

Le choix des Acadiens pour leur «Jour du Souvenir» à eux

Une commémoration perpétuelle du sort mortel de nos ancêtres...



Fosse commune d'ossements acadiens. On a aussi déporté nos morts en 1859 de la Rivière-Platte au cimetière de Miscouche.



Gerbe de fleurs (le 5 octobre 2008) à l'emplacement à Port-la-Joye de l'embarquement des citoyens français acadiens sur les vaisseaux britanniques Duke William, Violet et Ruby, etc.



Face à Charlottetown, le Monument de l'Odysée tragique du nettoyage ethnique de presque 3 000 Acadiens de l'île Saint-Jean sans compter les enfants dont l'âge moyen était d'environ 15 ans.

Deportation, not Expulsion

Colonel John Brooks Devoe

“We did upon pretenses not worth a farthing, root out this innocent, deserving people, whom our utter inability to govern or reconcile gave us no right to extirpate.” - Edmund Burke (1729-97) British Statesman, Author... on the Deportation.

While some might initially perceive the subject of this paper as being purely a matter of semantics, I contend that every person of Acadian descent should eschew the use of the term Expulsion with reference to the tragic events of 1755-63. It is a word designated by the perpetrators of the horrendous act to describe their evil deed and since, unwittingly, adopted by many who profess to be sympathetic to the Acadian view.

I was reminded of this not long ago when discussing with a Scot the tragedy that befell the Highlanders during the Clearances, which were also instigated by the English Crown. He had used the word Expulsion in connection with the Acadians, and when I admonished him, giving my reasons, he agreed with my position adding, “The victor writes the history and that is the word I learned in the history books of Nova Scotia.” And so it is. The term is preferred because it then likens the Deportation to acts committed by the French with respect to the Huguenots or the eviction of the so-called “Loyalists” by the American patriots (loyal only to their new nation) and fighting for independence from the Crown. Such a comparison is entirely without merit; a person expelled may choose his destination.

Words have meanings. The Deportation was unique in its intent and cruelty: The homes of the Acadians were burned, much of their cattle slaughtered; families were physically removed (often separated) and driven onto vessels at bayonet point bound for destinations chosen by their captors. They were not expelled, they did not emigrate, they were deported. Not all lexicographers deal with the difference between the words Deportation and Expulsion with precision, often giving them similar meanings. The roots from which they etymologically evolved suggest they are quite unlike in meaning however. The Latin origins of deport are deportare, carry off, carry away: de, away, off + portare, carry and for expel we find expellare, drive out: ex-out + pelier, to drive. Again, the Acadians were not driven, they were taken.

While some sympathetic to the Acadian view of things slip into the use of the victor's choice of words, those of the British view never fail to choose carefully. The English bias of Mahaffie in his recently published *Land of Discord Always* is evident in both his index and the text; the word is Expulsion, never Deportation. On the other hand, A. H. Clark (as neutral a writer as I have found) in his *Acadia* uses Deportation exclusively. There is a “code” here if you will, and a check of the indices of any of the histories of the time is revealing; try it. When writing, make your mark as an Acadian, use DEPORTATION, never Expulsion!

NDLR : L'article ci-dessus du colonel Devoe, de Stratham, New Hampshire, est paru en mai 2002 dans *Le Réveil Acadien* publié par la “Acadian Cultural Society”, à Fitchburg, Ma. Tandis que le colonel préconise l'utilisation du mot “Déportation” contrairement à “Dispersion” (Expulsion), d'autres utilisent sans ambages les mots “nettoyage ethnique” (John Mack Faragher, John Eldon Green), et “génocide” (Roger Paradis (1998), Warren Perrin, *Southern University Law Review* (1999), Fidèle Thériault, M^e Christian Néron, Benoît Aubin, Émery LeBlanc, Pierre-Maurice Hébert, Stephen J. Martin et Gilbert Gendron, *The Barnes Review* (2002), Dean Jobb (2005), etc. En tout cas, quiconque lit “L'Article II de la Convention contre le génocide,” pourra comprendre que les Acadiens ont bel et bien subi un nettoyage ethnique et un génocide en face du «Berceau même de la Confédération» canadienne tel que l'écrivait dans *The Guardian* (Charlottetown, 1^{er} novembre 2000) John Eldon Green, consultant en gestion au lieu historique national de Port-la-Joye-Fort Amherst.