

'Canada Is Doomed'

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For those who missed Dr. Chaput's speech last Friday Gateway features presents, as completely as possible, the text of his speech. The following transcription does not include the question period which followed the speech.

I feel uncomfortable because you look like a group of nice people, even charming people, and I have to say unpleasant things to you. I remember three years ago right after my first affair with the federal government, a Canadian magazine called the *Canadian Commentator* asked me to write an article . . . and the title I had chosen was "Canada's biggest problem."

The director decided to change the title because he didn't believe it was the biggest Canadian problem. Three years later I'm afraid that I was right to say that what I had written, the topic I had chosen or was invited to write on, is the biggest Canadian problem.

It is the biggest Canadian problem because of the determination of six million French-Canadians, to which group I belong, to govern themselves in a manner that is compatible with their own culture and their aspirations and, in fact, I would say that this problem . . . threatens the existence of Canada, as Canada happens to be now.

So as for myself and as for thousands of other French-Canadians in Quebec I do and will keep on doing, excuse the word, my damned best so Canada splits.



"Canada is no more my country."

Because Canada is no more my country—mind you I was born here as the chairman said. I say this with regret because Canada was meant to be my country, having been discovered by my ancestors four centuries ago.

But today's Canada having evolved against me and against my own people, we French-Canadians have taken the decision to build a country of our own. If you ask me what is separatism in Quebec I will answer you briefly by saying Quebec separatism is an ideal that aims at giving French-Canadians a country, what 1760 has stolen from them and what Confederation has been and is still unable to do.

Though I travelled 2,000 miles to be here tonight I do not kid myself. I am losing my time by talking to you, and you are equally losing your time by listening to me. Not because we are all idiots. Not because we are all of bad faith. But for two reasons: first, because we do not have or use the same terms of reference; and two, because dialogue is impossible between two parties that are not placed on the same level.

I say we do not have the same terms of reference. One example is that French-Canadians are rational, I don't mean that you are not, that you are not logical, but . . . French-Canadians are rational and English-Canadians are pragmatic. I'm not the first one to say that.

I speak as a French-Canadian. I speak of the French-Canadian nation and immediately you oppose that there is only one nation in Canada, the Canadian nation. Immediately we cannot dialogue because the starting point, the premises are not the same. French-Canadians like to call themselves a partner in a two-member association, and you regard them not as a partner but as just another minority.

Rational as they are, French-Canadians need a constitution. They work like that, they function like that. They need a constitution to govern their actions. Pragmatic as you are, (and when I say you, I enclose all the English-speaking people of whatever origin they are) the constitution is a barrier to your national projects. This would be enough to stop at the beginning any possible dialogue.

As a consequence of this mental duality between English and French Canada what is for you legitimate political behaviour is for us, coming from you, sheer hypocrisy. All your politicians especially the ones in Ottawa, the English-speaking ones, have two versions of their speeches in their pockets, one for English audiences and one for French audiences. And one is not the translation of the other, believe me.

A dialogue between French and English Canadians is impossible for another and maybe a more serious reason: you and me, meaning English and French speaking Canadians, are not placed on the same level. Let us not fool ourselves, there is no dialogue possible between the master and his servant, between the conquerer and the conquered. There is no possible dialogue because both do not support their claims with the same tools. In Ottawa you can rely, (when I say you I mean the English-speaking block in Canada) on 190 members, English-speaking members, coming from outside Quebec, and we French Canadians are represented by 75. There is no possible democracy, there is no possible dialogue.

No matter what we want and there are many examples, no matter what the French Canadian nation wants, it is not up to her to decide whether she is going to have it or not. It is up to the other nation, it is up to the other group.

You control even in Quebec 90 per cent of the economy. We control, even in Quebec, the other 10 per cent. And the American ownership of Canada, whatever the degree, does not help to solve the French Canadian problem.

And what is crucial in all this is that in this block of 18, 19, or 20 million inhabitants in Canada, the majority, the English-speaking majority, is always the same in the general population just as well as in the parliament. The majority is always the same, and always thinks the same; and the minority, French speaking minority, in the general population or in the Federal government, is always the same and by definition this is the negation of democracy. There is no democracy possible on such terms, there is no dialogue possible on such terms.

Some of you will say, and it was said to me quite often: why don't you merge and become Canadian like all other minorities have done?

Gentlemen, ladies, this remark is outrageous to a French Canadian. It's outrageous to a French Canadian for two reasons: because French Canadians are not a minority like others, and this may be one of the most important reasons for whatever is happening in Canada, because English Canada considers French Canadians just like another minority. French Canadians do not consider themselves a minority, maybe on the demographic side or the arithmetical side that is true, six against twelve or thirteen. But on a constitutional level French Canadians never regarded themselves as a minority.

Some of you, and maybe more out west here than in the Eastern part of Canada, may have come to Canada five years, 10 years, 20 years ago. I was here four centuries ago; my ancestors were here even 450 years ago. They were here before any other group was here in Canada. So you should understand why French Canadians have never regarded themselves, and cannot regard themselves, as just another minority.

It is outrageous to French Canadians, I say for another reason, because French Canadians are the original Canadians, and ever since 1760 they have tried to be Canadians—but against you will.

This is very easy to understand, to demonstrate, and I am astonished to discover that this remark is made so often to us: why don't you become Canadian?

Who for the first time after 1760 thought, or proposed, or tried to make Canada a country independent of the British Empire, and independent of London, if not the *Canadiens* as they were called at that time, or those you call today French Canadians? Who for the first time proposed the national hymn, called "O Canada," not because the music and the words were written by two French Canadians, because they wanted Canada to be their country. Who for the first time proposed a Canadian distinctive flag. The French Canadians again . . .

So I don't think you can say to French Canadians why don't you become Canadians like the rest of us, like the other minorities. What do you suppose Hungarians, Ukrainians, Poles, German from East Germany, would answer to the occupant (and this is the present tense) who invites them to merge and become Russian?

This may be what is wrong with Canada. In the mind of an English-speaking person, in the mind of the English-speaking population, all imperialisms are detestable, all imperialisms are to be rejected. Except one—English-speaking imperialism, who by the will of God has been called to govern the world.

I know these words are brutal. That's what I said in the first place. But I was not invited here to reassure you that all was quiet on the Eastern Canadian front, I was asked to tell you what is the situation in Quebec. Now I'm telling you, French Canadians want to be masters in their own house . . . They want to be the truly master in their own house, truly masters in their own country, in a country that belong to them.

You may call me an extremist. If you do so I will not be insulted, in fact I will be flattered instead, because no moderate ever built a new country. And this is what I'm trying to do.

In conclusion to all this I would like to force two thoughts into your minds. One, that separation of Quebec—now I will be gentle—will not be as tragic for either one of the two resulting countries as some of you here or outside may believe. Let us admit it, we are . . . a nuisance to you, and you are a nuisance to us. We are an obstacle to the implementation of your projects and you are an obstacle to our development. . . . That reminds me of the French actor . . . who in one of his plays says to his wife, for they have been fighting, just like Canadians here, he says, "let us now make peace, let us separate." In fact, I think this is what is the best conclusion, since there can be no dialogue.



"Let us now make peace, let us separate."

And after separation, and only then, not now, but only then, that is after a separation, we will be able—in mutual respect and good neighboring to sit down at the same table and solve in any manner that will protect your interests and ours, our common problems.

And I say that in conclusion I want to force two thoughts into your minds. Another one is that independence—I know probably all of your will laugh, all of you will smile at least—of Quebec will come, and soon. Not next century, not in half a century, not after we are all dead, it will come soon, and it will come because French Canadians want it. Let me remind you that if they want it it is their problem, and it is up to them and only up to them to decide whether they are going to have independence. It has been like that every where in the

world. It is not up to English Canada, it is not up to Ottawa.

I'm sure some people will ask me the question, is this legal, is this constitutional? No, it is not legal, it is not constitutional. But it still belongs to the French Canadians to decide whether they are going to have a country of their own, whether they are going to be independent. So stop dreaming, and wake up. Fifty countries in the past 20 years have become independent, have obtained their independence since the last war. This should be a lesson to all of us. And this should be a lesson to English Canada.

And if I may give you a warning, do not believe Jean Lesage, prime minister of the province of Quebec and a few others who speak of a negligible minority of separatists. If the Quebec separatists were an negligible minority Jean Le-



"French Canadians are ready to die for independence."

sage would not be haunted by their presence, he would not be haunted to the point that he feels compelled to speak about them everywhere and everytime he speaks.

If he mentions the separatists so often it is because he knows they are numerous, though badly organized. I'm the first one to recognize this. Extremely badly organized, the separatists, but there are thousands, and thousands, and thousands, and thousands, of them; and more thousands every day, and every week . . . You never hear Jean Lesage, in a public speech at the present time, mention the *Union Nationale* . . . as the opposition, say that we're afraid of the *Union Nationale* and somebody should stop them, and we have to organize against them. He never mentions them. He knows that the *Union Nationale* is dead. It died with Duplessis.

You never hear Jean Lesage talk about the *Creditistes* . . . You never hear Jean Lesage mention the *New Democratic Party*, (there aren't any in Quebec anyway—they don't have a single member in the parliament). Neither do the separatists. But every time he opens his mouth he must hear himself say that the separatists are only a noisy handful.

Ladies and gentlemen, if I say that soon French Canadians will be free, that is because there are two irrefutable reasons. One because of all the actors on the actual Canadian scene only the separatists know where they are going. And especially seen from our side of the country.

Another reason why I say that French Canadians will soon be free, is that because, and this also is irrefutable, no one outside of the French Canadians, or even inside the French Canadian group but outside the separatist movement, no one is ready to sacrifice his life to keep Canada as it is. Whereas thousands and thousands, including poor little me, thousands of French Canadians are ready to die for independence, for their nation.

Ladies and gentlemen, Canada is doomed. Long live the *Republic Français du Quebec*. You are not expected to applaud.

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