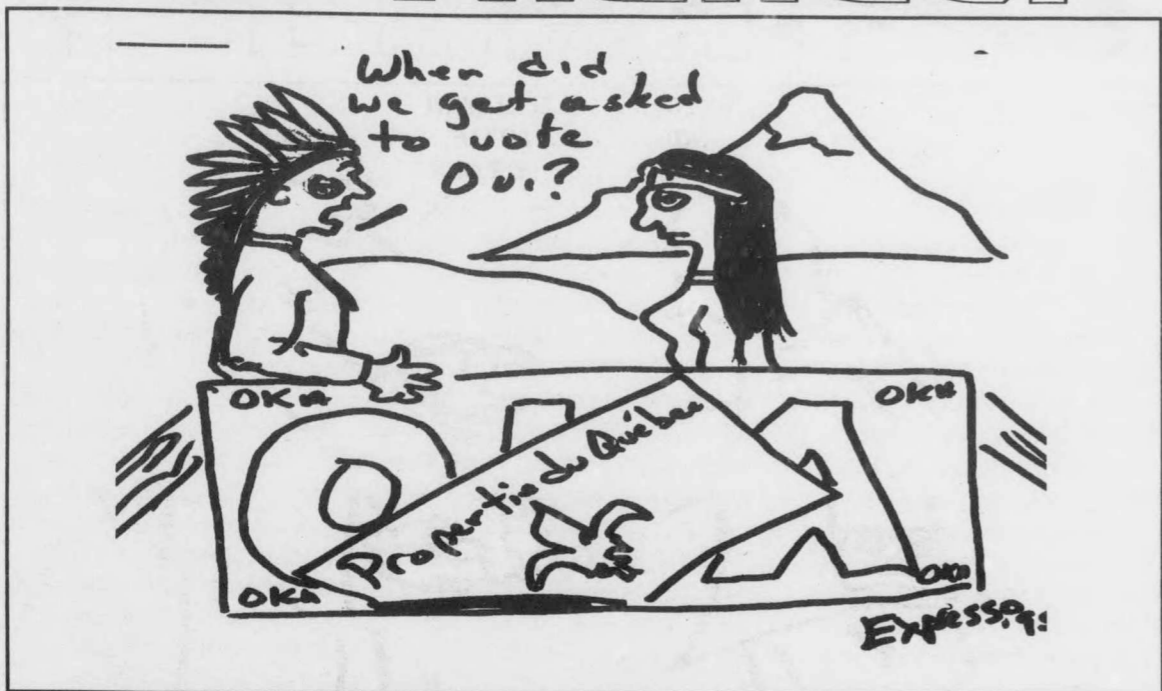


Blood n' Thunder



sympathy for a notion that aboriginals oppose. What makes him think he can have it both ways?

The real gist of Carrier's letter was to whine about the "oppressed nature of Quebec's "partnership" with Canada", calling the Quebecois a "conquered, oppressed people". Such a statement completely ignores the Canadian political reality of the last 25 years. These years have seen the position of Prime Minister held almost constantly by natives of Quebec, as well as the

introduction of programs meant to make francophones feel "at home" in Canada, such as bilingualism. It is true that Quebec did not consent to the 1982 Constitutional agreement, but the past decade has been dominated by two high-profile attempts to gain such consent. Both deals saw the federal government agreeing to confer more powers onto the provincial governments, including Quebec. This is oppression?

I'm not going to deny that Quebec is a distinct society that often felt "left out

of Confederation; indeed, I've often felt the same way about my home province of Newfoundland, so I can sympathise. But to call Quebec an "oppressed" society is just ludicrous. And if polls showing the "Oui" side headed for defeat on October 30 are any indication, most Quebecois feel the same way. Misunderstood, maybe-but oppressed?

The real jaw-dropper in Carrier's letter, though, is his claim that Quebec has the lowest standard of living on the

provincial scale. When, exactly, did the four Atlantic provinces get richer than Quebec?

I do not want Quebec to separate, I will grant them their right to do so if they wish. Quebec separation, however, must not take place without taking into account the lands that were added to Quebec since Confederation, the fair apportionment of the federal debt, and the wishes of Quebec regions where residents wish to remain in Canada. Parizeau and Lucien Bouchard have made statements suggesting that they will not bargain in good faith on these issues, but Quebec sovereignty cannot be allowed without it, regardless of how "oppressed" a few Socialists may feel Quebec is.

In the same issue of The Brunswickan that featured Carrier's rant, Student Union president Kelly Lamrock was quoted as saying that the International Socialists "tend to make a fool of students". If Carrier's letter is indicative, I'd say that's an accurate assessment.

Damian Penny

IS support Quebec's right to say "Yes"

Dear Editor,

This letter is a response to a letter that appeared in last week's Blood and Thunder entitled, "International

Socialists Piss Me Off". It seems that the author of this letter, Sheralee Stanley, experienced a very peculiar reaction to an issue of our newspaper, Socialist Worker. After reading an article on the Quebec referendum, she apparently became, "full of rage - pissed off to say the least". I'm certainly glad that Ms. Stanley found our newspaper provocative and intellectually stimulating (if in fact this is the best way to describe her abusive tirade), but I am sorry that she seems to have so profoundly misunderstood the position of the International Socialists concerning the Oct. 30 referendum.

The International Socialists defend the right of Quebec to self-determination (we have the same position with regards to the First Nations). We do not advocate separation, but we do believe that the population of Quebec has the democratic right to choose whether or not to form their own nation. Quebec is a part of Confederation by conquest, not by choice. They are an oppressed nation within the Canadian state.

We defend Quebec's right to choose in opposition to the anti-Quebec racism of parties like Reform and COR. Ms. Stanley claims that Quebec is like, "a spoiled child", but English Canadian students and workers have always been told by the right-wing in this country that Quebec is greedy and the cause of our problems. This is nonsense. Quebec is the poorest province in Canada. Our problems are the same as their problems- wage cuts, service cuts, and education cuts because of a system which puts profits before need.

We should remember that Quebec students and workers are a tremendous potential ally in any fight against the cuts to social programs now being implemented by the federal government. But they can only become our ally if we say loud and clear that we understand why Quebecers might be fed up with the federal system that offers nothing but cuts, and threats of economic non-association should Quebec separate (like those coming from Paul Martin, Preston Manning, and Sheralee Stanley). Quebec is welcome here, but if they choose to separate, that is their democratic right.

The International Socialists and the UNB/STU Socialist Students' Club will be holding a public meeting on this topic on Tuesday, October 24, at MacLaggan Hall, Room 013, entitled, "Quebec Referendum: Defend Quebec's Right to Vote YES". Everyone is welcome, so bring your friends and a coffee, and let's continue this debate.

Chris Rogers



Keep those Letters coming. But you can cut down on trees by e-mailing them directly to The Brunswickan at bruns@unb.ca. It's fast and the "Hip" thing to do.

Letters to the Editor



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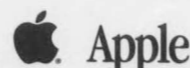
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