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Prime Minister takes stock of Parti Québécois victory in Quebec

Reprinted below is the full text of a nation-wide address by Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau on November 24, regarding the recent election in the province of Quebec:

To some Canadians last week's election in Quebec has given rise to many hopes. To many other Canadians it has been a cause of great concern, but to all it has posed many questions, and I believe it is incumbent upon me, as Prime Minister of this nation, to try, by way of response to some of these questions, to try to take stock of the current situation.

The first fact that we must acknowledge is that democracy is in good health in Quebec, and that is good news.

When a young party less than ten years old, fighting only its third general election, can take power, while respecting the democratic liberties, I think this phenomenon has few equals in the world today. It is a victory for thousands of party workers who, with no support other than their faith in an idea, and in their belief in political morality, have taken the Parti Québécois into power. That is a victory for them, but it is also a source of satisfaction for the great majority of Quebecers who believe in the democratic process, many of whom certainly will

hope to use that process to defeat the very ideas of the Parti Québécois in their day.

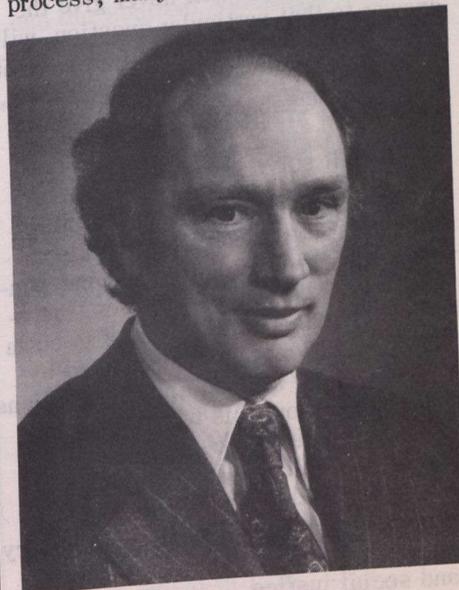
Quebec does not believe in separatism. The second fact is that Quebec does not believe in separatism. Now, this proposition, perhaps apparently paradoxical, is very easy to demonstrate. The Parti Québécois was defeated in 1970 and again in 1973 — those two elections when it advocated the separation of Quebec — but it won in 1976 when it repeated over and over again that the issue was not separation of the provinces but sound administration of that province.

Thus the separatists themselves do not believe that separatism has the support of Quebecers, and that, for me, is the second piece of good news.

The third fact: Quebecers have chosen a new government; not a new country. Mr. Lévesque has no mandate to bring in separation, nor, of course, do I, nor do I have the desire to ask for such a mandate. Consequently, the Federal Government and the provincial government will have to co-operate together within the framework of the Constitution, continuing to serve to the utmost the interest of the people of Quebec, just as the Federal Government, in co-operation with the other provincial governments, seeks to fulfil and serve the interests of the peoples of the other provinces.

Priorities of province

But now within provincial jurisdiction, the Quebec government has a very important priority, and will have to face many serious internal problems. The school question, the stability of investments, management-labour relations, to mention only three of the more serious of those as an example. But for other problems, those which come under the jurisdiction of both levels of government, for those prob-



Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau

