

separation help to balance the budget, assist the disadvantaged, or prepare our young people for the future?

In speaking of the immediate risks of separation, we must look at what Quebec's separation would mean in concrete terms. I will outline just three of the many risks that loom on the horizon in the aftermath of a YES vote.

The risk of losing your citizenship. One thing is certain: whatever the PQ [Parti québécois] says, your Canadian citizenship would be put at risk in a separate Quebec. Currently, as Canadian citizens, your Canadian passport guarantees you protection, respect and recognition worldwide. The citizenship we now enjoy is a privilege, not a right. Canada is free to redefine its arrangements regarding citizenship. The PQ government cannot make promises or decisions on behalf of the Canadian government as to who is a Canadian citizen.

The risk of job losses. A certain number of jobs in Quebec could be lost in the event of separation. New investments will slow down and capital, individuals and companies that do not want to remain in a separate Quebec might go elsewhere. How will this affect the future of your children and your communities? What is certain is that the economy and the situation of cities such as Montreal and Quebec City would be uncertain. I don't have to tell you how volatile the restaurant business is to this risk.

The risk of losing your mobility right. Within a separate Quebec, your access to jobs in other Canadian provinces, and that of your children and your grandchildren, would be eliminated.

Talking about the economic consequences of separation is not a fear-mongering campaign: it is telling Quebecers the truth. And I am confident that Quebecers realize not only these risks, but the tremendous advantages of Canada. Indeed, at the end of this saga, we will continue to demonstrate to the world why Canada has been selected by the United Nations for the second year in a row as the best country in the world in which to live.

We have made Canada our country and together we can ensure that it continues.

A Canada united, strong and ready to meet the challenges of tomorrow – a future brimming with hope and opportunity – is the heritage we should pass on to our children and our grandchildren. This is the heritage that we deserve!

Thank you.