

As for the French-speaking communities scattered across the country in provinces with an English majority, they fell victim to what must be called the stubborn intolerance of local authorities. We, the French-speaking people of Canada, had dreamt of a country the whole of which would be accessible to us, where we could speak French and develop culturally as English-speakers were able to do in Quebec. This dream never came true. For the most part, our English-speaking countrymen considered Canada an English-speaking, British nation in which *Francophones* were entitled to certain rights in Quebec but not throughout the country. The Federal Government itself became a private English-speaking preserve into which French-speakers had hardly the right to venture and in which French was barely tolerated. The marked economic inferiority of the French Canadians combined with the language problem to produce an explosive situation, but our governments did not realize how dangerous it was until very late. For example, a study carried out by the Federal Government in 1960 was to reveal that, right across the country, regardless of the prosperity or poverty of the region in question, French-speaking Canadians were always less well-paid than their English counterparts. By the time this situation became officially known, reform had already begun. Quebec had awakened and elected a strong and perspicacious government at the provincial level; it had trained, in increasing numbers, the administrators, scientists and technicians that until then had been lacking; it had strengthened its voice in the Federal Government. English Canada, in turn, began to see the injustice of the situation and changes were brought about. *Francophones* gradually took their place in the federal public service and in economic and political life. They had realized what benefits could be obtained from federal institutions and how to make use of the very considerable autonomy enjoyed by the Canadian provinces. Remarkable progress has been made in the last 25 years, but it comes too late to spare us a secessionist threat. The resurgence of nationalism, a postwar phenomenon, was felt in Canada just as it was throughout the world. Though most French Canadians continue to feel that their collective future lies within Canada, a significant number of others feel that it can only be based on a sovereign Quebec. It must be realized that French Canadians, almost without exception, value their culture as they do their soul. All of us are, and always have been, what you might call cultural nationalists. What is new is that our Quebec separatists embrace *integral nationalism*, which means that they believe it necessary for every nation — large or small — to form a separate and independent country. To appreciate the danger one must also realize that the nationalist drive in Quebec is combined with the decentralizing forces constantly at work within a federation. Like all other countries, Canada suffers from serious regional disparities. Average *per capita* income in the richest regions may be as much as double that in the poorest provinces. In addition, cultural differences, though less extreme than between Quebec and the rest of the country, are nevertheless very marked even within English-speaking Canada. In time of crisis, regional particularism always tends to be accentuated. Discontent is contagious, with the result that the claims of Quebec have now been joined by regional demands from the Canadian West, based on the rapid development of its energy resources, and by protests from the Atlantic Provinces, which, for their part, have no such assets to get them out of the economic stagnation in which they are caught and to which they refuse to resign themselves. If we add to all this the effects of the international crisis, which are strongly felt in Canada, and the unemployment-