

Trudeau dislikes confederation

by Peter Bryson

In recent months the Trudeau government has taken a number of steps with respect to "patriation" of the BNA act which have aroused considerable opposition. This opposition has been directed against both, [1] the substantial changes that the federal government would like to make and [2] the method by which the reforms are sought.

Unable to obtain agreement with the provinces on his constitutional proposals, Prime Minister Trudeau has taken the following course. He has decided to act unilaterally by obtaining a resolution

proposed will fundamentally alter the basic nature of our confederation. Trudeau terminated debate by invoking the controversial and rarely invoked closure rule. This rule has only been resorted to three times in the last 25 years. This somewhat callous treatment of parliamentary debate caused great Conservative uproar which was reported on the front page of the London Times [October 25], arousing British speculation as to the acceptability of the Trudeau proposals to many Canadians.

Trudeau seems determined to proceed despite strong

Parliament of Canada if it is sought to incorporate it into the federal legislation. Whatever the legalities, however, it certainly seems contrary to the spirit of confederation that the creators of this country [the provinces] will have no say in fundamental changes of the constitution which will dramatically prejudice their current constitutional powers.

It is important to remember that Trudeau is not simply asking the British "to return" our constitution. He is asking them to amend it for us by [1] inserting an amending formula which will put due power of

The English seem to be awakening to this fact and may not agree to pass Trudeau's resolution; rather they may simply return the BNA act to us, unamended. This is certainly a preferable course.

The following [edited] article by Memorial philosophy professor F.L. Jackson addresses some of the issues raised by Trudeau's proposals.

I sincerely hope the events of recent weeks have made it clear to Maritimers what we are up against in our struggle for survival within confederation.

The idea behind it all would seem to be that Trudeau basically dislikes Canada as he finds it. He dislikes constitutional monarchy, he dislikes governors-general, he dislikes senates, he dislikes provincial governments, he dislikes parliament, he dislikes the English-French thing. In short he dislikes the whole confederation idea, and the constitution which expresses it.

The French and English, as we all know, choose to remain under a constitutional monarchy in the first place be-

cause they believed a parliamentary democracy was superior to the kind the French and American revolutionaries were in that day proposing. Trudeau, however, chooses Rousseau (French republican philosopher), nevertheless and, in spite of two hundred years experience and grave emerging questions about American cultural future, he wants to go back and correct what he thinks was a wrong decision.

The centrepiece in this whole blitzkrieg upon our political conscience is the matter of the bill of rights. It is the objection to this proposal, spoken or implied, that really brands anyone who makes it not only an enemy of his country but an enemy of the human race. With this one, Trudeau has everyone on the run. One is not supposed to ask questions. One is simply exhorted to believe in rights, believe in entrenchment, believe in Trudeau and what he wants to do. Anyone who knows anything about political philosophy, however, knows that the question of human

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tion from the Commons and Senate which incorporates his constitutional proposals. He has terminated debate in the Commons on his proposals after only ten days, despite the fact that the resolution

opposition by most provinces and threatened court action by six of them. Constitutional scholars are divided on the legality of Trudeau's procedure. The proposed resolution may be ultra vires the

amendment in federal hands, and [2] incorporating a Bill of Rights. Surely it is not unreasonable to require that these changes be debated and accepted or rejected in Canada, rather than in England?

Commentary Rock and roll until dawn

In the early seventies, Marvin Gaye released an album which, besides being a joyous affirmation of his gospel roots, asked the question "What's Goin' on?" Throughout the album Gaye bemoaned a situation endemic to the seventies where style had come to be equated with content and the concerns of the sixties were freeze-dried. Today I look around at a campus full of people sporting skinny ties and pointed shoes. I hear them listening to the B-52's, Japan, and Martha and the Muffins, and I see them doing things that are "soooo punk!!!". I was in a Record store recently where they were playing excerpts from the Stones first album (an event in itself!) and I was shucking and jiving to "King Bee" when I heard a kid ask the clerk if that was a new Inmates album! What's going on? The comment registered, the kids seedy look and his punk shag identified themselves on my brain cells, a swift psychopathic rage followed... swift action... purposeful stride... retribution... and I made the little bastard eat the entire AC/DC catalogue... needless to say, he's in critical condition. Was I wrong?

Would a member of the bereaved generation have berated me thusly if I had failed to know if King Bee was written by Slim Harpo? Are the transgressions analogous? Have I become an anachronism because I prefer the Stones to the Inmates and Robert Johnson to George

Thorogood?

That's not the problem though is it? I don't really give a shit what these little creeps are listening to. What worries me is an increasing disenchantment with rock n'roll as a whole. Even in this day and age when the Blues brothers (disregarding their superlative band, can anybody really listen to their watered down versions of the classics without suffering intermittent bleeding) are touted for bringing soul music to the kids, I can't even seem to muster arguments to support my contention that 'Da Da Ron Ron' is a better record than 'Highway to Hell'. I can't seem to muster the required enthusiasm needed to convince a heavy-metal moron that the statement "I think Judas Preists second album is their best" is not only ridiculous and absurd since there is no difference, but that applying a critical context to a band that is so below criticism is a criminal waste of the English language. I don't care any more. What's going on?

The problem that is at the heart of this hullabuloo is Bruce Springsteen's new album **the River**. Almost repelling in its scope and size **the River** is the most depressing album I've heard in a long time. The fact that Bruce Springsteen sees Rock and roll as a trap was evident on **Darkness on the Edge of Town** but that album was so unremittably bleak that Springsteen's despair was all of a piece and despite tales of his

live shows you could, even while marvelling at the beauty of the album, dismiss his thesis as wrong-headedness. No such escape is permitted on **the River** however, Here Springsteen has written such joyous life-affirming rockers as **Crush on you** and has juxtaposed them with terrifying ballads such as **Wreck on the Highway** that deny what the rockers proclaim. The effect is such that you recoil when you're most drawn to the record. The conflict in Springsteen's mind is so intense that he questions rock n'roll traditions even as he clings to them. Springsteen's influence has been so powerful

modern rock n'roll that he makes you feel his tragedy as deeply as he does. His album covers make the point as well as anything.

And yet, I'm pissed off. I don't like my roots being questioned by an ugly little 'pusher' from New Jersey. Some questions should never be asked. I LIKE being able to sneer at the vermin who listens to Queen, the Scorpions, the Doobies, and Van Halen. I LIKE being able to get really drunk and thrash out bad versions of Kansas City, Johnny B. Goode and Tutti Fruitti with a Garage band and not have to question what I'm doing. Rock n'roll

may be shit, but it's glorious, nut-brained fine smelling shit. I know this, and Bruce Springsteen knows this too just watch him sing the lyric "I'm a prisoner of Rock n'roll" in the **No Nukes** movie without a trace of irony or introspection. So I hope you've exorcized your god-damned demons Bruce, 'cause I'm going to play your live version of 'Devil in a Blue Dress' and then I'm going to rip the lungs out of a Uriah Heep fan. ROCK AND ROLL, ROCK AND ROLL UNTIL THE FUCKIN' BREAK OF DAWN.....!!!

Signed: Tom Ozene & Chris Mitchell

