

Quebec and separatism

*If there is to be a Canada, there must be a Quebec.
And it must be strong. And it must stay in the federation.*

By DAN HNOJOVA
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So what do you say to a bright young college kid who admits he is a separatist? And the kid is not even a French-Canadian—but of English decent, born and raised in Quebec, educated at McGill and considers himself a Quebecois and supports separatism.

So what do you say to him? Well for a start you call him crazy. That's easy. Then you trot in a bunch of hoary statistics proving separatism is a zero scene economically. That should fix him. And there are stacks and stacks of those nice statistics on economy. You know the type: separatism means a 30% lower standard of living; separatism means losing 200 million in federal subsidies; separatism means shouldering a

it's a small price to pay for independence. Economic suicide or no economic suicide, he wants Quebec to separate.

For a moment you are stunned. Look man, do you know what you're saying? You can't separate just like that. There's no way. You just can't. If you do we will . . . we will . . .

We will what? If Quebec threatens to separate, Lester will call in the army or something? What could English-Canada do?

Nothing. A big fat nothing. If the Quebec people expressed through their legislature a sincere and unanimous desire to separate, English-Canada could not stop them. Because after all, in the eyes of the world this would be akin to stopping nationalism and surely our Nobel peace prize winning prime minister does not want to be accused of bullying a minority group that is simply expressing a natural urge to become a nation. Why our twinkle-eyed first minister has even gone on public record in support of embryonic political entities, yessiree.

And if Quebec should separate, where does that leave the rest of Canada?

There are three possibilities. In the first case there could be set up some sort of associate states using constitutional hocus-pocus roughly akin to the Ten Commandments on Separatism according to the Gospel St. Rene Levesque—thou shalt have only one banking system before thee; and so on . . .

Or else if the first case can't work—and Quebec had apparently learned the error of her ways—we might be able to muddle to a reunification if we can stand the stench of bad blood spilled on both sides.

Or lastly, since hell hath no fury

as a wasp scorned, we could kiss Canada in any shape or form goodbye and hello Green Bay Packers, Disneyland and Broadway.

And frankly I think the last may happen.

So what you say. Isn't it already happening? Isn't Canada so de-

"Canada shall not rule this province. Separation is essential for the survival of Quebec and Canada as we know them today. Without it both will disappear within the next 25 years."

Marc Briere, Montreal lawyer and supporter of Rene Levesque

pendent on the United States that the final judgment—total American assimilation—is as sure as God made little red apples.

Maybe—but I for one do not want it.

For my own selfish reasons, there is no way a Green Bay Packer can hold a candle to my beloved Judy Lamarsh—Canada's answer to high culture—or for that matter to Ralph Cowan, a misunderstood maverick who is just unbelievable.

For my own selfish reasons I want a Canada. And for there to be a Canada there has to be a Quebec, and a strong Quebec to boot. And Quebec must stay within the federation. Of course there is nothing sacred about our federal system. No where is it blasted in solid rock. 'Thou will worship no other government except Ottawa.' But I think that if Quebec wants to get what it is looking for, she will have to look to a strong Ottawa—and if Ottawa wants to remain the centre of power, Ottawa will have to be both compassionate and brutal.

So what does Quebec want?

Eugene Forsey, a political scientist, recently summed up the demands neatly: "First we English-Canadians have got to get it firmly into our heads that this country never was and never will be a country of one language and one culture. Second, Quebec is not just a province like the others. It always has had a special status and special position. Third, we simply cannot maintain the confederation settlement. The industrialization of Quebec, its cultural renaissance, the expansion of French-Canada far beyond the borders of Quebec, all call for adjustments."

Too many French-Canadians equate Ottawa with 'them' not 'us'. We have to make the French feel the whole country is their show as well as ours, mainly by giving Quebec more powers and a bigger share in running the whole country.

But a lot of people are unconvinced about granting Quebec these things. Given an inch and they'll take a mile. And besides, maybe things in Quebec are not so serious. Maybe Quebec is simply going through one of its periodic orgies of nationalistic chest beating and things will be okay if we just let things ride.

And people come up with all sorts of slick arguments—and some not so slick—against granting anything to the French-Canadian. One story goes we beat the frogs on the Plains of Abraham fair and square didn't we? We won, they lost. What right has a vanquished race to ask for more concessions?

It is true we did win. But let us remember that but for a few accidents of history there go we. What if we had lost? Would we be so adamant now? I doubt it. It all depends whose ox is being gored.

Another argument is a bit more sophisticated and is based on legalities and runs something like this: the constitution is the law of the land and nowhere in the constitution does it give Quebec the right to ask for more power.

True the constitution does not. When one looks at the letter of the law (the constitution) Quebec has not a leg to stand on, but that is in the letter of the law. However, I

"In one or two elections — we think two—Quebec will be ready to take itself out of the federal structure."

"The Quebecois are a national group; they feel themselves to be a nation. Even the English Quebecois do not see this—do not feel this."

"The English in Canada exhibit a good-hearted desire to keep Quebec within Canada and save the Quebecois from themselves."

**Rene Levesque
Head of Sovereign
State Movement**

think it is time to look beyond the letter of the law and more into its spirit, the spirit of the law. And in that spirit many of Quebec's claims are honest and justified.

And the arguments against Quebec go on and on—the language of commerce is English; Quebec is one province of ten, one problem in ten; increased global shrinkage and cultures and identities in the pot of homogenized humanity; etc., etc.

But these arguments, though they do hold a certain relevancy, are not true arguments but excuses—excuses for something to talk about and to do nothing. And Quebec is getting a bit fed up. She has been listening to the same tired record for the last 200 years. Now Quebec is starting to do something.

casserole

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"With the exception of Ontario, the rest of Canada is too caught up in stereotyped mythologically-based thinking about French-Canadians to be able to resolve our national unity problems in a rational way."

**Michael Oliver
Research Director
B and B Commission**

five billion provincial debt. Oh, there are lots of them. Like there is just no way for our separatist to break the power of the buck. No way.

But the crazy separatist doesn't even argue. He gives you that slow smile to say you're in the stone age while he's in the super-jet. Yes he knows about those statistics. Yes he knows he will suffer economically. So what. To him

Those lovely drawings on the cover come from a computer. It's had to believe that a machine can draw as well as a Picasso, or a baby gorilla, but it can.

There is more about computers on C-4 and C-5. They are fascinating gadgets, but only as good as the men who build them. Science editor Glenn Cheriton wrote the articles and photo editor Chuck Lyall took the pictures and arranged for the feature.

Quebec, biculturalism and the whole frog scene cover C-2 and C-3 this week. There are pro and con arguments for separatism, and one anti-frog column. Thanks go to Herbie, for posing for the picture on C-3.

Also on C-2 is a letter. It came to us following our education edition, and we just had to run it. Everything else this week seems so serious, and a good laugh never seems to hurt.

'This letter might not do any good'

Are our ears smarting!
The Feb. 23 Casserole was devoted to education, and, as was expected, not everyone was happy. The following is an indignant reply from a first-year education student, pointing out the error of our ways.

The letter came to us unsigned and handwritten, but we just had to run it—such outrage, such clear-headed rationality, such garbage. The weird sentence structure, the spelling mistakes, the terrible grammar, and the muddle-brained logic are reprinted exactly as they came to us.

This is the kind of young intellectual worker that abounds at university. This is the kind of academic leader that will soon be a pillar of society. This is the kind of pea-head that will be out "teaching" children in a few years time. Kind of scares you, doesn't it?

This letter is in regard to the article written about the faculty of education on C-3 of the Friday 23rd edition of the Gateway. This letter might not do any good, but at least I will feel better.

Upon first reading the article I was rather angry, especially at the first couple of paragraphs where students of other faculties gave their opinions. If they think that the education students, who eventually become teachers, are so low, how did they ever come to the position they are in now. I suppose teachers were more of a hin-

derence than a help. Many could have probably done just as good by getting the books and studying by themselves.

Some people just naturally have to put themselves above everyone else, which means someone has to take last place. These would be the students that, if we were over in India, would be of the highest rank and would have nothing to do with the untouchables. I do not think much of a status system, although it exists. In university I think that all students are of the same status, and if any comparison is to be done, it should be against the whole population, of which all are of a higher level.

As for the number of students that were interviewed for the article. Twenty students out of approximately 1,000 is really a good representation, is it not? And as for the choice of picture that was placed in the paper. The lunch room in the basement of the Education Building is hardly the place to find any students at work, although there are some. This is a room for relaxing during one of your free periods to eat your lunch or just to visit with friends. Why could the photographer not have gone just one floor higher and taken a photograph of one of the classrooms, where there is serious work being done.

I find the remarks of the students who said they entered education because they had low marks and could not enter any other faculty, confusing. The requirements to get

into Education are about the same as for any other faculty. I am not a "bright" student by any means, yet I had the qualifications to enter most any faculty I wanted. I know that there are many more like me in education.

I agree that there are problems with the courses that we have to take. One of the psychology courses I took also seemed to me to be boring and useless, but I only found this to be true of one course. I feel sure that the courses for the other faculties are not perfect either. At least we realize there is a problem and new ideas are being sought to try to right the problem.

It was said that education was a real fun thing. I say let those who think so try it. I do not find it so easy, but then maybe I am not as intelligent as I should be. I have had remarks about how easy the education course is, said to me outright. At first I did not mind the remarks as I thought they were just kidding me. Now I am at the point where I feel I will hit the next person who says anything to this effect.

At least we were credited with the ability to think. There are many students that are more intelligent than me and who are considered "bright" by educational standards, surprising as it may seem, in education. Serious work and research is being performed by many. I think more could have been said in favor of the faculty and the students.

Thank you
First Year Education Student