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## Abstract

On January 29, 1990, the Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, City Council passed a resolution declaring the only working language of the municipality to be English. On February 12, 1990, Thunder Bay approved a similar resolution in principle. By this time, 42 Ontario municipalities in total had passed English-only language resolutions.

The paper explores the factors and claims preceding the passing of these English-only language resolutions. Newspaper articles from the time focus on how the resolutions were a direct reaction to Ontario’s French Language Services Act of 1986. Municipal politicians framed their support for the resolutions as cost-saving measures for municipalities. Section 1 of the French Language Services Act explicitly excludes municipalities from its scope however, proving that these resolutions were completely symbolic. Further investigation reveals that the most significant push for these resolutions came from francophobe organizations such as the Alliance for Preservation of English in Canada and the Sault Ste. Marie Alliance for the Preservation of English Language Rights. Both organizations were inspired by a conspiracy theory formulated by retired Lieutenant Commander of the Royal Canadian Navy and author Jock Andrew, who claimed that official bilingualism and the provision of French language services outside of Quebec were part of a plan to prepare English-speaking Canada for French colonization and takeover. These resolutions took place amidst the constitutional wrangling of the Meech Lake and Charlottetown Accords as well as the recognition of Quebec as a “distinct society.”

While these events were not directly linked to the passing of English-language only resolutions, there was a distinct anti-French cultural climate in English-speaking Canada which the resolutions added to.

## Objectives

The primary objective of the paper was to understand the justifications used for passing of the English-language only resolutions in Ontario municipalities. Further attention was given to understanding the ideology behind the Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada (APEC) and the Sault Ste. Marie Alliance for the Preservation of English Language Rights (SAPELR), particularly with respect to why specifically they were lobbying for English-Language resolutions on the municipal level.

## Primary Sources

**Bilingual Today, French Tomorrow**  
Jock Andrew’s *Bilingual Today, French Tomorrow: Trudeau’s Master Plan and How It Can Be Stopped* provides insight into why pro-English and anti-French groups such as APEC and SAPELR were lobbying against the French Language Services Act. A core belief from the book is that providing French services and government hiring of bilingual people is discriminatory against English speakers, as Jock Andrew believed that English speakers were more likely to be monolingual.

**The French Language Services Act, 1986**  
The text of the French Language Services Act of 1986 (FLSA) was important to examine in order to gain a better understanding of how impactful the English-language resolutions were, and what they were supposedly countering. Section 1 of the FLSA specifically excluded municipalities from its scope unless the municipality decided to opt in, ultimately making the English-language resolutions that passed symbolic.

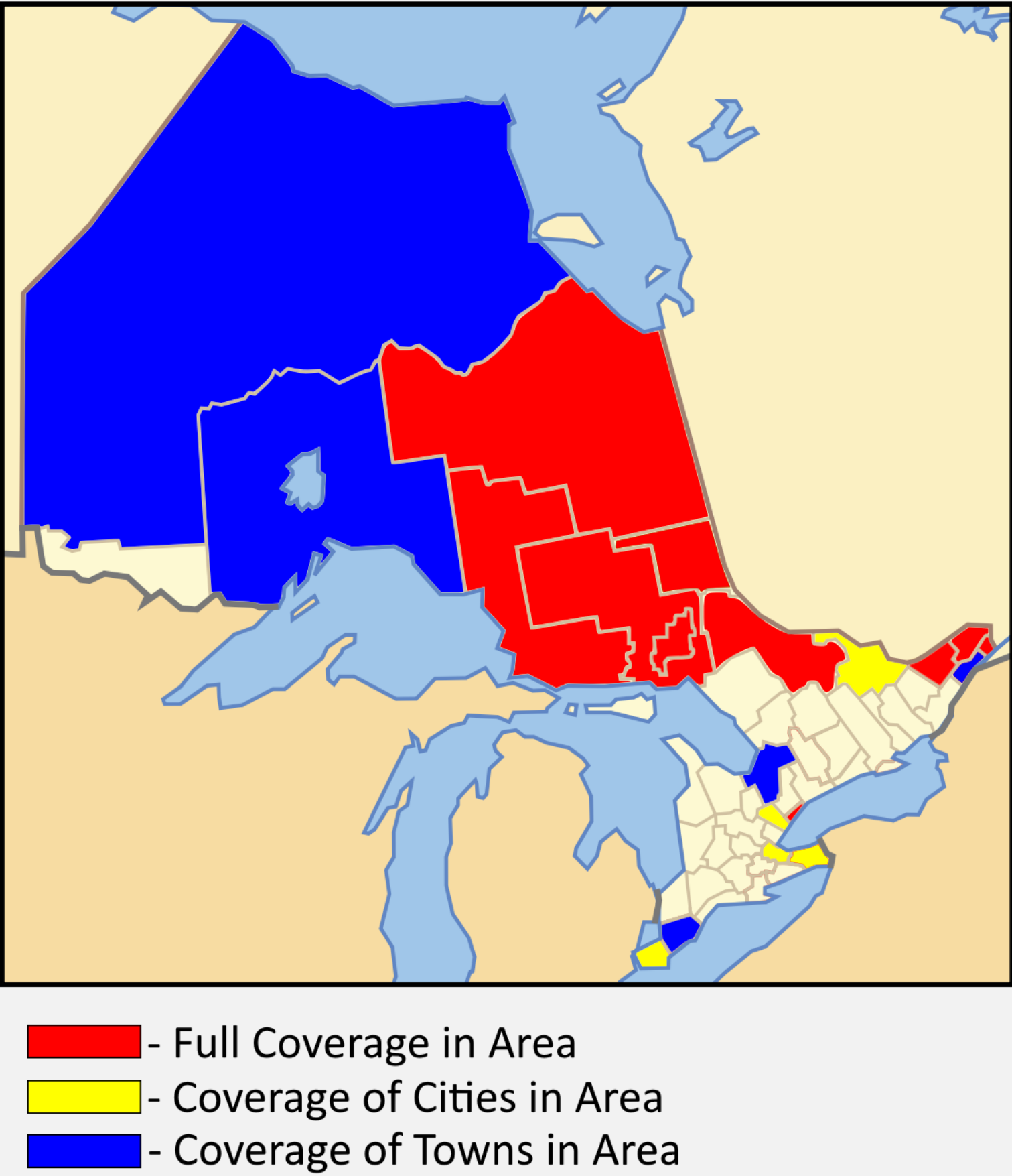
**Archived Newspaper Articles**  
Newspaper articles from the time provided insight into the public political motivations behind the English-language resolutions, and how individual municipal politicians were justifying the English-language resolutions to their constituents. They also helped solidify the connection between APEC, SAPELR, and Jock Andrew.

## Secondary Sources

**The Best Man for The Job**  
Harvey Sim’s *The Best Man for The Job: Joe Fratesi and the Politics of Sault Ste. Marie* covers Joe Fratesi during his time as Mayor of Sault Ste. Marie. The first section of the book discusses the run-up and passing of the English-language resolution in Sault Ste. Marie. It also discusses the specific petitioning efforts of the Sault Ste. Marie Alliance for the Preservation of English Language Rights (SAPELR) as well as SAPELR presence throughout Sault Ste. Marie in the lead up to the passing of the English-language resolution.

**“How Could This Happen To Us?” French Community and Sault Ste. Marie’s English Resolution**  
Michael Graydon, Celia Ross and Joel Muto’s journal article expands on Harvey Sim’s *The Best Man for The Job*, bringing further to light information regarding the formation and connections between APEC, SAPELR, and Jock Andrew’s work.

## FLSA Coverage In Ontario (1986)



## Findings and Conclusion

Officially, the English-language resolutions were justified through the claim that implementing the FLSA on a municipal level would be too expensive combined with a fear that the FLSA would be expanded to include municipal services. The FLSA did not include a requirement for municipal services to be covered, however. The English-language resolutions that passed were symbolic, with no real effect or resultant change as a result of their passing on a municipal level. These claims of cost and the fears of FLSA expansion were part of the deliberate lobbying strategy of various English language rights groups such as APEC and SAPELR, among others. These groups believed that bilingualism and bilingual policies were an attack on anglophones by francophones. Jock Andrew, one of the most extreme supporters and member of these groups, believed that official bilingualism in Canada was a means for a complete French-Canadian takeover of Canada, and that French services were simply the part of the French takeover. As such, even symbolically, the English-language resolutions that passed were viewed as victories.

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