

Politics threatens arts

by Ira Nayman

It's out of fashion, in these conservative times, but I am a cultural nationalist. No apologies, no regrets.

I believe that strong national cultural institutions (the CBC, the Canada Council, TeleFilm Canada, etc.) are vital to the survival of the nation. Without such organizations, Canadians won't get their stories told, won't learn anything about each other and, ultimately, won't have myths to bring them together as a nation.

Brian Mulroney's Conservative government has always been hostile to government intervention in the arts. But, in the face of a strong cultural lobby, it hasn't overtly struck arts off its agenda.

Until now.

Over the summer, rumours of a Conservative cultural policy known as "devolution" spread throughout the country. The main idea was that power over culture which has traditionally been assigned to the federal government will devolve to the provinces.

The Constitutional proposals recently tabled in the House of Commons send a mixed message on this issue. There seems to be protection for major cultural institutions (particularly the CBC), although such protection still leaves them open to the "death of a thousand budget cuts" to which the Tory government has subjected them.

Part III, Section 21, however, clearly allows for full participation by the provinces in broadcasting in general, and the running of the Canadian Radio, Television and Telecommunications Commission.

Since the CRTC is supposed to be an arm's length regulatory body, the government may be overstepping its jurisdiction by giving the provinces a consultative role in the issuing of broadcast licences.

In any case, when new technologies are threatening to make national borders obsolete, it is ridiculous for the

analysis

The Conservative government's latest Constitutional proposals may be the last nail in the coffin of Canadian culture. If the culture makes the country, that does not bode well for the future.

federal government to assume provincial governments can regulate the airwaves effectively.

Part III, Section 20 contains the most ominous idea. It states: "The Government of Canada will negotiate with the provinces, upon their request, agreements appropriate to the circumstances of each province...where appropriate, such agreements would be constitutionalized."

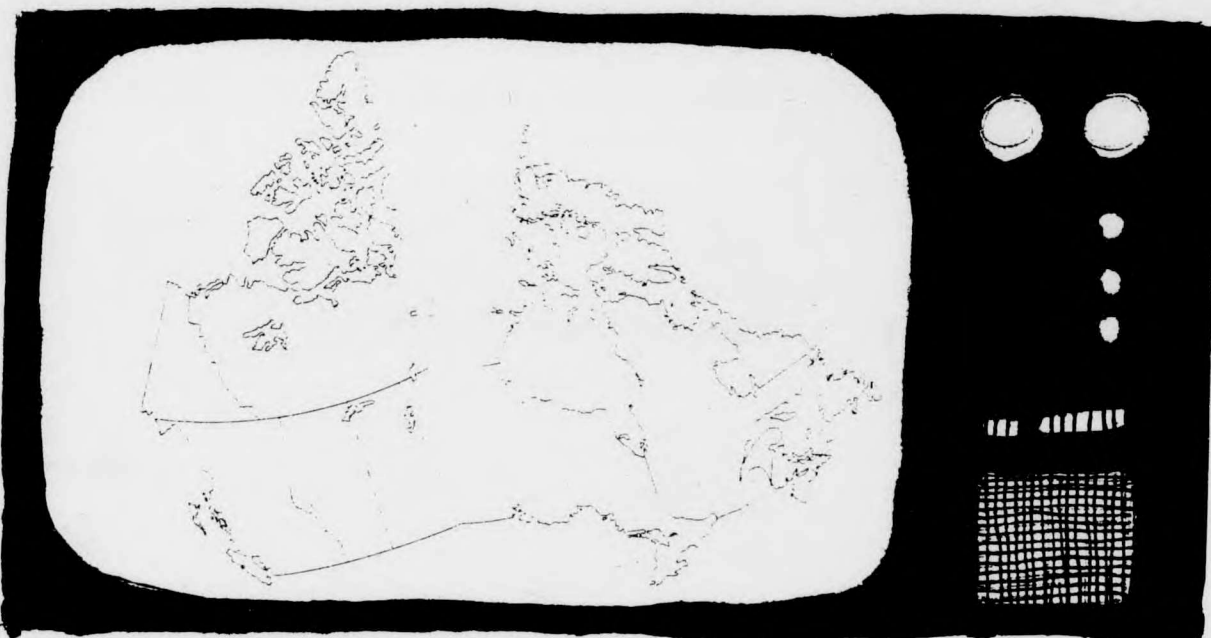
How this will be interpreted is anybody's guess. But, it may allow the federal government to pass its cultural responsibilities along to the provinces, piecemeal instead of all at once.

Devolution if necessary, but not necessarily devolution.

The attraction of this policy to a Conservative government cannot be understated. Ridding itself of responsibility for most, if not all culture would save the government a substantial amount of money. In addition, a free market in culture would develop, benefitting those (few) entertainment corporations who were not funded by the government, to the detriment of the many that are.

The effects on arts communities around Canada would be devastating. Provinces don't have the money to replace the federal government's funding. None of them. Even in Quebec, which has a pro-devolution government, artists recently came out against devolution, arguing that it would lead to decreased funding for the arts in that province. This would ultimately destroy the small amount of Canadian culture which survives America's entertainment juggernaut.

The Constitutional proposals on culture may be devolution in nationalist garb. Artists beware.



The best concerts you never saw

by Eric Alper

So, a band comes to town for the first time and no one has ever heard of them. Do you take a chance on seeing what could turn out to be the next Beatles, or do you lie after they are mega-stars and hope no one will notice your inability to name any of songs they played?

It's okay, 'cos you're not alone. Welcome to "Concerts that everyone claims to have been to."

1. Bill Haley at South London's Lewisham Odeon (1957)

The portly kiss-curl sporting hell-raiser was the first U.S. rock 'n' roll star to tour the U.K. The number of unreconstructed teddy boys who claim to have been present is roughly equal to the population of China.

2. The Who at Leeds University (1970)

In need of the perfect antidote to their double studio extravaganza, *Tommy*, The Who recorded every performance they gave in 1969 intending to release a live album but, in the end, didn't have either the time or inclination to listen to the results.

In 1970, they built a ceremonial bonfire and burnt all the tapes, then set up a mobile unit to record two shows at Leeds University. To this day, people still corner you at parties and insist, "You can definitely hear

analysis

A band comes to town for the first time. Do you go to see them, risking boredom, or stay home and lie about going?

me on the *Live At Leeds* album! If you the chagrin of the singer, who personally tore down similarly hyperventilating posters in the foyer of the clubs.

Seven hundred people were officially in attendance over the two nights. Strange, then, that some 2,285 million have since claimed to have listen carefully, side two, track two."

3. Led Zeppelin at Nottingham Boat Club (1975)

One of the more intimate dates on their celebrated "Return To The Clubs" tour, in which Led Zep returned to some of the clubs as a "thank you" to their fans. The band agreed to play for their original fee if the promoters charged the original price of admission.

The group's new material (such as "Stairway To Heaven" and the rest of the soon-to-be released *Led Zeppelin IV*) was warmly received by the several million persons who have since claimed to have been in attendance.

4. Bruce Springsteen at the Bottom Line (1975)

"Finally, the world is ready for Bruce Springsteen And The E Street Band" claimed the posters, much to

"lost their stubs."

5. The Police at the El Mocambo (1978)

The same spiked trio — before going gold with a song about a hooker named "Roxy-Anne," or something like that — decided to tape the show for later use in case they ever became in demand. They did; unfortunately, someone nicked the tape soon after the show, and it has never turned up. Despite many claims to the contrary, the only people to have attended the appearance were, in fact, The Police.

Special Mention:

6. Duran Duran at Maple Leaf Gardens (1983)

The video for their then-current hit "The Reflex" was filmed by ex-CITY TV personality J. D. Roberts. Think back, now: remember, during the bridge of the song, four or five guys looking up and getting soaked in the face by water? A close look shows that our favourite choice of liquid was animated. Models were chosen with a "wet look" intact.

Which was kinda neat to know after I overheard some Duranies telling the less-than-fortunate non-concertgoers they were sitting "right beside the ones who were drenched by the water." After the video came out, of course.

I guess they had to be sure they weren't imagining it, huh?

YORK UNIVERSITY
STUDENT CENTRE CORPORATION

RESTAURANT/CLUB

OCTOBER LINE-UP

Tuesdays are **JAZZ NIGHTS**

Saturdays are **DJ/CLUB NIGHTS**

- | | | |
|------------------------|-----------|--|
| 2nd | Wednesday | Chris Sheppard \$5.00/door |
| 3rd | Thursday | DJ/CLUB NIGHT |
| 4th | Friday | Dream Warriors To be confirmed \$10.00 |
| 7th | Monday | Company of Sirens (Theatre Co-Produced by YFS) & Mother Tongue FREE |
| 9th | Wednesday | Meryn Cadell \$3.00 |
| 10th | Thursday | DJ/CLUB NIGHT |
| 15th | Tuesday | DREAD ZEPPLIN \$4.00 advance \$7.00/door |
| 16th | Wednesday | Two Nice Girls (Co-sponsored by the Women's Centre) \$2.00-\$6.00 (sliding) |
| 17th | Thursday | DJ & the Watchmen FREE |
| 21st | Monday | Comedy Night (Geechy Guy Strombones & Kevin McGrath) |
| 23rd | Wednesday | Chris Sheppard \$5.00/door |
| 24th | Thursday | DJ/CLUB NIGHT |
| 30th | Wednesday | SPIRIT OF THE WEST \$10.00/advance \$12.00/door To be confirmed |
| 31st | Thursday | Hallowe'en (need we say more?) |
| 1st | Friday | MAESTRO FRESH WES \$10.00 |

SEPTEMBER 24 to OCTOBER 18

Art Installation by Nancy Hatch

The Patient Players

at the SCC Art Gallery

For more information call 736-5101