

At an appropriate time, an all-party committee of senators should be established to go to Quebec and to meet with Quebecers. All Quebecers who wished to express an opinion on Quebec within Canada could then be heard. The committee should then meet with opinion makers from all other provinces and territories. It should meet with senior political figures in Quebec City and also with other Quebecers — that is, executives, business people, entrepreneurs, artists, artisans — who continue to paint Quebec society within Canada. It will be from these people that senators will learn what it means to be a Quebecer and to be part of a cultural and linguistic minority both within Canada and in North America. It will be through meetings with the working people of Quebec that senators will discover the hopes and dreams of “this people” — hopes and dreams fashioned over hundreds of years, now exhibiting themselves in the movement for sovereignty.

[Translation]

Senators will know the answer to the following question: What does Quebec want? They will be able to pass on this information to all Canadians.

As senators know, this kind of mission would normally be carried out by a special joint committee that would include members of the House of Commons. However, this is not appropriate under the present circumstances.

There are in the House of Commons two political parties whose prime objective is not to keep Quebec within Canada. At least the Bloc Québécois does not hide its intention to get Quebec out of the federation. As for the Reform Party, judging by its position on the issue of the referendum, it is clear that it would love to kick Quebec out of the federation.

[English]

In my view, it would be completely counter-productive to involve the other place in such a fact-finding mission within Quebec. The Honourable Jean Charest, the leader of the federal Progressive Conservative Party, has shown, by his willingness to do whatever was required of him during the referendum, that the Progressive Conservative Party stands for a united Canada. Mr. Charest's support for the Prime Minister, both before and after October 30, illustrates that partisan party politics can be put aside when the future of the country hangs in the balance.

Much more, however, must be done in the weeks ahead than the establishment of this committee to ensure that the people of Quebec understand the love and affection that exists for them in the rest of Canada.

On Friday, October 27, the demonstration in the streets of Montreal was effective and impressive. As the editor of *Maclean's* magazine, Robert Lewis, has stated, “It was the silver lining for federalism in the outcome of the referendum.” Canadians stood up to be counted. The Quebec referendum

aroused a passion for Canada not seen in many years. Mr. Lewis pointed out that parents took their children out of school to attend pro-Canada rallies, and citizens by the thousands called and wrote to Quebecers, urging them to vote “No.” He believes that the Quebec referendum illustrated for us the powerful lesson that no nation can ever take itself for granted. These efforts could have been much more effective if they had begun earlier. If the Montreal demonstration had been held earlier, it could have been followed by other demonstrations. The Friday demonstration would not have been an isolated incident that allowed separatists to question the sincerity and motives of those who took part.

Efforts to let Quebecers know the positive feelings from those outside Quebec must be greatly increased. This increase must take place between now and the next time Quebecers go to the polls in either a provincial election or the next inevitable referendum on sovereignty. Who should make this effort? It must be a concentrated effort made by all Canadians. It must include our political leaders from all levels of government in Canada. In fact, it must be broader than that. It must include schools and universities from across Canada, those in senior citizen residences — all Canadians who believe that they can reach out and who believe in a united Canada.

Letters should be written, visits should be undertaken to Quebec and, ideally, Quebecers should go to other parts of Canada to experience the deep concern and love all of us feel. Canadians should keep up the pressure on Quebec through meetings, travel, letters to the editor and magazine articles that concentrate on the benefits of a united Canada.

As Peter C. Newman has stated:

If Canada, outside Quebec, continues to ignore the province's dreams and aspirations, there is now no doubt that the next time around will truly be the country's last chance.

If we are to win the hearts and minds of Quebecers, the virtues and benefits of a united Canada must be emphasized. I would hope that if we have learned anything from October 30, it is that negative scare tactics are not only ineffective but also may prove to be counter-productive.

I believe that those who have received the Order of Canada owe a special duty to this country to spread the good news of the future of a united Canada. They can reiterate, as citizens of a united Canada, that we all benefit from the critical mass of the Canadian economy, which has given us membership in the world's most exclusive club, the G-7. Canada is a founding member of NAFTA, APEC, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation organization, and it also plays a strong leadership role in La francophonie.

As Jean Monty, President and CEO of Northern Telecom stated recently: