

# And even he can't tell you what a Canadian is—that's too bad

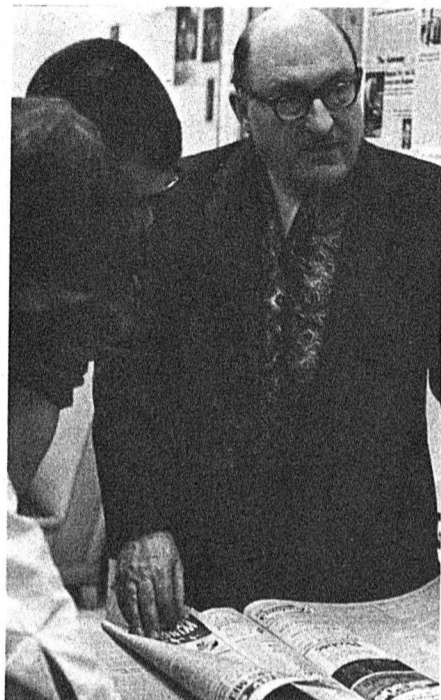
"Ask an American who he is and he'll say 'I'm an American', with stars and stripes coming out of his eyes and ears. Ask a Canadian and he'll say, 'I'm not an American,'" summed up Laurier LaPierre, former host of "This Hour Has Seven Days," at a panel discussion last night on "Is There a Canadian Identity?"

Anti-American feeling was also high with the other panelists: Marcel Lambert, MP, and Dr. Denis Smith, professor of politics. Mr. LaPierre was the most definite against it, saying, "when someone owns 2/3 of something, they own 2/3 of your soul, and you aren't independent then."

Mr. Lambert agreed that he doesn't like so much foreign investment in Canada, but commented he would like to see Canadians putting their money where their mouths are. His suggestion was not well received because, as one student said, they don't earn enough money anyhow. Mr. LaPierre added that he wasn't sure it was much better for a few Canadians to own everything, rather than a few Americans owning it all.

There is no fear of foreign investment, said Mr. LaPierre. We merely turn more over to them and live off the fat of the land. This is the way the rest of the world is—the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

"I've lived in a capitalist society," he said, "and I've seen the ugliness and poverty, sham and destruction in every-



—Erich Seeman photo

**FORMER GATEWAY NEWS EDITOR** Marcel Lambert Thursday takes a wistful look at Gateway editions from 1939 to 1941.

day affairs." He was speaking of Canada.

Dr. Smith thought many Canadians feel they do have enough identity. "I hope we aren't being fooled by the appearances of cities and dress which seem American but really aren't." It is merely the relative smallness and immaturity of Canada which produces the air of not having an identity.

"We haven't had the shattering loss of innocence the United States has," he said in reference to the Vietnam war.

What worries him most is the failure of Canadian politicians to recognize the Canadian identity.

"An exercise in futility and sterility" is how Mr. Lambert termed the panel discussion. The relevant question, he suggested, is not whether Canada has an identity. Instead he asked 'why do we as a national way of life uncover our navel and contemplate it with great care?'

He doesn't feel it will add one cubit to the Canadian way of life. Because we assume we have no identity, he said, we also assume other countries such as Britain and France, do. We forget, however, that theirs is the product of a thousand years, whereas we have had only one hundred.

Canadian identity will not be that easy to find. "Is someone suddenly going to wake up and say Eureka, then go out and make stamps to stamp ourselves Canadian?" questioned Mr. Lambert. He

doesn't think that will be the answer, for that would mean someone imposing their formula upon us and he hopes that won't be the way.



—Terry Malanchuk photo

**Laurier LaPierre**

Once we finally did discover this identity, there would be no sense constructing a Berlin Wall and isolating ourselves, he said.

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