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And we might wonder whether this republic, even if it were created, would actually increase France's cultural contributions and exchanges, considering the privileged relations already existing with Quebec under the France-Canada agreement concluded in 1965. Furthermore, it goes without saying that a sovereign Quebec would bring about not a broadening but a narrowing of the field of *francophone* action in North America. The cultural life of the one million French Canadians living outside Quebec would become more endangered than ever since they would not have the benefit of the considerable influence now exerted by our French province within federal institutions. Assuming, still, that an independent Quebec proved to be viable and lasting, its influence outside its own territory would nevertheless be weaker than at present. In contrast, the federal formula, if brought up to date by means of the necessary modifications and faithfully followed by all members, could enable French Canadians to count on the support of the whole of Canada in affirming the "French fact" in North America.

Economically speaking, it is doubtful that the separation of Quebec would be advantageous to France. If Canada, which is four times as large as a hypothetical independent Quebec, has a hard time resisting pressure from its huge neighbour, a small French-speaking republic would be very hard-pressed to prevent its economy from becoming a tiny extension or satellite of the American economy. Were such a change to take place, would it further the mining and commercial interests of France, which is now investing large amounts of capital in the whole of Canada (often operating out of Quebec, which is a natural port of entry, in view of the common language)? Would it be in the best interests of the large French companies that, using Canada as a base, have already succeeded in gaining important footholds in the American market?

I have tried to outline answers to some of the questions that concern France and Europe in regard to the unity crisis that Canada is experiencing. Of course, these answers are not final. Canada, even in time of crisis, or perhaps because of it, continues to evolve rapidly. One might even predict that Canada will emerge more united than ever from the present difficulties, thanks to rejuvenated institutions that will enable all its communities — especially its French-speaking community — to confirm their roles in the federation and to face the future with greater confidence.