

Richard Cleroux at Glendon

# Every Quebecker a separatist: Globe writer

By AGNES KRUCHIO

Every Quebecker, deep down, is a separatist, Richard Cleroux, Quebec correspondent for The Globe and Mail told a Glendon audience last week as he analyzed the results of the Quebec election.

"The election of the Levesque government was the culmination of a large nationalist movement which had started long before the formation of the Parti Québécois," Cleroux said.

It was a 'flowering of national pride' which had previously been channelled by premiers Jean Lesage and Maurice Duplessis. René Lévesque had spoken to this nationalist pride and got a closer and clearer expression of the people's will for the type of government they wished for than in any other previous election in the province of Quebec.

**NO WORSE**

It was not that the Liberals were any worse than any of the previous governments they replaced, Cleroux said in a seminar-type presentation. It was because people in the seventies expect more from governments and politicians than they did in the sixties. It was an election in which people made more difference than ideologies. The Quebec people wanted an honest government, Cleroux explained.

"In effect," he said, "the Liberals had only dropped by 10 per cent in the popular vote, which represents only 110,000 from among a little more than 3 million

voters." About 100,000 votes made the difference between the Parti Québécois' 6 seats in 1973 and the 69 they won in the last election. The reason according to Cleroux, while last time an overwhelming majority of the anglophone population had voted liberal, this time a large percentage of them voted for the Union Nationale. "Some, curiously enough, voted for the PQ, for the same reasons that their francophone counterparts had voted for it: a desire for a different, and an honest government," he said.

"The Liberals put on a big scare twice, but now the people called their bluff and did not fall for those tactics," Cleroux said.

**DROPPED VOTES**

A very significant role was played by the Union Nationale, which effectively spoiled the election, Cleroux claimed. In 31 of the 110 ridings the vote was split by the UN, and the split was large enough to put the PQ in front.

The Union Nationale had only five per cent of the popular vote in the 1973 election, because in 1973 they attacked the Parti Québécois. This time, they decided to attack the Liberals according to Cleroux.

"When you're number two in a system, you can't afford to attack number two, because it only helps number one," Cleroux explained.

"The UN's majority vote was francophone, however. The slogan of François Biron, its leader was 'Stop the strikes in the public sec-



Cartoonists post-election looks at Quebec political leaders Rene Levesque and Robert Bourassa. The Globe and Mail's Quebec writer, gave an election wrap-up at Glendon last week.

tor', and while it was far too simplistic and approach, people felt that he would at least try to cope with the large numbers of strikes plaguing Quebec. Hospital workers, teachers, civil servants and construction workers have struck repeatedly. While the Liberals were saying the same thing, they had lost credibility in the last three years," he said.

According to Cleroux, "Corruption was another factor in the Liberal loss. There had been too many scandals that had involved members of the Liberal Party in the last few years: Loto Quebec, the James Bay fiasco, the Olympic just to name the most conspicuous ones. And while one scandal will not necessarily bring down a government, the repetition of the scandal after scandal will act like water torture to the public."

The Union Nationale attacked

the Liberals on the issue of farm quotas. The milk quota was cut by 17 per cent. Quotas, said Cleroux are anathema to farmers. They are in the business to produce the most they can possible can, and when the government comes along and sets limits on production, it alienates many farmers, he explained.

And then, the infamous Bill 22. Cleroux says no one, among the furor that followed it, had looked up the actual facts. "There are very few immigrants in Quebec to begin with," he said, and "very few of these are recent immigrants, and even fewer have school-age children. The bill had affected only a few hundred people at most. But francophones had felt that their culture was endangered by immigrants and reacted emotionally. The immigrants, in turn, were offended

by quotas; the whole system was handled with a heavy hand by the Liberal government.

"The Parti Québécois had a more common sense approach in declaring that anyone already in Quebec could go to English schools, but future immigrants would be told that their children had to go to French schools ahead of time," he said.

As to why Premier Bourassa called the election in the first place Cleroux explained Bourassa felt the Union Nationale was 'stealing' his votes among the farmers; taxes would have to be raised in the spring, because of the Olympic debts among other things, and the economy would decline before it became healthy again. Bourassa calculated that he would beat the UN before it became too strong. It was a simple political gamble, and he lost.

## Strike-breaking in Quebec

MONTREAL (CUP) — Some business professors are planning to run their courses off-campus with private funding to avoid pickets set up by 500 striking faculty at the Université du Québec a Montreal (UQAM).

Speaking for the 30 faculty in administrative sciences, Graduate Studies Dean Pierre Simon said classes will start later this week in school gyms, private homes and church halls. Simon said the courses will be partly student-funded and an appeal has been made to the business community.

**OPPOSED SCHEME**

Both the students association and the Syndicat des Professeurs de l'Université du Québec have op-

posed the scheme. They plan to go to the classes and explain to the department's 3,000 students why they should support the strike.

The business professors split from the union earlier this year because they said their capitalist principles contradict the Marxist leanings of the union.

But the union says the business professors are "using" the strike to push their goal of separating the business school so they can get an independent bargaining position.

The UQAM faculty went on strike October 18 after negotiating wages and faculty representation on decision-making bodies for six months.

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