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A DYNAMIC NATIONALISM

The following address was given by the Minister of Forestry and Rural Development, Mr. Maurice Sauvé, at Ste-Foy, Quebec, on October 19:

Two weeks ago, when I last spoke in Quebec, I devoted my speech to the constitutional questions which now face Canada. My concern was to outline the Federal Government's policy on the procedures for discussing constitutional reform, and indicate, as forcefully as possible, the readiness of the Canadian Government to discuss any constitutional proposal put forward by a province at the constitutional conference which is envisaged for early next year.

But, as I said two weeks ago, the *fundamental* problem facing us is not so much that of constitutional arrangements. It is rather the problem of relations between English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians — and the way that problem is tackled — that will determine for better or for worse the future of this country. For, as French Canadians, our great concern is not simply whether the constitutional arrangements which delineate the division of powers between the provinces and the Federal Government are satisfactory. Our concern is whether there is going to be in Canada a real, not symbolic, sharing of power between English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians in business and industry, in politics and the civil service, in cultural and social life. For us then, the question is whether, at the centres of decision-making in almost all areas of Canadian life, English Canadians are prepared to relinquish to French Canadians an important partnership in influence, power and decision.

The question is inescapable, even if English Canadians wished to escape it, because of the dominant force now moulding French-Canadian society. That force, the motive force in French Canada, is French-Canadian nationalism. The nationalism — that sense of a strong and unique identity — which, throughout our past, has bid us to endure as a people and preserve our society — no longer permits us simply to survive but insists that our culture thrive and flourish.

STRAINS OF FRENCH NATIONALISM

But French-Canadian nationalism is not a simple thing. Looking back throughout our history we can detect two strands of nationalist thought — one outward, the other inward-looking.

The outward or open tendency in French-Canadian nationalism has been there since the beginning of our history. It was the dream of making the whole of the North American continent a home for the French language and culture which encouraged the settlement of New France, inspired the long and lonely voyages of French discoverers, led eventually, in 1867, to the creation of a Confederation in which French Canadians hoped to find a framework for a country which welcomed and respected their culture.

This French-Canadian nationalism, open and not defensive, concerned to look not only inward but outward to what it can both give and receive from other societies, this constructive but not aggressive nationalism is still an important strand in the fabric of French-Canadian society. The concern over the