



Association of
Canadian Archivists
Association canadienne
des archivistes

email aca@archivists.ca www.archivists.ca

June 7, 2016

Dear M. La Roche,

I am writing on behalf of the Association of Canadian Archivists / Association canadienne des archivistes (ACA) to express our collective concern about the recent decision to close the doors of Le Centre de référence de l'Amérique francophone on June 23, 2016. The Centre's recognition in 2007 under UNESCO's Memory of the World program was a tremendous accomplishment and speaks volumes about the value of its collections. What is even more deeply troubling is the closure coming at a time when the archival community is reinvigorating its commitment to improving access to records of Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit communities across the country in light of the National Truth and Reconciliation Commissions Final Report and Recommendations.

Established in 1975, the Association of Canadian Archivists is a national not-for-profit organization representing more than 600 archivists in Canada. With headquarters in Ottawa, the ACA's mandate is to provide the archival profession leadership and to facilitate an understanding and appreciation of Canada's archival heritage. As an association of archivists we all recognize the challenges of cutbacks, increasing costs, and the increasing desire for researchers to do much of their work online. However, we all **also** value the expertise that archivists provide to researchers and the imperative of archives to provide physical access to their collections. The lay-offs of six staff members and the access restrictions now *de facto* being imposed on the collections with the impending closure of the reading room represent serious negative implications for research on the Quebec Seminary, the early relationship between the diverse peoples of northeastern North America, the French Empire and the Catholic church.

The ACA encourages Quebec's Museum of Civilization as well as all levels of government to find a way to maintain access to the collections of Le Centre de référence de l'Amérique francophone, which includes ensuring the retention of the necessary qualified personnel with the required expertise to allow researchers' experiences to continue to be as meaningful as those of Tom Peace and the many others who have researched there. We do, indeed, hope this closure is temporary.

Sincerely,

original signed by Kathryn Harvey

Kathryn Harvey
President

cc.
Régis Labeaume, Mayor of Québec
Luc Fortin, Minister of Communication and Culture, Québec
Mélanie Joly, Minister of Canadian Heritage
Iskra Panevska, UNESCO
Carol Couture, Association des archivistes du Québec
Martin Paquet, Institut d'histoire de l'Amérique française
Joan Sangster, Société historique du Canada