explained in an interview “that compensation was just the beginning.”⁷⁸ While the blockade of the park ended in July 1973, Vautour was back in November, trying to close it down again. Following previous practice, he wrote a menacing letter to Chrétien, indicating that there were still outstanding grievances and that he had the support of 300 expropriates prepared to return to the barricades, if action were not soon taken.⁷⁹ However, when that same group reconvened a few weeks later, there was little sympathy for a further closure; nearly everyone expressed satisfaction with what had been achieved on the fishing issue. Vautour and a few supporters tried to close down the park in late November, but they caused little disruption in an action that ended with the arrest of several protesters, including Vautour, who was convicted of assault and given a suspended sentence.⁸⁰

Following this failed effort to use pressure tactics, Vautour’s role in the story significantly changed. Although he was still a public advocate for the interests of the expropriates, his role as president of the Citizens’ Committee ended in 1974, as the Kouchibouguac affair started to retreat from the front pages of newspapers. One of the few residents still living within the territory of the park, Vautour now turned his energies to his own fight to stay on his land. Having exhausted the procedures for a review of his file, Vautour received the first of many eviction orders in September 1974. A year later, he recognized that “after my attempts to have justice applied to all concerned, I am now faced with the problem of my own case for me and my family.”⁸¹

Vautour was determined to stay on his land, insisting that a payment of \$150,000 “would permit us to vacate this property and leave it to the mercy of Parks Canada.”⁸² For its part, the New Brunswick government was offering roughly \$20,000, so there was little prospect of the case being resolved through normal channels. Finally, fed up

with Vautour's presence, the government bulldozed the buildings on his property in November 1976.⁸³ If this was not enough to turn Vautour into a martyr, he and his family were forcibly removed in March 1977 from the motel where they were staying, but had not been paying their bills after the government stopped picking up the tab. A scuffle ensued and Vautour was arrested, but on this occasion was released on a technicality.

Following these two cases of forced removal (both at the hands of Sheriff James Wolfe of Emma Haché's play), Vautour came to be seen by many as an Acadian freedom fighter, in a cause about dispossession that could be linked to the defining moment in Acadian history, the deportation two centuries earlier.⁸⁴ As some Acadians abandoned their support for Robichaud's vision of equality between English and French-speakers and looked for other solutions, such as in the Parti Acadien's vision for a separate Acadian province, Vautour (and by extension all of the expropriates of Kouchibouguac) became proof that the status quo was unsupportable.⁸⁵ As Vautour went from peaceful lobbyist, to leader of park occupations, to the last man holding onto his land, he came to be seen — particularly within the Acadian arts community — as an Acadian figure, and the Kouchibouguac saga more generally an Acadian cause. An earlier (and widespread) characterization of the story as one of poor people being mistreated, morphed into one that gave those poor people a more specific identity.

Even before Vautour's eviction, there were signs of an identification of Kouchibouguac with Acadie. For instance, in 1975, CRASE, which had long been active in promoting the interests of all the expropriates, now called:

Aux Acadiens de partout: les frères de Kouchibouguac luttent depuis sept ans pour conserver un coin de pays dans le cœur de notre pays. S'ils perdent, à quand votre tour? Qu'avez-vous fait pour les aider?⁸⁶

At roughly the same time, Gérald Leblanc, who became one of Acadie's most important poets, was working as a researcher on a documentary project that the Office National du Film was developing on the Kouchibouguac story. Years later, he reflected on how

...these Acadians' ancestors had already lived through the Deportation of 1755 and were now going through something else not unlike that experience. I sorted through the documents and testimonies. I met with some of the people who had been expropriated, in order to familiarize myself with the facts of the crime.⁸⁷

Following his eviction, first from his property and then from the motel, Vautour came to personify this twentieth century deportation. After the destruction of his home, the pages of the Acadian daily *L'Évangéline* were filled with letters to the editor, such as the one from Clarence Comeau, who wrote to express his "mépris envers la manœuvre inhumaine ... concernant l'expulsion de Jackie Vautour et sa famille. On se croirait en 1755 pour justifier tels actes en plein novembre 76."⁸⁸ But this story did not end like the deportation with Acadians herded on to ships, only a relatively few resisting. Rather, in this case, Vautour expressed something of the more assertive mood of many Acadians when he returned to squat on his land in July 1978, where he remains.

Once reinstalled on "his" land, Vautour believed that he had established a beachhead that allowed the expropriates to repossess their properties. Indeed, at roughly the same time that he returned, he secured the signatures of over 600 former residents who indicated a willingness to do the same. While the petition was phrased so that the intentions of the signatories were ambiguous (for instance were these individuals prepared to return their compensation if they returned to the park), the document strengthened Vautour's significance as a symbol of Acadian determination who could not be pushed around. In September 1979, Acadian organizations took the lead in staging a "Journée de solidarité," which brought out 1,500 people to show their support for the expropriates in a rally on park land. Shortly after this event, one of the leaders of the Société des Acadiens du Nouveau-Brunswick (SANB) wrote to the federal minister responsible for Parks Canada that his organization was "solidaire avec ... nos Acadiens de Kouchibouguac."⁸⁹ This support was still evident on the occasion of the Acadian national holiday, *le 15 août*, in 1980, when the SANB published a pamphlet calling on Acadians to

take to the streets in the annual tintamarre. On the back cover, on which there was a large a picture of Jackie Vautour, Acadians were asked to send contributions: “En cette Fête nationale, démontrons concrètement la solidarité du peuple acadien par un soutien à la cause des expropriés.”⁹⁰

In the end, other families did not join the Vautours by returning to live in the park permanently, and expressions of support — both from Acadians and from other Canadians who took up the cause of poor people expelled from their land — had no discernible impact on the federal government. Vautour’s last resort was to have the entire expropriation process invalidated by the courts, but when this route came to a close in March 1980, there were further efforts to shut down the park, resulting in scuffles between demonstrators and the police. While there was little evidence of significant support for the use of violence, there were demonstrations and other expressions of sympathy from Acadian communities, which continued to see the Kouchibouguac cause as their own. The resolution passed by the town council of Tracadie, roughly 100 kilometres north of the park, which supported the expropriates and asked “que le parc soit fermé au public en attendant qu’un reglement soit apporté au conflit,” was typical.⁹¹

To defuse the situation, the federal and New Brunswick governments created a Special Inquiry in the spring of 1980. While the inquiry could not close the dossier, which remains open as long as Vautour remains on park property, it allowed the story to recede from public view. Its recommendations, tabled in October 1981 and accepted by both governments, called for further increases in compensation for the expropriates and for the Vautours to remain on their land as long as they “stayed within the law in other respects and did not use their present site as bases for action against the Park.”⁹²

Public Memory

By the time the Special Inquiry led to the quieting of the Kouchibouguac story, the role of the vast majority of the expropriates who had quietly left a decade earlier had largely been receded from public view. Instead, a narrative was already firmly in place that

largely reduced the story to one individual who was prepared to do what was necessary to hold onto his land. Over the past 30 years, the story presented to the public through fiction, poetry, sculpture, music, theatre, and film has largely been that of Jackie Vautour taking on the establishment. To take only a few examples: When Gérard Leblanc wrote his poem *Complainte de Kouchibouguac* (set to music by the band 1755), the story focused on someone returning to his land⁹³; when Jacques Savoie wrote his novel (later a film) *Raconte-moi Massabielle*, the central character was the last occupant of land in a part of Acadie that had been cleared of its residents⁹⁴; when Zachary Richard wrote a song inspired by the story, he penned the *Ballade de Jackie Vautour*⁹⁵; and when the Office National du Film made the documentary *Kouchibouguac*, Vautour took centre stage, along with others who had openly resisted the expropriations.⁹⁶ To bring the story to the present, while Emma Haché's *Wolfè* includes an "ordinary" expropriated couple, the Vautours are very much front and centre.⁹⁷

In the public mind, the Kouchibouguac story of 236 families had been reduced to one that was living outside the law. When the House of Commons considered apologizing to the expropriates of Forillon, there were several reference to the parallel experience of those expelled at Kouchibouguac, but always with a focus on Jackie Vautour. In introducing the resolution, Bloc Québécois MP Raynald Blais emphasized how the people of the Gaspé had "résisté avec beaucoup de dignité," having used the institutions in place to secure a better deal.⁹⁸ As for the Kouchibouguac story, whenever it surfaced, it was always with reference to violence and the role of one family. Typical was the remark of Blais' colleague Richard Nadeau: "Souvenons-nous de Kouchibouguac, au Nouveau-Brunswick, et de toute la saga qu'a dû vivre la famille Vautour." However, neither Nadeau nor any other MP who mentioned the Kouchibouguac experience suggested that those expropriates deserved an apology, something that could not be done as long as the most famous *exproprié* continued to live on park land.⁹⁹

If Vautour's image worked against a public apology for the people of Kouchibouguac, the Forillon expropriates benefited from the impeccable credentials and leadership that Lionel Bernier brought to

the table. Indeed, his name was referenced positively on several occasions during the debate over the Forillon apology. After championing the cause of his neighbours, and while Vautour was living without such amenities as postal service, running water, and electricity, Bernier went on to a distinguished career that included a long stint within the bureaucracy of the Québec government (ironically the same bureaucracy that he had fought against) developing norms to protect workers while on the job.¹⁰⁰ Recently, Bernier has been one of the leading figures on a Comité de Commémoration des Personnes Expropriées de Forillon, which also includes other members of displaced families, as well as several professionals, including two highly regarded professors from Université Laval.¹⁰¹

This well-connected committee wanted the federal government to create an interpretive centre that spoke to the experience of the expropriates, to provide free access to the park for the former residents, and to offer an apology for the wrongs that had been done. The first two goals were fulfilled in the summer of 2010 when a new interpretive centre was opened, in which the voices of the expropriates figured prominently, and a passport was promised which would allow free access to three generations of the expropriated families. The need to pay to return to “their” lands had long been an irritant for the expropriates of Forillon, as was symbolized in the final line of Maurice Joncas’ poem *La plainte de Forillon*: “Il faut payer à la barrière.”¹⁰² The last of the Comité’s goals was achieved in February 2011 when the House of Commons — if not the federal government — offered its apology.

Bernier played the lead role in campaigning for the passport, insisting along the way that all of those touched by the expropriations needed to be recognized, so that even families that had lost woodlots, if not homes, would be included. He wanted to avoid the same discrimination between different categories of expropriates that he had fought against in the 1970s, and expressed considerable satisfaction with this “belle victoire.” However, Bernier understood that there was also a larger context for his success with regard to this dossier in 2010, namely the centenary of Parks Canada that was on the horizon for 2011. He was certain that the expropriates from Forillon would have marked the year with petitions and rallies if the passport had not

been secured, so that the centenary would have been “entaché par le parc Forillon.”¹⁰³

Ultimately, the federal government chose to extend the passport demanded by the expropriates from Forillon to all Canadians who had been removed in the process of creating national parks across Canada, a practice that ended during the 1970s following the resistance of those displaced to make way for the two parks at the centre of this essay.¹⁰⁴ Those removed from Kouchibouguac were allowed to share in this act of reconciliation, but not out of any particular recognition of their losses, but rather — as Lionel Bernier saw it — to avoid the impression that the federal government was “accordant la faveur à Forillon, et au Québec.”

In the case of the apology from the House of Commons, there was not the slightest indication that other expropriates, including those from Kouchibouguac, warranted consideration. As Bernier saw it, the success of the Forillon expropriates was a reflection of how they had advanced the dossier in what he described as “une façon méthodique Il s’agit de leadership ... de rallier la population autour d’une stratégie.” The agenda for those removed from Forillon extended beyond the federal apology, with the receipt of a similar one from Québec’s Assemblée Nationale in October 2011 and with continued lobbying for an increase in Parks Canada funding to Forillon, so that at least some of the economic benefits originally promised might still be realized. This sustained political mobilization stands in contrast with the situation at Kouchibouguac where the expropriates have had trouble advancing their cause in the shadow of Jackie Vautour’s larger than life presence on the land.

While the Forillon expropriates successfully campaigned for both their passport and their apology, their story has generated relatively little significant cultural production, at least in comparison with the substantial (and still growing) output connected with Kouchibouguac. In addition to Joncas’ poem, there was the téléroman *L’Ombre de l’épervier* (inspired by Noël Audet’s novel of the same name), the final episodes of which (from a two-year run) touched on the expropriations¹⁰⁵; and the Forillon story warrants a brief reference in the first stanza of Paul Piché’s popular song *La Gigue à Mitchounano*, which linked the expropriations at Forillon with those

at Ste-Scholastique in 1969 in connection with the construction of Mirabel airport.¹⁰⁶

By far, however, the version of the story that has had the greatest impact takes it back again to Lionel Bernier, in this case by means of his *La bataille de Forillon*, published in 2001 and reissued in 2009. While the book is described as a novel, it is a thinly veiled memoir of Bernier's efforts to champion the cause of the expropriates. Most of the characters have names only barely altered from their real form, and so the story rotates around the efforts of a lawyer, Archange (and so an angel) Bernier, who served his neighbours well. In fact, the novel provides a significant collection of primary documents as Bernier has included lengthy excerpts from newspapers and government reports, which have proven useful in piecing together the story for this essay. To be sure, there are conversations between characters that may never have taken place exactly as they are described, and yet the work — which makes a great read — has the unmistakable feel of a memoir, and serves to underscore the point that the Forillon story — unlike the one at Kouchibouguac — has not inspired the imaginations of artists.

In the end, the public memory of these two cases of dispossession by the state has been constructed around two very different individuals, Lionel Bernier and Jackie Vautour. Bernier worked within the system, ultimately overcoming countless bureaucratic hurdles to achieve a better settlement for his neighbours. It is impossible to read *La bataille de Forillon* or to reflect on the apology that was accorded to the expropriates from the Gaspé without coming away with admiration for what Bernier achieved. Nevertheless, his determination to use the tools that the system provided cannot compete in terms of its inspiration for artists working in a number of different genres with the story (inspirational in its own way) of Jackie Vautour, the lone wolf, still tilting at windmills to find justice and embodying the aspirations of a people whose history was marked, in many ways defined, by a moment of ethnic cleansing.

RONALD RUDIN is a Professor of History at Concordia University. His current multimedia project dealing with the history and memory of Kouchibouguac National Park in New Brunswick brings together his interest in public, cultural and environmental history.

RONALD RUDIN est professeur titulaire au département d'histoire de Concordia University. Il travaille actuellement sur un projet de recherche multimédia concernant l'histoire et la mémoire du Parc national Kouchibouguac au Nouveau-Brunswick. Ce projet est à la rencontre de trois de ses champs d'expertise : l'histoire publique, culturelle et environnementale.

Endnotes

- 1 House of Commons, *Debates*, 40th Parliament, 3rd Session, 11 February 2011. In spite of this unanimous vote, the federal government has yet to offer an apology as I write these lines in the summer of 2011.
- 2 Until the 1930s, Canada's national parks were created on lands under the control of Ottawa, either in the prairie provinces, which had not yet been ceded authority over their resources, or in Ontario, where parks could be created out of "native and admiralty lands that were transferred to Parks Branch control." Subsequently, however, especially as the park network moved eastward, a system had to be devised to transfer provincial lands unencumbered by a resident population. Alan MacEachern, *Natural Selections: National Parks in Atlantic Canada, 1935–70* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 38.
- 3 I.S. MacLaren, "Rejuvenating Wilderness: The Challenges of Reintegrating Aboriginal Peoples into the 'Playground' of Jasper National Park," in *A Century of Parks Canada, 1911–2011*, ed. Claire Campbell (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2011), 334. Along with MacLaren's essay, the human role in creating nature in Canada's national parks is featured in many of the other essays in this book. For examples of the Yellowstone model elsewhere in the world, see works such as Roderick P. Neumann, *Imposing Wilderness: Struggles over Livelihood and Nature Preservation in Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); or Karl Jacoby, *Crimes Against Nature: Squatters, Poachers, Thieves and the Hidden History of American Conservation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).
- 4 Emma Haché's *Wolfe*, a French-language production, had its première at Moncton's Théâtre l'Escaouette before going to Ottawa.
- 5 Given that the Kouchibouguac story had to do with the "conquest" of

- French Canadians (albeit Acadians), there is some irony that Wolfe's given name was James.
- 6 The cultural production inspired by the Kouchibouguac story is discussed in Ronald Rudin, "Kouchibouguac: Representations of a Park in Acadian Popular Culture," in *A Century of Parks Canada*, 205–33.
 - 7 Tina Loo, *States of Nature: Conserving Canada's Wildlife in the 20th Century* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006), 40. See also Karl Jacoby, "Class and Environmental History: Lessons from 'The War in the Adirondacks,'" *Environmental History* 2, 3 (July 1997): 324–42; and Jacoby, *Crimes Against Nature*.
 - 8 There is a particular emphasis in the literature on the displacement of First Nations people for the creation of national parks. In the American context, see Mark Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); and Philip Burnham, *Indian Country, God's Country: Native Americans and the National Parks* (Washington D.C.: Island Press, 2000). For the Canadian context, see John Sandlos, "Not Wanted in the Boundary: The Expulsion of the Keeseekoowenin Ojibway Band from Riding Mountain National Park," *Canadian Historical Review* 89, 2 (June 2008): 189–221; and John Sandlos, *Hunters at the Margins: Native People and Wildlife Conservation in the Northwest Territories* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007).
 - 9 James C. Scott, "High Modernist Social Engineering: The Case of the Tennessee Valley Authority," in *Experiencing the State*, eds., Lloyd I. Rudolph and John Kurt Jacobsen (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006), 7–8; James C. Scott., *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 94.
 - 10 The Africville story, which closely parallels the Kouchibouguac one, both in terms of the depiction by government officials of those to be removed as needing rehabilitation via relocation and the considerable cultural production that it has inspired, has been considered by numerous authors. For an approach that parallels the one taken here, see Tina Loo, "Africville and the Dynamics of State Power in Postwar Canada," *Acadiensis* 39, 2 (Summer/Fall 2010): 23–47. Loo has also written about another high-modernist project in British Columbia in "People in the Way: Modernity, Environment, and Society on the Arrow Lakes," *BC Studies* 142/143 (Summer/Autumn 2004): 161–96. As for the Mirabel story, which has oddly generated little careful analysis, see Jean-Paul Raymond, *La Mémoire de Mirabel: le président des expropriés, Jean-Paul Raymond, se raconte à Gilles Boileau* (Montréal: Méridien, 1988). High-modernist projects, such as the development of the St. Lawrence Seaway, are also front and centre in Joy Parr, *Sensing Changes: Technologies, Environments, and the Everyday*,

THE FIRST FRENCH-CANADIAN NATIONAL PARKS:
KOUCHIBOUGUAC AND FORILLON IN HISTORY AND MEMORY

- 1953–2003 (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2010). The list of high-modernist projects, only a few of which have been referred to here, is long and extends across the globe.
- 11 John Sandlos, “Federal Spaces, Local Conflicts: National Parks and the Exclusionary Politics of the Conservation Movement in Ontario, 1900–1935,” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 16 (2005): 293–318; Sandlos, *Hunters at the Margins*; Tina Loo and Meg Stanley, “An Environmental History of Progress: Damming the Peace and Columbia Rivers,” *Canadian Historical Review* 92, 3 (September 2011): 412.
 - 12 There were 19 national parks prior to the creation of Kouchibouguac. In a case such as Cape Breton Highlands National Park, some French-speakers were removed. MacEachern, 54. However, it was not until 1969 that French Canadians were the focus of expropriation efforts.
 - 13 *Report of the Special Inquiry on Kouchibouguac National Park*, Gérard La Forest, Chairman and Muriel Kent-Roy, Commissioner, October 1981, 15. *Census of Canada*, 1961, Bulletin SP-5.
 - 14 Joel Belliveau and Frédéric Boily, “Deux Révolutions tranquilles? Expériences néo-brunswickoise et québécoise comparées,” *Recherches sociographiques* 46, 1 (2005): 11–34.
 - 15 Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), RG 84-A-2-a, mfm T-11103, Harkin to W.W. Cory, 22 October 1922.
 - 16 *Ibid.*, Harrison Lewis to Controller, National Parks Bureau, 24 November 1938.
 - 17 Cited in Jean-Marie Fallu, “La Gaspésie, cette éternelle région-pilote,” *Magazine Gaspésie* 169 (automne 2010).
 - 18 Bureau d’aménagement de l’Est du Québec (hereafter BAEQ), *Plan de développement: région pilote: Bas-Saint-Laurent, Gaspé et les Îles-de-la-Madeleine* (Mont-Joli: BAEQ 1966); *Le plan de développement du bas Saint-Laurent, de la Gaspésie, des Îles de la Madeleine : entente générale de coopération Canada-Québec, 26 mai 1968* (ODEQ: Québec, 1969).
 - 19 For a review of federal rural development plans, see Donald Savoie, *Regional Economic Development: Canada’s Search for Solutions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992).
 - 20 The commission, chaired by Henri Dorion, did not wrap up its work until 1972, by which time it had issued 64 volumes of reports. LAC, RG 84-A-2, mfm T-11104, Laing to Johnson, 24 April 1967.
 - 21 *Ibid.*, RG22, vol. 1385, 324-1, Pt 1, B. Prudhomme, Memorandum, 18 January 1968.
 - 22 Jean Chrétien, the minister responsible for the national parks, insisted on a long-term lease which, according to the Civil Code, would be “dans la tradition du bail emphytéotique” and would unambiguously convey all rights to the lessee. LAC, RG22, vol. 1385, 324-1, Pt 1, Chrétien to Jean-Jacques Bertrand, 14 April 1969.

- 23 Marcel Masse, interview by author, 12 July 2011. Masse was deeply engaged with the Forillon dossier in the Union Nationale governments of the late 1960s, as both the minister responsible for the Office de Développement de l'Est du Québec (1968–1970) and as the Ministre des Affaires Intergouvernementales (1969–1970).
- 24 LAC, RG22, vol. 1385, 324-1, Pt 1, Chrétien speech to Chambre de Commerce Régionale de Gaspé, 16 April 1969.
- 25 Ibid., Chrétien, Memorandum to cabinet, 7 May 1969.
- 26 *Québec-Press* (4 January 1970).
- 27 The tribunal that heard the cases of expropriates who refused to accept the Québec government's offers for their lands described the size of the exercise: "Cette expropriation est pratiquement sans précédent dans la Province de Québec La superficie couvre environ 59,000 acres, elle ... entraîne le déplacement d'environ 205 familles et leur relocalisation." *Recueils de jurisprudence de l'expropriation*, 1973, vol. 1, 65.
- 28 *Débats de l'Assemblée nationale*, 16 juillet 1970, 1121, 1124.
- 29 Ibid., 1143.
- 30 Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ), Centre d'archives de Québec, E32, 1993-06-011/165, Jean Chrétien to Masse, 23 February 1970.
- 31 Ibid., E9, S102,SS5,SSS1, "Pochette d'information," 13 May 1970.
- 32 Ibid., E32, 1993-06-011/165, Projet concernant un programme de relocalisation des populations habitant à l'intérieur des limites du futur parc national dans la presqu'île de Forillon, 7 October 1969.
- 33 These crews were hired by the federal government, following the transfer of the land to its control, with support from Québec when required. BAnQ, Centre d'archives de Québec, E49, 1981-09-003/ 68, file 3116-X, Robert Marois to Yvon Cloutier, 20 December 1971.
- 34 Interviews presented in permanent exhibit, "Ces Gaspésiens du bout du monde/The Gaspeians from Land's End," Dolbel-Roberts House, Forillon National Park. Thanks to Lise Cyr from Parks Canada who provided me with transcripts of these interviews and permission to cite them here.
- 35 BAnQ, Centre d'archives de Québec, E25, 1987-11-003, boîte 29, Jean Paquet and Robert Fournier to J. Alphonse Dugas, Sous-ministre, 1 November 1970.
- 36 Ibid., E9, S102,SS5,SSS1, "Pochette d'information," 13 May 1970.
- 37 Ibid., E25, 1987-11-003, boîte 29, Paquet and Fournier to Dugas, 1 November 1970.
- 38 Bernier, *La bataille de Forillon*, 2nd ed. (Montréal: Fides, 2009), 278.
- 39 BAnQ, Centre d'archives de Québec, E49, 1981-09-003 / 74, file 3244-x (Gaston Bouchard).
- 40 *Recueils de jurisprudence de l'expropriation*, 1973, vol. 1, 68.
- 41 Cour d'appel, District de Québec, file 9737, 28 April 1975.
- 42 Bernier, *La bataille*, 383, 385.

- 43 Cited in Le protecteur du citoyen, *Rapport annuel*, 1975, 166.
- 44 Bernier, *La bataille*, 541.
- 45 Québec originally budgeted \$5.3 million for the acquisition of lands. Arrête en conseil, Chambre du Conseil Exécutif, no. 2132, 27 May 1970. When the dust settled, the final bill to Québec ran to over \$10 million, or roughly twice the original estimate. Quebec, *Public Accounts*, 1975–1976.
- 46 Bernier, *La bataille*, 375.
- 47 Pierre-Yves Pépin, *Life and Poverty in the Maritimes*, ARDA Research Report RE-3 (Ottawa: Ministry of Forestry and Rural Development, 1968), 38; Provincial Archives of New Brunswick (hereafter PANB), RS106. 16/6, Dollard Landry, “Report on Survey of Kent County National Park: A Study of Its People and Their Relocation,” (hereafter Landry Report), 16 September 1968.
- 48 Madeline Hébert Stever, interview with author, 30 June 2011. Pierre Hébert’s experience was consistent with what Larry McCann has described as “occupational pluralism ... a long-term strategy” for Atlantic Canadians, who were able to combine “subsistence farming, summer fishing, [and] winter lumbering.” Larry McCann, “Seasons of Labor: Family, Work, and Land in a Nineteenth-Century Nova Scotia Shipbuilding Community,” *History of the Family* 4, 4 (December 1999): 487.
- 49 Joel Belliveau, “Acadian New Brunswick’s Ambivalent Leap into the Canadian Liberal Order,” in *Creating Postwar Canada: Community, Diversity, and Dissent 1945–75*, ed. Magda Fahrni and Robert Rutherford (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008), 69.
- 50 Université de Moncton, Centre d’études acadiennes Anselme-Chiasson (CEAAC), Fonds Muriel Kent-Roy, 188.112. These statistics only refer to landowning families living within the territory of the park. In addition, there was a small number of families which lived within the park but did not own property, and hundreds which owned land within the park but lived elsewhere.
- 51 LAC, RG 84, file U 2-13, mfm T-11101, A.T. Pelletier, Assistant Deputy Minister, New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources, as cited in D.W. McAuley, Memorandum to file, 30 August 1968.
- 52 Pépin, 41.
- 53 PANB, Landry report.
- 54 LAC, RG 22, vol. 1384, file 323-1, Submission by New Brunswick to meeting with federal officials on Kouchibouguac National Park, 1 April 1969.
- 55 Ottawa funded the various *Conseils régionaux d’aménagement* through its Agricultural and Rural Development Act (ARDA). This joint federal-provincial exercise in rural planning in New Brunswick was similar to the one in Québec that led to the idea for Forillon National Park.
- 56 Greg Allain and Serge Côté, “Le développement régional, l’État et la participation: la vie courte et mouvementée des conseils régionaux

- d'aménagement du Nouveau-Brunswick (1964–1980),” *Égalité* 13/14 (Automne 1984/Hiver 1985): 197, 199.
- 57 Belliveau, 77; Allain and Côté, 200.
- 58 Greg Allain, Serge Côté, and John Tivendell, *Évaluation des conseils régionaux d'aménagement du Nouveau-Brunswick* (Moncton, 1978), 96.
- 59 CRASE was on the job as of 8 April 1968. PANB, RS417, file 17921, Interdepartmental Committee on the National Park in Kent County, “Provincial Programs Associated with the Establishment of Kouchibouguac National Park,” March 1973.
- 60 Province of New Brunswick, *New Brunswick's New National Park: What does it mean for residents of Kent County*, n.p, n.d.
- 61 PANB, RS854, file 47973, CRASE, “L'animation sociale dans le parc national,” Document de travail, 13 April 1970.
- 62 Ibid., RS639, A/C7, New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources, “Kouchibouguac National Park: A Statement on the Present Position,” 17 August 1971.
- 63 CEAAC, Fonds Muriel Kent-Roy, 188.114, Interview with Paul-Eugène LeBlanc, 6 August 1980.
- 64 PANB, RS417, 17921, Interdepartmental Committee on the National Park in Kent County, “Provincial Programs Associated with the Establishment of Kouchibouguac National Park,” March 1973.
- 65 *L'Évangéline* (19 August 1977).
- 66 PANB, RS639, V1, Jackie Vautour to Richard Hatfield, 26 February 1973.
- 67 Ibid., RS417, file 17957, Vautour to Hatfield, et al., 12 September 1975.
- 68 Privacy concerns prevent me from identifying individual expropriates, whose files are housed in PANB, Land Assembly Records, RS 639.
- 69 Ibid., file 3-47-2, Vautour to Interdepartmental Committee, 20 March 1972.
- 70 *Moncton Times* (4 May 1972).
- 71 LAC, RG 84, Roland LeBlanc (President of CRASE) to Ministers Chrétien and Davis, 12 May 1972. This and all subsequent references to RG 84 material were received following an ATIP request to LAC.
- 72 *Moncton Times* (24 May 1972).
- 73 LAC, RG 84, J.J. McIsaac (Superintendent, Kouchibouguac National Park), Memorandum to file, 26 May 1972.
- 74 *Moncton Times* (25 May 1972). The question of arson in such cases is discussed in Jacoby, *Crimes Against Nature*.
- 75 LAC, RG 84, P.A. Thomson to Pierre Franche (telex), 5 June 1972.
- 76 Ibid., J.J. McIsaac to Regional Director, Parks Canada, 23 November 1972; Ibid., Jean Chrétien to Vautour, 26 January 1973.
- 77 Ibid., R.H. Kendall to Regional Director, Parks Canada, 6 July 1973.
- 78 Ibid., J.J. McIsaac to Regional Director, Parks Canada, 26 January 1973. McIsaac was reporting on an interview with Vautour that had been aired

- on Radio-Canada, 25 January 1973.
- 79 Ibid., Vautour to Chrétien, 19 November 1973.
- 80 Ibid., “Briefing Notes: Fishing Compensation — Kouchibouguac National Park, Background — Current Status.”
- 81 CEAAC, Fonds Muriel Kent-Roy, 188.108, Folder 1, “Presentation to Government Officials on behalf of and by Jackie John Vautour, 5 September 1975.”
- 82 Ibid.
- 83 Images of the destruction of Vautour’s home exist only because a passer-by, Victorine Vautour, was on her way to film her husband who had just hunted a deer. When she saw a crowd around Jackie Vautour’s house and learned what was going on, she grabbed her Super 8 camera. Victorine Vautour, interview with author, 21 July 2011.
- 84 I discuss the place of the deportation in defining Acadian identity in *Remembering and Forgetting in Acadie: A Historian’s Journey through Public Memory* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).
- 85 Belliveau, 77–9.
- 86 CEAAC, Fonds CRASE, 46.14-16, Communiqué de CRASE, “Kouchibouguac en feu,” c. 1975.
- 87 Gérald Leblanc. *Moncton Mantra*, trans. Jo-Anne Elder (Toronto: Guernica Editions, 2001), 86. Leblanc billed this work as an autobiographical novel.
- 88 *L’Évangéline* (23 November 1976).
- 89 Ibid. (17 September 1979); CEAAC, Fonds SANB, 42.255, Paul R. LeBlanc to John Fraser, 1 October 1979.
- 90 CEAAC, Fonds SANB, 42.204, dossier (d), “Tintamarre de la fête nationale,” 1980. The tintamarre is a carnival-like occasion for Acadians, when they take to the streets, dress up, and make as much noise as possible. On the symbolic power of the tintamarre, see Rudin, *Remembering and Forgetting in Acadie*, 207–12.
- 91 LAC, Roméo LeBlanc Fonds, RI2069, vol. 167, Conseil de Ville de Tracadie, to John Roberts (minister responsible for Parks Canada), 15 April 1980.
- 92 *Report of the Special Inquiry on Kouchibouguac National Park*, 116.
- 93 Gérald Leblanc, *L’extrême frontière. Poèmes: 1972–1988* (Moncton: Éditions d’Acadie, 1988), 57–8.
- 94 Jacques Savoie, *Raconte-moi Massabielle* (Moncton: Éditions d’Acadie, 1979); Ibid., *Massabielle* (Montréal: ONF, 1983).
- 95 Zachary Richard, *La Ballade de Jackie Vautour* (1978).
- 96 *Kouchibouguac* (Montréal: ONF), 1979.
- 97 A further Kouchibouguac-inspired theatrical production, *La persistance du sable*, by the Acadian playwright Marcel-Romain Thériault, premiered in the summer of 2011.
- 98 Chambre des Communes, *Débats*, 40^e Législature, 3^e Session, le 11 février 2011.

- 99 Ibid.
- 100 He was director of legal services within the Québec Commission des Accidents du Travail from 1977 to 1980, at which time he became a vice-president of the newly formed Commission de la Santé et de la Sécurité du Travail (CSST).
- 101 Laval Doucet holds the Chaire Multifacultaire de Recherche et d'Intervention sur la Gaspésie et les Îles-de-la-Madeleine de l'Université Laval; Tania Martin holds the Chaire de Recherche du Canada en Patrimoine Bâti.
- 102 Maurice Joncas, *La plainte de Forillon*, reproduced in *Possibles 2* (hiver/printemps 1978): 75–6. The poem, set to music by Pierre Michaud, has served as an anthem for the expropriates for decades. During the weekend when the passport was announced, I attended a reunion of the families removed from Cap-des-Rosiers, where Lionel Bernier's family had lived, to hear Joncas perform the song with words now indicating they would no longer need to “payer à la barrière.”
- 103 These remarks by Lionel Bernier and those subsequently cited come from my interview with him, 1 August 2011. On the issue of the number of generations to receive free access to the park, Bernier had campaigned for a passport that would have been extended to six generations.
- 104 When Gros Morne National Park was created in Newfoundland in the early 1970s, the federal and provincial governments constructed it around existing communities to avoid relocations. In 1979, Parks Canada officially committed itself to a policy that would avoid further expropriations.
- 105 *L'Ombre de l'épervier* was broadcast on Radio-Canada during two seasons (1998 and 2000). Noël Audet, *L'Ombre de l'épervier* (Montréal: Québec/Amérique, 1988) does not make reference to the expropriations.
- 106 Paul Piché, *La Gigue à Mitchoumano*, from his album *À Qui Appartient Le Beau Temps?* (1977). The song begins: “Ste-Scholastique ou parc Forillon / Fallait partir de bon matin / Pour les touristes ou leurs avions / On est toujours dans l'chemin.”

The First French-Canadian National Parks: Kouchibouguac and Forillon in History and Memory

Ronald Rudin

Volume 22, Number 1, 2011

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1008961ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1008961ar>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

The Canadian Historical Association / La Société historique du Canada

ISSN

0847-4478 (print)

1712-6274 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this article

Rudin, R. (2011). The First French-Canadian National Parks: Kouchibouguac and Forillon in History and Memory. *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association / Revue de la Société historique du Canada*, 22(1), 161–200.
<https://doi.org/10.7202/1008961ar>

Article abstract

Until the mid-1970s, the creation of a national park in Canada meant the removal of the resident population whose presence was viewed as incompatible with the preservation of nature and its presentation to visitors. Like other high-modernist schemes of the time, park projects were conceived by agents of the state whose knowledge trumped that of the people on the ground whose lives were viewed as worthless. The first nineteen of Canada's national parks were created in areas populated predominately by English-speakers so that it was only with the creation of Kouchibouguac National Park in New Brunswick in late 1969 and Forillon National Park in Quebec eight months later that French-speakers bore the brunt of forced removal. This essay explores the dynamics regarding the creation of the first two French-Canadian national parks, both of which emerged in the midst of révolutions tranquilles, one acadienne and the other québécoise. This context shaped both the process that led to the development of the parks and to the very different ways that they have been remembered over the past forty years.