

shared language, culture and history of a group not without its own internal stresses, but vis-à-vis the rest of North America relatively close-knit. The same sense of particularism is to be found in other communities within the Canadian unity, including, no doubt, the Jewish community.

A sympathetic understanding of this inward separatism is important if we are to adapt successfully to the paradox of the two majorities. What I am saying is a little more than Vive la difference!, I am suggesting that we will fail to adapt if we expect that the French majority will ever have exactly the same view of Canada and the world as the English-speaking majority. I think too that this kind of spiritual separatism may have been a factor in the 24% of the popular vote racked up by René Levesque in the last Quebec election. Part of the vote came from convinced separatists, part was the familiar "a plague on both your houses" protest. Part was attracted by the party's avowed socialism. But another element was this spiritual separatism, expressed in a vote for René since he wasn't going to win anyway. I do not want to exaggerate this factor but it was there.

For a government to function effectively it must have the consent of the great majority of the people, and a considerable measure of support. I believe this rule to be of near-universal application regardless of constitutional forms. In the age of instant communications, the systematic use of terror is no longer possible except perhaps in small, isolated states which have remained immune to the immense and growing weight of world opinion. While we reject the repressiveness of the totalitarian regimes of the Soviet Union or China and many of their political ideas and aims, we must assume that they suit the Soviet and Chinese people well enough to keep the rulers in office by consent, whether express or implied.

In free and open societies like our own, something more than a general consent and a reasonable measure of support is required to put a government in office and keep it there. Enough people must be convinced of the good faith and competence of a political leader and his party to give him a majority in the House of Commons, or at the least more seats than anyone else. Once the leader has gained the confidence of the House of Commons he has, in effect, been given a contract to govern the country for a period of four years, more or less, as long as he retains the confidence of the House.

This at least, is how it used to be. A leader and his party were given a four year contract, the terms of which required the administration to govern wisely and well, and