

doc  
CA1  
EA980  
78P61  
ENG

DOCS  
CA1 EA980 78P61 ENG  
Press briefing by the Honourable  
Marc Lalonde, Minister of State for  
Federal/Provincial Relations,  
February 10, 1978. --  
43235184



1104 CARRY BUILDING  
927 FIFTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

MILLER-COLUMBIAN REPORTING SERVICE  
RECORD-MAKING PROFESSIONALS

PHONE (202) 347-0224  
ALL REPRODUCTION RIGHTS  
RESERVED

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

- THE CANADIAN EMBASSY -

The Presidential Room  
National Press Club  
Washington, D.C.

FRIDAY, February 10, 1978  
2:00 p.m.

- PRESS BRIEFING -

- By -

THE HONOURABLE MARC LALONDE  
MINISTER OF STATE  
-for-  
FEDERAL/PROVINCIAL RELATIONS

INTRODUCTION BY:

HUBERT FEICHTLBAUER  
Member, Foreign Correspondents Association  
National Press Club

ATTENDING:

ROBERT J. MC GAVIN  
First Secretary [Information]  
Canadian Embassy

AND:

MEMBERS OF THE PRESS

-o0o-



1 MR. FIECHTLBAUER: Welcome, everybody, to our meeting  
2 of the Foreign Correspondents Association. I have the honor  
3 to welcome his Excellency, the Honourable Minister Marc Lalonde.

4 I am a non-elected, non-official of this Club.  
5 Our President is sick; our Vice President is traveling, and so  
6 I was told that perhaps the Government of non-elected officials  
7 would work approximately as well as it does in the State of  
8 Minnesota!

9 So welcome very much, Mr. Minister, to our meeting  
10 today.

11 I think that some of my colleagues may have  
12 experienced a similar thing that, when we are back home in  
13 our Countries, we tend to believe that the problem of  
14 National Unity in Canada perhaps is not that much of a  
15 problem; just like the roaring tiger in the Jungles does  
16 not look that bad if you are thousands of miles away from it.  
17 But the closer you get -- and we all have come closer to this  
18 problem -- the more we feel it is serious. Therefore, we  
19 are very happy that we have a chance to ask you some  
20 questions. And we are very grateful to you, sir, in that  
21 you are seeing not only our United States of America colleagues--  
22 but you are also talking to foreign correspondents from  
23 several Countries in several Continents.

24 I was reminded, a little bit this morning, of an  
25 article that I had read in the Montreal Gazette a couple of



1 weeks ago when -- and I think not quite unjustifiably -- the  
2 author said that the American's ignorance of Affairs Canadian  
3 was insulting; and that their indifference to them was,  
4 at times, really maddening. So, perhaps, it might be a bit  
5 gratifying -- mutually gratifying -- for you to be here  
6 today, and be in a small but, most certainly, very interested  
7 group of foreign correspondents; and I would like you to--  
8 kindly--give a little statement at the beginning, and then  
9 every one of us may ask questions. The whole thing is  
10 on the record--unless our guest will decide otherwise.

11 MINISTER LALONDE: Thank you very much, Mr. Acting  
12 Chairman. I wish to thank you for your invitation and for  
13 taking time to come and talk about Canadian affairs.

14 I am Minister of Federal/Provincial Relations  
15 -- as has been indicated -- and, also, Minister responsible  
16 for the Status of Women in Quebec -- in Canada -- and I  
17 don't know whether there is any particular relationship  
18 between the two.

19 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Both are minorities!

20 MINISTER LALONDE: My appointment dates back  
21 to last September. This was not a position that existed  
22 in the Federal Government before; except between 1867 and  
23 1870, the beginning of the Canadian Confederation.

24 My appointment had two purposes:

25 One was to try and coordinate in a more effective



1104 CARRY BUILDING  
927 FIFTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

MILLER-COLUMBIAN REPORTING SERVICE  
RECORD-MAKING PROFESSIONALS

PHONE (202) 347-0224  
ALL REPRODUCTION RIGHTS  
RESERVED

1 way, the innumerable relationships that exist between our  
2 Provinces and the Federal State; and

3 Secondly, to supervise the development of policies  
4 having to do with National Unity and the current crisis;  
5 particularly between Quebec and the rest of Canada.

6 Under that hat, I am responsible for working on  
7 the development of new Constitutional proposals, or proposals  
8 for Constitutional reforms in Canada, and the general strategy  
9 having to do with the Separatist threat in the Province of  
10 Quebec.

11 I think I should be taking questions, Mr. Chairman.  
12 I don't think you expect from me a very elaborate opening  
13 statement, or a long diatribe on anything in particular.  
14 I would be quite happy to take questions as they come and make  
15 my diatribes in answer to questions.

16 MR. FEICHTLBAUER: That was a nice invitation!  
17 Thank you.

18 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Mr. Minister, this morning,  
19 the Today Show -- seen by millions of people in this Country  
20 -- had an interview on the whole question of the Separatist  
21 Movement, in effect; and particularly something which I think  
22 is called Bill 101, --

23 MINISTER LALONDE: Right.

24 MEMBER OF THE PRESS:--Forcing French language  
25 education on everybody.



1 They also showed the gentleman -- who got a  
2 lot of applause -- who particularly thought that Quebec would  
3 be an independent State within one year.

4 Now, would you care to comment on:

5 (a) Bill 101; and

6 (b) On the prediction that was made?

7 MINISTER LALONDE: On Bill 101, it is an unfair  
8 reading to see it as "forcing everybody to go to French schools"

9 What Bill 101 does is that everybody who has had  
10 one parent educated in English in Quebec is entitled to  
11 send his children to English schools. Nonetheless, it is  
12 a very restrictive Bill because it means that an English  
13 speaking Canadian coming from outside of Quebec--or an  
14 American coming into Quebec--can send his children to an  
15 English school only on the basis of a special permission --  
16 a kind of a 3-year permit that can be renewed for another  
17 three years, subsequently.

18 So there are restrictive provisions, and it means  
19 that immigrants coming into Quebec have to send their  
20 children to the French school system.

21 It has to be remembered, however, that our French  
22 school system is also teaching English as a second language.

23 There has been a lot of opposition to the  
24 restrictive provisions of that particular Bill. We, as  
25 a Federal government have objected, most strenuously, to some



1 of the provisions--particularly those restricting the movement  
2 of people, really; and particularly English speaking  
3 Canadians.

4           Opposition Parties have indicated that, if they  
5 came into Office, they would change some provisions of that  
6 Bill.

7           There were also restrictions on the use of the  
8 English language vis-a-vis the language of the Legislature --  
9 that is, the public documents, the Bills, the laws passed,  
10 and so on -- and the use of the English language on behalf  
11 of companies in the Courts.   But these have been ruled out  
12 by the Courts as unconstitutional.

13           So these two provisions -- the provisions affecting  
14 these two sectors -- are, for all practical purposes, "dead".

15           The ones dealing with Education are still on, and  
16 may very well be declared Constitutional by the Courts. They  
17 will also be contested, however; and then it is a battle inside  
18 of the political process to convince this Government, or its  
19 successor, to modify those rules.

20           We are, as I said, finding those provisions  
21 excessive, unduly restrictive, and detrimental to Quebec  
22 economically.   Very much so!

23           As far as the forecast of Quebec being independent  
24 within one year, or even two or three years, I must say that  
25 is propaganda!   The separation of Quebec is not being



1 supported by the people in Quebec any more than it was  
2 ten years ago. The percentage of Quebeckers who will vote  
3 for separation has varied between ten and twenty percent  
4 over the last fifteen years. It has not been a consistent  
5 upward trend. It has been cyclical. It has gone down as  
6 low as 11%. It has gone up as high as 20%, and you could  
7 fix it around 15% or 17%, at the present time. It is in  
8 those figures -- in that range.

9 Now, seeing this, the Separatists have been  
10 saying, "Well, what we want is not full separation. What  
11 we want is a 'Sovereignty Association'" -- they call it --  
12 which would mean kind of a political autonomy with political  
13 union with the rest of Canada.

14 They have never defined what it means in practice.  
15 Even Mr. Levesque, in his latest interview in Time Magazine,  
16 is fudging it. But when you read what he says; at the end,  
17 it is "independence by any other name", I would say.

18 But the people in general are rather confused  
19 by those expressions, because you could argue that the  
20 present Federal system is a "Sovereignty Association"  
21 because any Federal system implies a division of sovereignty  
22 between two levels of Government, which we have.

23 But, again, the support for this is below 40%,  
24 even on that vague, fuzzy notion; so that the forecast  
25 that independence is going to be taking place in Quebec, as



1 I said -- not only in the next year, but in the next decade  
2 -- I don't see it. I just don't see it!

3 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Mr. Minister, how much of a  
4 boost did Levesque get from the reception he had in Paris?

5 MINISTER LALONDE: I think it was a good boost --  
6 certainly a good emotional boost -- inside of Quebec. There  
7 was a lot of publicity about it. He got a lot of publicity  
8 around the world about it, I suppose.

9 But inside of Quebec, I would not say that this  
10 has, you know, pushed the Separatist Movement much further  
11 ahead than it did before.

12 What these things tend to do is confirm those  
13 who are in opposition even more; and those who are in support  
14 even more. It accents the polarization; but it does not seem  
15 to have -- from the surveys I have seen -- generated any  
16 appreciable shift in public opinion.

17 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Mr. Minister, did the  
18 Canadian Government learn something from Belgium or, maybe,  
19 from Switzerland -- Belgium being bi-lingual and Switzerland  
20 being tri-lingual. Did they learn something from those  
21 parts?

22 MINISTER LALONDE: We have studied the Belgian  
23 system very extensively, particularly when we had, during  
24 the 1960's, the Royal Commission on Bi-Lingualism and Bi-  
25 Culturism. The Belgian system was extensively studied, but



1 the Belgian approach was rejected as not being appropriate  
2 for Canada.

3 Well, I don't have to tell you that Belgium is  
4 a Unitary State. We are a Federal State. And the notion  
5 that we could divide the Public Service in kinds of parallel  
6 French and English Departments just appeared to be impractical  
7 for Canada.

8 So our line of approach has been to evolve --  
9 make our Public Service at the Federal level evolve in terms  
10 of a capacity or capability of providing services in  
11 both languages by individuals who are in a situation where  
12 they are in contact with both language groups. These have  
13 been our efforts. This means, in effect, that all of the  
14 senior officers in the Public Service are becoming bi-lingual--  
15 or at least have what we call a "passive" capacity in both  
16 languages. That is, the capacity of being able to read and  
17 listen--if they don't have the capacity of communicating  
18 with the other language as much.

19 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: What is the difference you  
20 see between the Canadian/Quebec situation, and the Brussels  
21 situation? We have 80% French speaking people in Brussels,  
22 and 20% Flemish people.

23 What is the difference--in your mind?

24 MINISTER LALONDE: Well, the size of the two  
25 Countries is just so different that it is almost two



1 worlds!

2 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: We are dealing with Quebec,  
3 I suppose.

4 MINISTER LALONDE: Yes. In Quebec, you have 85%  
5 French and 15% English speaking. You have 5 million French  
6 and about 1 million English speaking people.

7 In Montreal, the proportion is about 20% English  
8 and 80% French. I suppose there is some kind of similarity  
9 -- or is it the reverse? I should say, rather, that the  
10 English speaking minority has a very prominent role and  
11 function in the business field. They are the minority.

12 But in Brussels, it is the 80% French, you see.

13 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Yes.

14 MINISTER LALONDE: But the Flemish are not the ones  
15 having the big jobs.

16 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Yes. They have.

17 MINISTER LALONDE: Well, then, it is much more  
18 similar than I thought!

19 There are lots of similarities, in the sense that  
20 you have two very different linguistic groups having to live  
21 together and find a way of co-existing.

22 In our case -- in the case of Quebec -- what had to  
23 happen is that the majority of the people felt that they  
24 were being put down by the minority who were occupying a  
25 much larger role -- as I said -- in the areas of business and



1 industry, and finance, generally. A lot of it has to do,  
2 therefore, with the pressure of a majority trying to get what  
3 it feels is a better shake out of the whole system than the  
4 one it has been getting traditionally, and resorting to the  
5 State it does control -- which is the Provincial Government  
6 in Quebec -- to try and achieve that upgrading of its  
7 capacity, of its achievements, economically and socially.

8 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Does the Federal Government  
9 do something to improve the economic situation of people  
10 in Quebec?

11 MINISTER LALONDE: Yes. And not only in Quebec.  
12 We have, also, in the Atlantic Provinces. We have had, over  
13 the last fifteen years -- and the last ten years in particular  
14 -- an extensive program called the Program of Regional  
15 Economic Expansion. We have a Special Minister responsible  
16 for Regional Economic Expansion. We have been developing  
17 policies over the last few years, trying to stimulate invest-  
18 ment in high unemployment areas. This has applied to the  
19 whole of Eastern Canada, of which Quebec is a part.

20 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Do you try to put French  
21 speaking people in those programs?

22 MINISTER LALONDE: Yes. One thing we have done --  
23 we cannot do much in terms of forcing any type of change  
24 in the Private Sector, which comes under Provincial control  
25 and regulation. But what we have been doing in the area of



1 the Federal Civil Service -- which is our own operation --  
2 has been a very definite policy of trying to encourage  
3 recruitment and promotion of French speaking people.

4 In 1948, the French speaking people were about  
5 13% of the Public Service, while they were about 30% of the  
6 population; and most of them were concentrated in lower paid  
7 jobs.

8 Between 1968 and 1970, French speaking people  
9 were about 18% of the Public Service. Last year, the  
10 French speaking people were 26.6% of the Public Service--  
11 which is about equal to the percentage of the population  
12 in Canada.

13 And what has also happened, at the same time, is  
14 that you have had a very steady upgrading and increase in  
15 terms of the levels and the representations of the senior  
16 level of the Public Service. You still find areas where  
17 we are under-represented as French Canadians--but there has  
18 been a very, very significant shift over the last ten years.  
19 There is no doubt about that!

20 We have been trying to do that; and we have en-  
21 couraged the Private Sector to do the same.

22 Things are evolving. But these things take time and,  
23 secondly, it always takes even longer for people to realize  
24 that it has happened!

25 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Isn't it also a question of



1104 CARRY BUILDING  
927 FIFTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

MILLER-COLUMBIAN REPORTING SERVICE  
RECORD-MAKING PROFESSIONALS

PHONE (202) 347-0224  
ALL REPRODUCTION RIGHTS  
RESERVED

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

education? The French speaking people are not in the top force. There must be a reason for that. Is there any change in that regard -- in higher education?

MINISTER LALONDE: There are two reasons.

One reason has been the traditional Anglo-Saxon or English-speaking Establishment, which tended to recruit itself from inside, and without reaching out into the French community.

The other reason is the one you mentioned, indeed, which is the fault of the French speaking community, itself, whereby historically, we were a society which was oriented towards Agriculture and the traditional professions. And it is only in this century, and after the First World War, really, that French Canadians started really getting into Engineering, and Commerce, and this type of thing. We started producing a lot of people -- scientists -- a lot of people who could really be critical in terms of an Industrial society. And you had a larger organization, also, of the French speaking society during that period, which shifted completely from an Agricultural society to an Industrial society.

So these shifts have taken place between, as I said, 1920 and 1960.

But the fact is, as you mentioned, that part of the blame is on the French speaking community itself-- because



1 of its socio-cultural values and orientation. But that has  
2 changed, and that has not been the fact since 1950.

3 MR. FEICHTLBAUER: Are you starting a new subject  
4 matter, or is this a follow-up?

5 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: No. This is another question.

6 MR. FEICHTLBAUER: Do you want to say something?

7 ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE PRESS: My only question was:  
8 What was the inference of General de Gaulle.

9 MINISTER LALONDE: What was his inference?

10 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Inference, yes --

11 MINISTER LALONDE: In 1967?

12 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Yes, when he was Vice Pequiste.

13 MR. FEICHTLBAUER: Influence. Influence!

14 MINISTER LALONDE: Influence! Oh! I think it was  
15 substantial. I think it was substantial-and significant.

16 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: He did not make the Cabinet  
17 people aware of it.

18 MINISTER LALONDE: Somewhat!

19 [Laughter]

20 Obviously, it was quite a bomb shell to drop on  
21 any Country; and it awoke--it generated--a lot of antagonism  
22 and animosity; and I don't think it was a positive development-  
23 in terms of what we have been trying to achieve in Canada.  
24 I think it generated antagonism; and negative views about what  
25 the French speaking people were trying to achieve. It has not



1 been a step forward in the whole process of development of  
2 better relationships between French and English speaking  
3 Canadians in Canada, and a better deal for French speaking  
4 Canadians. I think it has made the job harder for those of  
5 us who are trying to make it work better inside of Canada,  
6 between the two Countries. I think the global, total effect  
7 of this has been negative.

8 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: How was it received by the  
9 English people in Canada?

10 MINISTER LALONDE: They were mad as hell!

11 This was considered as, you know, a straight insult  
12 to our Country.

13 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Is it still resented?

14 MINISTER LALONDE: I am sure nobody has elevated  
15 a monument to de Gaulle, yet, in English-speaking Canada;  
16 and nobody expects that to happen.

17 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: I understand that quite a  
18 few business firms are moving their Headquarters, especially  
19 from Montreal .....

20 MINISTER LALONDE: Right.

21 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Which means that the whole  
22 trend of economic activity is moving westward.

23 How do you see that affecting the political  
24 status of Mr. Levesque?

25 MINISTER LALONDE: First of all, the movement started



1 before Mr. Levesque came into office. It is not a new  
2 phenomenon; and it is not the result of purely political  
3 factors. There are some economic factors that have been at  
4 play for a while, in that respect. Some are even moving to  
5 Calgary and Vancouver -- something like what is done in the  
6 United States. But there is no doubt -- there is no doubt  
7 at all -- that this movement has been accelerated since the  
8 event of the offers of Separatist Government in Quebec.

9 This is a serious cause of concern to us.

10 We have been talking to business people; trying  
11 to convince them that, really, this is not something that  
12 they should do for political reasons. If they have good  
13 economic reasons to do it, well, that can be understood; but  
14 they should not do it for political reasons.

15 It is not helping Mr. Levesque -- contrary to what-  
16 ever he may say. People are concerned in Quebec! They are  
17 perceiving the economic impact--or the economic effects of  
18 this; and people don't like it!

19 Unemployment in Quebec has been going up faster  
20 than it has gone in the rest of Canada in the last two years.  
21 It has gone up faster in Montreal than it has in the rest  
22 of Quebec. So these are serious developments that are a  
23 source of concern to us--and I am sure are a source of  
24 concern to Mr. Levesque, himself.

25 He may be whistling in the dark as much as he



1 wishes about it--and put on a brave face in the face of this--  
2 but I am sure this is something that is not helping his  
3 cause.

4 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: As a follow-up, does this  
5 mean that Mr. Levesque will try to push his referendum  
6 earlier than would otherwise be the case?

7 MINISTER LALONDE: I would wish that that would  
8 be the case. We have been pressing him to have his  
9 referendum as soon as possible, because of developments like  
10 this. As long as uncertainties are going to be entertained  
11 and maintained, they are going to have negative effects, on  
12 Quebec, in connection with Quebec's economy.

13 I think more and more people are realizing this;  
14 but it does not seem that he is going to be in a position  
15 to have his referendum before some time next year. I am  
16 afraid that we will still have to live for a year in that  
17 atmosphere.

18 MR. FEICHTLBAUER: You mentioned the influence  
19 of the de Gaulle statement. When Mr. Levesque was in  
20 Paris, he was received by President Giscard d'Estaing.

21 What does the Government of Canada do to talk to  
22 the Government of France, in order to at least get a little  
23 more understanding--if not support?

24 MINISTER LALONDE: Well, we have good and regular  
25 contacts with the Government of France. Our Embassy is in



1104 CARRY BUILDING  
927 FIFTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

MILLER-COLUMBIAN REPORTING SERVICE  
RECORD-MAKING PROFESSIONALS

PHONE (202) 347-0224  
ALL REPRODUCTION RIGHTS  
RESERVED

1 regular contact. Our Embassy in Paris is in regular  
2 contact with the French Government, and the French Ambassador  
3 in Ottawa is in close contact with us.

4 There are also quite a number of direct contacts  
5 on the political level taking place.

6 The French Government has expressed its view  
7 succinctly, in the Statement of Non-Interference and Non-  
8 Indifference, and it is understandable that the French  
9 Government should not be indifferent to the situation.

10 As long as they are respecting the Canadian  
11 Constitution, we are not opposed--on the contrary--to a close  
12 relationship between the Government of Quebec and the Govern-  
13 ment of France. But it has to be done under our Constitutional  
14 rules; and the French Government has to respect those rules!  
15 We are watching this carefully, and when we are concerned  
16 that there might be trespassing, we draw it to their  
17 attention.

18 MR. FEICHTLBAUER: Would you expect less support  
19 and encouragement for the Pequiste on the part of a Leftist  
20 Government in France?

21 MINISTER LALONDE: I would say "Yes".

22 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Still one more question  
23 about this "economic" side.

24 Has this controversy about Quebec affected  
25 immigration to Canada--and, if so: How?



1104 CARRY BUILDING  
927 FIFTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

MILLER-COLUMBIAN REPORTING SERVICE  
RECORD-MAKING PROFESSIONALS

PHONE (202) 347-0224  
ALL REPRODUCTION RIGHTS  
RESERVED

1                   MINISTER LALONDE: I don't think it has affected  
2 immigration into Canada. Immigration in Canada has been  
3 affected, mainly because of the general economic condition,  
4 and the question should be whether the economic condition  
5 has been affected by the political situation--to which  
6 I would say, "Yes". "It has been, somewhat." It is hard to  
7 put a figure on it but it has not been an indifferent factor.

8                   I would say--in terms of direct impact on immigra-  
9 tion--"No". It is related to the general economic situation.  
10 People are going to migrate to Canada if they find they  
11 can have a job, and a ready job. We are going to admit them  
12 if there is a job available.

13                   MEMBER OF THE PRESS. Do you have less French-speaking  
14 people coming to Canada, and more other people, since there  
15 is this kind of struggle?

16                   MINISTER LALONDE: I could not tell you that  
17 there has been any appreciable difference, one way or another.  
18 This has not changed the balance of immigration in any  
19 appreciable way. No.

20                   MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Sir, in light of the strong  
21 economic relations between Canada and the U.S., the National  
22 question of Quebec is, obviously, a question for the United  
23 States Government, too.

24                   Could you share with us your impression of the  
25 American view of this situation as a possible consequence



1104 CARRY BUILDING  
927 FIFTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

MILLER-COLUMBIAN REPORTING SERVICE  
RECORD-MAKING PROFESSIONALS

PHONE (202) 347-0224  
ALL REPRODUCTION RIGHTS  
RESERVED

1  
sic

2 on the economic consequences?

3 MINISTER LALONDE: Obviously, the fate of Canada  
4 cannot be indifferent to the United States, but I think the  
5 U.S. Government has taken a very correct and proper attitude  
6 on this.

7 The President has indicated that, obviously,  
8 his personal preference is for a united Canada. But this  
9 is a matter for Canadians to decide, and we don't expect  
10 the American Government to interfere in that debate, or  
11 necessarily take sides. This is a matter that has to be  
12 resolved between Canadians.

13 I think it will be resolved all the better between  
14 Canadians if it is left to Canadians to resolve. I think  
15 this is understood by the American Administration very well.

16 The posture adopted by the American Government  
17 is one with which we have no difficulty at all.

18 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Do you have any terrorist  
19 activity, now, in Canada?

20 MINISTER LALONDE: We have had none since 1970.  
21 As you remember, we took very, very strong steps at that  
22 time; and I think we have been proven right in the  
23 attitude of non-negotiation and the very strong measures  
24 we had taken at the time. Nothing has happened, since,  
25 in terms of terrorists' acts, and we keep touching wood  
that none will happen.





1 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Mr. Minister, Prime Minister  
2 Trudeau created some furor in the news by saying that he  
3 would use force to prevent Quebec from seceding.

4 Was he being serious--or was it just political  
5 showmanship tactics?

6 If he used force, would that be Constitutional?

7 MINISTER LALONDE: Well, again, I think what the  
8 problem is is that our Embassy has not re-circulated to you  
9 enough of what, exactly, the Prime Minister did say in  
10 that interview.

11 This was in a television interview, and he was  
12 asked a hypothetical question, which was: Assuming that  
13 even if Mr. Levesque does not win his referendum, assuming  
14 that he declares independence unilaterally and he takes over  
15 the Airports, and the Post Offices, and things like that;  
16 what are you going to do, Mr. Prime Minister?

17 So the Prime Minister answered: "If, against the  
18 will of the majority of the people of Quebec, the Provincial  
19 Government acts illegally to achieve its purpose in that way,  
20 I will not hesitate to use the sword." Which is to say that  
21 he is going to see to it that the law of the land is going  
22 to be respected, even by a Provincial Government! Obviously,  
23 that would be completely illegal. He was asked what he  
24 would do against a Government that would act illegally  
25 and would attack the basic Constitution of the Country; and

1104 CARRY BUILDING  
927 FIFTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

MILLER-COLUMBIAN REPORTING SERVICE  
RECORD-MAKING PROFESSIONALS

PHONE (202) 347-0224  
ALL REPRODUCTION RIGHTS  
RESERVED

1 But, in effect, any energies toward political  
2 change that may have existed have all been channeled,  
3 including democratic processes, it seems, and I hope it  
4 will go on that way. But we have had no incident that  
5 I can remember since 1970.

6 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: You don't feel there will be  
7 any if the referendum fails to pass?

8 MINISTER LALONDE: I can only hope that there will  
9 not be any. You know, it is like asking me whether there  
10 will not be acts of violence if the referendum is won.  
11 There may be some people, or groups -- small groups -- taking  
12 the law in their own hands, maybe. But, you know, when you  
13 look around the world, you see the call of terrorism in  
14 various Countries; and sometimes you wonder, "why". But, then,  
15 it does take place.

16 I think there has been a lot of education, through  
17 the whole process during the last seven years,  
18 since those terrorist acts in Quebec. We have to play the  
19 rules of the game, and I can only hope that once the rules  
20 of the game have been obeyed, people will be ready to abide  
21 by the results.

22 I cannot guarantee it, but what I can tell you is  
23 that, at the present time, I see no evidence of a resurgence  
24 of terrorist activities--or support for any kind of  
25 terrorism.



1104 CARRY BUILDING  
927 FIFTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

MILLER-COLUMBIAN REPORTING SERVICE  
RECORD-MAKING PROFESSIONALS

PHONE (202) 347-0224  
ALL REPRODUCTION RIGHTS  
RESERVED

1 that is what he said.

2 He also said, clearly, that if the expressed  
3 will of a substantial majority of people in Quebec was to  
4 leave, he would not use force.

5 He would quit, but he would not use force.

6 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: What would be the strategy  
7 of the Federal Government, just to avert Mr. Levesque's  
8 strategy?

9 MINISTER LALONDE: The first one is to keep cool.

10 Secondly, in the first year, it is to let some  
11 of the steam go out; allow time for the bloom to come off  
12 of that particular government, and the honeymoon, and all the  
13 emotions around this new government to wither down a little  
14 bit; and to address ourselves directly to the people of  
15 Quebec and the people in the rest of Canada, to explain  
16 to them what changes are taking place, and what changes are  
17 needed, and show to the people, over the next year, that  
18 the will of the Federal Government in particular -- and the  
19 rest of the Country -- is ready to entertain changes and  
20 accommodations which would insure not only the survival but  
21 the expansion and the flowering of the French language and  
22 culture in Canada, generally.

23 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: What is the purpose of your  
24 visit here?

25 MINISTER LALONDE: I have been invited by the



1104 CARRY BUILDING  
927 FIFTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

MILLER-COLUMBIAN REPORTING SERVICE  
RECORD-MAKING PROFESSIONALS

PHONE (202) 347-0224  
ALL REPRODUCTION RIGHTS  
RESERVED

1 Foreign Review for a meeting. They wanted me to deliver  
2 a speech; but I decided I did not have time to draft a  
3 speech, but that I would come and meet with them.

4 We had a session with the Journalists this  
5 morning. That is about it.

6 MR. FEICHTLBAUER: In connection with the slogan;

7 "Sovereignty Association", it has been argued that  
8 Mr. Levesque could promise only one thing but, as the  
9 <sup>SIC</sup> Sovereignty -- not the Association -- isn't it so that  
10 in reality, there would be no alternative to some sort  
11 of a Federation configuration -- whatever you call it--  
12 if Quebec would separate from the rest of Canada?

13 Isn't it possible that the other Provinces will  
14 say, "Now you are gone. Stay out. We don't want to have  
15 anything to do with you any more."

16 MINISTER LALONDE: First of all, Mr. Levesque  
17 and we agree on one thing, which is that you have to make  
18 up your mind whether you are going to be independent, or  
19 whether you are going to live in a Federal system. There is  
20 no half way house. You cannot be a quasi-Federal State.

21 What they have been saying is not quite clear.  
22 They say all kinds of things--according to who is speaking;  
23 and even according to the people they are speaking to.

24 I have heard some of their spokesmen say that  
25 they would want to negotiate this "in parallel". That is,



1104 CARRY BUILDING  
927 FIFTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

MILLER-COLUMBIAN REPORTING SERVICE  
RECORD-MAKING PROFESSIONALS

PHONE (202) 347-0224  
ALL REPRODUCTION RIGHTS  
RESERVED

1 sovereignty and association at the same time. They would not  
2 have to become totally independent, but they would work out  
3 something where they would be, at the same time, "independent"  
4 and "associated".

5 I don't know how they would work that out; but  
6 that is their problem!

7 Let's assume that a referendum would be held  
8 and the "Sovereignty Association" would win. There is no  
9 doubt, at all, that the rest of Canada, at the present time,  
10 or in a year's time, would say, "No way"! Again: "Make  
11 up your mind! If you want to be independent, you be  
12 independent! If you want to be associated, well, it isn't  
13 in a Federal context."

14 Mr. Levesque would be called to return to his  
15 people and say, "I thought I could get an association.  
16 I cannot get it. So I ask you whether we should be separate  
17 or not".

18 And I am convinced -- and whatever happened over  
19 the last 15 years reinforces me in that conviction --  
20 there is no way the people of Quebec want separation or  
21 total independence. Once the cards are on the table and  
22 they know what the choices are, they are not going to go  
23 for that.

24 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Can you give us the feelings  
25 of the English people towards these kinds of feelings of the



1104 CARRY BUILDING  
927 FIFTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

MILLER-COLUMBIAN REPORTING SERVICE  
RECORD-MAKING PROFESSIONALS

PHONE (202) 347-0224  
ALL REPRODUCTION RIGHTS  
RESERVED

1 French Quebecers?

2 MINISTER LALONDE: Well, the surveys indicate  
3 that the overwhelming view is against it but, at the  
4 same time, the majority of the people are of the view  
5 that if the people of Quebec were, in a democratic way,  
6 to decide to leave, we should not use force to keep them with  
7 Canada.

8 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Which would leave us where?

9 MINISTER LALONDE: It leaves us in the situation  
10 where I am convinced that-both in Quebec and outside of  
11 Quebec--the people are going to hope to stay together.

12 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: You cannot have just one  
13 State -- one of the ten States -- just indefinite --

14 MR. FEICHTLBAUER: Is there any danger that  
15 other Provinces might say, "All right. Let's be independent.  
16 Let's go our own way. Let's break up."

17 MINISTER LALONDE: "Let's go our own way?"

18 No. There is no serious threat of that.

19 MR. FEICHTLBAUER: Will the Maritime areas be  
20 able to survive like Alaska?

21 MINISTER LALONDE: That is a good comparison!

22 I only wish they would strike oil like Alaska. That  
23 would help!

24 But the Maritime areas have been striking fish  
25 lately. There is a good future in the Fishing Industry there--



1104 CARRY BUILDING  
927 FIFTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

MILLER-COLUMBIAN REPORTING SERVICE  
RECORD-MAKING PROFESSIONALS

PHONE (202) 347-0224  
ALL REPRODUCTION RIGHTS  
RESERVED

1 since we have the 100-mile limit. I don't know, frankly,  
2 how they would manage! They are very concerned that  
3 it would be-- not like Alaska--but like Bangladesh! So they  
4 are very opposed to any such development.

5 But, again, I think we are looking at very dark  
6 scenarios; and we seem to be painting the worst possible  
7 picture. I don't see it.

8 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: If we keep that picture,  
9 could they, possibly, go with Quebec?

10 MINISTER LALONDE: No! At best, a small part of  
11 New Brunswick could go with Quebec, which is: about half of  
12 it, which is Acadia--where the Acadians are--which is a  
13 French speaking population. But all of the rest is English  
14 speaking. They would not go with Quebec. Definitely not!

15 I think they would go with Maine before going  
16 with Quebec.

17 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Is that a possibility?

18 MINISTER LALONDE: Not a serious one. I don't  
19 think so. Again, unless Maine were to strike oil and  
20 agree to share it with the Maritimes. I don't see this as  
21 any great likelihood. I think they have a long tradition  
22 of being Canadians. I don't think they would receive very  
23 substantial economic advantages in doing this.

24 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: In the case of Separatism,  
25 what would the French community do inside of the English



1 Provinces?

2 MINISTER LALONDE: Oh, they would be even more  
3 quickly assimilated than they have been in the past. That  
4 is a pretty obvious development. Some individuals might  
5 move into Quebec but people will not move for linguistic  
6 reasons if there is no job. So, in practice, there would  
7 be no population movement into Quebec. I don't see this--  
8 at all.

9 There would be assimilation. Mind you, assimila-  
10 tion has been taking place substantially in a lot of  
11 areas; but I think the process would be accelerated very  
12 substantially.

13 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Mr. Minister, I understand  
14 there are quite a few moves to have a Constitutional reform  
15 to accomodate the French speaking people.

16 MINISTER LALONDE: Right!

17 MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Could you please tell us  
18 what the situation is on that front, and what is in your mind,  
19 and is this the will of the English speaking people to do  
20 this?

21 MINISTER LALONDE: We are equipping ourselves with  
22 a Federal Referendum Legislation, ourselves. I will be  
23 introducing a Bill on the subject during the course of this  
24 year--in order to be able to retaliate vis-a-vis the Quebec  
25 referendum--if necessary.



1104 CARRY BUILDING  
927 FIFTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

MILLER-COLUMBIAN REPORTING SERVICE  
RECORD-MAKING PROFESSIONALS

PHONE (202) 347-0224  
ALL REPRODUCTION RIGHTS  
RESERVED

1                   Secondly, we intend to make a certain number  
2 of Constitutional proposals, this year, which will deal,  
3 essentially, with the areas under Federal responsibility  
4 at the present time.

5                   We cannot, in practice, amend the Constitution in the  
6 areas affecting the Provinces, without their consent.

7 And the Quebec government has indicated that they are not  
8 interested in negotiating any deal except independence, or  
9 the Sovereignty Association--which we are not ready to  
10 entertain, and we will not entertain, ever!

11                   So what we intend to do, during the next phase,  
12 is to put forward a certain number of proposals where we  
13 can amend and change the situation.

14                   MR. FEICHTLBAUER: The Supreme Court?

15                   MINISTER LALONDE: "The Supreme Court". The Senate  
16 might be another area that is possible. The Charter of  
17 Human Rights in Canada; and a certain number of other  
18 provisions, inside of the Constitution, affecting the Federal  
19 authority.

20                   But as far as the distribution of power, itself,  
21 is concerned--between the Federal and the Provincial  
22 authorities--this would require some kind of an agreement  
23 between the Provinces and the Federal Government; and this  
24 is not forthcoming at the present time.

25                   So there are things we can do which will show to



1104 CARRY BUILDING  
927 FIFTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

MILLER-COLUMBIAN REPORTING SERVICE  
RECORD-MAKING PROFESSIONALS

PHONE (202) 347-0224  
ALL REPRODUCTION RIGHTS  
RESERVED

1 the people of Quebec, and the French Canadians, that we  
2 are flexible as a Federal Government and, secondly, that  
3 the Federal Government is willing to make accomodations.

4 Then there would be a second phase--once, either,  
5 the Quebec Government has lost its referendum or, again,  
6 once they have lost Office and we have a Federalist Party  
7 and Office in Quebec.

8 Then we can try to negotiate a global deal  
9 on a new Constitutional Agreement.

10 It is a two-phase operation.

11 MR. FEICHTLBAUER: Do you think these rules would  
12 be enough to reduce the political clout of the Parti  
13 Quebecois?

14 MINISTER LALONDE: Not completely, at all, because, as  
15 I indicated--I think at the beginning--the factors involved  
16 are not purely Constitutional or legalistic, or even linguistic.  
17 They are of a socio-economic nature; and these will take  
18 a longer time to resolve.

19 It is a question of insuring the economic promotion  
20 of the French speaking community in the Private Sector, making  
21 sure that it feels that it has, really, equality of opportunity;  
22 not only that it has it--but it feels that it has it! And it  
23 will feel this only when it has had it for a good while.

24 Again, it takes time for people to perceive these  
25 things!



1104 CARRY BUILDING  
927 FIFTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

MILLER-COLUMBIAN REPORTING SERVICE  
RECORD-MAKING PROFESSIONALS

PHONE (202) 347-0224  
ALL REPRODUCTION RIGHTS  
RESERVED

1                   So, I think, the problem is with us in Canada  
2 for quite a few years down the line. I think we can  
3 resolve the most contentious areas. We can certainly lower  
4 the pressure by action that is going to take place and  
5 develop--in our Country--greater acceptance by the French  
6 speaking people of our situation as French speaking people  
7 that are a minority that will not feel squeezed, but, on  
8 the contrary, will feel welcome and supportive.

9                   That is the type of socio-economic, cultural,  
10 type of mentality that you have to develop, and that is not  
11 something that the Government alone can do. And you cannot  
12 legislate that, "tomorrow morning". It is an evolution in  
13 Society that has to take place after a lot of arguments;  
14 and a lot of pressures; and adaptations; and accomodations.  
15 That is down the line for several years.

16                   MEMBER OF THE PRESS: Would the Government--the  
17 Federal Government--help the position of Mr. Levesque, for  
18 instance.

19                   MINISTER LALONDE: They don't need our help!  
20 They are doing pretty well, themselves, by now. I think it  
21 might be counter-productive--even if we were to do it.  
22 You know, we will help, as a Federal Government, the move-  
23 ments--the volunteer organizations that are anti-separatists--  
24 but, as far as the Provincial political parties are  
25 concerned, they are doing pretty well on their own, now,



1104 CARRY BUILDING  
927 FIFTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

MILLER-COLUMBIAN REPORTING SERVICE  
RECORD-MAKING PROFESSIONALS

PHONE (202) 347-0224  
ALL REPRODUCTION RIGHTS  
RESERVED

1 and I don't think direct intervention of the Federal  
2 Government would be very helpful. In fact, it might be  
3 counter-productive!

4 MR. FEICHTLBAUER: It is customary in the  
5 National Press Club to close with a funny question.

6 I am not going to adopt this custom, and I am  
7 not going to ask a funny question. But I am going to ask  
8 a question which it may be funny to expect you to answer it.

9 When will the Federal Government call for  
10 National Elections?

11 MINISTER LALONDE: I will answer you very  
12 seriously. I will give you the ultimate date, which  
13 is July 8, 1979 -- that is the ultimate date.

14 MR. FEICHTLBAUER: Could it be any time before  
15 that?

16 MINISTER LALONDE: It could be any time before  
17 that.

18 MR. FEICHTLBAUER: Thank you very much, Mr. Minister,  
19 for being with us.

20 Thank you very much for coming.

21 Thank you for your candid and frank answers.

22 [Applause]

23 [Whereupon, at approximately 3:30 p.m. the  
24 Press Briefing was concluded.]

DOCS

CA1 EA980 78P62 ENG

Breakfast interview with the  
Honorable Marc Lalonde, Minister of  
State for Federal/Provincial  
Relations, February 10, 1978.

43235185

LIBRARY E A/BIBLIOTHEQUE A E



3 5036 20024337 9

ACCOPRESS®

NO. 2507

BF - RED	BY - YELLOW
BG - BLACK	BA - TANGERINE
BD - GREY	BB - ROYAL BLUE
BU - BLUE	BX - EXECUTIVE RED
BP - GREEN	

SPECIFY NO. & COLOR CODE

ACCO CANADIAN COMPANY LTD.  
TORONTO CANADA



60984 81800

