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MR. DUKE: I am Paul Duke of American Public Television.

Canada's future is a subject of wide discussion these days. There is, now, a basic question: Will Canada remain the Confederation which it has always been; or will its biggest Province, Quebec, break away and form its own independent Government?

Clearly, this is a topic of great interest to Canadians--as well as other nations around the world.

One man who is well versed in all of the ramifications of this issue is Marc Lalonde, the Minister of State for Federal Provincial Relations.

During his recent to Washington, Monsieur Lalonde discussed the Quebec matter with myself and two other journalists: John Anderson, an Editorial writer for the Washington Post, and Michel Tatu of the French newspaper, La Monde.

Mr. Minister, you were named to this new position in September of 1977. Why was it created?

MINISTER LALONDE: I thought, at first, that I was the first one to have ever been appointed to this position, until I checked the history books and found that I had three predecessors, all between 1867 and 1870, when the new Confederation started in Canada.

I think this is probably a sign of the times