

Claude Ryan visits

We don't have to take a Valium

by Ron Stang

For many in the audience, the message must have seemed reassuring.

Here was a major Quebec political figure not only saying he wanted Quebec to remain within Confederation but that he also wanted an even stronger federal government.

During a speech to a Dalhousie audience last week Quebec Liberal Leader Claude Ryan came off, at times, sounding like his was the loudest voice in the land pleading for national unity. Not only did he attack the government of Premier Rene Levesque but he chastised Canada's other premiers for sowing the seeds of national divisiveness.

Ryan said the premiers' performances at the First Ministers Conference then taking place in Ottawa was just a further example of the kind of inwardness now characterizing the different regions in the country. Rather than making an effort to understand the views of the other provinces, he said, all the provincial leaders talked about were their own concerns.

Ryan also lashed out at some English Canadians' recriminations against the federal government's bilingualism policies. He called their actions "stupid and unfounded" and said they were generally motivated by racial hatred. He added, however, that such sentiment was not limited only to Canadians outside Quebec. There are some in Quebec who hold similar racial biases against the English, he said.

Ryan said the kind of racial attacks directed against French pilots and air traffic controllers during their 1976 strike has caused "great damage". (The central issue in the strike was the demand to have

the French language used in ground to air communication.) He added that if English Canadians sincerely want Quebec to remain within Confederation they will have to prove this to their French counterparts.

"Needless to say, the people of Quebec will decide for themselves (to separate or not) but they will be influenced by the kind of reaction that emanates from the rest of Canada," he said.

Ryan said he has no doubts Quebec would be able to survive on its own should it opt for separation. However, he believes the net benefits accruing to Quebec from the federal system outweigh independence.

He said the federal system provides an economic security blanket with the federal government keeping depressed regions of the country afloat during hard times through its fiscal transfer policies. For example, the prairies benefited from aid from central Canada during the Great Depression. More recently, Quebec has received \$3 billion in federal payments to compensate it for losses incurred as a result of the international oil price rise of 1973.

Ryan told the audience that the country can be strengthened only if the division of powers between the provinces and the federal government are more clearly articulated and firmly entrenched.

Ottawa, he said, should have full control over such macro-economic policies as inflation and unemployment, industrial policy and transportation and communication because each of these areas require coordination from an institution having the resources to manage them.

Ryan added, however, that provincial control over such



Quebec Liberal leader Claude Ryan (above) wants Quebec to remain in Canada and a stronger federal government

areas as health, education, labor relations, cultural affairs and provincial economic development should be further developed to best suit the provinces' individual needs.

He favors the federal system to the Parti Quebecois' concept of "Sovereignty-Association", because Confederation allows Quebecers more direct control over economic policy. He said through federal parliamentary representation. But under an economic common market, control would likely be much more indirect. Under such an

arrangement, he said, it would only be the top leadership of the Quebec Government who would be able to negotiate with Ottawa.

Mr. Ryan said any future role for Quebec in Confederation would have to be backed by constitutional guarantees to ensure the flourishing of a French culture. He said certain basic language rights would have to be enshrined in a new constitution, including the right of French Canadians to education and communication in their own language anywhere in Canada.

Killam lectures

Nobody cheered

by Ron Norman

Last year the University found it had some spare change from the enormous benefactions of Isaak Walton Killam and decided to found a series of popular lectures. Actually, the real benefactor was Dorothy Killam, the millionaire's widow, for Killam died without a will. So the lectures were named for her.

The first set of lectures, held last winter, were given a common theme—"1984 and Beyond"—and they proved so popular that the University is giving a continuation this fall: three more lectures with the same theme, but with a rather different class of speaker.

From the expectant mood of the audiences of the present series I suspect that last winter's speakers were very good indeed. So good that I believe I could detect some disappointment in the air after each of the 'new' lectures.

So far, these have been given by Robert Trivers, a biologist, and Irwin Cotler, a lawyer.

Cotler, like Trivers, began by dividing his treatment into two parts. And like the biologist he devoted the first and larger part of the evening to telling us about his work.

Since Mr. Cotler was recently counsel for Anatoly Scharansky, one can easily forgive him for talking shop, or one could if he flavoured it with one little indiscretion. But Mr. Cotler's tact never failed him once. The strongest point he cared to make was that it was very odd of the Soviet Union to incorporate the Helsinki accords in its constitution ("to its credit") and yet to ignore them in practice.

In the second part of his lecture Mr. Cotler got down to the job of prophesying.

He thinks we should work towards a universal law of human rights.

He thinks that the new Canadian constitution should begin with a manifesto of human rights even before it deals with the distribution of powers.

He also says that language rights should be guaranteed in the Constitution.

Like Trivers, Cotler wound up with what was probably intended to be a rousing peroration. He proposed a "revision of the social contract" in which the poor would be compensated for their powerlessness.

Nobody cheered. But lawyers are used to not being cheered.

Dal Photo/Posiak

fit to be tied

by Alan Adams

University of King's College students will now be able to tell the difference between silk and a sow's ear thanks to a \$4700 expenditure by university president John Godfrey. Godfrey spent the money on 221 English woven silk ties bearing the institution's crest.

Godfrey's actions came as a result of a student's dislike of the \$2.00 model previously sold to students and faculty.

Godfrey explained that a student approached him last year wanting to replace the existing tie with one of higher quality. The student designed the new tie and Godfrey approached a weaver in England for production. Godfrey feels the new product is "a very expensive but rather splendid tie."

Godfrey said that at the time of the purchase the situation of the Canadian dollar was very different and "in retrospect we made a mistake". But, he added, King's students now face a

"very democratic situation in tie selection." The new silk tie is on sale in the King's bookstore for \$21.00, along with the older \$2.00 model.

Godfrey defended his actions by saying the previous tie "looked terrible." When asked why an English weaver was chosen over a Canadian company, he said it's very difficult to get silk ties made in this country. He made no mention if he, in fact, had spoken with a Canadian manufacturer.

A King's student described the incident as "unfortunate and a useless waste of money." He said when Godfrey was confronted about an English weaver he exclaimed "it was the least we could do for George III."

King's student council president Wally Stephen expressed disgust at Godfrey's decision. Stephensaid the money could have gone towards the greater benefit of the university and he described Godfrey's actions as "very Oxfordian."

Dal Photo/Delorey

