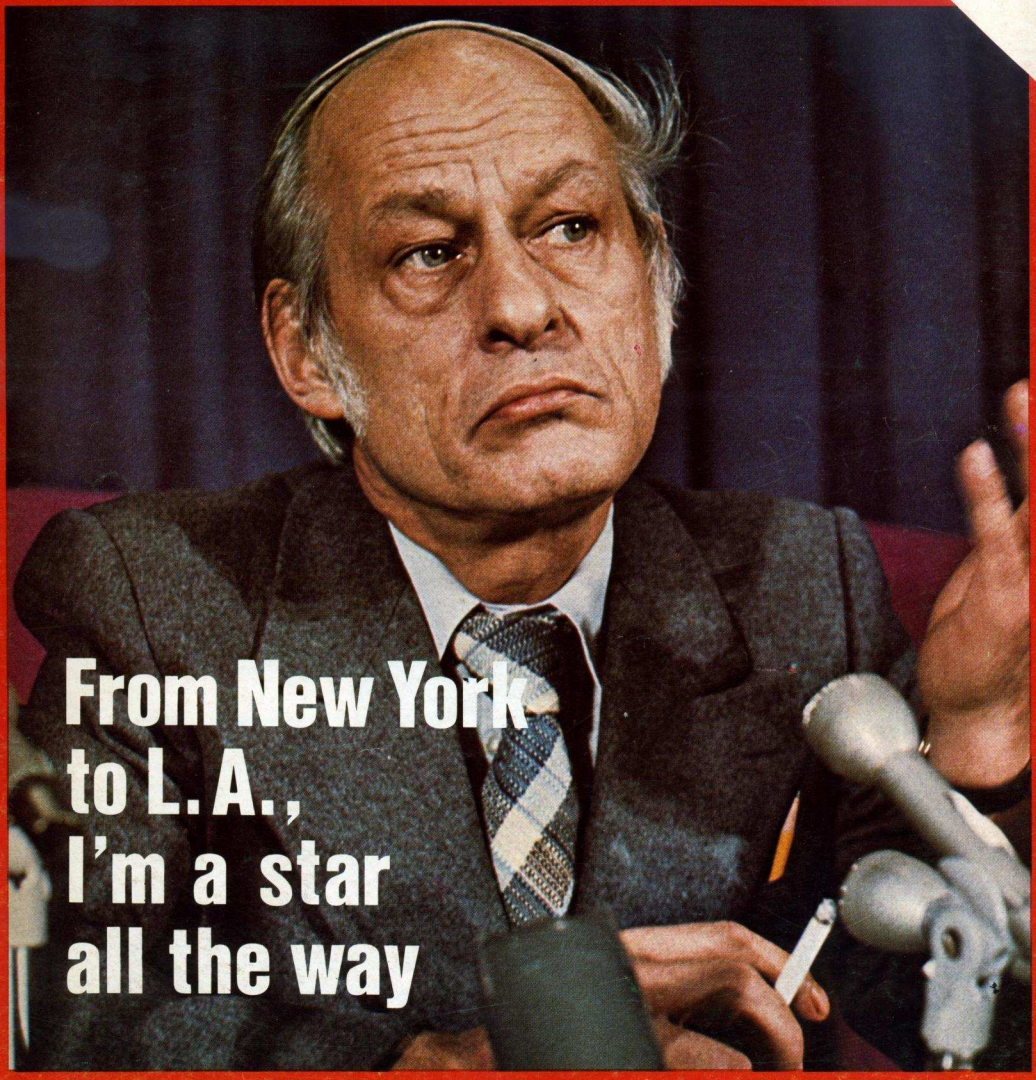
THE LAST POST

MARCH 1977/75 CENTS

SPECIAL REVIEWS SECTION



From New York to L.A., I'm a star all the way


AISLIN '77
THE MONTREAL GAZETTE
NOW LET'S NOT GET OVERLY EXCITED ABOUT ALL THIS!
POLLS

THE LAST POST
March 1977, Vol. 6, No. 1

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We wish to thank the Ontario Arts Council for its financial assistance under its periodicals program.

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Letters

Parchment hepatitis

Dear Last Post:

One appreciates many things in your derisive ragbag of goodies, not the least of which is your carefully selected and framed tid bits of journalistic and/or bureaucratic excess. Please accept a nomination of one of your own for the same distinction. Sandra Schecter's December article on the bilingualism debate concludes a very refreshing analysis with — alas — ". . . asked to believe that our creative capacities parch and jaundice with our elementary school diplomas." While conceding that Ms. Schecter is entitled to a much more jaundiced view of life and literature than any currently extant, and, while fearful of provoking her to a bilious rage, I really must protest that parchment hepatitis is an extremely tenuous proposition at best — even with the most toxic deliria.

Dr. John Van Dorp
New Westminster, B.C.

We're always careful

Dear Last Post:
re: Letters; December 1976 — Teachers and Workers

You should be careful not to offend people like Sharon O'Neill Fair. After all, teachers are the backbone of the left in this country. And as such deserve better than to be compared with a miner.

Boyd MacGillivray
Ottawa

Ferns, Ostry and Canadian publishing

Dear Last Post:

Norman Penner missed the point about Canadian publishing which is illustrated so well by the strange history of Harry Ferns and Bernard Ostry's *Age of Mackenzie King* which he reviewed in your December issue.

Published by a British-owned publisher, Heinemann, in London and released in Canada by a branch-plant importer, British Book Service, Ferns and Ostry's book angered the Liberal establishment. But it apparently sold well, because it disappeared from the bookstores in a matter of months after its release.

The publisher did not, however, do the obvious profit-maximizing thing, and reprint immediately. Not at all. Instead, the book became unavailable in Canada and stayed unavailable until I sought out the authors and publisher and negotiated for rights to it earlier this year.

There was a market for at least some radical analysis and history even in 1955, as this book's history shows. But when the politics of the publisher conflicted with the politics of his book, it was the book — and the potential profits it represented — which apparently were sacrificed.

Penner suggests that these bad old days are gone forever, because now there is a growing audience for "radical analysis" and "no longer any difficulty in getting such works published and promoted."

The main reason why books of this kind can and are being published in Canada now, but weren't in 1955, is that there are some newer Canadian publishers who want to see them in print as much for political as for commercial reasons. Can you imagine Jack Pickersgill, or even Donald Macdonald, phoning up Mel Hurtig and asking him to can Larry Pratt's book on the tar sands?

The Ferns and Ostry case is a classic example of how relevant are the politics of publishers to the politics of what gets published. In this connection, isn't it rather ironic that Prentice-Hall, one of the major U.S. branch plants operating in Canada, is soon bringing out a book on the socialist tradition in Canadian political thought, the politics of which they could not possibly endorse — written by Norman Penner.

James Lorimer
James Lorimer & Company
Toronto

He doesn't like our style

Dear Last Post:

After reading the October 1976 issue of *Last Post*, I developed some anxiety about your claim that this was the best magazine writing in Canada. The place to substantiate such a claim is inside, not on the back cover. Perhaps you take deliberate refuge behind that terrible word best.

I like to be informed by a magazine and provided with interesting insights into the material under consideration. I don't really care whether the insights have a conservative bias or a revolutionary one, provided that they are well based. I was happy to be informed about a number of issues that were not in the public eye when I was last in Canada. However, after repeatedly missing the point when I'd apparently been geared up for one, I started going back to find out what was wrong. Frequently I discovered the clever absence of a point. It had been replaced by a joke, by a catch-phrase indicating either good or bad, or by some other small stimulus. I was supposed to respond with a chuckle here, or muttered "what a bastard!" there, and continued reading with the impression that I'd learnt something. Do you have an audience so uniformly attached to your set of attributes that it is content to jerk about on the ends of these strings?

I didn't find the whole magazine facile. Regehr's article on South Africa, while adopting a point of view, was at least written in a thought-provoking and thoughtful manner. I would dispute several of the supportive assumptions he made, but felt that it was essentially a fairly sensible piece of writing.

Burgess serves as the best example of what I want to criticize. In "The Backlash" he repeatedly resorted to these string-pulling devices when unable to make a point sensibly. Let me elaborate, using examples from his article. He called opposition in Western Canada to imposition of the government's bilingualism program "extreme bigotry" and as evidence of this bigotry ventured that

those who exercise it are "seized by a fear of things that go bump in the night." This overstatement is cute, and is a device by which the responsibility to demonstrate bigotry is evaded.

Party leaders Clark and Broadbent had to be chastised for not standing up in favour of an immediate change to bilingual air traffic control. By suggesting that the question should not be a political puck since something as real as public safety had to be considered, Clark had been "not driving away the votes" of the racists and extreme bigots of our land (and we know that Clark was just pretending to make good sense while thinking only of electoral success, something easy to believe of a politician). However, politician or not, what Clark had said was very pertinent. Ask anyone who flies a lot. If Burgess really believes that safety is an irrelevant consideration, then let's hear his argument.

Broadbent had said that, as well as efficiency and safety, cost was a factor that should be considered, and had suggested that it was a serious mistake that the commission established to look into the question was not including cost in its terms of reference. In response to this sensible statement Burgess asks the devastating questions: "How much is national unity worth? Fifteen cents? A quarter?" (We presumably respond with "No! No! How dares that coprophiliac Broadbent put a price on our national unity?"). Talk about obscuring an issue! Broadbent had not even tried to put a price on bilingual air traffic control, let alone something as nebulous as national unity. If Burgess doesn't hink that cost should be considered, he should write down his reasons for holding that point of view. Then at least there would be something to read. . . .

Kip Sumner
Johannesburg,
South Africa

Hearn's and MacPhail's letter insensitive

Dear Last Post:

As someone who has been a post-doc both in Canada and England, I would like to comment on the letter on post-docs and immigration by Hearn and MacPhail of Coventry. While they have drawn attention to the ever present danger of allowing ourselves to blame immigration for a problem whose source is elsewhere, they have also shown the insensitivity of those living in an (ex)colonial power to some of the problems of a (former?) colony.

Firstly, most of the immigrants who affect the post-doc pool in Canada are British, American and European, not from developing countries as Hearn and MacPhail seem to assume.

Secondly, a striving for cultural independence is surely a "progressive" step for a former colony and should deserve MacPhail and Hearn's support, as should efforts by countries such as Tanzania to protect their own culture by insisting that their teachers be Tanzanians. Regrettably, Canada also still needs these kinds of efforts to protect her independence.

Thirdly, their analysis which claims that the cause of Ph.D. unemployment is that "declining capitalism is refusing to waste its shrinking profits" is an absurd piece of rhetoric. While capitalism may well be declining, profits are at record high levels in Canada. Their faulty analysis is dangerous since it allows the real problems to carry on untouched. The real culprits are a system which forces senior university staff to exploit the cheap labour of graduate students and hence to produce too many Ph.D.s, and an economy dominated by American firms who do their research at home.

While I agree with MacPhail and Hearn that the solutions to our problems must be to organize and fight against a system which is too wasteful of human talents, I hope that in future they will try to learn more about a distant problem before passing judgements based on their local problems and experiences.

David Rogers
Ottawa

The Time-Reader's Digest Bill

Dear Last Post:

I protest Mr. Train's remarks on the *Time-Reader's Digest* bill.

The passing of bill C58 did not rid *Maclean's* of important competitors, it aided in allowing Canadian magazines to surface to the Canadian public. If the bill did anything at all to its competitors it increased them. Now, besides competing with *Time* and *Reader's Digest*, *Maclean's* has to fend with *Canadian Review*, a rising star, and there will soon be other Canadian stars (I hope).

Just remember before this bill was passed Canadian magazines represented only 3% of all the magazines sold at Canadian newsstands. Not ½, not one out of 10, but one out of every 33⅓ magazines in our own country.

If you ever hope to take *The Last Post* out of the dust bin and on to the newsstands where magazines should be, I suggest you defend legislation passed to help you.

Bartin Barkhouse
Lower Sackville
Nova Scotia

Tim Buck and Mackenzie King

Dear Last Post:

Regarding the review of *The Age of Mackenzie King* in your December issue. The writer in a cursory aside lumps the late Tim Buck, long-time leader of the Communist party, in together with CCF founder J. S. Woodsworth as "often being mesmerized by King".

The truth of the matter is that far from being "mesmerized" by Mr. King or the class he represented. Tim Buck was an unflinching working-class adversary of the ruling circles yet to be equalled in Canadian political life. Bourgeois politicians never made the error of underestimating Buck, and regarded him as a uniquely equipped and uncompromising leader of the working-class movement over a half-century of political activity. That is why they hounded him all his life; imprisoned him in Kingston Penitentiary in the '30s and illegalized the Communist Party twice during his leadership.

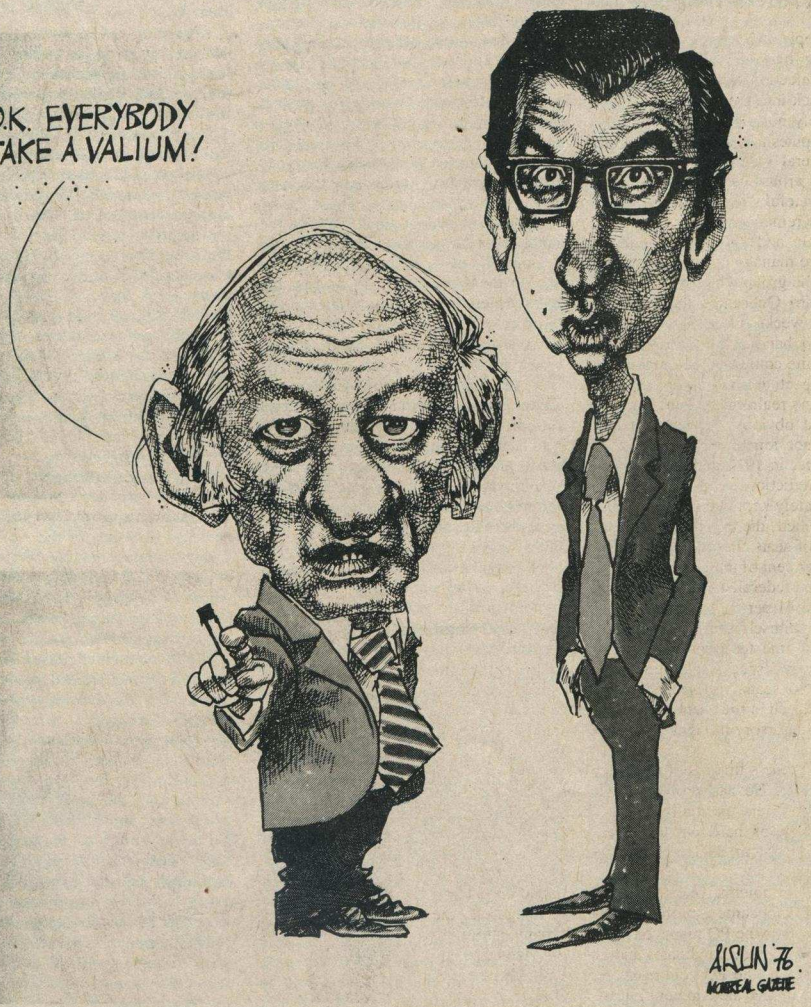
Tim Buck's attributes rightly gave the ruling class deep concern. He had a remarkable capacity for theoretical and practical direction of the working-class struggle against monopoly; and a power of attraction for working people, among whom he enjoyed a warmth of massive personal support which was the envy of all political leaders.

His fundamental grasp in Canadian terms of the method and science of Marx and Lenin; his contempt for, and consistent exposure of ultra-'left' phrasemongers and traitors to the movement for socialism; his adherence to the principle of working-class internationalism, the most vivid aspect of which was, and is, fraternal support to the Soviet Union — the first to drive a bridgehead into the world system of capitalism so that others might pass more easily into socialist transition. These were Tim Buck's strengths.

The capitalists never forgave Tim Buck throughout his life for these sterling qualities. And on his passing, they and others seek to downgrade or misrepresent his contributions.

Mark Frank
Toronto

'The best and



the brightest'

by Nick Auf der Maur

Most people and groups in Quebec are settling down now and getting over the shock of last fall's dramatic Parti Quebecois election victory. Business and labour are settling uneasily back into their old niches; the former apprehensive, but definitely not panicy; the latter still too weakened from internal disputes to emit much reaction.

The general Quebecois public is feeling quite relaxed despite the aroused expectations. The Anglophone public, perhaps grateful the PQ win did not bring forth the Apocalypse remains nervous to a degree but not much more. The Liberals and Union Nationale, unfamiliar opposition partners, are managing brave faces and little else.

In fact, the group which was slowest to get over the shock was the Parti Quebecois itself. But after a breathless and heady six weeks of a breakneck reform pace, the PQ appeared to handle the Christmas break quite nicely and emerged quite composed and ready to govern serenely.

In retrospect, it's rather surprising that so few politicians and observers realized the Liberals were going to lose. Their support had obviously eroded, and what support they did have was not terribly enthusiastic. The PQ, having been burned twice, in 1970 and 1973, with incautious and overly generous predictions, was determined not to be disappointed and deliberately kept their expectations low. Even as election day approached, the PQ did not dare to hope they would win a majority of seats. In the end, it was the Union Nationale's rise to 19 per cent of the popular vote that robbed the Liberals of the needed federalist vote and assured the PQ of a majority of seats with 41 per cent of the vote.

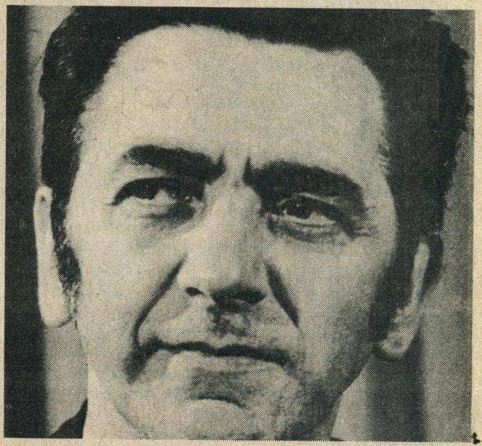
Levesque himself said that, on election day, he devoted most of his time to preparing two speeches; one was the "moral victory" speech required should the party win in the vicinity of 20 seats; the second was "a significant breakthrough" speech in the event the PQ won more than 30 seats. He gave only cursory thought to what he would say if the PQ won.

Rene Levesque's first major task after November 15 was to form a cabinet. He had problems. Not the same problems provincial premiers normally have, like B.C.'s Premier Bennett, who was hard put to select a cabinet out of the motley group of car dealers and others that Social Credit managed to elect.

Levesque's problems were the reverse. He had almost too much talent. It became a problem of who to relegate to the backbenches. For the PQ managed to recruit many extremely attractive and talented candidates and get them elected.

In many ways, the PQ contingent represents the best and the brightest of that new generation of Quebec technocrats, academics and managers (this does not mean that the so-called best and the brightest assures good government per se,

Pierre Marois, the man Levesque would like to see as his successor



Camille Laurin, in charge of cultural development, and especially language policy

witness the Kennedy-Johnson administrations).

Levesque also had a lot of juggling to do, to keep the various tendencies within the PQ in equilibrium. This he managed to do effectively by restructuring the cabinet system, creating new posts and something called the cabinet 'priorities committee'. The mandate and powers of the priorities committee is not quite clear, but it may (or may not) turn out to be the inner cabinet.

The priorities committee contains four Ministers of State (the title now used for senior ministers), plus three key members from the rest of the regular cabinet. For the most part, these are the men closest to Levesque, in terms of thinking and influence.

First, there is Pierre Marois, the 36-year-old minister of state for social development, a Ralph Nader type consumer and consumer co-op advocate who received his doctorate in social sciences from the Sorbonne. He was a student activist in undergraduate and law school days at the Universite de Montreal, a civil servant in the new ministry of education back in the 60's and a one-time rep with the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CNTU). A progressive, and one-time PQ executive president, he is seen as the man Rene Levesque would like to see as his successor.

Bernard Landry, 39, minister of state for economic development, is another long-time Levesque associate from the time he was an adviser in the natural resources ministry in the 60's. A one-time ranking civil servant in both the natural resources and education ministries, he studied economics at the University of Paris and worked in France's ministry of finance and economic affairs.

Camille Laurin, 54, an eminent Quebec psychiatrist who studied in Boston and Paris, and the author of medical books and papers, is now serving as minister of state for cultural development and is most particularly responsible for language policy. He's a quiet, studious man, called the PQ's Mother Superior by the Liberals.

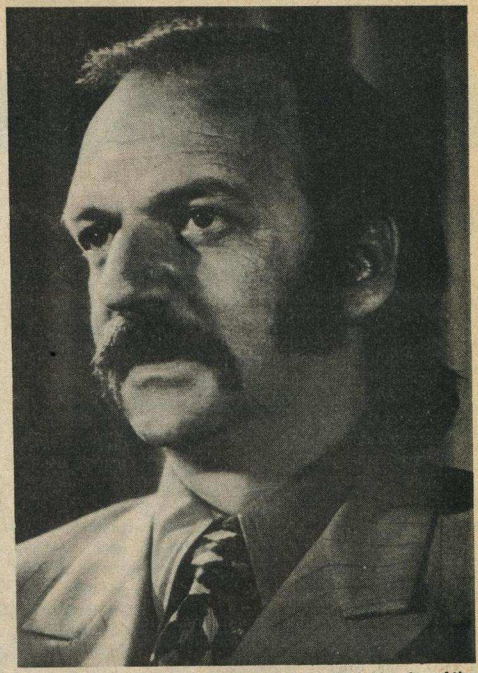
Jacques Leonard, 40, an experienced chartered accountant and administrator who usually wears corduroy suits and an old ban-the-bomb button, is now minister of state for planning and development. He once taught at the University of Rwanda.

The other three members of the priorities committee are more familiar: Jacques Parizeau, graduate of the London School of Economics and former economic adviser to Quebec Premiers Lesage, Johnson and Bertrand and today minister of finance; Claude Morin, minister for inter-governmental affairs, where he used to be the deputy minister, holder of three masters degrees (economics, social sciences and social welfare) from Laval and Columbia universities; and Robert Burns, PQ house leader and minister for parliamentary and electoral reform and unofficial leader of the party's left-wing.

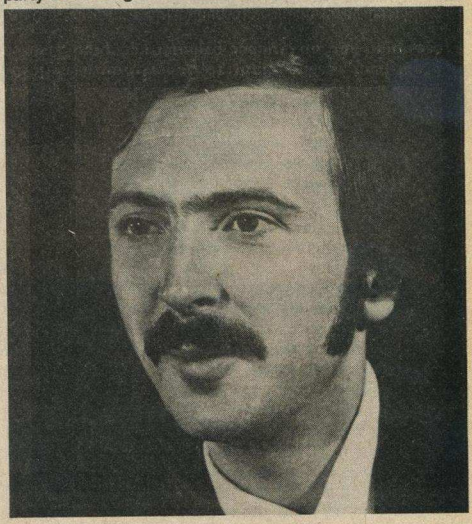
The vice-premier and minister of education is Jacques-Yvan Morin, the professorial graduate of Harvard, Cambridge and McGill universities, and an internationally recognized expert on constitutional and international law.

There are many more influential and important cabinet ministers, most of whom hold impressive academic records — LSE, MIT, etc. — or civil service and administrative records. A few, like Energy Minister Guy Joron, a former wealthy stockbroker, have business records.

Put one's finger on the name of any minister — I just stuck it on Jean Garon, the agriculture minister — and what does



Robert Burns, PQ house leader and unofficial leader of the party's left-wing



Energy Minister Guy Joron is a former wealthy stockbroker

one find? A 38-year-old who studied economics, law and social sciences at Laval, taught fiscal and economic law, a specialist in co-operative law who worked for various government ministries.

All in all, a talented cabinet composed of the new technocratic and managerial generation in Quebec which looks to the state for national survival and greater economic control and development.

The cabinet was sworn in on November 26 and rushed headlong into its work of reform. In a little less than a month, the new government issued a dizzying stream of policy pronouncements, orders in council, reforms, proclamations of intent, as well as convoking a mini legislative session, all of which left even the cabinet breathless.

Jacques Couture, the priest-turned-politician who ran as Montreal Citizens Movement candidate against Mayor Jean Drapeau two years ago, and now the new labour minister, raised the minimum wage to $3.00 an hour, the highest in Canada along with British Columbia. Municipal Affairs Minister Guy Tardif, an ex-Mountie and a criminologist of note, combined with Youth and Recreation Minister Claude Charron, the flamboyant man in charge of the Olympics installations, to put the screws on the city of Montreal and Mayor Drapeau.

Legislation permitting class actions and a wide variety of Nader-type consumer protection benefits were promised; secret political funding was to be abolished; the introduction of proportional representation was discussed; resources were to be conserved and pollution curbed.

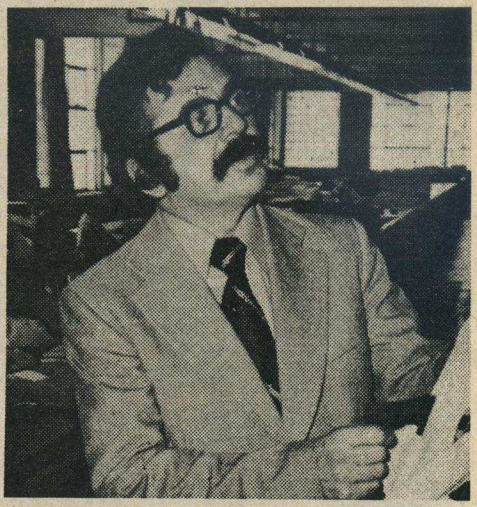
Lise Payette, Quebec's top TV personality and now minister of consumer affairs and financial institutions, set to the difficult task of reforming auto insurance. Economic Development Minister Landry said he would reduce the province's staggering unemployment rate. Industry Trade and Commerce Minister Rodrigue Tremblay talked about creating a free trade zone at Mirabel Airport, while the labour minister promised anti-scab legislation, and worked to ignore provincial AIB recommendations regarding pay raises for police and construction workers.

Jacques Parizeau introduced a supplementary budget and went to the federal and provincial finance ministers conference and talked tough along with the others; Levesque went to the first ministers conference and talked tough too. All this and more. It was a heady first month in office until the Christmas break arrived to settle things down.

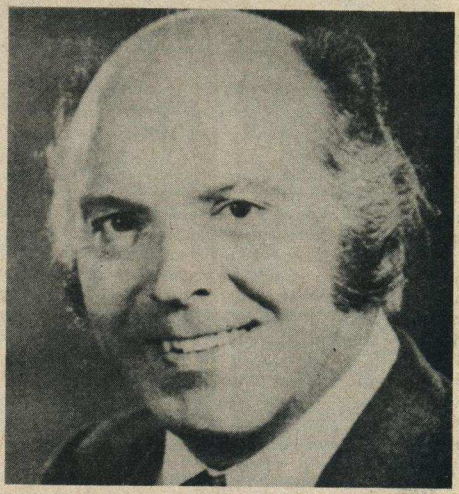
By that time, various members of the cabinet and the premier felt that things were moving too fast, that it was time to slow the pace down and prepare for the first major opening of the National Assembly expected in February.

The PQ ministers were determined to show the public that they were no ordinary newly-elected government to show that they had made campaign promises and were determined to keep them. Quite often, when new governments are sworn in, it takes time for the new ministers to get to know their departments. And the premier tells them to shut up until they know what they're talking about. Not so with the PQ.

Levesque himself talked a lot, often to reiterate the party's commitment to independence, despite the fact the issue was downplayed during the campaign for electoral reasons. In fact, many observers were surprised by the vehemence of the insistence that Quebec sovereignty was the party's number one priority.



Labour Minister Jacques Couture raised minimum wage to $3.00 an hour



Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Claude Morin is the father of the PQ's referendum strategy

Premier Levesque faces the press at the December first ministers' conference in Ottawa.

However, part of the reason for playing up the independence theme so forcibly was for internal party reasons.

One of the best ways to keep the party united and prevent open quarrelling between left and moderate elements is to insist on the one, long term objective that brought the disparate coalition into being in the first place.

There was a fear amongst certain PQ members that Claude Morin's referendum strategy would be a precursor to the abandonment of sovereignty as a platform. And if the more militant Pequises are worried about compromise, there is now ample evidence that pragmatism will be a hallmark of the new administration.

The biggest compromise of course came before the election: a PQ win wouldn't necessarily mean separation. The government would seek a direct mandate from the people through a referendum.

Once in power, the PQ soon learned that pristine purity of policy was a luxury it could ill afford. Ministers were saying that the party program was written in opposition, and while in power not everything could be done. The program would have to be changed to reflect realities. Pragmatism began setting in very quickly after the initial welter of reform.

In Montreal, conservationists and environmentalists had been waging a long battle to prevent the demolition of a large downtown hotel, the Laurentian, to make way for a mammoth Canadian Pacific property development. In opposition, the PQ had vowed to stop the destruction of the hotel. In power, the party decided that development meant investment and jobs; the hotel would have to go.

During the campaign, the PQ said language testing for children was "odious". In power, it said language testing would have to continue for the time being.

The party structure of the PQ is very democratic, sometimes to the extreme. One of the provisions of the program calls for the party, through its National Council (including district representatives, the executive) to exercise control of what the government does, and allowing it to veto policy.

Shortly after the election, Levesque appeared before the Council and informed it that basically the government was responsible to the people who elected it and not to the party per se. There would be no party meddling in government policy. It is reported that the membership, elated with the victory, accepted this view with equanimity.

Levesque and some of his ministers also explained that the party program was not going to be implemented ipso facto, that much of it was an opposition program and not a government program. Unlike several months ago, when it looked like the party's fortunes were sagging and the left wing was getting ready to challenge the PQ's so-called establishment, Levesque's more realistic approach — which after all put them in power — is now generally accepted.

But everything is not necessarily going to come up roses for the PQ. The new government has inherited a staggering number of problems, some caused by the Bourassa administration, some caused by the general state of the western world's economies. There are also economic problems caused by the unease and lack of business enthusiasm for the PQ itself.

Capital is quietly trickling out of Quebec and there is not exactly a flood of new investment, either domestic or foreign. Many building projects, plant expansions and the like have been cancelled because of political uncertainty. But the overall panic flight has not, apparently, materialized.

But amongst the populace in general, there is optimism that the PQ will deliver on its main electoral promise — clean, honest and open government and that, in itself, pleases almost everybody.

The P.Q. and the U.S.

The American Connection

by Robert Chodos

In Roch Carrier's novel *Floralie, Where Are You?*, the Charlatan faith-healer Néron tells Floralie to look "on the other side of the trees, the other side of the forest. Where the road stops there's another road that leads into town. At the end of that road is the United States. Look. There. That's the United States. . . . Look at the smoke coming out of the factory chimneys. When that smoke comes down to earth it falls in a rain of gold. . . . Those are machines singing. They bite into metal and spit out chunks of gold."

Néron's image of the United States has a history of wide acceptance in Quebec. It was a place that was fabulously rich and slightly remote. Thousands of Quebecers followed the trail of golden smoke and went to work in the factory towns of New England. Others dodged the Canadian draft during World War II by taking to the hills of New Hampshire and Vermont.

Successive Quebec premiers have made regular pilgrimages to Wall Street in search of another form of gold. But on November 15, 1976, a new, more self-confident generation of Quebecers elected a government that is going to change everything. Or is it?

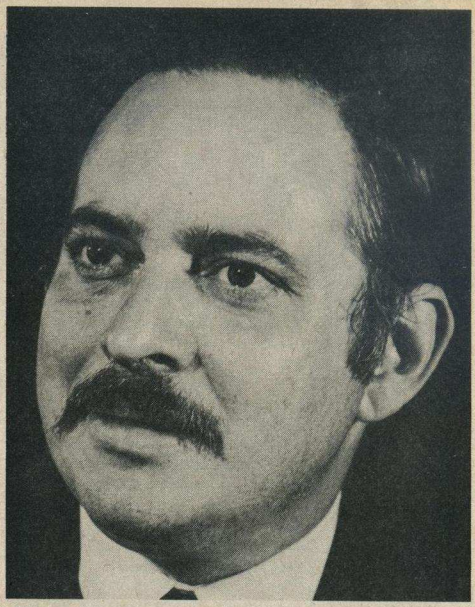
* * * * *

Just after the election, reporter Susan Reisler of the CBC radio program *Sunday Morning* asked Rodrigue Tremblay, the newly elected Parti Québécois Member of the National Assembly for Gouin, what the economic priorities of the new government would be. The first, Tremblay said, would be to restore order to public finances. And then, "we will unblock many economic projects that are blocked presently by the federal government. One project like the ones I have in mind is the enriched uranium project. The president of Hydro-Quebec told me that this project could generate one billion dollars of export a year, towards Europe. Europe needs uranium to manufacture, to build electricity. This project has been blocked by the National Energy Board."

Later, when Tremblay was pressed about the question of enriched uranium, it turned out that it wasn't only the Europeans who were involved: "I think the world is so hungry now for energy, cheap energy, that there is room in the world for both ordinary uranium and enriched uranium. You know that the CANDU reactor uses ordinary uranium. But the American reactors and the French reactors use enriched uranium. And Pakistan has a French reactor and the United States of course has American reactors, and I think there is a big demand and the demand will increase as the price of petroleum will go up — I think it will keep going up until the end of the century — so I think that there is room in the world for both.

"And it is very unjust for Quebec that the federal government in order to promote the Ontario economic development and keep Chalk River in high gear has blocked our project. I think this will be a very big matter of contention between Quebec and Ottawa. We have a desire to stimulate economic development; we have a need for economic development and we cannot tolerate — our population cannot tolerate — that the federal government will block such an important project."

Enriched uranium is, as Tremblay said, only an example. But it is an instructive one, because it puts Quebec in



Quebec Industry and Commerce Minister Rodrique Tremblay (left) is a strong supporter of a common market — but with the U.S., not Canada; Finance Minister Jacques Parizeau (right) has talked of a two-step process, first a common market with Canada, then a North American free trade area

potential conflict with Canadian economic nationalism and because it is oriented largely toward a north-south economic flow. For Rodrigue Tremblay, who is now the province's minister of industry and commerce, has been one of Quebec's most prominent advocates of closer relations with the United States.

* * * * *

Back in 1970 a small book called *Indépendance et Marché Commun Québec-E.U.* — "Independence and a Quebec-U.S. Common Market" — was published in Montreal. The author was a respected University of Montreal economist, Rodrigue Tremblay, and the book made a bit of a splash. Mario Beaulieu, who had been Finance Minister in the recently-defeated Union Nationale government, ran for the leadership of his party with Tremblay's proposal as his platform. But Beaulieu was defeated and the idea gradually faded away.

In his book, Tremblay argued that the Parti Québécois proposal for a Quebec-Canada common market after independence was not realistic: "Because this proposal of economic reintegration with the former partners seriously underestimates the psychological consequences (political "backlash") of the separation of Quebec for English Canadians and, above all, because *the proposed formula, at best, doesn't improve in the least Quebec's present economic situation on this continent* [emphasis in original] . . . advocates of independence prefer not to allude to it any longer."

With tables and statistics, he showed that the Canadian tariff structure favours Ontario industries at the expense of Quebec ones, and that Quebec manufacturers would be better off behind American than behind Canadian tariff walls. He said that Quebec's natural markets were in the Boston - Washington - Chicago triangle. He proposed that the post-independence Quebec dollar be fixed at parity with the American dollar and backed up by loans from the American treasury.

But would the United States want Quebec as a sort of second Puerto Rico? Tremblay had no fears on that score: "Especially now, when the rest of Canada has undertaken a war of nerves with the United States on the subject of an eventual continental resource policy, it will be clear to all how precious the assurance of access to our energy and our primary materials, the abundance of which is virtually without limit, will be to the United States. One only has to consider the recent negotiations between Hydro-Quebec and the Consolidated Edison Co. of New York for the export of electricity from Labrador to New York to evaluate the strategic importance of Quebec to the American economy. There is no need to stress that Quebec already has its 'lobby' in Washington."

There is also no need to stress that Rodrigue Tremblay does not have much sympathy for Canadian economic nationalism. Nevertheless, in October 1976, after Robert Bourassa had called the election that would bring his defeat, Tremblay joined the Parti Québécois, which continued to advocate a Quebec-Canada common market as an important plank in its platform, and accepted its nomination in the riding of Gouin.

But the shift in Tremblay's position between 1970 and

1976 is more apparent than real.

In his book, Tremblay noted parenthetically that the rest of Canada would also be better off in a common market with the United States "were it not for the attachment to British institutions of a certain political elite and the preponderant influence of Bay Street financial circles." All that has now changed is the order in which Tremblay sees things happening.

"I think the Quebec economy is very strong — potentially strong," he told Susan Reisler. "We have a lot of resources. We have the cheapest electricity in the world. We have discovered uranium in the north of Quebec.... We have iron ore. We have a lot of things. And our location is not too bad. Within the Canadian common market which is a strip of 200 miles, 3500 miles long, we are not well located. But if we have a sort of North American common market, which I think we are going to evolve toward in the next quarter of a century, then the Quebec-Montreal area, the St. Lawrence area, is very well located.

"Our natural market is not Vancouver, of course. It is mainly Boston, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Washington, Philadelphia and New York. So this market is relatively strong — maybe not as strong as the Detroit-Chicago axis that Toronto faces, but it is well located. And for transport, for example, Mirabel is the most modern and largest airport that we have on the east coast of the continent. We will take advantage of that — it is one hour shorter from London to go to Mirabel than to go to New York, for example."

In other words, instead of Quebec going into a common market with the United States and then the rest of Canada seeing the error of its ways and tagging along a little later, Quebec and Canada will form a customs union and the whole caboodle will join up with the Americans over the next 25 years. Either way, the end result is the same.

* * * * *

It is not to be thought that the minister of industry and commerce is alone in his views within the Parti Québécois. The week after Tremblay's interview was aired on *Sunday Morning*, the new minister of finance, Jacques Parizeau, told historian Ramsay Cook on the same program that while the economic links between, say, Quebec and British Columbia or Quebec and Nova Scotia were not crucial, the links between Quebec and Ontario were. Cook asked whether this was not in conflict with what Tremblay had said about the American market's being much more important to Quebec than the Canadian.

"Well," said Parizeau, "it's possibly, simply that steps have to be taken one by one. We all know, in North America, that sooner or later there won't be much in terms of tariffs between the United States and Canada, since for the last 30 years these tariffs have fallen regularly. So, we know that eventually, Montreal, for manufactured goods mind you, Montreal will be in much closer contact say with Boston, or even with Chicago, and New York, than it is now."

Cook was not satisfied: "Don't you think that a customs union with Ontario would be fairly difficult if you were thinking in terms of closer economic relations with the manufacturing centres of the United States?"

"Oh no," Parizeau replied. "All I'm saying, I'm not talking about a customs union with Ontario, I'm talking about a customs union with Canada — largely because of Ontario, but with Canada — and then eventually, that shall we say, a free-trade area within North America will gradually take place. So it's one step after another."

In a 1974 article in the American quarterly *International Organization*, political scientist Daniel Latouche of McGill University argued that the PQ had no clear idea about how it would pursue its relations with the United States and that "this absence of a United States policy is a symptom of a widespread belief among the PQ leadership that it should be easier to work out mutually satisfactory arrangements with Americans than with Canadians."

This great affinity with the United States is not only economic but also philosophical. "The PQ leadership," Latouche wrote, "shares with most Quebec elites a deep admiration for the only North American society that is said to have succeeded in providing itself with an autonomous model of development.... The socioeconomic model for the Québécois is not Canada, for it exists only as an act of will, but the United States which has succeeded in giving form to the North American myth. Thus few Québécois are willing to make concessions to English Canada in order to help the latter recapture its former relative economic and cultural autonomy from the United States."

Since Canada is perceived as being colonized by the United States anyway, it is regarded as being better for Quebec to make its own deals with the Americans than to be a sort of second-order satellite as a disadvantaged part of the Canadian colony. "Better to be the slave of the master," commented one Péquiste, "than to be the slave of the slave."

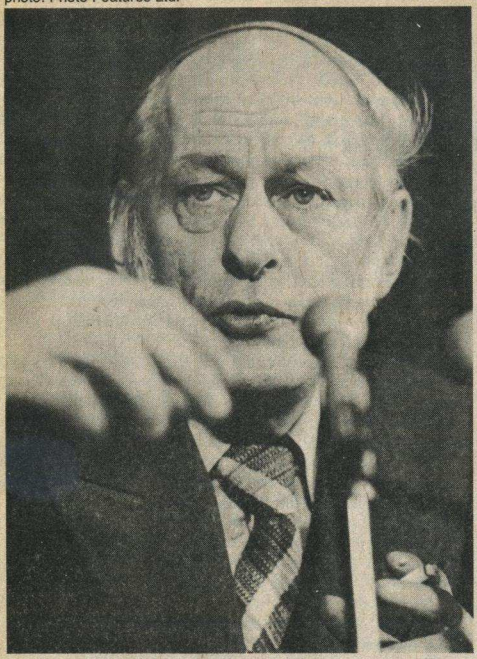
René Lévesque himself shares many of these perceptions. During World War II he worked for the American Office of War Information in London and developed an abiding affinity for things American. He began the television career that would eventually lead him into politics as an authority on U.S. affairs. In his biography *René*, Peter Desbarats tells us that Lévesque reacted strongly to the starting of a radio station in Montreal by Newfoundland entrepreneur Geoff Stirling in the early sixties. "Good God!" he is reported to have cried. "We've been colonized by Newfoundland! At least being colonized by the United States is semi-respectable."

In the post-election banter, Rodrigue Tremblay was asked whether he would be likely to make many trips to Washington. No, he said, it would be more likely Lévesque who would be making those trips: "He always did want to be ambassador to Washington."

* * * * *

The president of Hydro-Quebec, who told Tremblay about the wealth to be gained from enriched uranium, is a 64 year old former bond salesman named Roland Giroux, who has been one of the most powerful men in the province for a decade and has become known as Quebec's unofficial ambassador to Wall Street. In 1962, when Liberal Natural Resources Minister René Lévesque undertook to nationalize Quebec's private electric utilities, his plans were scotched by a hostile Toronto bond market. Lévesque endeavoured to raise the money in New York instead. One of the people he turned to for help was Roland Giroux, then a senior employee of a St. James Street financial house. The money was found, and Quebec has done most of its borrowing in New York ever since.

photo: Photo Features Ltd.



Premier Rene Levesque has long felt an affinity for the U.S.; Roland Giroux (right), the powerful head of Hydro Quebec, is the province's unofficial ambassador to Wall Street and is an old associate of Levesque

Lévesque went to Giroux for advice on other occasions after that, and the acquaintance continued after the Liberals were defeated and after Lévesque left *rouge* ranks to form the Parti Québécois. Meanwhile, Giroux was brought into government service in 1966 by Union Nationale Premier Daniel Johnson as an economic adviser and member of the Quebec Hydroelectric Commission, and when Hydro-Quebec President Jean-Claude Lessard retired in 1969, Giroux was named to succeed him.

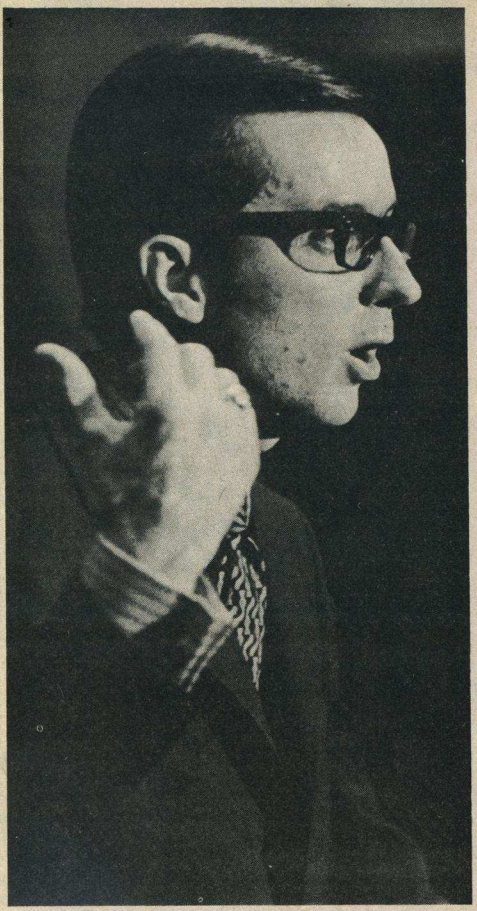
The presidency of Hydro-Quebec is in itself a position of considerable power. The electric utility is by far the most important economic asset in the possession of the Quebec government. Since René Lévesque's departure from the natural resources department, it has been virtually independent of ministerial control. And as the symbol and most important product of the new technocratic capability that manifested itself in Quebec in the 1960s, it has enjoyed wide public sympathy.

In the case of Roland Giroux, these strong cards are augmented by his own skill in the use of power and his contacts with Wall Street bankers, who find him reassuring and with whom he is on first-name terms. Some people who have been outmanoeuvred by Giroux maintain that his Wall Street connections are exaggerated and are not nearly so important to Quebec's ability to raise money as they are generally credited to be. But whether or not Giroux is a magician of finance, it is widely believed that he is one. And the last person to discourage that notion would be Roland Giroux.

When the Liberals were returned to power under Robert Bourassa in 1970, the new premier was determined to cut Giroux down to size. For one thing, as a Union Nationale appointee Giroux was suspected of residual *bleu* sympathies, and for another, Bourassa was not enamoured of the presence within the government of a power base over which he had little if any control.

Bourassa declared war on Giroux on April 29, 1971, the first anniversary of his election, with his announcement of the James Bay scheme, the largest construction project in the province's history. Quebecers were quick to note that although the centrepiece of the scheme was to be a huge hydroelectric development, Hydro-Quebec, which under normal circumstances would be expected to be in charge of such a development, was assigned only a secondary role. A new body, the James Bay Development Corporation (JBDC), staffed by loyal Bourassa allies, was to run the show.

For a while Giroux rolled with the punches and planned his strategy. If James Bay was to be accomplished, large amounts of money would have to be raised. And he was the man with the alliances in New York. He promoted the inclusion in the project of the multinational engineering firm,



Former Premier Robert Bourassa tried to cut Hydro Quebec and Roland Giroux down to size, but Giroux held his own

Bechtel, saying that its presence would make it easier to raise money in the U.S. Key members of the Bourassa cabinet, and eventually the premier himself, were won over. Giroux's arch-rival, Pierre Nadeau, president of the JBDC and its chief operating company, the James Bay Energy Corporation (JBEC), resigned in disgust. The JBEC, although formally a subsidiary of the JBDC, became in effect a subsidiary of Hydro-Quebec.

By 1974, Giroux had established himself as one of Bourassa's most important advisers. Don Murray of the Montreal *Gazette* wrote that "there are some in the provincial government who suggest that Giroux has again become an 'eminence grise' where economic matters are concerned." On a trip to Europe to drum up investment and raise money, Bourassa took along his chief speech-writer, his press secretary, his bodyguard, his personal hairdresser and Roland Giroux. Bourassa had recently confessed to being a social democrat and the admission had some of the European financiers worried.

"To the nervous bankers," wrote Murray, "the phrase suggests former President Salvador Allende of Chile and his policy of land reform and nationalization of resource companies. And so Giroux goes from meeting to dinner to meeting assuring his friends that the thin young man with the carefully trimmed hair really doesn't mean that at all, but is only talking about social reforms like Medicare, free drugs for old people, and dental care."

But the new harmony between Giroux and the Bourassa government was in the nature more of a truce than a peace treaty. Jean Cournoyer, who became minister of natural resources in 1975, began to make noises about bringing Hydro-Quebec under government control. In the summer of 1976, Hydro-Quebec was hit with sporadic strikes, which caused interruptions of service in parts of the province. The dispute dragged into the election campaign. Bourassa desperately wanted it settled. Giroux declined to co-operate, preferring instead to go into virtual seclusion and hint at retirement. On the last weekend of the campaign Bourassa — a bit prematurely — declared the dispute over. The tactic didn't work. On the Monday the electorate voted in the Parti Québécois. Both Bourassa and Cournoyer were defeated in their own ridings.

Three days later, Premier-elect René Lévesque came to the Hydro-Quebec building in Montreal to meet with Robert Bourassa and discuss the transfer of power. On the same visit, he stopped in to see his old friend Roland Giroux, who told him that he would stay on at Hydro-Quebec. Giroux also told Lévesque that he had just raised $50 million on the U.S. money market, which was taken as a sign of confidence in the newly-elected government.

* * * * *

Quebec's ability to borrow money in New York is the most important concrete expression of Quebec-U.S. relations. Between them, the province and Hydro-Quebec owe more than $10 billion, and the bulk of that debt is held in the United States. The PQ wants to continue borrowing American money, and this means that Quebec will have to retain the favour of Wall Street, something it has been very good at doing in the past.

But investors are finicky souls, and not easily comforted. Even the continued presence of Roland Giroux and the ascendancy of Rodrigue Tremblay may not be sufficient reassurance. Although Canadian commentators have grasped at every conceivable straw in attempts to divine the attitude of Wall Street toward post-election Quebec, no clear indication has yet emerged. Wall Street, like many Canadians, is waiting and seeing. Whether the PQ government will be able to persuade Americans that Quebec will continue to be a safe and profitable place in which to invest remains to be seen.

What is clear, however, even at this early date, is that it will try.

Of pollsters and pundits, and Liberals and Tories

by Rae Murphy

Public opinion polls, like handguns, are harmless things in themselves. It is what people do with them that causes the problem.

It may well be that George Gallup thought he was merely developing a scientific method to chart just what everybody thought about everything. Yet, in the hands of the practising politician the polls become a means of organizing public opinion rather than a means of expressing it. In the hands of the pundits the polls become a means of obscuring public opinion. In Canada we have the experience of the Perils of Pierre over the last 12 months to bear these contentions out.

The immediate problem is the result of the most recent Gallup Poll which shows that, contrary to the pronouncements of the Ottawa press corps, the PQ victory in Quebec did not increase the prime minister's popularity in English Canada. Now just why a policy of federalism that has been consistently rejected in English Canada and more recently apparently rejected in Quebec should result in an increase in popularity for the proponent of that policy is difficult to understand in the first place. To be stunned that it didn't, as many pundits now appear to be, is to confirm the diagnosis of terminal myopia.

It is, of course, not particularly important that the nation's political writers guessed wrong. Although why they do so consistently does bewilder the more casual observer. The important thing is that English Canada's less than panic over the emergence of Rene Levesque in Quebec does not mean a lack of interest in constitutional affairs, but rather a willingness to investigate other options while rejecting The Just Society circa 1968.

And other options are appearing.

In the first place, it is simply not true that Joe Clark and the Progressive Conservatives have not advanced an alternative policy to the Liberals' federalism. Clark is, quite naturally, hiding in the weeds with his package. He doesn't want to be placed on the defensive as was Stanfield. But the basics of the Tory approach are quite evident:

— Lip service to bilingualism and some of the broader concepts of federalism. At least one of the major candidates for the Tory leadership finessed the question rather nicely calling for a passive bilingualism.

— Clark has also proposed, or is at least willing to discuss expanded provincial rights over communications, immigration, off-shore mineral rights, etc.

— Clark has also indicated a desire to "de-federalize" many programs such as unemployment insurance as well as to decentralize others like regional economic expansion.

Even if the detail is missing and there is a studied vagueness in much of the Tory position, they are perceived rather clearly by Canadians as being decentralists and it does not take too much of a leap of the imagination to see the outline of rather amicable negotiations between Prime Minister Clark and Premier Levesque. Nor does it take much of a prophet to realize what the program would mean for the stability of English Canada.

The simple truth is that federalism hasn't worked in Canada. It is not accepted in Quebec and the centrifugal force on all parts of English Canada has increased while we have lived through the delusion that French on boxes of cornflakes would make the real world go away.

This, in turn, poses some very real problems. One has every expectation of hearing that popular cliche of the late '60s turned around — "what does English Canada really want?" Quebec, with the election of the PQ is well on the way to defining itself and its goals — within or without a new Canadian federation. The problem is in English Canada. A government in Ottawa pledged to the enhancement of provincial powers and the weakening of the central authority could on one hand go a long way towards meeting the requirements of Quebec, and on the other inadvertently pave the way for the political disintegration of English Canada.

Is it not time, therefore, to leave off this stuff about Joe Clark not being charismatic enough to lead this snowbound country; about his being boring and therefore unable to enthrall the ten boring provincial premiers, whose conferences tend more and more to replace parliament; about him leading a party of neanderthals unable to match the style, grace and wit of men like Eugene Whelan and Joseph-Philippe Guay who illuminate the Liberal frontbenches?

Is it not time therefore to perceive the federal Tories as not only the possible but probable next government — the numbers are there and they seem to add up — that will preside over a country in an economic and social bind that makes constitutional change irresistible, but none the less explosive?

Is it not time also to consider the alternative for English Canada posed by the Tories in a much more serious light? Given especially the ideological affinity as well as party membership, future first ministers' conferences are likely to be rather homogenous affairs. If the only alternative to Trudeau's federalism is Clark's decentralization then Canada — English Canada at least — is in very serious trouble.

Meanwhile, word from Ottawa is that several journalists wish that Gallup didn't have the monopoly and that other polls could presumably tell other stories. Keith Davey is also bitching at Gallup.

Special Review

Understanding Quebec

by Norman Penner

Quebec: Social Change and Political Crisis, by Dale Postgate and Kenneth McRoberts. McClelland & Stewart/Toronto. 216 pages. $4.95 paper.

Quebec: The Unfinished Revolution, by Léon Dion. McGill- Queen's University Press/Montreal and London. 218 pages. $7.50 paper.

René, by Peter Desbarats. McClelland & Stewart/ Toronto. 223 pages. $10.00 cloth.

Quebec versus Ottawa, by Claude Morin. University of Toronto Press/Toronto. 164 pages. $6.50 paper.

George-Etienne Cartier, by Alastair Sweeny. McClelland & Stewart/Toronto. 352 pages. $16.95 cloth.

The Diaries of Louis Riel, edited by Thomas Flanagan, Hurtig Publishers/Edmonton. 208 pages. $9.95 cloth, $4.95 paper.

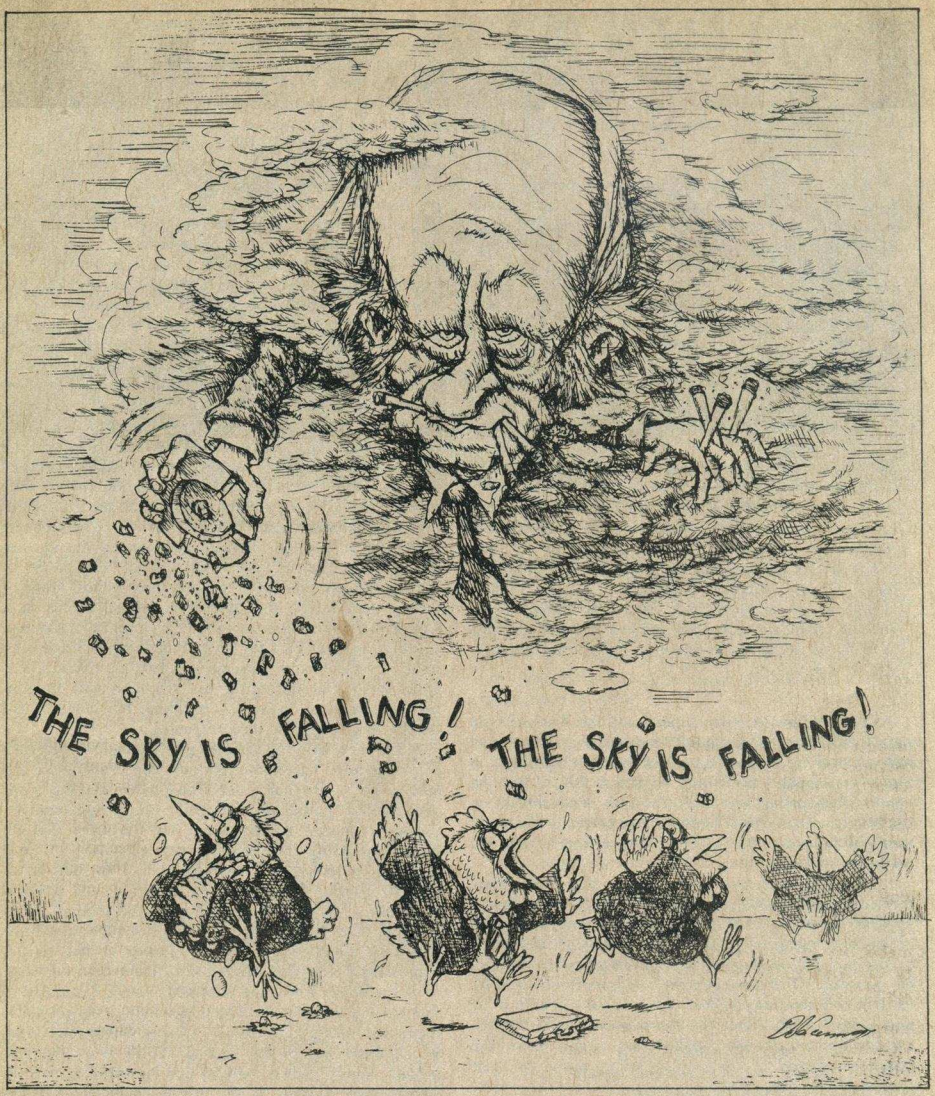
What does Quebec want? Anyway? How many times have we heard this question asked? Asking it became one of the standard Anglophone reactions to the Quiet Revolution. But most questioners never listened to the answers, or else didn't believe what they heard. Then came Monday, November 15, 1976 and the unexpected victory of the Parti Québécois in the elections, and suddenly everyone wants to know how did it happen? What does Quebec want? And more important — when?

The books listed above, particularly the first four, provide an excellent short course in Quebec politics. They are new, although the ones by Dion and Morin appeared in French a few years ago, but are now fortunately available to English readers.

The Postgate-McRoberts book is a sympathetic treatment from the outside — two English political scientists who present a wealth of material much of which will come as new information to most readers.

The Léon Dion book is a sympathetic treatment from the inside by one of the top political scientists in Quebec. The chief virtue of this book is the brilliant way in which the author constructs a theoretical framework for the study and analysis of Quebec nationalisms, demonstrating that there are at least four nationalisms contending for the support of Quebecers: conservative, liberal, social-democratic, and socialist. He effectively shows that, as a result of the Quiet Revolution, Quebec is no longer a one-ideology society and by so doing he places in a new perspective what has really been happening in Quebec since 1960.

Claude Morin's book is written by a key participant in some of the post 1960 events. As a top civil servant he was



part of Quebec's negotiating team in the numerous federal-provincial confrontations during the sixties and early seventies, and then quit his post to become a leader of the PQ. He is now minister of intergovernmental affairs in the new government of Quebec.

The book by Desbarats is a biography of the new premier of Quebec, René Lévesque, who is the consummate personification of the Quiet Revolution — secular, radical, nationalistic, and mildly social democratic.

The view of Quebec held in English Canada throughout the years has been mainly one of irritation, frustration, and anger. In the words of Postgate and McRoberts,

> Over the decades of Canada's political history Quebec has achieved a certain notoriety as a sort of pathological disorder in the normally healthy Canadian body politic.

> Other provinces are occasionally obstreperous, but only Quebec is so consistently and visibly troublesome. (p. 11)

But this attitude goes deeper than anger. It covers an exploitative relationship, once again quoting from Postgate and McRoberts,

> . . . Quebec's resources, both human and material, have been seen as easy fields for exploitation; politically, the province is often regarded as little more than a building block, albeit a large one, in the construction of parliamentary majorities. (p. 13)

This exploitation goes back to the beginning of the British rule. Lord Durham in his famous report of 1839 describes this relationship with smug satisfaction: "The large mass of the labouring population are French," he said, "in the employ of English capitalists." (Carleton Library, *Lord Durham's Report*, edited by Gerald M. Craig, p. 32). Durham went on to say,

> The English have already in their hands the majority of the larger masses of property in the country; they have the decided superiority of intelligence on their side; they have the certainty that colonization must swell their numbers to a majority; and they belong to the race which wields the Imperial Government, and predominates on the American Continent. . . . The French Canadians, on the other hand, are but the remains of an ancient colonization, and are and ever must be isolated in the midst of the Anglo-Saxon world. (Lord Durham's Report, pp. 147-8).

As Postgate and McRoberts point out, this Anglo-Saxon racism and "imperialistic bias" remained a constant threat hanging over the French Canadians. Durham's proposal to forcibly assimilate them was tried and failed. But the oppression remained and so did the built-in advantages on the English side, which Durham had correctly assessed: they had the property, the Imperial Government, and the dominant language.

But the English establishment did not rule alone. They formed an alliance with the Roman Catholic clergy and a small group of French-Canadian business men, as a result of which the clergy was guaranteed ideological supremacy in Quebec, and the English were given a free hand to run the economy. This arrangement was bitterly opposed by the French-Canadian *petit-bourgeois* in the first half of the nineteenth century, and with the support of the French-Canadian proletariat and habitants they fought against the entrenched power of the English ruling group and their clerical allies. They wanted a secular society on democratic lines, with the French in the key positions of power. They were anti-clerical, liberal, and radical. They were defeated twice: once as *Patriotes* in the 1837 rebellion, and again as the *Parti Rouge* at Confederation. From then until 1960, the Catholic hierarchy had complete ideological supremacy in Quebec's Francophone society or to use the term that Trudeau coined in 1954, they were able to erect a veritable ideological "monolith".

Their ideology was conservative, reactionary, ultramontanist*, with strong elements of absolutism carried over from the feudal days. But they could not have held this supremacy without the support of the English establishment which counted on them to keep Quebec in line. Thus the Quiet Revolution which started out as merely a change from the Duplessis regime, upset the whole balance of rule in Quebec.

Under the impact of the new forces unleashed by the Quiet Revolution, the conservatism of Quebec society declined drastically, particularly the political influence of the high clergy. The ideas of liberalism, socialism, and social democracy, long suppressed, began to flourish. But each of the new ideologies appeared under a nationalistic flag. It was Quebec society that had to be reformed, or liberated, in accordance with the different ideological precepts of the various movements that developed.

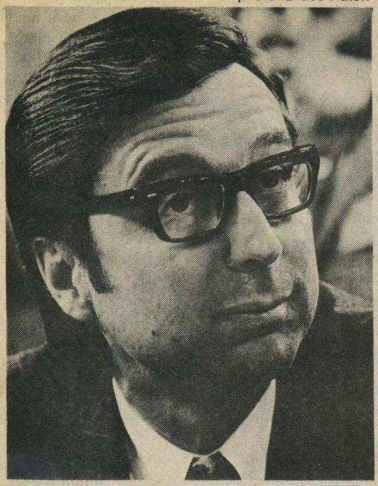
Separatist bodies sprang up covering socialist, social democratic, and right wing outlooks. Left-wing organizations emerged that were variously Marxist, Leninist, anarchist, or terrorist. The Liberal Party which dominated the politics of the first six years of this period, was itself a coalition, racked with bitter internal debates, conflicts, and schisms. The labour movement experienced a phenomenal growth in numbers, militancy, and political consciousness. What had been the Catholic union movement, broke with the Church and became the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CNTU). The teachers organized across the province and formed the Quebec Teachers Central (CEQ). The Quebec Federation of Labour brought forward a new and more radical group of leaders and joined the other two labour bodies in a Common Front with a set of radical, even revolutionary, manifestoes that went far beyond anything that had been issued by the labour movement in English Canada. The Quiet Revolution during the first ten years was tumultuous, exhilarating, violent — anything but quiet. It has decisively changed the face of Quebec.

It has especially transformed Quebec nationalism from a conservative, defensive outlook concerned with "la survivance" to a dynamic set of nationalisms taking up the questions of "rattrapage", catching up, self-government, greater autonomy, independence, and socialism. The key to understanding this development, according to Léon Dion, is by looking at "nationalism . . . not only in its cultural context but also in its economic and political contexts . . . encompassing both ideas and action." (page 107). In other words, there are now several nationalisms that have come to the fore in Quebec in this period, expressing different demands and different class interests.

At the outset it was the reformed Quebec Liberal Party that set the tone for the Quiet Revolution. Its programs expressed the views of the new Quebec technocratic elite, which came out of the Second World War educated, trained, highly skilled, only to find the main doors to its advancement closed. In the private sector most of the important posts were occupied by English-speaking Canadians or Americans and in the public sector, by a small and conservative bureaucracy that belonged to another age. The new elites wanted a rapid expansion in the functions and role of the provincial state, the creation of a large modernized bureaucracy, the intervention of the

*The idea that the Catholic Church rules all aspects of life in a Christian society, including all temporal as well as religious spheres.

photo: Bruce Paton



From Jean Lesage (right) to Robert Bourassa (left) Quebec's demands for greater autonomy escalated and no Quebec premier accepted Trudeau federalism

provincial government with public funds into the provincial economy, and the transformation of the language of business, commerce, and education to French.

These ambitions seemed to be symbolized by the nationalization of Quebec Hydro in 1964 under the leadership of René Lévesque, then minister of natural resources in the Lesage government. Thirteen giant electrical trusts, mostly American-owned, were taken over. Young Francophone engineers began to rise to the top in an industry which had hitherto excluded them as not being competent for supervisory jobs. Quebec Hydro expressed the concept of "French power" in a new and heady way.

The demands of the Quiet Revolution required an alteration in Quebec-Ottawa relations. Quebec needed more provincial powers, more revenues, and the return of shared-cost programs to exclusive provincial control. It also needed these powers and revenues to satisfy the growing demands for social reform which the Quiet Revolution unleashed and which had been so neglected in the Duplessis years. Instead of the anticipated decrease in Quebec-Ottawa confrontations we now saw an enormous increase in what has become the great Canadian football game.

Many of the men who prepared Quebec's positions at these frequent federal-provincial tournaments as senior civil servants are now in the PQ government. One of these is Claude Morin, deputy minister for intergovernmental affairs under Lesage, Johnson, and Bourassa, and now Minister of the same portfolio in the Lévesque cabinet. His book, written just after he resigned his post under Bourassa, gives us valuable insight into what went on behind the scenes during these negotiations. Quebec fought for greater autonomy, special status, and wide ranging constitutional revision. Its demands escalated with each premier: Lesage, Johnson, Bertrand, and Bourassa. This was not federalism à la Trudeau, but a Quebec version which Bourassa himself called "a decentralized federalism" and which others called "special status". Quebec wanted prior control over social policy including family allowances, pensions, unemployment insurance, immigration, communications and even the right to deal with foreign governments. The *Toronto Star* complained bitterly in its issue of May 19, 1971 about Bourassa whom they had counted on to moderate Quebec's demands after his election in 1970:

> The really disheartening thing is that this drive towards separation seems to go on regardless of what administration is in power — whether it is the Liberals under Jean Lesage, the Union Nationale under Daniel Johnson or the Liberals again under Robert Bourassa. It is as if some powerful force pushes them onward regardless of their original professions.

This "powerful force" is of course the force of a nation that wants its rights, which the *Toronto Star* as one of the principal spokesmen for the English-Canadian establishment, cannot or will not recognize. One has only to recall the time when the *Toronto Star* frightened old Tory Toronto out of its collective pants on June 25, 1949 when it published in huge red letters the headlines:

Keep Canada British!
Defeat Montreal's Mayor Houde!
God Save the King!

More and more, Quebec spokesmen at these conferences were going beyond fiscal sharing with the federal government and demanding to be treated more like a nation than just another province. Any sign of weakness by the Quebec negotiators aroused an instantaneous response back home. Morin deals, somewhat too obliquely, with an outstanding example of this. At the Victoria Constitutional Conference in June 1971 word leaked out that Bourassa was going to accept the main features of a

In this mid-sixties demonstration, the Rassemblement pour l'independance nationale (RIN) parades outside Montreal's old 'New Courthouse'

federal proposal to change the Constitution. Within 48 hours every important French organization in Quebec including the labour federations, the patriotic societies, the Council of French Canadian Employers, and the Quebec National Assembly itself had repudiated *in advance* any such agreement.

But on this as on every other question of importance, Quebec was in a minority of one at these Conferences. Realizing this eventually caused Morin to cross the threshold from that of a negotiator for greater provincial autonomy within the Canadian state, to his present position as an active separatist and one of the chief lieutenants of René Lévesque.

The rise and success of a separatist political movement has been undoubtedly the chief feature of this whole period. Although there had been a few previous attempts to build separatist organizations in earlier times, none amounted to very much. The main spokesmen of French-Canadian nationalism in the past, in articulating Quebec grievances against Confederation, never went beyond the framework of the Canadian state. Even Henri Bourassa who emerged at the end of the nineteenth century as the French-Canadian leader who denounced Canada's subservience to British imperialism, limited his demands to Canadian self-government in which French and English would find a new relationship once they were freed from this colonialism. But during the Quiet Revolution, a new note began to surface: that Quebec was a colony or semi-colony of *Canadian* imperialism and that what was required was "decolonization" — that is separation and independence from the "foreign power" that was Ottawa!

Peter Desbarats in his biography of *René* has sketched an interesting narrative of the political career of Lévesque from radical to Liberal to separatist. The weakness of the book is that it is not analytical or historical, does not adequately assess the rise of the separatist movement, and never quite decides whether René was creator or creature of this new phenomenon.

According to Desbarats, the first separatist organizations in this period were the *Rassemblement pour l'indépendance nationale* (RIN) which was radical and leftist, and the *Ralliement nationale* (RN) which was conservative and right wing. But he ignores *L'Action socialiste pour l'indépendance du Québec* (ASIQ) which was formed in September 1960, a few weeks ahead of the RIN. The main mover in this organization was Raoul Roy, an old time Communist who had been expelled from that party for what it called "bourgeois nationalism". The ASIQ with its slogan "For the absolute independence of Quebec and the national proletarian liberation of the French Canadians" did not play as important a role in the Quebec political ferment as did the RIN. But the merging of socialism with Quebec nationalism which it was the first to accomplish, set the pace for a rapid growth in socialist thought and action in Quebec and made socialism, for the first time in Quebec history, a genuine indigenous French-Canadian movement. Prior to that, socialism had been represented in Quebec by two English dominated parties, the CCF-NDP and the Communist Party, both of which made little headway in the province. Léon Dion in his book *Quebec: The Unfinished Revolution* points to the contribution which ASIQ made in this

regard:

> This movement, aimed at channeling the energies of the people who gravitated around the *Revue socialiste,* was the first to proclaim "the insolubility of the national and the social questions". (page 145)

In other words, the socialists preached that separatism was not just a structural or constitutional change but had to be part of a social upheaval. This theme was taken up by the socialist groups and periodicals which proliferated in the sixties, most of them acknowledging their debt to Roy and his pioneering group. Socialism became an important part of Quebec life. Three major Marxist periodicals, *Parti pris*, *Socialisme*, and *Socialisme québécois*, appeared and influenced a whole generation of young intellectuals. In turn these intellectuals influenced the labour movement and were largely responsible for the adoption in 1971 of socialist manifestoes by the three trade union federations.* Many of them joined the RIN and while they did not succeed in making it a socialist organization, helped to radicalize it and make it more militant.

What Desbarats misses from his biography is that René Lévesque and the PQ emerged in part as a *petit-bourgeois* response to the growth of revolutionary socialism, and in part as an outgrowth of the reform liberalism that had dominated Quebec since 1960. Desbarats deals only with the latter aspect. The Parti Québécois is broadly speaking a social democratic organization which, with the exception of its separatist goal, has a platform similar to those of the British Labour Party, the NDP, and the Swedish Social Democratic Party. Social democracy arose in most industrial societies *after* the growth of socialism and of reform liberalism. Its ideology lies somewhere to the right of socialism and to the left of liberalism.

Thus the major ideological themes of all advanced capitalist societies have now appeared and become rooted in Francophone Quebec. The battle for the future of Quebec will be both an internal struggle between these ideologies, as well as a struggle against what is viewed as the external oppressor.

Desbarats is correct nevertheless in pointing to the important role that Lévesque has played in bringing the separatist cause to the level that it has now reached.

Since 1966 when the two existing separatist parties made their first appearance as parliamentary parties, the progress in terms of electoral support has been steady and startling. The RIN and RN together in 1966 obtained 8.8 per cent of the vote, but elected no one. But the Liberal Party which had a plurality of the popular vote in that election was defeated by the Union Nationale, because the separatist vote was heaviest in the Liberal ridings and took away votes from Liberal candidates. Lévesque took note of that trend and it was undoubtedly a factor in his decision to bolt the Liberal Party, which he did the following year.

The PQ however, was more than an amalgamation of the RIN and RN. It was a revolt within the Quebec Liberal Party, for large numbers of its members and supporters deserted the Liberal Party under the impact that Lévesque made throughout the province after his withdrawal from that party. In 1970 the PQ, running for the first time, got 24 per cent of the vote with seven seats, in 1973, 30 per cent with six seats and in 1976 40 per cent with 71 seats out of 110! The seat-vote discrepancy which exists in most provinces is particularly loaded in Quebec, but that's another matter. What is important is that the percentage of votes which the PQ has obtained in the last three elections is quite a bit higher in terms of the French vote, assuming that the PQ gets little support from English-speaking voters who account for about 20 per cent of the electorate.

There are a number of factors which explain the PQ's success at the polls. Separatism is one of them, but if we accept the public opinion polls, it was not a major factor. The tactic of the PQ to put off the question of separatism to a referendum to be held some years ahead, permitted a sizeable portion of the voters to support the PQ because of its social reform program, and because of their disgust with the sorry record of the Bourassa regime. The Union Nationale which was revived by the Tories gained Liberal votes from English voters in protest against Bill 22, and from French speaking conservative-minded electors who returned to the UN fold after voting for Bourassa in 1973 when they were convinced then that they had to do that to prevent a victory for separatism. Incidentally, the resurgence of the UN in this election ought to remind us that conservatism, though in decline, is far from a spent force in Quebec.

The majority of French-Canadian workers, some estimates are as high as 75 per cent, voted for the PQ, even though only one of the trade union federations, the Quebec Federation of Labour, officially endorsed it while not endorsing separatism. From the social and political point of view, this is probably the most significant thing about that election. The French-Canadian workers, the most militant in Canada, have found a party which at least for the time being they can support. It will be interesting to see what this does to Lévesque and the PQ in terms of their attitude to the labour movement, and whether it will mean a closer association between labour and the new government of Quebec.

The election of the PQ has itself caused an upsurge in Quebec's national feeling. The demonstrations that took place after the victory are unprecedented in Canadian political history. Whoever heard before of several thousand people coming out to cheer a newly installed cabinet? Yet there are also signs that the PQ leadership knows it has a tiger by the tail, and is seeking to slow down this momentum, particularly from its radical wing. That may be why Lévesque gets more and more vague about when the referendum will be held, and what he will do if it is defeated. Pierre Vallières, ex-theoretician of the FLQ, in explaining why he joined the PQ, said that the "independence process [is] a revolutionary process in a society such as ours [involving] a profound transformation of structures and social relations." (*Choose*, page 29). But the PQ is not a revolutionary party, and as a social democratic movement is incapable of bringing about a major change in structures and social relations! That is the dilemma that the PQ is beginning to face with some signs already visible of hesitation and doubt.

The revolutionary socialist groups are generally opposed to separatism because they now feel that the

*See D. Drache, editor, *Québec — Only the Beginning* for English translations of these manifestoes.

Ex-FLQ theoretician Pierres Vallieres in the mid-sixties; he later joined the PQ

struggle for socialism must be a Canadian-wide revolution involving the working class of the whole country. In the meantime most of them view the PQ with the distaste that Marxists have traditionally felt with respect to social democracy. They have been advocating a Quebec labour party, to bypass the PQ, but if that was ever a realistic proposal, it is certainly not now. The Quebec labour movement, while not for separatism, is giving its support at least for the foreseeable future to the PQ.

In the meantime, the election results have caused agony and near panic in some circles in English Canada.

The *Toronto Star* has been particularly vicious in its hate campaign against the PQ, suggesting among other things that it is fascist, Nazi, anti-semitic, and generally very dangerous! Charles Bronfman went hysterical before the PQ victory, although he has had sober second thoughts since, which is a good thing for a distiller to have. On the other hand there are saner voices like the NDP, which after an initial period of confusion, has declared for a bi-national state. By the way, wasn't that what the Waffle had advocated at the NDP Convention of 1971, and for which it was so roundly condemned by the NDP leadership?

Trudeau, to whom all eyes and ears are now turned for his next gems of wisdom, has failed so far to come up with anything new. He entered federal politics in the sixties convinced that the power of the federal government had to be strengthened, and that concessions to Quebec as a province had to be stopped. He called this "realism in Canadian politics". But this approach is no longer "realistic" if it ever was. It has failed in Quebec. Surely there are some intermediate options between the Confederation of 1867 and a complete break-up of Canada.

The two remaining books on this reviewer's list are not essential to the immediate Quebec question. But they do bear on its historical roots. George-Etienne Cartier was first a rebel under Louis Joseph Papineau and then gradually became a leading lieutenant of John A. Macdonald, helped no doubt by his sudden, and not accidental, rise in the business world, most notably as counsel for the Grand Trunk Railway Company. He was one of a small group of Francophones elevated to the boardrooms of English enterprises, and who became also the political representatives of the Tory-Clergy alliance. Cartier was the leading member of this group and played the principal and indispensable role in selling Confederation to French Quebec.

For a while this alliance assured the Conservatives of most of the federal seats from Quebec, as well as control of the provincial government. But this support began to fall apart when Macdonald in 1885, in spite of pleadings from his French lieutenants (Cartier was dead by this time) sent Louis Riel to the gallows. According to the *Globe and Mail* of December 30, 1976, "the Tories are still searching for a way to bury the memory of Louis Riel." (This incidentally is a quote from Joe Clark's M.A. thesis written seven years ago when he was a fledgling political scientist.)

But a book like the one Professor Flanagan has just produced helps prevent anyone from forgetting Louis Riel. He is the man on Canada's conscience. He was killed by Anglo-Saxon chauvinists who saw in his execution the defeat of French-Canadian rights outside of Quebec. For Quebec Francophones it brought home the realization that they were in a permanent minority in Canada and would forever be treated as such, which they were.

But a new era has begun. Quebec is still numerically a minority. But as a collective body — a nation — they want full equality. They cannot be defeated, whatever the form the future relations between the French and English nations will take. For over 200 years French Canada has been on the defensive. Now the roles have been reversed. In responding to the challenge which this represents to English Canada, the initiative cannot remain exclusively with the politicians. In any event they are bewildered and have momentarily lost the initiative. It is for the general body politic of English Canada, the labour movement, the youth, the community organizations, the socialists of all kinds, to discuss, debate, and formulate proposals for a genuine French-English partnership. It may not work. But it's worth a try.

Other reviews of Quebec and English-Canadian books are in this issue's Special Reviews Section at the back of the magazine

THE QUIET CANADIANS

by Drummond Burgess

As Premier Rene Levesque flew back to Quebec City from the first ministers' conference in Ottawa in December, the pilot of his Quebec government airplane used French to communicate with the control tower at Montreal's Dorval airport. At least one English-speaking Air Canada pilot heard the exchange and filed a complaint. Ken Maley, head of the Canadian Air Line Pilots Association (CALPA) announced that the Quebec government pilot should be prosecuted because of a "flagrant disregard of air navigation safety". Transport Minister Otto Lang waffled, saying he didn't know whether the pilot had the right to use French or not.

Naturally, Levesque milked the incident for all it was worth, declaring the complaint scandalous and promising that the full weight of the Quebec government would be used to support the pilot if the case ever came to court. "Nobody can tell the pilot of a Quebec government plane not to speak French over Quebec," said Levesque.

It was a clever ploy, and if it had happened at the height of last summer's backlash over bilingualism might have driven English Canada into a collective nervous breakdown. But it wasn't last summer and the incident was greeted with indifference. If the case ever does come to court it will be a cause célèbre in Quebec and will play an important part in moulding Quebec public opinion. For that reason it's not likely that it will come to court, although, with a government as accident prone as the federal Liberals, it's best to hedge all bets. But for the time being, the incident has been a non-starter.

The lack of public reaction was a little strange. Last summer's backlash against bilingualism was real, not just a figment of journalists' imaginations — although there is a journalistic angle as well, as will be seen. It was real enough that it may have contributed substantially to the Parti Quebecois' election victory. We will never know how many voters in Quebec had, as one of their main reasons for voting PQ, the thought that if English-Canadians were going to get excited about bilingual labels on soup cans and bilingual announcements at international hockey games, then it was indeed time to send for Rene Levesque.

Newspaper columnist Douglas Fullerton, trying to assess who had done most in 1976 to further the separatist cause in Quebec, in a New Year's column ran through the usual list of names that have been mentioned since November 15 — Levesque, Bourassa, Trudeau, Drapeau etc. But he ended up awarding the gold and silver medals to those now almost forgotten men, Ken Maley of CALPA and Jim Livingston of the Canadian Air Transport Association:

"The whole province was outraged, and the coelescing of support around les Gens de l'air led the remarkable upsurge of nationalistic feeling. The strike had a reciprocal and anti-Quebec polarizing effect in English Canada, providing further ammunition for the 'let them go' school."

But, for whatever reason, in the aftermath of the election the backlash had died away to a whimper, on the surface at least.

One sign that the whimper was for public consumption while private feelings remained unchanged was the great Toronto journalists' caper at the end of November.

Prime Minister Trudeau was in Hogtown to give a party in honour of Team Canada. While there he used the opportunity to have what was supposed to be a private and off-the-record lunch with some of the stars of the Toronto media — Dennis Braithwaite, the *Toronto Star*'s radio-TV critic and David Crane, its editorial page editor; managing editor Clark Davey and Ontario legislature columnist Norman Webster of the *Globe and Mail*; editorial director Douglas Macfarlane of the *Toronto Sun*; Fraser Kelly, political editor of CFTO-TV; Charles Templeton of CKEY and Bob Hesketh of CFRB.

The lunch took place at an expensive Japanese restaurant complete with stocking feet, chopsticks, sake and other strange customs guaranteed to unnerve any red-blooded Anglo. Braithwaite, who had already downed a couple of scotches on an empty stomach, found it all rough going but managed to remain silent until Charles Templeton suggested that Trudeau should use the media for his political purposes and the prime minister replied, "Why do you think you're here for lunch?" Which seemed a rather obvious comment but, as Braithwaite later reported in his column: "... I blew my stack. I hadn't planned to. I intended to be just an observer. But Trudau's cynicism and the sake both hit me at once." Braithwaite then informed the gathering that the whole exercise was horseshit, bullshit and just plain shit and that Mr. Trudeau could "take your goddamn sake and shove it up your ass." When Trudeau failed to take this advice Braithwaite continued: "I swore, I yelled, I told the P.M. he was responsible for splitting the country, him and his bilingualism. It was disgraceful, but suddenly most of the others, where they had been statesmanlike and academic, began agreeing with me and pounding poor Trudeau." Apparently, only Norman Webster of the *Globe and Mail* did not join in the circus. Trudeau found himself listening to — shades of last summer — denunciations of bilingual soup can labels, the Toronto French TV outlet and French being shoved down everybody's throat.

Braithwaite can hardly be faulted for his vocabulary since the prime minister himself has set some choice precedents in that area. But the denunciation of bilingualism was revealing and astonishing. If the gurus of the Hogtown press corps are saying exactly the same things as the little old ladies in tennis shoes, the relatively calm public reaction to the Quebec election may be deceptive indeed.

The most dangerous aspect of this hostility to bilingualism is that it's far from sure that the people who express it are aware of the logical consequences. There seems to be an assumption that bilingualism is the only thing dividing Canada, and that if French were banished from English Canada tomorrow this would somehow unite the country and we could all go back to some mythical good old days of One Big Happy Canada. But Quebec nationalism is a reality — not only for the Parti Quebecois, but for all major political parties in the province. There may be differences on the desirability of independence, but all parties agree it's the job of the Quebec government to defend the interests of French Canada. It was, after all, the Bourassa Liberals who brought in Bill 22, not terrible Rene.

Opposition to bilingualism at the federal level leads to one of two logical conclusions: either a two nations policy with special status for Quebec, and perhaps complete independence; or the assimilation of Quebec into English Canada. One wonders, if the Japanese sake had flowed even more freely than it did at that Toronto luncheon, what else those pundits would have started yelling about.

* * *

In English Canada after the Quebec election, the dominant concern had reverted to the old, pre-backlash preoccupation, indeed to the pre-Trudeau preoccupation — what could be done to keep Quebec in Confederation, and who was the man or party to do it?

For the Quebec government the answer, as expressed at the finance ministers and first ministers conferences in Ottawa, was simple: nothing could be done and no one could do it.

For federalists, of whatever variety, that answer, however simple was no answer at all. And so the country's spokesmen girded themselves again to ask the question: What does Quebec really want? and What can we do about it? But it was difficult to give answers when, for the time being at least, the initiative lay in Quebec City and the man in charge there was saying: "We want out."

Prime Minister Trudeau had an answer, but it was the same one he had been giving ever since he went to Ottawa ten years ago and, as commentators endlessly pointed out, during those ten years support for independence had steadily grown. What did the man who last year had proclaimed "separatism is dead" have to offer now that that movement's leader was the premier of Quebec?

It would have been difficult for Trudeau under any circumstances to say "I was wrong. Official bilingualism is essential but it's not enough. Quebec is not a province like the others. Without excluding Quebecers from English-Canada, we've got to start from a new premise." Even if he had been so inclined, the Quebec members of his own party would have made it impossible.

On the heels of the election the minister for regional economic expansion, Lucien Lessard, suggested that federal grants to Quebec might be cut because of the PQ victory. His

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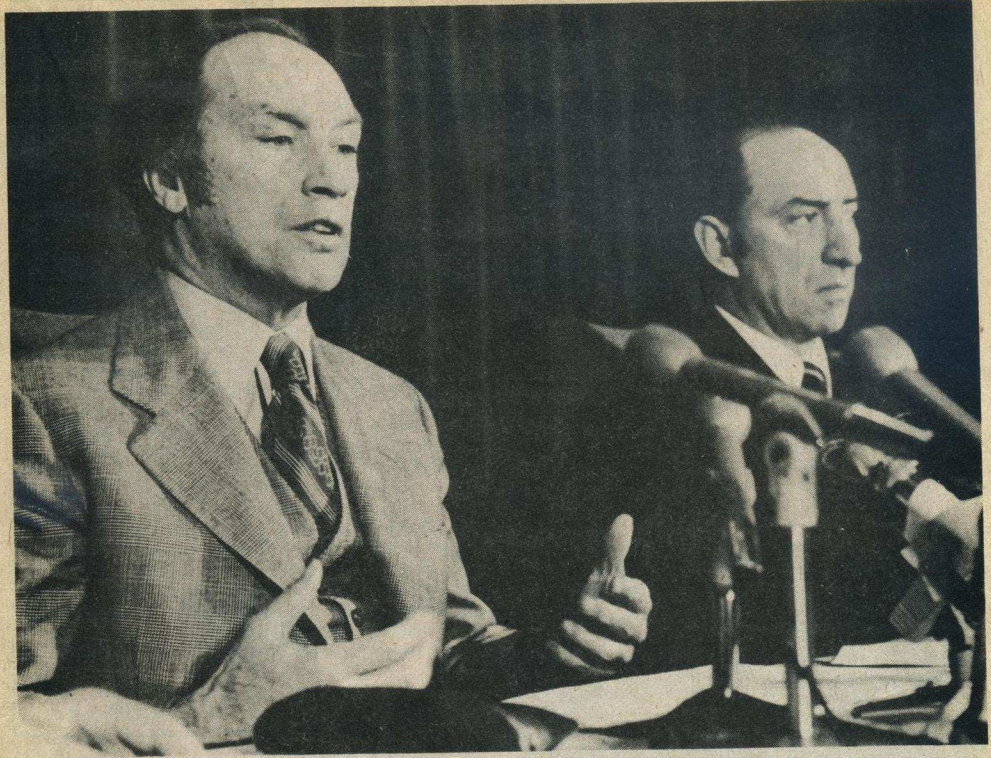


Prime Minister Trudeau and Health Minister Marc Lalonde: worried that special status for Quebec would make French Canadian M.P.s in Ottawa irrelevant

statement followed reports of hard-line demands at meetings of the Quebec caucus of the federal party. Enough talk of this got around to make it necessary for Urban Affairs Minister Andre Ouellet to deny this, saying "It would be extremely clumsy to penalize Quebecers and try to punish them for the way they voted by cutting grants to the government."

Two federal ministers from Quebec — Ouellet and Health Minister Marc Lalonde — publicly pointed out what was evidently a general concern. Both said special status for Quebec would reduce members of parliament from Quebec to second-class status. This, they said, could reach a point where no Quebec politician would be interested in going to Ottawa, and then separatism would be inevitable.

In other words, the Quebec caucus, which makes up half the federal Liberal members, was worried that with Levesque's victory it had already lost its mandate to represent Quebec; and that if serious concessions were made to Levesque their presence in Ottawa would become irrelevant. After years of Ottawa primacy, the swing of the pendulum back to Quebec City was bound to be painful for Quebecers who had chosen to go to Ottawa.

But the Quebec caucus faced yet another dilemma. If there were to be a decision that there should be a serious transfer of powers from Ottawa to Quebec City in some form of special status, would it be appropriate for a federal prime minister from Quebec, senior federal cabinet ministers from Quebec and a large Quebecois caucus to be negotiating this transfer on behalf of English-Canada? Trudeau didn't have much room to manoeuvre, even if he wanted to.

So the Liberal line remained the same. Interviewed by Bruce Phillips on the CTV network, Mr. Trudeau was asked whether the dissatisfaction with Confederation, not only in Quebec but elsewhere, didn't require some new response. The prime minister replied: "Well, that may be the right thesis. It's certainly not mine and it's not one I agree with but I'm sure it will be put before the Canadian people in the coming weeks and months . . . just on the basic tenet that you put forward, I say that that may be your or you may be speaking for a lot of people who believe that, and I think Canadians will have to make up their minds. If they think that giving more power to the provinces will suddenly make Mr. Levesque's party love Canada, then that should be the course they'll follow. I'm telling you quite clearly, I'm telling the Canadian people that's not my course. My course is to keep a strong federal government but to make Quebecers feel that they have a role to play in that government and that's what I

would propose to the people. . . ."

Making national unity the big issue and offering Pierre Trudeau as the man who could save Canada was an obvious, and probably an inevitable strategy for the Liberals to adopt. It offered as well the prospect of being able to sweep under the rug national dissatisfactions over economic and social problems, minor scandals and the unpopularity of some ministers. But it wasn't easy to sell the same package as in 1968 — not when the years since then had brought Levesque to power.

Standing on the status quo had another disadvantage for the Liberals — it meant that if any initiatives were going to be taken towards Quebec they would have to come from the opposition leaders or from the premiers of the provinces. Opposition leaders can only propose, with an eye on the next election; premiers, however, can also dispose to some extent since they hold office and have power within certain jurisdictions. With Trudeau standing pat, the door was open for the others.

Opposition leader Joe Clark didn't even have to change his line. He had been talking about decentralization of the country — although in vague terms — when the premiership of Quebec was still only a gleam in Rene Levesque's eye. He continued to talk about decentralization after the PQ's victory — still in vague terms.

In speeches since the election, Clark has rejected both separatism and special status as policies for Quebec, but has spoken of decentralization of the system as a whole. For example, speaking in Ottawa in late November he said, "We have had a federal administration which has tried to govern Canada as if it were a unitary state, as if the provinces did not exist, or as if they were an anachronistic nuisance. I remain convinced that it is not the existing federal framework itself, but instead the wholly insensitive manner in which it has been operated, which is at fault. It is a supple framework which has grown and changed over time, and which can grow and change some more. . . . As federal prime minister I would undertake, with the first ministers of all the provinces, a thorough review of those areas in which duplicate, competitive or overlapping federal and provincial programs can be sorted out . . . for example, the preposterous impasse in national communications policy . . . must be swiftly resolved."

The problem with this is, if decentralization means that any federal powers that are transferred go to all ten provinces, not just to Quebec, one of two things is likely to happen: either the decentralization will not go far enough to satisfy Quebec, or it will go far enough, in which case the country is likely to disintegrate into some modern version of the Holy Roman Empire — a sitting duck for the United States, with the provinces all making their own deals with Washington, and Ottawa relegated to a purely formal role of signing on the

dotted line.

Premier Levesque is not planning to wait for a referendum before asking for some additional powers for Quebec because he feels there are some Quebec demands that are traditional, that have been made by previous governments, and that don't require any additional mandate. It's not hard to guess how Trudeau would respond; how would Clark reply?

In a New Year's interview with the Toronto *Globe and Mail* Levesque said: "We go back to the old standby requests or demands of Quebec . . . we won't accept the absolute state right of the federal government about immigration. We're in a case with falling birth rate, or fallen birth rate and the assimilation of immigrants and the choice exclusively in actual fact is in federal hands. We're in a case where our own collective community identity is permanently — at least potentially — permanently endangered on account of the lack of power. Well that is a standby. There are others. As much as we can push them we're going to push them." When asked what powers in that area he would want, Levesque replied "full powers", and said he was talking about *before* the referendum.

But full power can't be restricted to immigrants who come from outside Canada; it must also include full control over whether or not people can move from English Canada to Quebec. Without that, it would only be half powers.

It's one thing to say that this could work in the case of Quebec, that there would be two immigration policies, one for English Canada and a different one for Quebec. But to give full powers over immigration to all ten provinces? To have a situation where Imperial Oil could not transfer a man from Calgary to Vancouver or Toronto without first getting landed immigrant status from the department of immigration of the province? Immigration controls at all provincial border points?

Clark could find himself in the position of either favouring the balkanization of the country, or of ending up as too much of a federalist to satisfy Premier Levesque even *before* a referendum is held, or end up adopting a policy of special status for Quebec, a policy he so far says he rejects. Perhaps it's a good thing for Clark that he's being vague about what he really means.

A party that might naturally be expected to support special status for Quebec is the New Democratic Party. Its federal caucus is reported to favour such a policy by a considerable majority and NDP leader Ed Broadbent has hinted at it. Speaking in Toronto in early December he said Canada should "redraw the constitution so a strong central government can exist, but recognizing the uniqueness of Quebec" and said the election of the PQ should have "shattered even the most dogmatic belief that Quebec can have a place in Confederation just like any other province." But the details, he said, would have to wait. And, in a New Year TV interview with Patrick Watson, he more or less reversed himself: "Heck, between Joe Clark and Pierre Elliott Trudeau and Ed Broadbent in terms of federalism there isn't a significant difference, especially since the prime minister has come down somewhat off his high horse and said, we have to be a little more flexible, we have to be reasonable." There's not much special status in that.

Rather than tackle the constitutional framework of the country, the NDP has preferred to stress its support of the social policies of the new Quebec government. That's natural, since the PQ is Quebec's social democrat party. And it's also important because there's a trend in the country to start ignoring economic and social issues, to assume they've got to be pushed aside until the great national debate gets somehow settled. But although it's important this doesn't mean the debate over Confederation should in its turn be ignored. It will be great if Saskatchewan can provide useful experience to Quebec in bringing in state auto insurance. But that won't solve the national question.

In the end one wonders whether any of the federal parties is really prepared to meet even the traditional and *pre*-referendum demands of the Parti Quebecois government.

Another political level from which initiatives can come and, in some form, clearly will be coming is the provinces of English Canada. The provincial premiers, in an anti-Ottawa mood anyway, are not going to allow the debate over Confederation to be a dialogue between Ottawa and Quebec City. The common front of the premiers during the recent federal-provincial conferences was an early indication of this. There have been others. For example, Darcy McKeough, the treasurer of Ontario, was in Quebec City within days of the swearing in of the Levesque government to brief Finance Minister Parizeau and Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Claude Morin on the premiers' common front plans, and also to test the PQ's attitude to Ontario. And Ontario Premier Davis accepted an invitation to be a guest at the Quebec Winter Carnival as a way of stressing his concern for a cordial relationship with Quebec.

photo: David Lloyd

NDP leader Ed Broadbent: hinted at the possibility of a two-nations policy

photo: David Lloyd

Tory Jack Horner: said Quebec should be told it can't separate and refused to rule out the use of force

But the premier who has probably done the most to articulate a policy is Premier Blakeney of Saskatchewan. And he has done so in terms that would clearly find favour with many of the other premiers — and with Joe Clark in Ottawa. The idea is decentralization. Speaking to the Canadian Club in Toronto recently he said that "the best way, perhaps the only way, to beat one idea is with a better idea. If the battle is for the minds and hearts of the people of Quebec and the rival idea is separatism, what is the better idea? Is it to increase the centralizing power of Ottawa in new fields? . . . A federal government with more power, a provincial government with less, has no champions in Quebec. In the fight against separatism that is not the better idea. . . . The times require of all governments — but particularly the federal government — a new sensitivity to the issues that divide us and a new determination to resolve those issues in a spirit that will meet provincial and regional economic and cultural aspirations within one Canada. As a start, the federal government should re-examine its position toward provincial rights in some key areas: resources and resource taxation, cultural affairs and communications."

Decentralization. Not special status for Quebec or a two nations policy, which might have been expected to be articulated by a New Democratic Party premier, but more power for all the provinces. Good for the country or not, and whether Pierre Trudeau likes it or not, it may be an idea whose time has come. The federal government is going to have to worry about some kind of separatism not just in Quebec, but within English Canada as well. And the premiers aren't going to leave it to Trudeau to handle Quebec: we may yet see the premiers getting together to handle Trudeau.

* * *

With the independence of Quebec now occupying a high spot on the national agenda, it was perhaps inevitable that the use of armed force to prevent independence would also get on the agenda. But it was disturbing nevertheless that three politicians, representing the two major federal parties, were talking about it in one way or another — Pierre Trudeau for the Liberals and Joe Clark and Jack Horner for the Conservatives.

Trudeau has been rejecting the use of force ever since the Quebec election, but in one interview, with CTV's Bruce Phillps at the end of the year, he did so in a strange way.

Questioned on the subject at one point Trudeau said, "The question you raise is can we maintain a situation by the force of arms. My answer to that is no. You say that I'm giving away an option that a lot of people may have. Indeed they may. I'm just telling you that it's not mine and I'm letting people know that they shouldn't count on me as leader to keep Quebec in by force of arms if Quebec overwhelmingly decides that it doesn't want to be a country in Canada. . . . I'm just saying that I would not be the man to lead Canada into a civil war but I don't say there wouldn't be others who would not want to take up arms and hence the danger is not one that I'm minimizing."

So the prime minister says people shouldn't count on him to keep Quebec in Canada by force if its people vote for independence, but thinks others *would* want to take up arms. Well, how would those others get their man in the prime minister's office if Trudeau were still there? Later in the interview, the PM answered that question: he wouldn't be there. Stating his opinion that Levesque ought to resign if he loses a referendum very badly, Trudeau added: "The converse of that — I say it before you say it — is that if Quebec were to vote very massively for a separation in an election or in any other form, I would have failed and I would silently go away. . . ." Trudeau would not use force; instead he would resign and open up his job for someone else, someone who might use force. So the prime minister rules out force one minute, and then brings it in through the back door a few minutes later.

Conservative leader Joe Clark had said nothing on the subject until recently, and what he then had to say was confusing, to say the least. During an Ottawa press conference in late January he refused to rule out the use of force "absolutely, categorically," and saw "no particular need to offer a hostage situation by saying under no circumstances at all would we not use force." At the same press conference, however, he said "I don't think you can force people to stay if they don't want to stay. If the force of argument won't work on Quebec or others, I don't think the force of arms would." The next day, in Kingston, Ont., he expressed concern people might misinterpret what he had said and declared "I cannot envisage a situation in which it would be wise or necessary to use force." And there, for the time being, it stood, whatever it all meant.

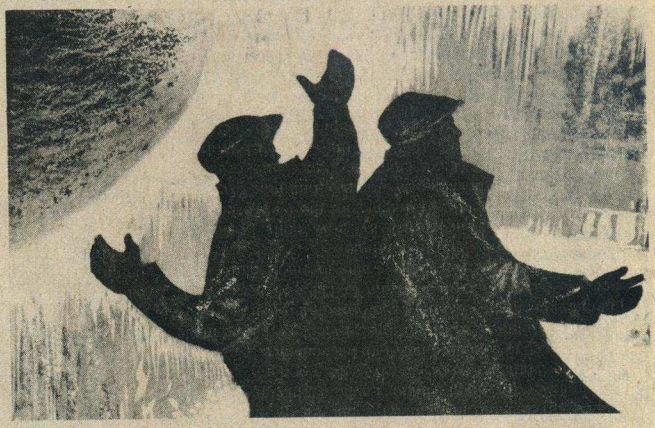
Tory frontbencher Jack Horner has also discussed the possibility. Interviewed on CTV television he declared that Rene Levesque and everyone else in Quebec should be told they cannot separate, and refused to rule out the use of force. "I think we've got to get down to some pretty hard bargaining. I wouldn't want to sit down with anybody and bargain with them without knowing where the bottom line was. If you say to Rene Levesque, we want you to stay in Canada but we will not use force to keep you in and you will not use force to get out, Rene Levesque is as good as out, if he's any good as a bargainer at all."

In fairness, though, at another point in the interview Horner did concede the possibility that it could be morally wrong to refuse independence if the people of Quebec vote for it.

Still, it was a dismal way to start a New Year.

The "San Juan" scandal

by RON CROCKER



CAPE BROYLE — In Cape Broyle, a community of 500 on Newfoundland's Southern Shore, the centre of community congregation is the San Juan Lounge. At the San Juan Lounge the topics of conversation are like those in hundreds of outharbour pubs ... moose hunting, standings in the darts league, the state of provincial politics.

But one topic is different and, almost a year after discussions first opened, it continues to dominate all others.

The topic is another *San Juan,* a 35-foot longliner which left Cape Broyle on a mild Sunday last February with two local men on board. The *San Juan* never returned to Cape Broyle, but its crushed hull was later deposited in St. John's by a federal vessel, which also returned the body of 39-year-old Edward Coady. The body of 48-year-old James Ryan was never recovered.

In Newfoundland the loss of the *San Juan* has become a cause celebre, a symbol for abiding government neglect. Normally, Newfoundlanders accept death at sea with a fatalistic detachment bred of time and experience. Normally the *San Juan* disaster, too, would have been taken with such grace. Instead the subject is discussed with bitterness and contempt. The reason is that all of Cape Broyle, and a good many other Newfoundlanders, are convinced that the *San Juan* and her crew could have and should have been saved.

Ned Coady and Jim Ryan sailed out of Cape Broyle last February 22 to hunt sea birds — puffins, turrs (murres) and ducks. "Birdin' " is a deadly serious winter sport in Newfoundland, done partly out of financial necessity, partly for pleasure and partly as ritual, a tribal ritual as massively misunderstood outside the province as the one which governs the seal hunt.

The Southern Shore men embrace a special peril to go either fishing or hunting on the sea. Along that shore there are no bays. When a vessel clears harbour she immediately launches upon the open North Atlantic, the least hospitable ocean in, for Coady and Ryan, one of the least hospitable months.

As evening fell in Cape Broyle that day the townspeople became uneasy about the *San Juan* and her crew. They took the usual steps: alerted the RCMP and organized a coastline vigil to flash light signals and sound car horns; not a sophisticated process but one with proven merits.

So that the ensuing events are placed in perspective, a little must be written about search and rescue facilities in Newfoundland.

Until just over a month ago when the federal government — goosed out of its lethargy by the wholly avoidable deaths of 13 Dutch sailors off St. John's — stationed a couple of helicopters in that city on an experimental basis, there were no systematic search and rescue facilities in the province. Air searches originated at the Air Sea Rescue Centre in Halifax or at the armed forces base in Summerside, Prince Edward Island. Sea searches would be organized haphazardly, with federal vessels dispatched from wherever they happened to be at the time.

At the time of the *San Juan* alert the Canadian Coast Guard ship *Bartlett* happened to be in St. John's. Her crew was summoned from the city and surrounding settlements and five and a half hours later the *Bartlett* cleared port, heading in a generally southeasterly direction. The *San Juan,* if powerless as expected, would also drift that way, given wind and tide conditions.

At this point the incontestable facts of the case end and versions of the story begin. The most important version is the official one. Designed to allay public concern, it missed its mark completely. Confused and contradictory, the official story of the *San Juan* disaster is little more than an insult.

The story was told last March 1 when ministry of transport and Coast Guard officials held an "information session" in St. John's. Incredibly, neither the captain nor any crewmember of the rescue ship *Bartlett* appeared at the session. Most of the story was related by a Coast Guard bureaucrat and a Transport Canada flack.

The salient material from the briefing is as follows: Four hours out of St. John's, at 2:30 a.m. February 23, the *Bartlett* contacted the *San Juan* by radio. The *San Juan* reported engine failure, and gave her position. One hour later the *San Juan* reported to the *Bartlett* that she could see the rescue ship's search lights. Half an hour later, at 4 a.m., the *Bartlett* spotted the *San Juan.*

According to the government officials, the *Bartlett* and the *San Juan* made a pact to delay the rescue until daylight because of high winds and waves. The

San Juan reported all well and said she would limit radio contact to conserve battery power. Contact was re-established at 5 a.m. and all remained well. But at 6 o'clock when the *Bartlett* attempted to call, the *San Juan* didn't answer.

The search resumed and two other federal government vessels joined it. Later that day small pieces of wreckage were sighted and the *Bartlett*, apparently assuming it was all over for the *San Juan*, dismissed the other vessels at 8:30 p.m. and halted the search for the night. It was not until early the next afternoon, Tuesday, February 24, that the partially submerged *San Juan* was sighted by an aircraft and then picked up by the *Bartlett*. Ned Coady was dead in the wheel house. Jim Ryan was missing, presumed drowned.

Even to amateurs this official version of the *San Juan* story seemed as full of holes as a Swiss cheese. Predictably it was leapt upon from all corners. The questions came in battalions.

How did the *Bartlett*, after sighting the *San Juan* at 4 a.m., lose sight of her again? No answer. Why couldn't the *Bartlett* monitor the *San Juan*'s movements on radar? No answer. Why couldn't the *Bartlett* effect an immediate rescue when contact was made with the *San Juan*? Answer: the *Bartlett* is too small and poorly equipped for a rough weather rescue (fair weather rescues, of course, are rarely needed). Why was the search called off on Monday night when there was no conclusive proof that the *San Juan* was wrecked or had sunk? Again, no answer.

The government people introduced contradictions into their story which caused them even more trouble. Having noted that bits of wreckage were sighted on Monday, they begged the question as to whether the wreckage was positively identified as belonging to the *San Juan*. Compounding the confusion, they subsequently explained that the *San Juan* sustained its damage being hoisted aboard the *Bartlett*. Why the contradictions? No answer.

So the official version of the loss of the *San Juan*, about as satisfying as a cup of consomme, was duly placed on record. That done, Ottawa stepped gingerly to one side to watch the dust settle down. In Newfoundland, meanwhile, concern had curdled into anger.

Letters to the editors came in sheaves. Editorials demanded an independent inquiry at which the skipper and crewmembers of the *Bartlett* would be obliged to testify under oath. Radio gab shows were a-crackle with criticism and gossip.

Unofficial versions of the story were a dime a dozen, with one becoming more and more prevalent and more and more compelling. That version had the *San Juan* being accidentally rammed and swamped by a larger vessel, perhaps the *Bartlett* herself.

On May 29 of last year a letter appeared in the St. John's *Evening Telegram* from James Coady of Cape Broyle, 80-year-old father of Ned Coady.

"My son Ned had a wallet in his pocket and when the RCMP gave it to me, it was totally dry, the water had never touched it. This proves there couldn't have been much water going over the boat and the two men would never have drowned out there that day."

How did Ned Coady die? Not even James Coady knows. The autopsy report has never been released, not even to the family.

With the story remaining about as clear as a Grand Banks fog talk of the *San Juan* died down gradually last spring, the chorus of cries for an inquiry fading into the distance. An aide for Transport Minister Otto Lang — perhaps after reviewing the price of jet fuel — said flatly that the cost of an inquiry would be too great.

Throughout the summer the *San Juan* obsession merely simmered; but it failed to disappear. Then on October 26, CBC television in Newfoundland aired a moving half-hour documentary on the tragedy and its impact on Cape Broyle. Among other things they learned from the friends of Coady and Ryan: the *San Juan*'s radio had been out of order for months before the fatal voyage because Coady could not afford the $500 for the part needed to fix it. The information flew so directly in the face of the government reports about gaining and losing radio contact with the *San Juan* that a piercing cry for an inquiry rose once more, echoed by politicians in Ottawa.

Still there has been no inquiry, and there are no apparent prospects of getting one, despite questions which, in the words of the St. John's *Evening Telegram*, "scream to the heavens" for answers.

By a fierce irony the CBC documentary on the *San Juan* was aired seven days after the Dutch freighter *Gabriella* was abandoned at sea by her 15-person crew, 130 miles from St. John's. An air rescue was organized for the *Gabriella* with an armed forces helicopter sent from P.E.I. The helicopter located a life raft and in a gallant rescue fetched up the only crewmember still alive. Eight others had perished on the raft. What will never be known is the number of them who perished during the four and a half hours it took the rescue 'copter to fly from P.E.I.

The *Gabriella* tragedy affects the *San Juan* story in two ways. On the positive side it forced the modest government action of stationing two rescue helicopters in St. John's ... subsequently moved to Gander in honour of Liberal turf. On the negative side it has eclipsed the *San Juan* incident, lessening the chances of an inquiry.

But if talk of the *Gabriella* dominates other places in Newfoundland, in Cape Broyle the *San Juan* remains the issue and the symbol.

Cape Broyle remembers, and keeps a candle lit. Rescue helicopters may come and go, but nothing short of an exhaustive inquiry and straight government answers will quell the talk and assuage the sadness of the bitter men and women who gather at the San Juan Lounge.

* * *

There are two postscripts to the *San Juan* story.

The first occurred a few days after the loss of the *Gabriella*. Into the harbour of St. Shott's, Trepassey Bay, floated a life raft belonging to the Dutch freighter. On it were seven bodies, frozen and contorted like ghoulish human pretzels.

The men of St. Shott's organized quietly to bring the bodies ashore from the rocks where the raft had grounded. Each body was wrapped in canvas to protect it from the rocks. Respect for the dead dictates that bodies are not to be damaged.

Postscript number two occurred back in November. For days the House of Commons question period rang with opposition queries about the operation of a defence department hunting lodge in Labrador. Who were the visitors, the politicians wanted to know. What were the costs and wasn't the lodge really just an expensive VIP retreat?

No, came the word from the department of national defence. While VIPs visit, the lodge serves primarily as a training site, for air and sea rescue personnel.

Special Reviews Section

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The battle of the twits

Premier Maurice Duplessis talking to journalists in 1954, including Rene Levesque (right foreground, back to camera)

by PATRICK BROWN

Duplessis, by Conrad Black. McClelland & Stewart/ Toronto. 745 pages. $16.95.

Hormisda, wielding the great Obsidian sword of the slain hero Valmore, astride Cléophas, the three-horned dragon steed of the planet Redmond, plunged into battle. The priest-king Esioff, lured into evil by the fell wizard Sarto, had declared war, bringing long night to the darkling plain. Beside Hormisdas rode Tancrède and Télesphore-Damien, Adélard of the Green Planet Nérée, they, too, pledged to eternal strife against the Priest-Kings of Philémon since the cruel death of their mother in the Abysm of Flavien.

No wonder people West of the Ottawa Valley think the Quebecois are foreigners.

Hormisda, Valmore, Cléophas, Redmond, Esioff, Sarto, Tancrède, Télesphore-Damien, Adélard, Nérée, Philémon, and Flavien aren't places, characters, swords or steeds in a book on a bus-station newsstand rack; they are denizens of the index of Conrad Black's biography of Maurice Duplessis, and they live there among such exotic neighbours as Trudeau, Pierre Elliott; Diefenbaker, John George, and Drapeau, Jean. Those who are eager to follow up on the careers of the politicians, clerics and businessmen bearing these strange and traditional Quebec Christian names, soon to be lost forever, will find all the detail they wish for in Black's book, and much, much more.

Rarely, in a long and varied career of commentary, has one backed so obliquely into a book review. Indeed, it is customary to address something other than the index in the first paragraphs of a serious critique of a serious book. Yet, if the story so far is anything to go by, reviewing a book by Black is likely to end in dispute, debate, donnybrooks and a general free-for-all in the public press.

Take, for example, the case of Ramsay Cook, a harmless enough Liberal Party hack, who teaches history at York University. Not two hours had passed after the appearance on the street of the Toronto *Globe and Mail* of December 18, bearing in its pages Cook's review of *Duplessis,* when the publisher of the *Globe and Mail,* Richard S. Malone, padded up his hall to answer the doorbell. There on the doorstep was Conrad Black, clutching in his hand a rebuttal of the review. Malone, understanding this situation at least, allowed that he

had been expecting something of the kind, and directed Black to the *Globe*'s editorial offices on Front St. The rebuttal appeared among the letters to the editor of December 20.

Black's chagrin over the review was nothing if not understandable. Cook's opening line had denounced the book as "... verbally inflated, badly organized and above all unjustifiably long..." and went on to a summing-up that "... anyone who can endure this ramshackle biography to the end will likely conclude that though Joseph Maurice LeNoblet Duplessis triumphed rather easily over most of his enemies, he has finally come a cropper in the hands of an admiring biographer." Fighting words indeed. And a fight was what Cook got ... or what he would have gotten if he hadn't chickened out after the first salvo or two.

Black's letter complained that "Ramsay" had not informed the readers of a disagreement the two had had over Black's thesis (which was the basis for a major part of the book); added that he had anticipated "Ramsay's" attitude and thus described in a footnote "the churlish flippancies of Ramsay Cook"; and ended with the challenge "We are all familiar with the elemental rule of justice that people are to be judged by their peers. The *Globe and Mail* is not to be commended for departing from that rule and entrusting the review of a serious work on an important subject to a slanted, supercilious, little twit."

What we seem to have here is an excess of communication. Shortly after Black's rebuttal, Cook was back in the pages of the *Globe* with a lame-brained reply, the major point of which was that he was not well enough acquainted with Black to merit the familiar first-name approach in a public denunciation. Perhaps not, but the fact remains that he was asked to comment on Black's McGill thesis of 1973, did so in unflattering terms, and that those comments were passed on to Black by the Dean, who in turn passed Black's reply to Cook, and so on.

Cook's rejoinder to Black's rebuttal had hardly seen print when Doug Bassett (a fellow newspaper-tycoon and crony of Black's) was moved to spontaneous comment on the issue. Bassett was against Cook, as was a hitherto-uncelebrated correspondent of the *Globe*, Alex McGregor, who excoriated Cook for writing a scurrilous review, and praised *Duplessis* as a book of indisputable importance for Canadian historiography.

At time of writing, this is where things stand, though there are new and exciting developments in the offing. The last "major" review of Black's book is in the hands of Larry Zolf, a slow reader, commissioned to pronounce for the *Toronto Star*. He will surely have important things to say about *Duplessis*, North Winnipeg and The Current Political Situation. He may not realize that hostilities have been temporarily suspended, and that his remarks, while not having the impact of, say, the assassination of an Archduke, may have the effect that Ted Lindsay of the Detroit Red Wings used to have when he swung one at the Rocket Richard — A Bench-clearing Brawl.

Consider. Jack McClelland, Black's publisher, has written a letter to Black about Ramsay Cook, describing Cook as "dishonest". For those unfamiliar with Cook's own books, we might add that McClelland is his publisher, too. Peter C. Newman and John Robarts, among many others, are also reported ready to head for centre ice the minute anyone says anymore nasty things about *Duplessis*. Heavy-duty, industrial-strength, economy-size allies for any book. Were one the editor of the *Letters* page of the Toronto *Star*, one might be advised to cancel one's less pressing engagements.

It takes a careful examination of the memory to come up with a newspaper correspondence more entertaining in the line of scholarly vitriol. This reviewer remembers an ongoing debate in the London *Times* precipitated by a reader's having noticed that the crossword was number 123456. He asked for suggestions as to the next date when the number would be sequential, that is, 234567. The debate over Whit Monday 1993, every third Sunday excluding Septugesima 1982, election day 1999, and other potential non-printing days, made Belfast look like a mutual admiration society. Let's hope just such a debate is on its way, in view of the advance warning Black is giving on national television and elsewhere, wondering why Cook has the "professional ethics of a cockroach", and why "these so-called professional historians, if they're such goddamned geniuses, didn't write a book about Duplessis..."

Leaving aside the natural glee one feels at seeing the editorial pages of the *Globe and Mail* transformed from the qualifying rounds for the Canadian Boring team at the Commonwealth Games (whatever they are) to a Canadian historical version of the battle for the Holiday Inn, Beirut, there is a case for addressing the topic in hand: who's right?

Two things about the book seem to have exercised commentators to date: Black's prose and his assessment of Duplessis.

Taking each of those two things one at a time, dealing first with the first, it's incumbent upon this reviewer to opine, that is to say advance as a viable hypothesis, the suggestion that there is, in one chapter or the other, occasionally, though not always, a sentence that might have come from the quill of Julius Caesar.

I challenge anyone to name (in the letters column of their favorite journal) a definitive biography that does not suffer from this deficiency. There are names and figures without end; there are dreary moments in every life, even ours; there are dull developments that turn out later to be significant. It is impossible to write a 750-page history, include all relevant detail, and still satisfy those readers who would be happier with *The Bionic Man Meets Show White and The Seven Perverts*.

Black's prose is serviceable, and he has occasional flashes of dry wit. Who else has written of the labour minister in Duplessis' first cabinet ... "comparisons between William Tremblay and Lorenzo the Magnificent could not be expected to go on forever" ... or of Duplessis himself as "the Great Helmsman" ... or even of a Man In The News who is getting a disturbingly easy ride everywhere else ... "but the Liberals were now being influenced by a type of politician not prominent in the province since the days of Philippe Hamel: strident, moralizing, uncompromising, abrasive, and often platitudinous. Lapalme and even Drapeau approached it at their most tedious. But the Lesage government had several people like this, most conspicuously Rene Levesque, Minister of Natural Resources" ... or of Robert Bourassa as "Quebec's most dextrous and durable Premier since Duplessis" ... or, lastly, of Claude Wagner as "the most important federal Quebec Conservative politician since Sir Adolphe Chapleau".

Suffice it to say, that in the tradition of historical biographies, Black's prose is no stodgier than the next guy's, and is leavened by these odd little chocolate-chip insights.

On the matter of the overall assessment of Duplessis, it's

Duplessis in 1952 with an admiring Maurice 'Rocket' Richard (centre) and Maurice Bellemare, who was interim leader before the U.N. chose Rodrigue Biron last year

become axiomatic that any serious biographer falls a little in love with his subject. Adolf Hitler, the Mad Trapper of Rat River and Timothy Leary seem, after seven or eight years of research in their postage bills, to have some endearing qualities. This particular trap failed to ensnare Black. Contrary to other published opinions, it seems to me that there's more than enough material in the book to make a just and reasonable assessment of Duplessis: warts are not hidden, and all the warts come from Black's privileged access to the archives of Duplessis' private papers . . . material that could have been kept quiet had Black wished.

The trap that did ensnare Black is his own background: principal owner of almost a score of newspapers, director of Argus corporation, millionaire many times over. Try as he might, and that's not very hard, Black fails to sympathize with the point of view of organized labour, or labour at all. Nevertheless, if one disagrees with his interpretation, it is only because the tools to do so — facts and data hitherto locked up in a dusty archive in Trois Rivières — are presented in this book.

It is not the task of a historical biographer to produce either holy writ or a rattling good yarn. In producing neither, Black has disappointed a few; in producing a massively-documented biography of Duplessis, he has filled a gap in Canadian letters and a need for anyone who follows Quebec history of this century. He has further emphasized the disgraceful partisanship of all Quebec newspapers then and now, given full reign to his own outspoken and occasionally eccentric opinions, and permitted me, by way of backing out of this rather convoluted review, to make one last point that will make sense of the obscure beginning.

Shortly after the November 15 Affair, in which Rene Levesque entered Duplessis' old office as Premier, and Rodrigue Biron entered Duplessis' old office as leader of the Union Nationale, Biron submitted to the Public Works Dept. a list of the lawyers, doctors, contractors and party hacks who he OK'd for receiving government contracts.

The story is told around Quebec City and Montreal as an illustration on the general Nincompoopery of Biron, unaware as he is of the fact that he's not the incumbent premier, and that the old days have gone.

Black says of Levesque that he " . . . used to hold self-serving ceremonies such as the one to observe 'the first official contract in the history of Quebec awarded after a public call for tenders'."

The names that opened this review, sounding as they do as if they belong to the Ghost Riders of The Mountains of Thark, are disappearing, with other vestiges of the old Quebec. Duplessis may not have been worse than Taschereau; but we don't need him back.

Political power, private interest

by F. W. PARK

The History of Canadian Business, 1867-1914, Vol. 1: The Banks and Finance Capital; Vol. 2: Industrial Development; by Tom Naylor, Foreword by Eric Kierans, James Lorimer & Company/Toronto.

Tom Naylor has written an important and interesting book in his two volumes of *The History of Canadian Business*. It makes fascinating but not always easy reading; the juxtaposition of ideas is sometimes arbitrary and readers will be sure to find an opinion or judgment to question or argue about. But it is a solid contribution to knowledge and it deals one more devastating blow to any remnants of the old idea that Canadian history is uneventful and dull or that Canadians in positions of trust have always been trustworthy.

Naylor deals in all its gory detail with the history of Canadian banks and banking; he goes into the role of Canadian promoters and entrepreneurs in the Caribbean and in Latin America; he explains how foreign patent control held back the development of Canadian technology; he re-tells the sad story of the way in which municipalities vied with each other to offer tax concessions and bonuses to new industries; in short he gives a necessarily condensed version of the process of Canadian industrialization that overlooks none of the sordid components of that story.

Naylor wants to explain why the Canadian business-owning class, the bourgeoisie, has not been a defender of Canadian independence and national sovereignty, to explain why the Canadian economy, in his words, never fully made the vital transition from commercialism to industrialism. To do this a theoretical framework is evolved, based on an arbitrarily chosen reference to Marx's *Capital* which is taken as expressing a law of development applicable to Canada.

Marx is discussing the transition from feudalism to capitalism in 17th century England. To Marx this process of transition was more "revolutionizing" if the embryonic producer became a merchant dealing in the commodities he produced than if the merchant became the organizer of production for the market. In the first case the producer is directly modifying guild relationships of production, in the latter case those relationships are less affected. But in both cases industrialization takes place.

There were at Confederation, says Naylor, drawing a parallel from Marx, two paths that a country could follow on the way to industrialization. Manufacturing industry could grow up "naturally" by a process of capital accumulation in a small-scale unit of production, with profits being reinvested in the enterprise to finance its growth. A second path implies direct development into large scale enterprise, often with direct state assistance and with capital from outside the enterprise, be it commercial capital, state subsidies or foreign investment.

In Naylor's view to follow the first path successfully leads to the creating of a flourishing, independent, national entrepreneurial class. The second may lead to the development of an inefficient, non-innovative, backward industrial structure, with a penchant for dependence on foreign technology, foreign investment and state assistance.

Both paths were available in Canada at Confederation and both were being used. However in the long run only one could prevail. So, the National Policy protective tariff brought in by the Macdonald government in 1878, a policy that represented the wishes of the merchants of Montreal and Halifax who were moving into industrial promotions, firmly set Canadian industrialization on the path to dependence on state assistance, on foreign capital and on foreign technology.

Now of course the National Policy did have very anti-national effects. It was a policy aimed at encouraging manufacturing in Canada, with no attention paid to who owned the industries being established, and it helped to set the economy on a branch-plant path.

But why were there two paths and two paths only? And why did one have to prevail and is the long-term result inevitable and irreversible?

It is hard to see that an argument based on a thesis sketched out by Marx to help understand the transition from feudalism to capitalism in England has any necessary or even useful application to an understanding of the role of the Halifax and Montreal merchants in 19th century Canada, their industrial promotions and reliance on outside capital.

Naylor argues that it was the commercial class in Canada who controlled the banks and hence put savings to work in the production of staples instead of assisting in industrial capital formation. It was the strength of commercial capitalism in Canada, based on the British colonial connection that served to lock the Canadian economy into the staple trap. A vacuum was created into which flowed U.S. capital and know-how and the result is a condition of dependence.

Reciprocity and the National Policy are both analyzed within this framework, and all that can be said is that it throws no new light on Canadian development, the process that Naylor refers to as "industrialization by invitation".

But why do we need this once-in-a-lifetime choice between two paths? And why is there such a continuing and sharp division of interest between merchants and industrialists? The Canadian merchants very rapidly became railway promoters and industrialists and there was a real move away from the British colonial relationship that took definite form in the First World War (outside the Naylor time period). Naylor quotes Galt in the 1850s and 1860s as saying that a protective tariff will not encourage manufacturing but Galt was in fact asserting the right of the old province of Canada to determine its own financial policy with or without the approval of the British government. Reliance on staple production for export (wheat, lumber, fish, furs, resources) is a trap only if outside interests are allowed to obtain and maintain control of the surplus generated by the exports.

Take the example of Cuba since 1959. The path away from dependence on a one-crop economy (with that crop largely

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Sir John A. Macdonald around the time of the National Policy protective tariff

foreign-controlled) is not to turn away from the production of sugar, but to end foreign control of the industry, making it more efficient and more productive, finding alternative markets, increasing production and using the profit to develop the economy as a whole.

What was lacking in 19th century Canada (and today too for that matter, understandably then, not so today) was a decision to make political power serve the national rather than the private interest. The myth that they are the same thing dies hard.

When Naylor sees the British connection as dominant during the period he is discussing he is, in broad political terms, quite right. But the situation is often more complicated than that and one small incident illustrates the complication. Naylor mentions en passant how Sir John Rose, one of three successive finance ministers in the first Macdonald government, left the cabinet and Canada in 1869 to become a partner in the "English private banking firm" of Morton, Rose, and refers to "his" American affiliate, Morton, Bliss & Co. of New York. But who is the Morton who heads both firms? Not a staid English private banker as one might imagine but a leading New York financier, a merchant turned banker, a financial bagman for the Republican Party, Levi P. Morton, later a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, U.S. Ambassador to France, U.S. vice-president, governor of New York State, and a disappointed aspirant for the Republican nomination to the presidency. The Morton, Rose firm was controlled by Morton, Bliss & Co. and the British affiliate in which Sir John Rose played a key role as resident junior partner was mainly concerned with marketing U.S. (and to some extent Canadian) securities in London. Rose, a close friend of Macdonald, knew his way around, and Morton, Rose was one of the financial houses supporting the financing of the CPR in the 1880s. A nice example of junior partnership in the activities of Rose, but with U.S. not U.K. capital, an expression of the already important triangular relationship among Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Tom Naylor has covered a huge field and some of his comments and references are necessarily but disappointingly brief. He tells us that in 1906 Sir Herbert Holt, the arch-capitalist of the 1930s, got out of the Sovereign Bank that he had founded in 1901 and took control of the Royal Bank just two years before the Sovereign Bank failed in 1908. We are given no details but in such a case it is precisely the technique used that is important.

A theme that cries out for examination in depth is precisely how the Anglophone elite in Quebec got control of the corporate wealth of the province, how they got the franchises and the rights to natural resources and the control of the economy that secured their wealth and power for so long.

Leaving aside points of detail and arguments over the theoretical approach, Tom Naylor has made a valuable contribution to an understanding of Canadian problems. He has examined previously unexamined material and drawn fresh and often controversial conclusions. In focussing on the structure and control of industry he has had to pass by the role of the labour movement and the whole political history of the period. But for what he has attempted and achieved we are all in his debt.

Shallow, self-righteous, vindictive

by ANTHONY WESTELL

One Canada. Memoirs of the Right Honourable John G. Diefenbaker. The Years of Achievement 1956 to 1962. Macmillan of Canada/ Toronto. 330 pps. $15.95

The news media have transformed the image of John Diefenbaker since 1967 from that of discredited prime minister and failed opposition leader rejected by his own party into that of an elder statesman, friend of the common people and defender of parliament. We have given him this new image partly because it makes him a saleable commodity in the news business: On a dull day in the Commons he can usually be relied upon to say something outrageous which can be solemnly reported because it comes from this mythic source.

His more energetic exploiters might also argue that in the absence of genuine political heroes, he's an acceptable invention, and that, anyway, it's not nice to tell the truth about eighty-year-olds — at least, not outside the press club. There is, however, no longer need to be protective because Diefenbaker is telling the truth about himself in these memoirs — the second of three projected volumes.

His memories and judgments reveal him as a man of shallow mind, appallingly self-righteous, vindictive and frequently boring.

One hopes to find in political memoirs the inside story of events, reflective analysis, perhaps even self-criticism and the frank admission of error. But not in this volume. It is as the title suggests a record of what Diefenbaker regards as his achievements as prime minister. Little of importance is added to the public record, not even the perspective of 14 years.

The self-righteousness and the desire for revenge emerge when Diefenbaker makes clear his successes were his own and his failures were those of traitors, or of the hated Liberals, or of the disloyal civil servants, or of the powerful press.

No other prime minister, surely, has been so bitter about the colleagues he appointed to Cabinet.

Diefenbaker intervened in U.S. politics in 1960 by urging Eisenhower to cancel the Nixon-Kennedy TV debates; Dief wanted Nixon elected

J. M. Macdonnell: "Following the swearing in at Rideau Hall, he told Olive that because I had forgiven him his subterranean plots against me over the years, he would never again be disloyal. It was not long, however, before he returned to his former ways."

Davie Fulton: "He was politically ambitious, and, as Prime Minister, I had always to consider this when reviewing his recommendations to Cabinet. Further he was not politically wise: three of his great finds as officials and assistants in the Department of Justice were Guy Favreau, subsequently Minister of Justice under Pearson, Marc Lalonde, Minister of Health and Welfare under Trudeau, and Michael Pitfield, the present Clerk of the Privy Council." Clearly, a nest of vipers.

George Hees: "... frankness, however, demands recognition that a considerable portion of this success was due to the shrewdness of his Executive Assistant, Mel Jack."

Leon Balcer: "... no uxorius control have I ever known to equal that in which he was enmeshed." Diefenbaker apparently didn't trust Madame Balcer.

The ministers who remained loyal to Diefenbaker through his difficulties are of course heroes and statesmen.

It is a further measure of Diefenbaker's malice that he must leap ahead of his narrative to nail those who later were identified as enemies. For example: "I have read that Dalton Camp played a major role in the 1957 victory. At the time, I knew nothing of him whatever ... he was nothing." In his own memoirs, *Gentlemen, Players and Politicians,* Camp has described his role in the 1957 campaign including his contacts with Diefenbaker, with supporting documents.

In his eagerness to nail another enemy, John F. Kennedy, Diefenbaker provides some of the few new scraps of important information. The usual version of relations between the two leaders has been that Kennedy tried unsuccessfully to bully Diefenbaker into supporting U.S. policies, and then interfered in Canadian politics to help Pearson defeat Diefenbaker. Quite unintentionally, no doubt, Diefenbaker now provides the facts which offer a different perspective.

He reports that he intervened in U.S.

politics in 1960 to urge Eisenhower to cancel the Nixon-Kennedy TV debates because he wanted Nixon elected. He goes on to say that in 1961 when the U.S. Treasury was holding up the supply of machinery needed to ship Canadian grain to China, he telephoned Kennedy and threatened him: "I had to tell him that unless he released the unloading equipment, I would go on national television and radio to tell the Canadian people that he was attempting to run our country.... When he told me he considered ours a personal conversation, I rejoined that there was nothing personal about it ... that was the end of any friendly personal relationship between President Kennedy and myself." So now we know how the break occurred. Diefenbaker confirms, incidentally, that there was no reference to him as an SOB in the famous memo Kennedy left in his wastepaper basket and which Diefenbaker retrieved and made the subject of an official protest, although it seems quite innocuous. It was of course the Critics who invented the SOB story.

Long passages of the book are simply dull: extracts from speeches which probably sounded wonderful but say little in print.

It is interesting to note that Diefenbaker gratefully acknowledges the support of the Canada Council. It is reported that the Council is providing about $80,000 to pay for research and professional writing, while Diefenbaker and his publishers can expect to clear close to a million dollars on the three volumes.

The media might remember that the next time Diefenbaker makes a speech about private enterprise.

It's thickheadedly pessimistic

by EDIE FARKAS

Lady Oracle, by Margaret Atwood. McClelland & Stewart/Toronto. 345 pages.

How reassuring to learn that behind Margaret Atwood's deceptively simple prose, lies a truly simple mind. Previously suspected, finally confirmed by the splashy publication of her latest novel — *Lady Oracle*.

It pays to have a fresh personality myth handy to replace the old one when it goes stale. Until recently, Atwood was our loudest Nationalist, mystery lady, tough-talker who'd tell any loutish reporter where to go if he dared ask about her private life. Yet she was cloaked in enigmas suggestive of tantalizing vulnerabilities, and her fans adored her. To them she was unabashedly condescending, her one constant attribute being her policy of not suffering fools lightly, while revelling in her own banalities as though they were precious mignons of wit, dropping to her bemusement from heaven knew where. ("I envy Shakespeare, you know. Because nobody knew who he was or what he thought.")

But Atwood's pushing 40 and it's time to plan for the future. Suddenly, with the help of McClelland and Stewart's PR people, she's willing to show and tell — about her life as an alternate life-styler on a farm near Alliston, Ontario, about how it *really* feels to be a Famous Canadian Woman. About her hitherto closet career as cartoonist for *This Magazine*, doing gently affectionate spoofs on, what else, her own endlessly fascinating self.

This was the year for Atwood profiles, *Maclean's* and the *Canadian* and CBC radio all having gratefully interviewed her, revealing an Atwood we never before knew — just a regular hippie housewife carrying her baby slung in a homespun pouch over her breasts, tending to the vegetable garden. Sewing. Living with a liberated minor novelist who makes cherry and banana wine.

As Atwood moved from academic bohemia to the literary big-time, she became more daring in her criticisms. She's fresher because more people read her. In *Edible Woman* graduate English students, office politics, and Women's Liberation received her ironic blows. Today it's the literary marketplace and its parasites, the critics; Atwood's imagination is seized by phony politicos who are dying to get themselves thrown in jail. Little girl wasphood and no-talent poets and CBC interviewers. This is the mature Atwood.

For all her remarkable talent at recording the idioms of the groups she satirizes, Atwood's social critique can appeal only to those who share her severely limited scope. If Toronto is the backdrop for her wicked glimpses at unimaginative CBC types, cocktailers, and culture groupies, it is because the WASP urban milieu is, finally, the only place where she is comfortable enough to crack a couple of nasty jokes.

And then, she's so easily satisfied: her craving to degrade revolutionaries is fulfilled by the novel's goofy gang of infantile suburbanite kids whose interest in the workers is purely pedantic. If these numbskulls satirize anything, it's the tight-assed cynicism of a WASP, perseverence-ridden temperament which takes them seriously in the first place, and masquerades as world-weary sophistication while doing so. Yes, Atwood is sick and tired of the pretentious *artistes*, the Big Empties who live on gossip and the latest trends. She's had it with sycophants and do-gooders. It's not that her sources are arid, as some critics have suggested, but that they have been experienced by a cautious, hard-working young woman whose most audacious discovery in life was that Mr. Right doesn't exist.

Romance is the subject of *Lady Oracle*. It is written in the form of a gothic romance and is such excellent pastiche that the structure of the novel is a mirror of its content.

Pulp gothic novels written in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were mocked by 'serious' writers even in their own day. There were gothics about the supernatural, about haunted castles surrounded by shrubbery mazes, about misunderstood monsters like Frankenstein (and today's King Kong) and — for women — there were novels about love. A persecuted maiden, in many cases an orphan forced to work for a living, usually as a governess, falls deeply but not wildly in love with a high-born gentleman, both handsome and rich, who though disdainful and wife-encumbered at first, becomes enamoured of the girl in the end because of her goodness and purity. Female virtue's reward was to marry well — up and out of one's class, after first suffering a catharsis of guilt and terror in an atmosphere of sexually-tinged evil.

Lady Oracle, narrated by its sloppy

Margaret Atwood as a regular hippie housewife

heroine Joan Foster, is the story of a woman who grows from ugly-duckling fatso-hood to svelte beauty, and who, though leading a dull, married life, leads several secret lives — as cult darling after the publication of her book called *Lady Oracle,* as Louisa K. Delacourt, author of pulp Costume Gothics, and as mistress to the Royal Porcupine, "Con-create" poet, who turns out to be a clean-cut kid from Don Mills. The book abounds with secret lives and mistaken identities, ghosts, mystics, shocking occurrences and cliff-hanging chapter endings. And through it all are scattered the brilliant little excerpts of the Costume Gothic that Joan as Louisa K. is working on.

Like all good pastiche, the novel mocks by the closeness of its imitation. And this imitation makes *Lady Oracle* the most tightly written of Atwood's novels, the prose flowing smoothly and clearly as ever.

With experiment in style comes experiment in thinking. Atwood has learned that Life is really a shabby Realist — a timid, mediocre, passionless, and wary thing. Romance is therefore no luxury, but a necessity. Atwood presumes our complicity in this world-view; indeed, the complicity of all right-thinking folk. It's an all-or-nothing exchange with Atwood: in order to take her work seriously, she demands that we enter into a conspiracy of reaction with her. She needs broad, all-encompassing categories, and, maternally, feels that they are best for us too. Her mature metaphysics is a dichotomy of Escape/Acceptance — there's no hint of change or even of the will to change. That way it's easier to dismiss anything new and different as romance, and stay with the old and comfortable as reality.

Take for instance: Arthur — the blob, the burden, the political dilettante and rationalizing self-redeemer. The man Joan Foster loves, her husband. Because the novel is written in the gothic confesisonal style, everything is seen through the eyes of the narrator, Joan. She analyses and comments and assesses, and somehow all this mental shifting and weighing takes the place of doing, of living. *"It wasn't that Arthur was dishonest: what he thought and what he said he thought were the same. It was just that both of these things were different from what he felt."*

Atwood is concerned not with the reality of Arthur as such, but with Joan Foster's relation to it: *"When I stopped to think about it, I felt our marriage was happier than most. I even became a little smug about it. In my opinion, most women made one basic mistake: they expected their husbands to understand them."*

And yet — the coy games, the secret subservience to Arthur's fragile ego, his petty jealousy of her success — with all this, Joan draws Arthur with humourous compassion. Because whenever Arthur becomes too dull for words, Joan escapes to the warehouse studio of the Royal Porcupine for a langorous waltz in the nude. Until even the Porcupine himself becomes a bore. He cuts his hair, throws away his cape and is Chuck Brewer who wants to get married and settle down, just like Arthur. Her fantasy life in ruins, Joan fakes her own death by drowning and rushes off to Italy, to get away from it all.

Romance, says Atwood, needs artifice. Further: romance is necessary because people are too weak to face themselves and so project an ideal image onto someone or something else. And this constant, universal act of projection is what makes the world a game. Politics, war, and football — all are romantic interludes from the dull reality of eating, sleeping and breathing.

Joan sees herself as a fantasy-maker, a provider of visions. As for the utopias that Arthur and his friends would like to offer to the masses, Joan says that they are much more interested in reading Costume Gothics than hearing the theories of Marx: *"So you're interested in the people, the workers, I would say to him during my solitary midnight justifications. Well that's what the people and the workers read, the female ones anyway."*

The best one can say about Joan's view of "the workers" is that it is naively anachronistic. But the link drawn, in Joan's and presumably in Atwood's, mind, between the Romance to be had in sexual politics and in class relations, and, indeed, in all affairs that are broader-ranging than hearth-and-home, makes *Lady Oracle* the most thick-headedly pessimistic Canadian book to come out in the wrapping of a literary confection.

To believe that all people have a natural inclination to drug themselves with daydreams is stupid and frivolous, but to imagine that all attempts to make history, all social and political theories, war and politics, can be reduced to the tactical manoeuvering of a football game is the worst kind of intellectual and artistic abdication.

Nuclear legacy of the realists

by ROBERT CHODOS

Nuclear Energy: The Unforgiving Technology, by Fred H. Knelman. Hurtig Publishers/Edmonton. 259 pp. $4.95.

Nuclear Power, by Walter C. Patterson. Penguin Books/Harmondsworth, England. 304 pp. $2.95.

The Poverty of Power: Energy and the Economic Crisis, by Barry Commoner. Knopf/New York. 314 pp. $11.50.

We Almost Lost Detroit, by John G. Fuller. Ballantine Books/New York. 288 pp. $1.95.

Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. has recently become notorious. Like Richard Nixon, it deserves its reputation. But again like Nixon, it has become notorious for its peccadilloes rather than for its fundamental flaws. Much attention has been devoted to the question of whether AECL bribed officials of foreign governments in order to sell them nuclear reactors. Comparatively little has been devoted to examining whether selling nuclear reactors is a business Canada should be in at all.

That is the inescapable question that emerges from these four books. If their authors are right — and they build up a good case — the equally inescapable answer is a resounding 'no'. Their discussions centre not on the atomic bomb but on the peaceful atom, the one that was supposed to provide us with electricity for our lamps, toasters and television sets. This peaceful atom was going to play Dr. Jekyll to its warlike cousin's Mr. Hyde. But instead of Jekyll and Hyde it has turned out to be Hyde and Hyde.

Three of the books were published in 1976. The fourth, John G. Fuller's hair-raising *We Almost Lost Detroit*, was first published in 1975 and has just been reissued in paperback. They are signs of a growing awareness of the deficiencies of nuclear power, an awareness that is especially strong in the United States. Even in the United States, however, nuclear power enjoys wide public support, as was demonstrated by the defeat of an anti-nuclear proposition by California voters last June.

Perhaps a major reactor accident involving the loss of thousands of lives will have to happen before the general public attitude toward nuclear power is changed. And the evidence suggests that it is not a question of whether there will be such an accident but of where and when. Even with the limited number of reactors that have so far been in operation the record includes some terrifying near-misses. Reactors have malfunctioned in unforeseen ways, sometimes destroying themselves in the process. People have been killed and significant amounts of deadly radioactive substances have escaped. Until now, however, all these accidents have been contained before they reached holocaust levels.

But there are now only some 150 reactors in the whole world. If some of the more gung-ho nuclear development scenarios are realized, there will be a hundred reactors in Canada alone by the year 2000, along with a thousand in the United States and many hundreds more in other countries. These reactors will be built to varying construction standards and be operated by people with varying standards of competence and training. And even if the probability of an accident at each individual reactor remains infinitesimally small, the proliferation of reactors will make an accident somewhere a virtual certainty.

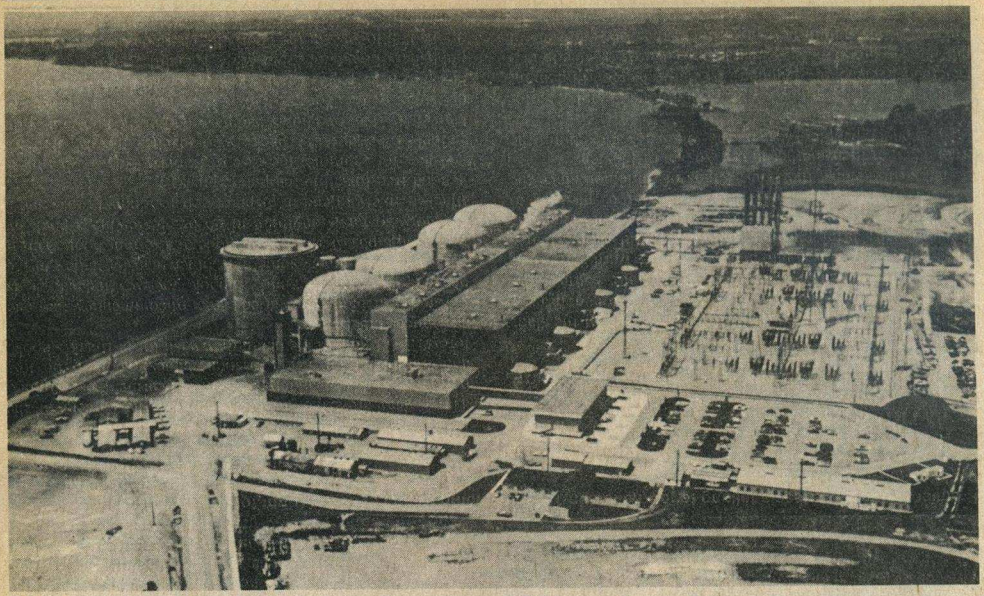
Nor is the possibility of a reactor accident the end of the dangers of nuclear power. There is the still unresolved problem of the disposal of spent nuclear fuel which, far from being inert like wood ash, contains radioactive and fissile substances that are even more potent than what went into the reactor. Notable among these is plutonium, which is believed to be toxic in quantities as small as a millionth of a gram and which has to be stored and guarded for thousands of years before it can be released. So far only highly temporary answers to the question of the storage of nuclear ash have been found, and leaks of nuclear wastes have already been reported in a number of places.

Plutonium is also the most powerful of the nuclear explosives, and someone with a little plutonium and a lot of ingenuity can make an atomic bomb. The increasing amounts of plutonium in the world make real the possibility that some of it will fall into the hands of a deranged head of state, a terrorist group or a future Gary Gilmore. In addition, nuclear power plants are vulnerable to sabotage and to natural disasters such as earthquakes.

Like the book about wasps that Dylan Thomas got for Christmas as a boy, these books tell you everything about nuclear power except why. There is no really adequate explanation of how people have allowed the nuclear venture to get as far as it has, in full knowledge of the dangers. Fuller suggests that the nuclear developers have been moved by guilt over the atomic bomb and a need to show that their technology could be redirected to the benefit rather than the destruction of mankind. Commoner attributes utility companies' enthusiasm for nuclear energy to their preference for a centralized technology which they can control and which can provide them with profits. Knelman blames the prevailing faith that all problems are subject to what he calls a "technical fix" — a solution that involves building more and better machines. This assumption has been central to postwar North American society. The lethal ash of nuclear power plants may be the agent that will finally prove it wrong.

If none of these is a complete explanation, each is no doubt part of the truth. The story of nuclear energy is not a story of mad scientists but of generally well-intentioned and competent scientific and technical people over whom there has been far too little public control. The need for individuals to become informed on scientific matters and play a much greater role in making decisions where scientific questions are involved is perhaps the most important message left by these four authors. "Before we commit ourselves and our descendants to a nuclear future," writes Patterson, "it is vital that we concur in and understand the nature of the commitment. If we undertake it now we do so for all time."

While each of the books takes a different approach and each has its strengths and weaknesses, I found Patterson's to be on the whole the most enlightening. The author, a Canadian now living in Britain, clearly believes that an understanding of how nuclear reactors actually work is neither beyond the layman nor irrelevant to him. The



The nuclear power station at Pickering, Ontario

technical chapters, while often somewhat heavy going, are necessary background to the historical and narrative ones that follow. The style is sometimes so low-key and factual as to border on the flat, but the book is an invaluable information package.

Fuller deals with much of the same material as Patterson — the history of nuclear development and the details of reactor accidents — but on a more popular level. His vivid presentation and the wide distribution the book is enjoying mean that it will probably be the most effective of the four in creating public awareness of the ramifications of nuclear energy.

Commoner, who covers the whole energy range but is particularly devastating in his critique of nuclear power, criticizes the nuclear program not only on safety and environmental grounds but on the basis of economics and energy efficiency as well. He argues that the economic advantages of nuclear energy as compared to other methods of electricity generation are not increasing but diminishing, and predicts that sometime in the 1980s it will become more expensive to generate electricity by splitting uranium atoms than by burning coal.

Knelman is eloquent in his discussion of the reasoning of nuclear advocates and informative in his accounts of Canadian nuclear controversies. But his book is often repetitive and has a tendency — which, somewhat remarkably, is avoided in all of the other three books — to be shrill. It also seems to be intended as a sort of Canadian supplement, filling in the Canadian aspects of a larger story that is available elsewhere. The nuclear story is, inevitably, international (after all, if Detroit had been lost, Windsor would have gone too) and Canada, which has as long and dishonourable a nuclear history as any other country, is a perfectly valid vantage point from which to write it. It is a pity that Knelman made only a half-hearted attempt to do so.

There is general agreement among the four authors on the alternatives to nuclear energy. In the short term there is plenty of coal, and for the long term research efforts should be devoted to harnessing such renewable energy sources as the sun and wind. Fuller sees possibilities in nuclear fusion, although Commoner considers it unfeasible. Knelman and Commoner, in particular, also place considerable emphasis on energy conservation. It all sometimes sounds a little idealistic, but the realists have had their say and have brought us the prospect of a nuclear catastrophe. Perhaps it is time to listen to the idealists.

I do, however, have one reservation. Technology has allowed many forms of drudgery that formerly had to be performed by human beings to be done by machines instead. This is on the whole a good thing, although we have, as we are finding out, paid a high price for it. Commoner or Knelman in full flight sometimes sounds as if he is advocating an energy future that is not so different from the past; in one passage, Knelman writes that "a shift to services and labour-intensive renewables and recyclables can provide high levels of employment. The trade-off, of course, will be against waste in all senses."

There is no doubt of the need for energy conservation but I remain unconvinced that it is better to wash clothes in the river than in the family Maytag.

WHAT ABOUT THE DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS?

[Prince] Andrew is one of many figures about a central figure in a family that represents a living coat of arms, a badge in Canada's cap, a crest on Canada's blazer, a figment of a symbol of all the historical events that shapes this noble country.

— McKenzie Porter, Toronto Sun, January 6, 1977

Poetry in terms of people

by RAE MURPHY

The Price of Gold, by Miriam Waddington. Oxford University Press/ Toronto. 333 pp. $3.95.

The Price of Gold is, I believe, Miriam Waddington's ninth collection. She is a prolific writer whose poetry has been published in just about every magazine and journal where Canadian poets appear and in several international publications where they usually don't. She is a disciplined and lucid critic and her works on A. M. Klein and John Sutherland are remarkable in the sense that they provide both a social context and a treatment of the artistic as well as personal influences that contributed to the creative impulse of a generation of poets we have read and admired over the last few decades. Miriam Waddington is one of the best things Can-Lit has going for it.

Yet she has never achieved "stardom".

This is unfortunate because Miriam Waddington, unlike so many of our poets, writes for an audience of non-poets. She speaks of life as it is lived with few demonic visions and fewer erudite line-droppings which seek to impress as they baffle the reader.

Miriam Waddington's determination to look at things as they are — unadorned and rather stark — creates problems for her in some of her most personal recollections. They can be rather cloying:

> When we first met
> we used to talk
> about art, later
> we talked about
> artists and
> finally we talked
> about his arthritis.

Or she can adopt a voice of a sensuous Molly Goldberg:

> Yet Sam's
> a certain style of lover,
> a hemm-er and a haw-er, sugarless,
> and instead of being a sigh-er,
> Sam is alas, a cough-er.

But when it comes together in her most beautiful work, "Ten Years and More", the reader is sent back to read again her other poems to see what more there is. And there is always more.

But love when geritol replaces soft lights and champagne is scarcely representative of Miriam Waddington's work or interests although, unfortunately, they are the most interesting poems in this collection. Miriam Waddington can define and express the Canadian landscape — the Prairies and the forbidding cold of eastern Ontario of her youth — in the most human terms. And cold is cold in Winnipeg or Leningrad:

> Both have the same
> skinny church
> standing lone like
> a cello in the snow,
> and you can see
> the same half-dozen
> people on skis or
> snowshoes making
> their way across
> the same flat
> white park.

In Miriam Waddington, everything is expressed in terms of people, not as a mass or some collective abstraction, but as an individual being either able to understand and to cope, or being mystified or uncomprehending, with the action of another individual or a state or a system. It is this human dimension which not only links her poems about places, seasons, love affairs and international affairs but also runs through her entire career.

There was a time when Canadian poets of Miriam Waddington's generation, influenced by their contemporaries in the United States and Western Europe but also deeply moved by the depression, the shattering train of events that wound through Spain and culminated in the destruction of fascism in Germany, tried to identify themselves and their art with struggle or to place themselves within a social context. This was not an easy thing to do and many paid a penalty for their efforts. Many of these poets were carried away by the enthusiasm of their own verbosity and by their naivety, but at least there was a little life.

Miriam Waddington must have been a part of this movement. Yet, while others were calling upon poets to descend like eagles from their perches into the valleys where the masses fought and other such things Miriam Waddington's poetry seemed always to be on a smaller scale. It expressed the noble sentiments we are capable of, but always very personal and on that level passionately humanistic.

While some poets now plead temporary insanity, others pretend that it was always Freud and never Marx; that it was Fabianism and never Marxism that lit the fuse to the muse — and all have grown older and wiser — Miriam Waddington remains somewhat what she has always been: someone's "leftwing ladylove" who can remember; who can laugh with herself and even enjoy her bitterness. Her poetry — the crisp, sharp images, the lean and precise style — is incomparably better than much of her earlier work, but the spirit is still the same. People still suffer and die, one by one, in the Middle East and there are reasons:

> . . .
> good men are
> shot like dogs
> in the streets
> in Chile.

She is capable of feeling the things that happen which offend the human spirit everywhere.

Miriam Waddington is a fine poet. I believe she is one of the best we have.

THERE GOES THE SACRAMENTAL WINE

Pope will beatify Irish alcoholic

—Headline, Toronto Globe & Mail, December 22, 1976

MOVIES: by Thomas E. Reid

Network

In writing this particular review I must declare something about my objectivity. In the early 1970s I was, as a variety show writer, the golden-haired boy of CFTO-TV (Toronto's vastly successful flag-ship station for Canada's CTV private television network). The shows that I wrote were, specifically, *The Ian Tyson Show, Newsmakers Match, The Lionel Hampton Special, Jazz Circle, Miss Canada Backstage,* and *The Innocent Island.*

An attack by Toronto *Globe and Mail* TV critic Blaik Kirby on the writing of a TV show for which I received a show-ending credit almost terminally injured my very large ego, which had been so tenderly nurtured in the fertile social soil of Southwestern Ontario. So indignant was this sensitive Chatham peach, I blasted away at the show's executive producer, and in fact at all CFTO producers, through the good offices of *Toronto Star* TV writer Jack Miller. My remarks could be fairly called injudicious (and, immaterially, hyperbolic). My comments fingered CFTO's gullibility when it came to dealing with American producers.

The Toronto Star's first headline was nationalistic and fun — **American bull cows CFTO-TV says Canadian.** The next edition of the *Star* toned it down, but needless to say I very soon became an ex-television writer.

To make a potentially interminable harangue blessedly short, my writing assignments dried up and I was out. I was told subsequently by a producer, who happened to agree with my views and applauded my outspokenness, that a meeting of producers was held and it was decided no immediate action should be taken against me. They didn't relish the thought of further embarrassment at the hands of the print media. The taps were turned off slowly and without hope of entreaty.

In retrospect, I believe I received exactly what I deserved: unemployment for brash impudence. In any case TV was not my only source of income or I would not have been nearly so bold.

That aside, let me go on to some other insider opinions about broadcasters, since besides the CFTO experience I was also in radio for a number of years as an announcer, writer, and middle manager of sorts. Broadcasters, particularly the Canadian variety, are a slippery bunch of eels, in spite of, or more likely because of Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission over-regulation.

In the big picture their sins are minor, but aggravating. I could cite many examples and give details of such conventional con-jobs as to why Canadian broadcasters are allowed to pirate American programming, and why you cannot normally get intelligent television (such as that of Channel 17 in Buffalo) on cable without the assistance of expensive converters, and how individual radio stations can violate the intent of CRTC Canadian-content regulations (which in my opinion are impenitently stupid), but I'll just give you one example of the misuse of a broadcasting licence:

John Bassett, the "boss" at CFTO, had an interest of one sort or another (I'll leave the drudgery of researching the particulars to you) in a hotel-real estate development in the Bahamas called Treasure Cay, on the north end of Abaco, second largest Bahama Island.

In December of 1970 I found myself on a plane to Abaco presumably to research and write a half-hour television "documentary" on Abaco. Now I must confess I thought I was invited along because of my inherent intelligence, insight, and evident writing prowess, even though my only television writing credentials had been exclusively for variety shows grinding out such gems as: "I'd like to thank my guests Loretta Lynn, Conway Twitty, and Canada's own Anne Murray for being with me tonight. See ya next week — and remember — drive carefully, the life you save could be your own!"

The Treasure Cay filming, don't you know, was directed according to a script prepared before I became involved in the project. In other words my research was meant to be illustrative, not revelatory. The subject of the "documentary" was the Treasure Cay hotel, the development's real estate opportunities, and touristy day-trips from Treasure Cay. In short we weren't producing a documentary, we were making a sales film for Treasure Cay. The film was advertised and publicized as a documentary and appeared on CFTO as a Sunday evening public affairs show.

Which brings me at last to the witty film parody, *Network*. John Bassett and his lovely wife were in the audience the day I saw it, and I felt certain I would hear his loud voice laughing at Paddy Chayefsky's scintillating script in all the right spots throughout the movie. But I didn't. Perhaps I was having too much fun to hear him, and perhaps he found it all a little too fantastic. *Network* is nothing if it isn't fantastic, i.e. unbelievable. Scriptwriter Chayefsky has used a dramatic device that I will call extrapolation. Meaning that if things continue the way they're going in broadcasting, somewhere down the road *Network's* eccentricities will become norms.

But even today there are a hell of a lot of truths in *Network*. But, because the movie has been around a while, you undoubtedly have read a great deal about the plots and sub-plots so I won't catalogue them all here.

Network is a story of a U.S. network newscaster who is fired but allowed to continue broadcasting for a couple of weeks. First night out after being canned, he announces to his audience that he will kill himself on the air. Nobody in the director's booth notices what the newscaster is saying. (Ironically the director was played by Bill Burrows, a

Network newscaster Howard Beale (the late Peter Finch) in a scene from "Network"

producer at CFTO!) Once the show is off the air the vigoro hits the mixmaster.

The newscaster, Howard Beale (Peter Finch) is to be pulled off the air immediately, but his producer Max Schumacher (William Holden) who is having his own problems with the Network gives the poor guy just one more chance to square things with his audience. Next time out, Beale announces to millions of viewers that he made the previous night's careless and brooding remarks simply because he ran out of "bullshit". The production staff goes into a tizzy. Everybody wants to cut Beale off but Schumacher allows him to continue.

You'd better believe that by now both Beale and Schumacher are really in dutch with the Network. They are, that is, until the network's top programming executive Diana Christensen (Faye Dunaway) goes into orgasmic shock over the show's ratings and the wild-eyed publicity that Beale's on-air activities are reaping for the network.

It turns out that the network has been in an audience-share trough. They need numbers — big numbers. So at the insistence of Miss Christensen they turn bonkers-Beale into a television star of a different sort. He's to walk on and rant and rave about all the injustices that your average sophomore discusses over one last toke between one and three in the morning.

Then comes the monkey-wrench. Beale is ordered to face the chairman of the board of the conglomerate that controls the network. Poor demented Beale is quickly and evangelically convinced of the hard realities of BIG business. Rather than succumb to such a pitch for multi-national snake oil, most lib-dem romantics would rather take the nearest 10th floor window to nirvana, but not Beale. He becomes an instant convert and goes on the air that night with the "new truth". And hapless Howard Beale's ratings go straight into the toilet.

You've heard how networks kill shows that fail to draw enormous audiences? Well in this case they kill the host — on air.

Sidney Lumet's direction is tight and loyal to Paddy Chayefsky's terrific script (My most enjoyable moments were the chairman's (Nad Beatty) remarks in his consciousness-raising speech about business to Howard Beale). Best-director Oscar must go to Lumet, if it doesn't go to Alan J. Pakula for *All the President's Men*. Chayefsky is a shoo-in for best original script. As for the others, Holden is handsome and dependable; Peter Finch is a loveable nut; Robert Duvall is remarkably accurate as an ambitious would-be American TV network head; but Faye Dunaway disappoints in her role as the hyper programmer. She hasn't got the slightest notion of how true megalomania seethes.

Lumet and Chayefsky have lampooned the television business beautifully. Go see it. It'll entertain you like you haven't been entertained in years.

Four types of Quebec nationalism

by ELIOT HOLMES

Le processus électoral au Québec: les élections provinciales de 1970 et 1973 (collection of essays edited by Daniel Latouche, Guy Lord and Jean-Guy Vaillancourt). Hurtubise HMH/Montréal. 288 pages. $8.95.

Partis politiques au Québec (collection of essays edited by Réjean Pelletier). Hurtubise HMH/Montréal. 299 pages. $8.75.

Nationalismes et politique au Québec, by Léon Dion. Hurtubise HMH/Montréal. 177 pages. $5.75. (also available in English translation — see page 18)

Now that Quebec voters have spoken and the improbable has occurred, we can expect a great proliferation of books and essays dealing with the forces and events leading to the unexpected victory of the independentists and the nemesis of Robert Bourassa.

Although the 1976 election has brought about a fundamental shift in the balance of political forces, we can gain considerable insight by looking at some of the analyses conducted some time before the election and also at studies based on earlier elections.

In *Nationalismes et politique au Québec*, Léon Dion discerns four distinct strains of Quebec nationalism.

The first he calls "conservatist" nationalism, and was the dominant form roughly from 1840 to the end of Maurice Duplessis's years in power. This is a very inward-looking, ethnocentric form of nationalism, based on a pre-industrial conception of society. Clerical, agricultural, almost corporatist in its leanings, it insists on a strong degree of provincial autonomy but tempers this with a mitigated acceptance of the federal system.

Liberal nationalism, covering the periods in office of Jean Lesage and Daniel Johnson, can best be summed up by the slogan *"maîtres chez nous"*. It is characterized by a certain opening to the world, by a period of *rattrapage*, or catching up, to bring Quebec's social and economic structures fully into the era of the industrial state and the welfare state, and by an insistence that Quebecers can handle administrative and technical tasks themselves. Liberal nationalism adheres firmly to federalism and to capitalism.

The third variety of nationalism in Dion's schema is the social democratic type incarnated by the Parti Québécois. It seeks a break with Canadian federalism and leans, at least in principle, toward the collective rather than individual promotion of Quebecers.

Finally, socialist nationalism also seeks full independence but wants this coupled with a radical transformation of the economic system.

Dion, a veteran political science professor at Laval University, predicted (this was in 1975) an increasing polarization between the Parti Québécois and the Liberals, who in his eyes attach such primacy to economic matters that they find themselves without a clear national ideology.

He dismisses Bourassa's "cultural sovereignty" as a hollow slogan, and says Liberal language policies and other measures induced by nationalist pressure are based on shallow opportunism (and are not perceived as particularly bold by most French-speaking people).

Dion also sees an increasing polarization between the PQ and the Liberals on economic grounds because of the latter's conservatism. He saw Bourassa headed, in fact, toward a "neo-conservatist" nationalism because of his laissez-faire attitude in economic matters, and regards the PQ as the natural heirs of the so-called quiet revolution.

The bipolarity Dion predicted and the continued dwindling of the third parties he foresaw did not come about, we are now able to say with the benefit of hindsight, because the arrogance and incompetence of the Bourassa Liberals breathed new life into the Union Nationale and brought the PQ many votes they could not otherwise have expected.

Harsh as he may be toward Bourassa, Dion draws a caricature of Trudeau and his comrades-at-arms in Ottawa which strays somewhat from reality. He portrays them as "the new intolerants" of Quebec society, incapable of "understanding the foundations and the breadth of the independentist movement". Perhaps what really irritates him is that Trudeau saw only too well that certain ideas led logically to separatism and showed foresight and leadership in rejecting those ideas.

We'll see who wins.

Le processus électoral au Québec and *Partis politiques au Québec* are collections of academic essays of unequal interest and uneven quality. Each book has contributions dealing with specific aspects of electoral behaviour and party organization and makes no attempts to provide a universal or comprehensive survey. For instance, one essay in *Partis politiques* deals with Union Nationale riding organizations in the 1960s. No other party is scrutinized in that particular context and so we miss worthwhile comparisons.

Several of the essays contain a lot of numbers from polls and actual election returns but fall somewhat short when it comes to explaining their significance. One essay in particular in *Le processus électoral*, written by sociologist Serge Carlos and dealing with electoral systems, is chock-a-block with complex mathematical formulae which may well provide powerful analytic tools but which surely have little place outside highly specialized publications.

But these faults do not detract from the quality and interest of some of the other essays, and we'll mention here a few of those which may help shed some light on the current situation even if they do now seem somewhat out of date.

Serge Carlos and Daniel Latouche are co-authors of two essays in *Le processus électoral* which use pre-election polls, the first for 1970 and the second for 1973, to determine what categories of voters support the PQ. Not surprisingly, they find nationalist orientation an important factor in delineating PQ support, but they also find that social and economic factors play far less important a role than some people had supposed. Taking educational level, income and occupation into account there are only small differences in PQ support from one group to the next, although support in middle groups was slightly less.

Nationalist orientation was also a much stronger factor than level of satisfaction with the government — in 1973, in fact, a larger proportion of PQ voters indicated support for independence than in 1970. When the 1976 analyses are complete, we shall doubtless see a strong surge in the satisfaction factor.

In another essay, Daniel Latouche uses 1973 data to predict which of a number of hypotheses could lead to a PQ victory in a subsequent election. Of the hypotheses — including increased polarization between the PQ and the Liberals, increased support for independence, a shift by undecided voters — only one, that of a sizeable federalist vote for the PQ, would give that party an election victory. It seems Bourassa made it happen.

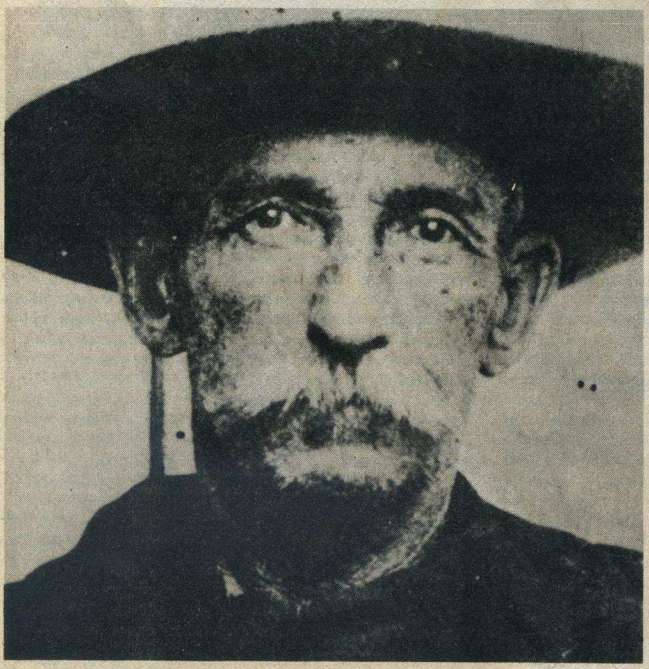
Another contribution outlines a survey showing that PQ election workers are younger and better educated but less experienced than those working for other parties at election time, and also are motivated more by ideological considerations. The Liberal machine is more highly structured, and promotes its workers through the ranks in an organized fashion.

Partis politiques begins with several theoretical essays on the structure and behaviour of political parties, and then provides a number of case studies. But the accent is on parties peripheral to today's political situation. For instance, two deal with the Créditistes, and two deal with the RIN (Rassemblement pour l'indépendence nationale), which disappeared in 1968.

Only one study deals specifically with the Liberal Party, which was after all in power at the time the book was published, and that study deals with the period from 1897 to 1936! Perhaps political scientists who examine the Quebec scene are as guilty as those who devote themselves to the study of federal politics in ignoring the party in power in favour of opposition parties and ideological movements. Go to any good university library and try to find a comprehensive and unbiased account of the Liberal Party of Canada. You won't find one.

But now that the Liberal Party of Quebec is in the opposition, perhaps we can expect to see it subjected to more serious academic examination.

At the moment outlaws are 'in'



Train robber Bill Miner

by SANDY GAGE

The Bad and the Lonely, by Martin Robin. James Lorimer and Company/Toronto. 222 pp. $12.95.

At the moment outlaws are in. To prove it you need only tune to your local country and western station. A bunch of leather-voiced, boozaholic Texans including Willie Nelson and Waylon Jennings have made it to the top of the country charts with something they call outlaw music. Nelson and Jennings have been around the country music scene since the early '60s, but only recently have they been able to turn their slightly disreputable reputations into a positive selling point. People seem to like their raunchie style. And people like their opposition to the transformation of country music into a big business. The outlaws have stayed outside the mainstream of the country music industry and have refused to polish up their act to make it a more easily marketable package.

(Roy Payne is trying to bring outlaw music to Canada. His latest hit — "Outlaw Heroes".)

To make it as an outlaw you have to be nasty and uncouth, but you also have to be against the system that victimizes you. This is as true for Pretty Boy Floyd or

Robin Hood as it is for Willie Nelson.

In 1969 the British historian Eric Hobsbawm tried to draw some generalizations about the role of outlaws in society and popular culture. In his book, *Bandits*, he compared the case histories of outlaws from many different countries and historical periods. This book added a certain legitimacy to the outlaw as a subject for history, as well as for the ballad and pulp novel.

Now British Columbia professor Martin Robin has followed suit with his own outlaw book, *The Bad and the Lonely*. This work is not the spaghetti-style western which the title implies, but neither is it an analytical book, such as Hobsbawm's, that adds new insight to a popular subject.

Robin has staked out the high ground between Zane Grey and Pierre Berton to tell us "seven stories of the best — and worst — Canadian outlaws". The stories are well written in a lively and ironic style to which the subject matter easily lends itself. In sheer readability the book is a vast improvement upon the author's first published work, *Radical Politics and Canadian Labour*.

Some of the stories Robin relates are virtually unknown to us today. The author had to dig them out of old newspapers and government reports. There is the case of the "Igloo Badmen" for example. Uluksak and Sinnisak were shipped from the barrens north of Great Bear Lake to Edmonton and then Calgary to stand trial for the murder of two Catholic priests in 1913. The priests were determined to bring the word of God to the Inuit, but they met a bloody end one stormy day when they tried to add Uluksak and Sinnisak to their dog team. After a long search the Mounties finally brought the two murderers to justice in the summer of 1916. Justice in this case turned out to be life imprisonment at the Herschel Island Mountain Police Post.

There are other chapters in *The Bad and the Lonely* that are less interesting. The sad case of the Black Donnellys is given one more go-round. The story of Bill Miner, train robber, is also retold. Bill's fate is pretty widely known, especially in the west where his exploits make up one of the paperback Frontier Books that can be found in almost every roadside store.

Robin admits in his preface that he sometimes sides with the bad guys in his stories, but he chooses not to develop an explanation for this preference in the chapters that follow. For analysis we must turn to Hobsbawm.

For the meaning of outlaws in our own time we might turn again to country music. Singer James Talley has a recently released song about honest, hard working people who have been forced into a corner by the return of hard times:

Are they gonna make us outlaws again?
Is that what it's comin' to my friends?
Well, I think I see why Pretty Boy Floyd done the things he did —
Are they gonna make us outlaws again?

The PQ and business

by MARC RABOY

The Quebec Establishment, by Pierre Fournier. Black Rose Books, Montreal. 228 pp., $5.95.

A few days after the Quebec election my neighbourhood grocer, Mr. K. brought to my attention the latest copy of the yiddish left-labor weekly *Vochenblatt* analysing the results of the November 15 vote. According to *Vochenblatt*, the Parti Quebecois victory was due to the fact that Quebec workers are no longer willing to vote for capitalist parties, and in the absence of a workers party they chose the lesser evil, the petty bourgeois, middle-class-dominated PQ.

However, the weekly continued — with the vocal support of Mr. K. — the nature and internal inconsistency of the PQ will probably make it impossible for the new government to solve the province's economic problems and implement its program of social reforms.

"Unless," concluded Mr. K., "Unless, they go after the companies."

Pondering this I went home and read my newspapers and Pierre Fournier's new book *The Quebec Establishment*, and I concluded that the chances of the PQ launching an anti-corporate crusade were probably about as great as the likelihood of Mr. K being called to high tea with Rene Levesque.

Appropriately sub-titled "The Ruling Class and the State", Fournier's book is about the influence of busines in Quebec politics, and it clearly shows that under Bourassa and going back at least as far as Duplessis — including the period of the Quiet Revolution — government decisions and policies reflected and served the interests of business, especially big, big business.

So what else is new, you might say? And what does this tell us about what's likely to happen now that the PQ is in power?

In the first place, we have here some important new insights into the nature of business domination of government, providing a framework we can use to analyze what happens in the post-election period.

In preparation for a doctoral thesis from the University of Toronto, Fournier sent questionnaires and did interviews with top executives of the 100 most important corporations operating in Quebec, including such old favorites as Noranda Mines, Domtar, United Aircraft, CIL, Alcan, Royal Trust and the like.

The results were stunning in what they revealed about the monolithic nature of business ideology, and the candour with which top businessmen are prepared to talk openly of the way they run things in this society.

With regard to their ideas, for example: 99.3% agreed with the Quebec government's handling of the common front strike of May 1972, 98.6% supported its attitude during the FLQ crisis, 93% are satisfied with unemployment insurance and 97.1% with the Quebec pension plan. 98.6% of Fournier's subjects would like to see the elimination of strikes in public and essential services, 94.7% oppose government price-fixing to counter monopoly power, and 95.6% are against any government control of profits.

More interesting are Fournier's data about the easy access of businessmen to the top levels of government, the high quality of their contacts, and their overall satisfaction with results. The usual procedure, according to one executive interviewed, is to "start at the bottom and keep going up the line" as far as is necessary to achieve what they want. The "bottom" in these people's view turns out to be somewhere around the deputy minister level. 94.1% claimed access to senior civil servants, 85.1% to cabinet ministers. As to the preferred inter-

locutors of Quebec's corporate bosses, lowly members of the national assembly will be chagrined to learn that they are favored by only 4.0%, and legislative committees are considered seriously by only 1.1%.

Fournier reveals that it was not only business that sought contact with government, but that the reverse was possibly even more common. Said the director of a trust company: "Cabinet ministers often come to see us to ask how things are going and to discuss the effects of laws and regulations. We discuss such things as the investment climate and consumerism." Recalling the calibre of the Bourassa regime, we might note the remark of a cement company president: "Ministers often seek our advice. They want to know what they should do."

This cozy situation has now been complicated. In spite of themselves, most of Rene Levesque's ministers are totally unknown to the business community. However, with the exception of the ludicrous braying of Charles Bronfman (since moved aside from his post as President of Seagram's), there have been no great cries of alarm.

In fact, the opposite is the case. Immediately upon the PQ victory, corporate leaders began tripping over each other to declare their confidence in the new government and their determination to carry on, as long as there was a reasonable profit to be made. Now, Rene Levesque and his incredible string band are playing "Getting to know you" before a packed house.

As soon as Levesque announced the composition of his cabinet, businessmen responded with mixed feelings. While the holders of the main economic portfolios, Jacques Parizeau (finance) and Bernard Landry (economic development) were well known to them, others like Jacques Couture (labour) were question marks. Couture has since been kept busy trundling around to meet with this or that business group and make up for his lack of experience with the milieu.

One of the big favourites of business in the Levesque cabinet is conservative economist Rodrigue Tremblay (industry and commerce), who distinguished himself in their eyes by speaking out against the raising of the minimum wage in the new government's early days. *Le Devoir*'s Jean-Claude Leclerc dubbed him the "gogo" minister when he announced grocery stores will soon be permitted to carry wine; the editorialist pointed out that Tremblay would be better advised to concern himself with matters like salvaging what's left of Quebec's textile industry.

The PQ-business courting period has included a splashy affair thrown at Montreal's Mount Royal Club by Wood Gundy, the investment bond dealers. And as this was being written, Levesque was planning his U.S. coming-out with an address before the prestigious Economic Club of New York and a meeting with the editorial board of the *New York Times*.

But could we expect any different, given the power relations of capitalist society? As Pierre Fournier notes in the conclusion to *The Quebec Establishment*, business-government relations in Quebec have tended to be particularly crude, but the real source of political power here comes from economic dominance and the control of ideas, not the greed and corruption of isolated businessmen or politicians.

The PQ has an advantage over the traditional parties in that it is in no way dependent on business for financial contributions. Party statutes prohibit the acceptance of any individual contribution over $2,500 or corporate gift greater than $250. Indeed, during the last election campaign the party turned away over $12,000 in donations it felt were questionable.

But the PQ in government is subjected to an even greater need to maintain business "confidence", and especially the favour of the international money market.

One of the interesting tidbits in Fournier's book is the story of a letter from R. E. Powell, then president of Alcan, to Premier Duplessis in 1946. Powell explained to Duplessis the company's need to count on cheap electricity rates and low taxes.

The morning after reading this I opened my copy of *Le Devoir* to learn that the chairman of Alcan's chemical and smelting division, Roger Phillips, had announced his company could not proceed with its billion-dollar investment program without assurances that its energy costs would remain low.

Plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose. When Levesque and the Liberals nationalized hydro in 1962 Alcan was allowed to keep its private power plants on the Saguenay River. The company pays the government a fee which has remained unchanged since 1946 — the year of Powell's letter to Duplessis. Perhaps Mr. Phillips' recourse to the mass media rather than Her Majesty's Postal Service represents a lack of access to the ear of the premier, but be that as it may, pressure is pressure.

Analysts like Pierre Fournier and the editors of *Vochenblatt*, who are not expecting social upheaval in the wake of the PQ victory, see in it instead the seeds of yet a stronger, more determined effort by progressive people in Quebec to rid themselves once and for all of the domination of capital.

In the meantime, at least my neighbour, Mr. K. will be able to sell wine in his grocery store.

Good reading!

LAST POST

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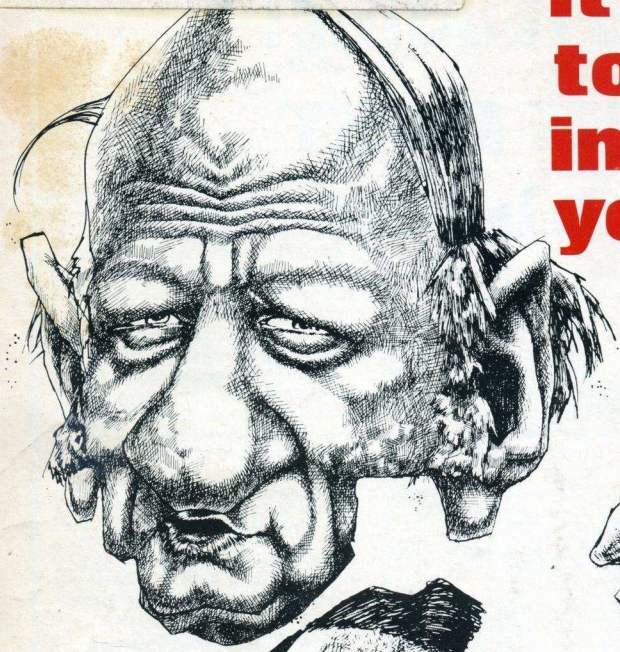

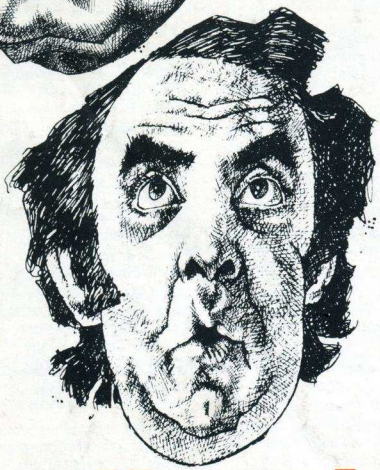

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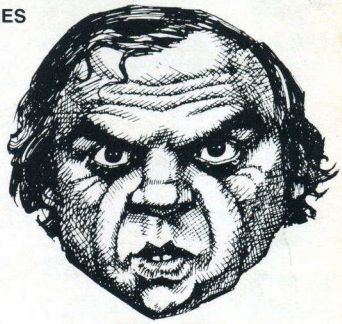
BY AISLIN



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