

Confederation thus remodeled to establish a balance of the forces that form our country and to satisfy to a greater extent Quebec's aspirations is, I feel, the only real hope of the French-Canadians. It is the only way to a mutually acceptable compromise. Co-operative federalism is half-way between tutelary federalism, which existed until 1963, but which is no longer acceptable to the French-Canadians, and confederative federalism, which is no longer satisfactory for present-day problems and which the English-Canadians would not accept.

Silence of the Moderates

We should not forget that the two extremisms which confront one another at present in our country meet while they are opposed. They produce the same fanaticism; they lead to the same catastrophe; they engender one another. They are equally opposed to the compromise of co-operative federalism. And yet we shall be lost the day we refuse to accept compromise in our personal or collective lives. The virtue of compromise is moderation. And moderation is the only way towards progress without a crack-up, toward evolution without rebellion. Between rebellion and inertia, genuine progress, which is usually half-way between the idealism of the élite and the people's realism, always finds a place. For this reason, the silence of the moderates is, in the present situation, more dangerous than the war-cry of the extremists.

The silence of the moderates itself threatens the French-Canadian population with separatism. There are indeed two solitudes developing there presently. On the one hand, as Professor Marc-Adélarde Tremblay recently said, "the Quebec population reacts with enthusiasm to the appeal of modernism and adopts wholeheartedly the new ways of life and the new manners of thinking, so that day by day they come to be more and more like the other North Americans". This was confirmed by a scientific poll several months ago, according to which 33 per cent of the people from Quebec were in favour of political union with the United States.

On the other hand, and at the same time, the noisiest elements of our élite are adopting the vocabulary, the attitudes and even the behaviour of certain leaders of the new African states.

This ever-widening rift reveals a profound lack of stability within our society and is the measure of the element of artificiality in our national feeling. In this respect one might recall the warning given by that great French thinker, Father Delos, in his book "La nation". "The exact proportion", he writes, "between the utterances of the élite and the realities within the masses constitutes the truth and, for that matter, the authenticity, of national feeling. Because that feeling must be aroused, how easy it is for the rousers to become strident and introduce artifice and exaggeration. It follows that those who think through their élite are misled with regard to their own true cultural values and, losing their sense of proportion, are weakened and irritated by a sustained and exaggerated psychological tension."