CHAPTER 2

QUEBEC NATIONALISM

Just as modern Spain tends to explain the Castilian character by citing eight centuries of Arab domination, French Canadians are obsessed by the consequences of Wolfe's victory on the Plains of Abraham. The "Conquest" is the source of many legends; it is a convenient explanation for much that has occurred in Canada since 1759.

When the arrival of a British fleet in the summer of 1760 assured the results of Wolfe's triumph, New France was a stagnating, sprawling, underpopulated dependency. It was primarily a commercial community; 25 per cent of the population lived in the three towns of Quebec, Trois-Rivières, and Montreal. From its origin to the Conquest, its economic base was the fur trade, which involved 4,000 full-time employees in 1754, when the total population of the colony was only 55,000. Industry was practically nonexistent, and agriculture was largely undeveloped; only about 170,000 acres were under cultivation. The mentality was more that of a frontier community than of a rural agricultural society. It contained at most 70,000 settlers at the Conquest, compared to over 1,600,000 in the English-speaking colonies to the south. In the 150 years following Champlain's landing at Quebec, only some 10,000 immigrants had arrived from France. By comparison, Boston alone received 12,000 in the dozen years from 1630 to 1642.

Champlain had dreamed great dreams of a self-sufficient community on the banks of the St. Lawrence, but little was done to fulfill them. The mercantile concept prevailed and manufacturing was discouraged. Some ships had been built at Quebec, but the cost was too high, and only a few royal shipyards were in operation at the end of the Seven Years' War. At Trois-Rivières an iron forge was barely able to keep going.1 Montreal was hardly more than a place of exchange where Indians and traders met.

Throughout the entire period preceding the Conquest, scant effort seems to have been made to attract skilled labor and still less to make use of what was available. Only about 1,000 immigrants could claim a trade, and there was scarcely any incentive to learn one in the colony. A major drawback seems to have been the lack of an entrepreneurial class with the will and the means to develop the country.2

In view of the subsequent orientation of the mass of French Canadians, it is significant that few immigrants were farmers. Most of them were laborers with no special skills. A venturesome spirit was the major characteristic of many, and the forest was a magnet to them. The fur trade was a natural outlet for the restless spirit that typified the courreur de bois.

THE CONQUEST

The debility of the French-speaking middle class in Canada became increasingly apparent under the British regime. Within a generation after the Conquest commerce was practically a monopoly of the English-speaking newcomers, and the French had become identified largely with farming. The substitution of one national group for the other in the colonial business world was not the result of coercion or deliberate policy, but rather the inevitable outcome of new circumstances. About 100 of the local noblesse, including a number involved in the fur trade, went along when the military and other elements identified with the French regime returned to France. Few civil servants or agents of metropolitan enterprises remained. Among those who stayed, less than 500 were seigneurs, lawyers, doctors, or merchants. Few had adequate means to adapt to new conditions of trade, and the others soon learned they could expect little assistance from London suppliers or bankers.

The reorientation of the economic life of most of the French residents of Canada in the first few decades following the Conquest was accompanied by social, and to a greater degree political, changes which in the long run assured them survival as a distinct community. A benign military governor, General James Murray, was able to protect them from the harsh legal and religious prescriptions initially decreed by London, which wanted to hasten the assimilation of His Majesty's new subjects. Under his successor, Guy Carleton, the Quebec Act authorized free exercise of their religion and retention of French civil law.

Representative government was granted them, literally against their

2. Ibid., pp. 88, 135.
will, by the Constitutional Act of 1791. The English merchants had long demanded a voice in government, but the leaders of the French community were fearful of popular sovereignty, and their views subsequently prevented the French element from taking advantage of its numerical force. The Act divided the colony, giving the United Empire Loyalists of Upper Canada (present-day Ontario) their own province. In Lower Canada (today's Province of Quebec), the French Canadians were kept in a minority in the appointive legislative and executive councils, the real seats of power, but their numbers assured them a preponderance in the legislative assembly.

By the time the new regime began to function, the seeds of political dissension were beginning to germinate. The promise of agricultural markets for French-Canadian wheat in the new empire began to dissipate quickly, first in the face of competition from the south and later from Upper Canada. Lack of incentive and of technical instruction restricted full utilization of the land, and the growing population created pressures for expansion which were satisfied under neither the seigneurial land-tenure system implanted by the French nor the purchase arrangement made available by the British administration in areas that had not been opened to settlement under the French regime.

One additional factor was of prime importance in impeding French-Canadian business enterprise. The rudimentary educational system which had existed under the French regime had been disrupted by the Conquest, and for several decades there was practically no organized instruction. As a result, the vast majority of the French-speaking population, at the turn of the century, were illiterate. The seminaries at Quebec and Montreal were the only secondary schools for boys in 1800, but the traditional humanist education they dispensed was largely foreign to the developing capitalist-oriented society their graduates faced. The French merchants had been practically eliminated from the fur trade by the time the lumber industry began to expand at the turn of the century. Whether because of lack of capital or because they had lost the taste for risk, the French Canadians were largely hesitant to diversify their investments or to participate in the new enterprises.

The pattern which was to dominate French-English relations in Canada to the present day was fixed in that period. The educated element of the French-speaking population was prepared for the professions; it had no other outlet for its energies but politics. In control of the assembly, it was in nearly constant conflict with a commercial middle class composed almost exclusively of the English-speaking merchants. The French-dominated assembly became the champion of the rural areas,
insisting that taxation be based on trade, not on land. In Upper Canada
such conflicts pitted elected representatives against the appointed execu-
tive branch which held the real power; in Lower Canada the confronta-
tion was predominantly cultural. The result was the rebellion of
1837–38. The Catholic hierarchy and French-Canadian seigneurs op-
posed the uprising, while some English-speaking Quebeckers sided with
the rebels. In Upper Canada, sympathizers attempted a parallel revolt.
Nevertheless, the leader of the rebellion, Louis-Joseph Papineau, had
proclaimed that “one nation should never govern another,” and it is as a
symbol of French-English antagonism that the insurrection is remem-
bered in Canada.

With government at an impasse, the legislative assembly in Lower
Canada was suspended, and London was obliged to take action. The
British administration dispatched Lord Durham to take over and to
make recommendations for a viable solution. The situation he found is
summed up in an oft-quoted passage from his Report: “I expected to
find a contest between a government and a people. I found two nations
warring in the bosom of a single state: I found a struggle, not of
principles, but of races; and I perceived that it would be idle to attempt
any amelioration of laws or institutions until we could first succeed in
terminating the deadly animosity that now separates the inhabitants of
lower Canada into the hostile divisions of French and English.”

Durham recognized that the political problem devolved from the
conflict between the elected assembly and the clique entrenched in the
executive branch of each provincial government. The solution he envis-
aged was a greater degree of representative government. Since this
implied a French-speaking majority in Lower Canada, he recommended
a legislative union of the two provinces to assure English ascendancy.
Durham was highly critical of the French Canadians, whom he charac-
terized as a “people with no history and no literature.” The only way to
assure their descendants a fair share of the benefits of life in North
America, he felt, was to integrate them thoroughly into the dominant
English-speaking milieu.

The proposal to submerge the French Canadians long obscured for
many thoughtful members of both language groups the over-all impor-
tance of Durham’s recommendations. They could not have guessed that
the theory of decentralization he propounded would soon become the

4. Ibid., p. 150.
basis on which the major English-speaking dependencies of the British Empire were to evolve toward self-government. In the territory to which it was specifically addressed, however, its immediate application was to falter over the language hurdle.

The Act of Union, passed in 1840, accepted the major recommendations of the Durham report. An uneasy compromise was reached whereby equal representation was given to the two provinces in the new legislative assembly, although “Canada East” had 200,000 more inhabitants than “Canada West.” English was established as the sole official language.

The merit of the Union was to bring responsible government to Canada and to establish the principle of the co-operation of both French- and English-speaking communities in government. Louis Lafontaine and Robert Baldwin resisted London’s attempts to dominate; by 1846 the adoption of free trade made tight control over the colonies less important, and when the Liberals were returned to power in Westminster, London gave way. By 1850 Canada West had outstripped Canada East in population, and agitation for representation by population began.

Baldwin’s successor, George Brown, was a convinced advocate of “rep-by-pop” and a violent opponent of “French domination” of the Union. A new basis of English-French co-operation was found, however, in economic development, and John A. Macdonald and Georges-Étienne Cartier put together the only coalition able to muster a majority in the late 1850s. This combination was responsible for the construction of the Grand Trunk Railway, which did much to knit the country together, but in the end it succumbed to sectional pressures. The “rep-by-pop” issue continued to build up support, and cabinet instability brought government to a standstill. Uncertainty was increased by concern over the threat posed by the United States, whose economic and cultural appeal was considerable. The Civil War and the Fenian incursions into Canada had aroused fear of military involvement, and the westward pressure of American settlers raised the question of control over the Northwest territories. The need to open the West became increasingly urgent also as a source of farm products and as a market for expanding industry in the East. All of these factors stressed the need to find a way out of the political impasse.

The only solution which would satisfy Canada West’s insistence on “rep-by-pop” and at the same time give French Canadians assurance for their language, religion, and customs was dissolution of the Union and creation of a confederation. Although the ideal would have been to give
each part of the Union freedom from interference by the other in as wide an area of essential interests as possible, the leading spirits of confederation wanted to retain for the central government powers equivalent to those of a unitary state. The possibility of bringing the maritime provinces into the new regime bolstered confederation proponents, and agreement was reached on a balance of power which permitted periods of ascendancy for both the provinces and the central government in the first century of confederation. With the French Canadians outnum­bered, the fears that had blocked a similar solution a generation earlier no longer prevailed; the apprehensions of the English-speaking minority in Lower Canada were discounted on this basis and on the experience of the preceding decades.

When Parliament in London passed the British North America Act in 1867, only four provinces united to form the new Canadian Confederation. The guarantee of financial grants and of an intercolonial railway helped convince New Brunswick and Nova Scotia to join with Quebec and Ontario. Prince Edward Island entered in 1873, but Newfoundland held aloof until 1949. In the West, the Hudson’s Bay Company had first to be bought off to establish Canadian sovereignty. A show of force was necessary to subdue the métis (French and British half-breeds) on the Red River. The Manitoba Act assured them French-language rights and Catholic schools when the province was established in 1870, but the first major threat to confederation arose there shortly thereafter over the language issue, when settlers from Ontario rejected the French-speakers’ claim to equality. The promise of a railroad to the Pacific was a major lure to British Columbia, which joined in 1873. French-language rights were not a question in the case of British Columbia, but when Saskatchewan and Alberta were admitted in 1905, a cabinet crisis was averted only when Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Canada’s first French-Canadian prime minister, backed down on school rights for the French-speaking minorities in those parts of the Northwest territories.

In practice, the new Confederation proved in the beginning to be less centralized than some of its English-speaking proponents had anticipated. The size of the major provinces was a guarantee of friction with the central government. Moreover, the provincial legislatures quickly became important centers for the administration of local affairs as well as for the struggle against the federal parties. Most important of all, however, was probably a series of judgments by the Privy Council in London, especially from 1883 to 1937, which restricted the general power of federal legislation and widened that of the provincial legislatures.
SURVIVAL

The Confederation put into the hands of the French Canadians for the first time a large measure of control over their own affairs. In one sense, however, these powers were illusory, at least for the era, and in another their dimensions were neither perceived nor understood. The French Canadians made up less than one-third of the population of the new Confederation. They composed three-quarters of the 1,000,000 inhabitants of Quebec, but economic power was almost entirely in the hands of the English-speaking minority which dominated the cities. The countryside accounted for 85 per cent of the population of the province, but in 1861 Montreal had more English than French inhabitants; Quebec City was 40 per cent English; and smaller urban centers were largely English.

Economic and, increasingly, social problems bearing directly on Quebec continued to arise from factors over which the French Canadians themselves had little or no control. Pressures already in operation tended to assimilate all the population of the province to the economic and social structures of the rest of the country and, indeed, of the continent. The central government had almost total control of trade and financial matters. Quebec was extremely slow to recognize that the Constitution left it broad responsibilities in the social area.

By 1867 the socioeconomic patterns that had encompassed most of the French-Canadian population since, and largely as a result of, the Conquest had been in the process of disintegration for well over a generation. Almost a century was to go by, however, before the leadership of the French-Canadian community would be prepared to acknowledge that the way of life which had satisfied the needs of a small populace scattered over a large underdeveloped area was no longer adequate. Even if the leaders of the day were aware of the scope of the problem facing them, it is questionable whether they would have found a satisfactory way to cope with it, because continental factors were at play. To the degree that the provincial government undertook a role in attempting to find a solution to the expansion of its population, it exhorted fidelity to the soil and encouraged settlement of additional marginal or submarginal land. Quebec leaders were propounding what had become an article of faith; the energies of the community were devoted to the maintenance of a way of life which its spokesmen had come to identify with the ability of the group to survive. The dominant theme was the "vocation" of French Canada to agriculture. Although
the majority of French Canadians had been obliged to turn to farming through force of circumstance following the Conquest, a myth was firmly implanted. The Church was a consistent advocate of rural life, and by the beginning of the nineteenth century nearly all spokesmen for the community were fully committed to agriculture as the ideal existence for their compatriots.

The reasons for this derived from the origins of New France and from the vitality of the French-speaking community after 1760. Central to both was the position of the Church. The French colony had had two objectives: trade and colonization. Throughout the 150 years of French control, the civil administrators and the Church were at odds over the true role of France in the New World. The churchmen charged that their mission to the Indians was compromised by the use of brandy as a medium of exchange in the fur trade and by the dissolute life of the coureur de bois, who represented the white man in the hinterland. They dreamed of establishing a model colony based on agriculture. This became possible with the exclusion of the French Canadians from the fur trade soon after the Conquest. The rapid development of new farm lands was accompanied by an increase in the influence of the Church. Where the administration of the ancien régime had served as a counterweight to the clergy, the new rulers relied on the Church as an intermediary. Its position was thus doubly reinforced, because the withdrawal of the French administration left it as the only instrument to which the population could turn with confidence. At the same time, the new government was ready to depend on the clergy to bring influence to bear to assure the loyalty of the populace.

The role of the Church in assuring the survival of French Canada as a distinct community cannot be overstated. In rural areas largely remote from English influence the parish system furnished the administrative and social framework which permitted the people to keep their cultural characteristics, despite the flood of British immigrants to the cities and to other parts of the territory. In later years, the transition to urban life was simplified by the integration of the new arrivals from the country into the network of city parishes, which expanded and adapted reasonably well to the initial influx. The personal relationship which had characterized the rural parish was considerably weakened in the urban environment, but it was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that the effects of bureaucracy helped to break down the social ties which made the parish the center of activity it had been in an earlier and simpler age.

It is open to question whether the exhortation of the clergy would
have sufficed to turn the populace to farming, but with other avenues closed, the enthusiastic backing of the Church soon led to the identification of French Canada with the idealized simplicity of rural life. By 1820, however, the possibilities of agricultural expansion in the province were practically exhausted, and much of the land under cultivation began to show the effects of overexploitation. The exodus from the land began. Nearly 40,000 farms were abandoned between 1844 and 1861. After 1840, French Canadians migrated to New England at the rate of 20,000 annually; it is estimated that 500,000 people left Quebec for New England in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Since it was often the most venturesome element of the population which chose to emigrate, there was a noticeable degree of social inertia in Quebec between 1850 and 1925, the period of the most intense outflow.

In an effort to halt the emigration, attempts were launched to open up new areas to colonization. The ideal of a rural Catholic and French culture based on a romanticized conception of what New France had been stems from this period. It reached its heyday in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when Curé Labelle sparked a massive effort to settle the Laurentian foothills north of Montreal. Quebec had been 80 per cent rural in 1861; by the end of World War I a rural-urban balance had been reached, and by 1961 the percentages of a hundred years earlier had been reversed. Nevertheless, it was 1950 before the Quebec bishops, in their collective pastoral letter on labor, conceded that the urban worker might aspire to a spiritual life as edifying as that available to the tiller of the soil.

The orientation of the mass of Quebec's population toward agriculture meant that most people in the province tended to minimize the importance of other economic activities and to place emphasis on careers which complemented farming. In the early years of English domination, a tradition was established in which the liberal professions, with an outlet in politics, were the only openings for the elite, other than the clergy. The bias in favor of medicine and law was strong enough to cripple the development of a business-oriented middle class of any importance. Those French Canadians who had established themselves in commerce or industry did not encourage their offspring to follow in their footsteps. By 1840 there were numerous French-Canadian merchants and manufacturers. Their children entered the secondary school system, which prepared for the liberal professions rather than for business.

Cultural influences are undoubtedly important aspects of the lag in Quebec's industrial development. Education is usually cited in this
regard, particularly the lack of training in engineering and the general orientation of schooling toward noncommercial pursuits. The absence of an aggressive entrepreneurial spirit is usually attributed to this factor or to the otherworldly outlook of most French-Canadian teachers. The relatively inefficient methods of cultivation that prevailed on most Quebec farms in the nineteenth century also bear a heavy responsibility. An economic historian points out that wasteful agricultural practices create major distortions in the allocation of resources and seriously hamper the whole economy.\(^5\)

It is questionable, however, whether fidelity to traditional patterns explains adequately the relatively slow exploitation of the province's natural resources in comparison with Ontario's development. Finance and business interests in Montreal, which largely controlled the Quebec economy, were almost exclusively English-speaking. Presumably they would have been alert to expansion opportunities in their own province, particularly in view of the reservoir of manpower which was spilling its excess into New England and the West.

Two French-Canadian professors of economics make a good case for a more basic explanation. They question the validity of the cultural argument by citing the rapid industrialization achieved between 1939 and 1950. Employment in manufacturing increased in that eleven-year period at ten times the rate of the century before 1939. The absence of any appreciable change in cultural factors led them to look elsewhere for the cause. They argue that geographic and economic factors were the prime considerations; agricultural expansion and emigration were the only possible outlets in the nineteenth century. They point out that a shift from emphasis on commercialism to industrialization characterized the North American economy when the exploitation of the iron and coal deposits of the Appalachian and Great Lakes regions began. Just as the Atlantic ports—except New York, where the railroads converged—lost their earlier importance, Quebec, which had depended on lumbering and building of wooden ships, was in no position to develop heavy industry. Like New England in the same period, it turned to textile and shoe production, which benefited from the abundance of cheap labor. The shift from wooden sailing ships to steel and steam was a blow to the Maritime Provinces as well as to Quebec. Southern Ontario, on the other hand, was strategically located with relation to water-borne and

rail traffic and in addition profited from a judicious erection of tariff walls.⁶

Support for the predominance of international economic factors over domestic cultural influences in promoting Quebec's material advancement can be adduced from more recent developments. The current industrialization of Quebec is intimately related to the economic evolution of the rest of North America. The depletion of pulpwood sources in the United States, the increasing importance of nonferrous metals, and the use of hydroelectric power all favored the economic development of Quebec. The effect of such changes is evident from a comparison of production figures in the past half-century. In 1920 agriculture accounted for 37 per cent of Quebec production, and manufacturing, 38 per cent. By 1959, agriculture accounted for only 5.7 per cent, while manufacturing contributed 62 per cent.

When the industrialization of Quebec began to accelerate at the end of the nineteenth century, French Canadians had a largely passive role. Some had gained control of tanneries, sawmills, and shoe factories in the preceding decades, but on the whole it was as a source of unskilled labor that French Canadians participated in this phase of provincial development. The resultant division of labor was based on what a Quebec sociologist characterized as the "French-Canadian differential." Finan­cial, managerial, and technical functions were in English hands, while the French were limited to services, clerical, small industry, commercial, and professional activities.

With almost no role in directing the industrialization of their province, French-Canadian leaders lagged woefully in developing a social framework adapted to the rapid urbanization it entailed. They maintained their nostalgic commitment to agriculture into the mid-1940s, and as a result, social legislation was minimal. One of the most caustic critics of Quebec social policies in the first half of the twentieth century is Pierre Elliott Trudeau, University of Montreal economics professor who became a Liberal Member of Parliament in 1965. He charges that theorists, who did not understand the industrial phenomenon, misused papal social encyclicals to endorse the traditional assumptions. They distorted papal strictures against the abuses of capitalism to excuse xenophobia and the rejection of correctives proposed by the federal

government. As a result, Quebec fumbled unemployment assistance in the depression of the 1930s, delayed application of old-age pensions legislation, and permitted action on family welfare allotments to go by default to Ottawa, although it was clearly a provincial prerogative.\(^8\)

Similarly, Church spokesmen used papal objections to atheistic socialism to condemn the social-democratic Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, many of whose proposals eventually found their way into the platforms of the two traditional Canadian political parties. The major prescriptions put forth by the Quebec Church and by its theoreticians to restore economic and social vigor were back to the land, small business, co-operatives, Catholic unionism, and corporatism. The first of these was a reflex action recommending a return to an idyllic past that had never existed and that had no real meaning to an urban working class three or four generations removed from the soil. The second reflected both a recognition that some French Canadians had established a foothold in small commercial enterprises and artisanal manufacturing, and an aversion to the impersonal corporation under English-Canadian or U.S. management, which had become increasingly important in Quebec since the start to the twentieth century. The tendency of successful French-Canadian entrepreneurs or their heirs to dispose of the family business to outside interests was a major drawback for this recommendation, from the nationalist viewpoint.

The co-operative movement, particularly as regards credit unions, has been one of the few areas in which French-Canadian enterprise has shown solid results. It was less successful in other areas, however, partly because attempts to establish consumer co-operatives were entrusted to the Saint-Jean-Baptiste societies, whose members were in large part small proprietors and merchants, with personal interests adverse to such ideas.

Catholic workingmen's organizations were long equivalent to company unionism, with Church officials exerting a paternalistic influence which put a higher premium on social co-operation and peace than on workers' rights. Not until the 1940s were any really positive results achieved. The 1949 strike in the asbestos industry was a social breakthrough that cleared the way for the aggressive unionism that has marked the French-language organization since.

Almost as popular as le retour à la terre with French-Canadian leaders as a cure-all for Quebec's social and economic problems, the appeal for

the establishment of a corporate system has been equally futile. The hope of social peace based on equilibrium among classes, which is the basis of Catholic interest in corporatism, was reinforced in French Canada by the belief that such an arrangement would be admirably adapted to safeguarding French-Canadian institutions and customs against English-Canadian and U.S. encroachments. It had a special appeal to traditionalists who feared that their positions of leadership would be undermined by recourse to democratic ways.

The relative stability of Quebec provincial politics since confederation seems paradoxical in view of the social and economic pressures to which French-Canadian society has been subject in the past century. The paradox is less striking when the shifts that did occur are understood in relation to the situations that produced them. The Conservatives dominated the provincial scene almost to the end of the nineteenth century. From 1897 to 1935 the Liberals maintained uninterrupted control. For the next quarter of a century—except for most of the war years—Maurice Duplessis and his Union Nationale were the forces that ruled Quebec.

Although nationalism was important the first two times power changed hands, the predominant factors in all three political upsets were economic and social conditions. In the first instance, the continuing economic stagnation that prevailed throughout much of the last quarter of the nineteenth century eventually made itself felt at the polls. The Liberals in turn were ousted in the depths of the great depression. The defeat of the Union Nationale in 1960 was mainly the result of the industrial revolution which followed World War II. In each case the change-over was delayed by the built-in lag in the electoral system due largely to flagrant inequalities in the numerical importance of the various counties. Some adjustments have been made from time to time, but there has been no complete overhaul of the provincial electoral map since confederation. The overrepresentation of the rural areas had been the mainstay of the Duplessis regime, which achieved power initially through an alliance with reform forces in the cities. Duplessis quickly eased his partners off the stage and established the quasi-dictatorial regime best known outside Quebec for the Padlock Law, which permitted sequestering premises suspected of serving as outlets for Communist activity and similar infringements on civil liberties which the Canadian Supreme Court has been obliged to redress. Within the province, the premier made his mark by an unparalleled exercise of personal power and blatant recourse to patronage.

A University of Montreal sociologist explained the anomaly of so
cynical and corrupt a regime in a province as honest and religious as Quebec. He saw the situation as a modern counterpart of a traditional society of the Middle Ages, where everybody knew everybody else and all relationships were on a personal, hand-to-hand level. Such a system works well without serious corruption in small communities based on a set of generally accepted values. When some degree of pluralism is introduced, as was increasingly the case in Quebec, when moral order is replaced by technical order, the old system of patronage must give way to impersonal bureaucratic efficiency. A further complication existed in the Quebec situation, however, in that the French Canadians have never learned to identify themselves with the state. When the subjects of France's absolute monarch passed under British rule, they were carefully excluded from the seat of power. A hundred years after the Conquest, they had learned how to use the institutions of representative government, but even after a century of confederation they must still be convinced that at least the provincial state is a creature of their community. The recurrent outbursts of nationalist sentiment that enliven the history of Quebec evidence this lack of commitment.

TRADITIONAL NATIONALISM

Today's rabid nationalists would have it that the separatist movement was born the day after Wolfe defeated Montcalm. Such a view is almost certainly anachronistic. Although the French-British rivalry in North America may have developed national instincts more rapidly than in Europe, the nineteenth century was just beginning to perceive such differentiation, and the warm personal relationships, including considerable intermarriage, that characterized the early years of the English domination in Canada tend to discount any rabid anti-British sentiment so early in the life of the new subjects of George III. There is no evidence of any sense of national sentiment following the cession; other than concern for their individual economic outlook, apprehension over possible obstacles to the practice of their religion was the closest thing to a nascent nationalism among them.

Within a generation, however, awareness of their isolation heightened as they were increasingly passed over in the distribution of public posts. In the first quarter of the nineteenth century “nation” and “nationality” were in common use in referring to “French Canadians.” Animosity

toward the English merchants intensified as their control of the economy became increasingly apparent. By the 1830s, the malaise from poor crops and the pinch of land was aggravated by massive immigration from the British Isles. The threat of rebellion was unmistakable in 1934, when Louis-Joseph Papineau presented to the assembly a list of grievances in the Ninety-Two Resolutions, which he called a bill of rights. The revolt of 1837–38 was a spontaneous expression of these sentiments in more direct form than the "Patriots" themselves had been prepared to undertake. Moreover, the unrest in Upper Canada made clear that more than ethnic differences were involved.

Nevertheless, the organized expression of French-Canadian nationalism dates from this period. Durham's slurs on French-Canadian culture led François-Xavier Garneau to write the history which became the foundation stone of both French-Canadian literature and nationalist doctrine. He made explicit the link of language, religion, and customs which was the basic tenet of Quebec nationalism until the 1940s.

The language rights of French-speaking communities in the other provinces and the execution of the French-Indian rebel Louis Riel kept nationalism alive in Quebec in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. English Canadians today are in general agreement that Riel was a demented victim of frontier justice. They acknowledge that he should not have been hanged for his part in the métis uprising of 1885, in what was later to become the province of Saskatchewan. He has remained for Quebec a martyr to the cause of French-Canadian rights and a symbol of the tyranny of numbers. More than any other event since confederation, this incident brought home to the Quebec people that in a showdown on English-French lines, Ottawa was responsible to the English-speaking majority. This realization inclined the French Quebeckers to look increasingly to their provincial capital as the main bulwark against the rest of Canada.

Less dramatic than the Riel incident, but more pertinent to the modern problem of French rights in Canada, is the question of French-language schools outside the province of Quebec. New Brunswick had outlawed separate schools in 1871, and the Ottawa government induced the French Canadians to resort to the courts for redress rather than press for federal action and thereby create a precedent which might later be used against Quebec. In 1890, Manitoba took similar action against separate schools and dropped French as an official language in the province. The issue nearly split the nation. Though a compromise was eventually reached, it satisfied neither side, and it has fed the fires of Quebec animosity to the present day.
In large part, the refusal to recognize French language rights outside Quebec was traceable to the basic anti-Catholicism of the anti-French forces. This in turn, however, was only one aspect of English-Canadian British jingoism which was rife in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. In Canada, imperial sentiment was fostered by heavy immigration from the British Isles and by parallel investment of British funds. Its impact was felt on international as well as on internal issues; the Boer War was the first of a series of conflicts involving Britain which put cruel strain on English-French relations in the Confederation. The country had hardly recovered from this quarrel when the school question recurred in a new setting. The accession of Alberta and Saskatchewan to provincial status was the occasion for an attack, sparked by the Orange Order, on the provision of the enabling bills which provided for continuation of the rights to separate schools embodied in the North-West Territories Act of 1875. Once again French-language rights were sacrificed to compromise, and Quebec's impression of the majority's lack of concern for minority interests was further strengthened.

The school question was only one aspect of the next major English-French confrontation. This time, Ontario was the scene of conflict. The occasion was new legislation limiting the use of French as the language of instruction. Enforcement coincided with a decision by the Canadian government to revoke a promise not to impose conscription for service in World War I. The drive for volunteers had been clumsily handled by Ottawa, with little regard for French-Canadian sensibilities. The school issue fed animosities on both sides, and the conscription legislation split the two language groups more deeply than any other issue since the beginnings of the Confederation. The only members from Quebec the government had in the Commons were three representatives of English-speaking constituencies. In the Quebec legislature, a motion was introduced expressing the province's willingness to accept the breakup of confederation if the rest of Canada considered Quebec an obstacle to union and progress. The motion was withdrawn after considerable debate in the press and in the legislative assembly on the merits of the question. Although the consensus of the chamber was clearly opposed to such drastic measures, the time devoted to consideration of the motion is an indication of the temper of the moment.

Nationalist sentiment during much of the first half of the twentieth century was embodied in two individuals, Henri Bourassa, who founded Le Devoir in 1910, and Canon Lionel Groulx, who initiated the teaching of Canadian history at the University of Montreal in 1915. They typify the two aspects nationalism holds for French Canadians. A
grandson of Louis-Joseph Papineau, Bourassa was a passionate champion of French rights in Canada. His polemics against military contributions to imperial wars first brought him into conflict with English-Canadian sentiment on the Boer question and were influential in marshaling French-Canadian opinion against conscription in 1917. He was a pan-Canadian, however—a spokesman for Canadian autonomy without foresaking the British tie.

Groulx, on the other hand, was the spokesman for a narrower brand of nationalism, and his ideas dominated nationalist thought between the two world wars. He was largely responsible for the mythology that filled French-Canadian youth with nostalgic pride in the exploits of the French regime in Canada. He stressed the antagonisms between the two conflicting language groups subsequent to 1760, and the seeds of separatist discontent are readily discernible in much of his work. Though Groulx cannot be charged with the wave of separatism which welled up in the 1930s, it is clear that its leaders found in his emotion-laden rhetoric sanction for many of their prejudices, including a dose of racism which for some of them was an excuse for anti-Semitism.

On the whole, however, the French-Canadian nationalism of that period was a reaction to the depression. The lower rungs of the economic ladder were occupied largely by French Canadians, but as in the 1960s, much of the most extreme agitation stemmed from youths whose parents were sufficiently prosperous to assure them a college education. Unlike the most recent past, corporatism and back-to-the-land movements were regularly put forth as remedies for unemployment, which was particularly severe among urban French-Canadian communities. Fascist overtones, which were common then, have been totally absent in the recent past. Many of the themes of the early 1960s find a parallel, however, in the demand of the prewar years: equal rights for the two languages, a proportional distribution of federal jobs, safeguards for the French Canadians' natural resources heritage, social legislation and nationalization of public utilities, and an autonomous "Laurentian" state.

The conscription issue during World War II was handled with more finesse than had been the case in 1917. Nevertheless, most French Canadians felt that the outcome demonstrated once again the predominance of the English-speaking majority over the national government, regardless of the views of the French-speaking minority. The French Canadians thought they had been given an unequivocal promise by the federal government that conscription would not be invoked for overseas service. In 1942, Prime Minister Mackenzie King called a national plebiscite on the question; the public was asked whether it would
release the government from its commitment not to send draftees abroad. The French Canadians argued that such a plebiscite was dishonest. The promise had been made to French Canada, they insisted; yet all Canadians were asked to decide whether the government should be held to its engagement. The vote was 63.7 per cent to free the government's hands. In Quebec, however, it was 71 per cent against a change; estimates put the French-Canadian vote across the country as high as 80 per cent. King waited until 1944 before imposing limited conscription for overseas service. Although the reaction in Quebec was much milder than in the previous war, it was sufficiently resentful to threaten an upheaval in political allegiances. Anticonscriptionism brought wide support to the Bloc Populaire Canadien, a movement of nationalistic youth which was organized in 1942. It quickly gained a wide hold on Quebec opinion, increasingly incensed over attacks on French Canada's war role. Some of its spokesmen clearly foreshadowed the separatists of twenty years later: they propounded a "French State" which would nationalize public utilities, regulate industry, and institute a vast social welfare program. Wide divergences divided the leadership, however, particularly on economic questions, and the radicalism of some of its extremist spokesmen alarmed the lower clergy and rural voters. In the 1944 provincial elections, many conservative voters turned from the Bloc to Duplessis, whom the Liberals had dislodged at the beginning of the war. Even social-minded nationalists considered him preferable to the Liberals, who were committed to the federal government's conscription policy. As a result, Duplessis's Union Nationale regained power and entrenched itself until 1960.

Though Duplessis retained office largely by exploiting Quebec's nationalist sentiment vis-à-vis Ottawa, his regime posed no real threat to Canadian unity. English-Canadian and American businessmen found his nationalism a convenient façade behind which lucrative investments were at least as safe as on their own soil. The Duplessis regime was an anachronism in the postwar period. It tried, with less and less success, to contain a variety of forces which were increasingly close to the explosive level when the leader's sudden death occurred in 1959.

THE NEW NATIONALISM

After two centuries of daily contact and frequent discord, the two major national elements in Canada have left unexploited few areas of possible mutual recrimination. From the late 1700s, there is a continual record of French-Canadian complaints against discrimination in the
civil service, economic preference for *les Anglais*, or lack of regard for the French language. A pair of French-Canadian university professors advance the hypothesis that a cyclical relationship can be established between the most extreme manifestations of Quebec nationalism and various socioeconomic phenomena which breed similar responses among English-Canadians. Periodic rigidities in institutional structures, they say, choke off normal avenues of occupational mobility. Frustrated middle class elements react by attacking what they perceive as barriers to their social, economic, and political advancement.\(^\text{10}\)

The predominance of the middle class in the development of French-Canadian nationalism is beyond dispute; the expansion of that sector in the modern industrial society has accounted for much of the recent wave of nationalist sentiment in Quebec. Another professor, from Montreal, relates the extremist drive to the end of the Duplessis regime and the implicit promise of a share in the exercise of power for the newly emerging social segments. These latter find the clergy dominant in education, English Canadians in finance, Americans in culture; only the Quebec state belongs to the entirety of French Canadians. Therefore, they reason, the totality of powers should be in the hands of the state, which will make accessible the various positions now monopolized by a limited group or by “foreigners.”\(^\text{11}\)

Whether because of socioeconomic factors or not, striking new facets have been unfolding in the most recent manifestation of nationalism in Quebec. In the past, the key word was “survivance,” and primacy was given to defense. The French language was to be cherished and protected because it was the bulwark of the Catholic faith. Civil law and traditional practices were to be shielded from change, because the secret of survival was immutability. Though French Canada seems more deeply committed now than ever before to the defense of its cultural heritage, it is no longer on the defensive. It is pressing the attack. Its new confident, aggressive attitude denotes a reversal of mind that was never evident before. It is true that the messianic nationalism propounded by Canon Groulx was optimistic in scope, but its overtones were otherworldly; it held out the promise of eventual reward for the practice of the simple virtues most readily applied in a rural environment. Groulx himself preached the need to strive for economic power, but until the postwar period, the effect of such advice was minimal.

Formerly, French-Canadian nationalism was evoked by overt outside

pressures, usually an eruption of English Canadianism, as in the school and conscription issues, or by economic depression. No such excitant is apparent in the current instance. The rapid postwar industrialization might be adduced as sufficient reason, but this is an intensification rather than a new phenomenon. Moreover, the reaction seems more far-reaching than the threat implicit in further industrialization would warrant. For want of more obvious external stimuli, the cause must be sought within French-Canadian society itself. The tenor of pertinent changes there is apparent from the evolution of some of Groulx's disciples.

Michel Brunet, professor of American history at the University of Montreal, has made an avocation of Canadian history since the Conquest. A strong supporter of the majority-minority theory, Brunet argues that Quebec must maximize the number of situations in which provincial autonomy is effective. Thus the French-Canadian majority in the province will be independent of the English-Canadian majority in the rest of Canada in all decisions taken in fields where provincial autonomy is admitted. Quebec, moreover, can devote adequate attention to economic development, he maintains, by concentrating the energies formerly dissipated in endless struggles to safeguard traditions, language, and religion. Brunet's views on the economic handicaps French Canadians labored under since the Conquest have had wide dissemination, and their influence on Quebec youth should not be discounted. As with Groulx, for earlier generations, Brunet and his colleague Maurice Séguin have been extremely effective propagandists; unlike Groulx, however, they seem to be having considerable influence in orienting youth toward positive endeavors rather than toward squandering their energies in recrimination.

The neohistorians have been expounding their theories since the mid-1940s, but it is only since the end of the Duplessis regime that a broader segment of intellectuals has taken an active role in propagating nationalist dogma. Many leftist intellectuals who, under Duplessis, rejected all forms of nationalism as contrary to the dignity of the individual, changed their minds in the early 1960s; they began to see a national aspect in the dilemma of the French Canadian who feels completely foreign to the only concept of pan-Canadianism available to him. They reason that respect for the individual implies respect for his language; by defending the language group, then, they are defending the rights of the individual.12

One incident a short time before Duplessis's demise was primarily responsible for the sharp rise in nationalism among intellectuals. For the first two months of 1959, the French network of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation was silenced by a strike sparked by its program producers. René Lévesque, subsequently one of the most dynamic ministers in the provincial government, was a key figure among the strikers. He had been one of the most popular TV personalities in Quebec because of an outstanding news commentary program in which he had been featured. Lévesque made no secret of his conviction that the government would have taken immediate steps to settle a similar walk-out on the English-language network. He drew the conclusion that Ottawa had little understanding of French Canada and even less concern about developments which affect only French-speaking citizens.

Lévesque's views help explain the commitment of a sizable proportion of educated young Quebeckers to a nationalist philosophy oriented toward their province rather than toward Canada. Lévesque is a symbol of French-Canadian aspirations; he says he wants to remain a Canadian, but not at any price: "I know Quebec is my country. I'm not quite convinced Canada is," he told one English Canadian in 1963, when he was Quebec's minister of natural resources. Those who talk about that legal entity, the Canadian nation, he told an editorialist of Le Devoir, usually forget that a more basic and profound reality lies in the human, cultural, and social entity embodied in the French-Canadian nation. He believes that no nation can get along without nationalism, which he defines as basically man's desire for the self-respect that comes from having control over his own destiny. He dismisses as a caricature of individualism the concern for human values expressed by some French Canadians who question Quebec's ability to respect the individual. Such concern, he feels, would dehumanize the individual by cutting him off from the national community which supplies much of his strength. This consciousness of collective strength and particularly confidence in its use is something new in French Canada. It denotes a dynamic outward interest replacing the introspective defense mentality which characterized French-Canadian nationalism in the past.

Of signal importance to an assessment of the new face of French-Canadian nationalism is the changing role of the Church in Quebec. Traditional nationalist doctrine was in large part formulated by the clergy, and lay champions of nationalism stressed the role the language

played in maintaining fidelity to the religious heritage. The Quebec Church no longer equates loyalty to the French language with religious orthodoxy; well over one-third of Canada's Catholic population is not French-speaking, and adherence to French has not provided an absolute guarantee of religious practice in Quebec. Moreover, the new generations of young clerics are more interested in social action than in strictly French-Canadian national problems. Finally, many of the most fervent exponents of the new nationalism are frankly anticlerical; some of them are avowed agnostics. Most of the new nationalist leaders view the Church as only one aspect of a politico-socio-economic complex. The state and the economy are their major interests; they refuse to identify their national cause with religious belief.

Every French Canadian is a nationalist at heart; there are few who do not harbor some measure of resentment against their English-speaking fellows. There are wide variations, however, in what the concept of nationalism holds for individual Canadiens and in what each would consider desirable to achieve nationalist goals. The spectrum runs from acceptance of the status quo, through several fairly definite democratic programs for change, and some less readily identifiable postures, to the totalitarian—and rare—commitment of the terrorists. Even for the majority, which has not found it too difficult, to date, to acquiesce in the limitations set by past political decisions, there is a deep conviction that an injustice has been perpetrated and that it should be righted. Most French Canadians remain hopeful that eventually their language rights will be respected across Canada.

It is not always clear where the line between confederation and independence would fall for many acknowledged nationalists. Jean-Marc Léger of Le Devoir has frequently expressed his separatist sentiments, yet he professes to see a future for Quebec within the Confederation. He warns against the "dangerous illusion" that "national emancipation" is really under way and lists his requirements for a "normal nation": its state, economy, and institutions at every level attuned to the national genius, "a certain measure of participation in international life."¹⁵ The programs of the pro-independence groups demand little more. Many who stop short of Léger's position hold up the aim of commanding recognition by the sheer superiority of the French-Canadian contribution to national life. This is the position of the moderates who insist that the Confederation assures Quebec all necessary safeguards for a separate cultural existence.

¹⁵. Le Devoir (February 17, 1964), p. 4.
Practically all nationalists see the most obvious route toward greater autonomy in full use of the Quebec state. This is a novel idea for most French Canadians, for whom the state has always been the enemy. Such an attitude was encouraged by the clergy, whose influence had grown enormously after the Conquest because the state no longer competed with the Church for the loyalty of the French-Canadian people. The progressive laicization of key posts has begun to restore an equilibrium that was long absent.

This is not without danger for the future of the Canadian Confederation, however. The old nationalism was clerical; it responded to clerical pressure for moderation. The Church had thrown its weight in favor of the government against the American colonists in 1775 and against the rebels in 1837; the pattern persisted through the several crises which threatened the Confederation in the past century. With more open dissension in Church ranks, and much of the new nationalist wave beyond clerical influence, there is less chance that the clergy's ability to restrain extremism will be effective in any future confrontation between the two language groups.

Is French Canada a nation? This question continues to elicit considerable semantic juggling among those Canadians who do not reject the idea out of hand. The word “nation” is as ambiguous in French as it is in English. French Canadians are inclined to use it more readily than their English-speaking neighbors to cover the idea of common origin, traditions, and language—all of which may also differentiate a nationality. English Canadians are suspicious that there is at least an unconscious purpose in the choice of language; they charge that proponents are deliberately encouraging confusion in order to accustom their fellows to the idea that French Canada lacks only the formal institution of a sovereign state to complete its existence as a nation.

The fundamental psychological factor underlying the relationship between French-speaking and English-speaking Canadians is their own view of their kinship. Despite much emphasis, particularly since World War II, on unhyphenated Canadianism, the two major ethnic groups continue to describe each other in terms of nationality. The English Canadian, who traditionally identified his French-speaking compatriot as “French,” more frequently refers to him today as “French Canadian.” For generations French Canadians used “Canadiens” to refer to
themselves; the other inhabitants of Canada were always “les Anglais.” In recent years, however, French Canadians have increasingly come to refer to themselves as “Canadiens français.” This can be interpreted as a growing recognition that “the others” may be Canadians rather than English. It continues the implication of a distinction between the two elements of the population, however, and adds a restrictive connotation. The group loyalty is unaffected, but there is a suggestion of a more circumscribed concept. It may be a more or less conscious limitation, a withdrawal from a national Canadian context to the narrower provincial confines wherein French Canada is synonymous with Quebec.

Eugene Forsey, an English-Canadian political scientist who has exhibited considerable understanding of French-Canadian frustrations with the way confederation has evolved, is willing to admit the two-nation concept if Canada itself is accepted as a nation. Canada is two nations, he says, in the ethnic, cultural, sociological sense, but one nation in the political, legal, constitutional sense.16

Such an opinion admits too much and does not promise enough for many French Canadians, who are not themselves consciously separatist. They reject what they characterize as the folklore type of existence that would give French Canada a status comparable to Scotland or Wales. They charge that such a distinction amounts to proposing a divorce between their cultural heritage and the practical demands of their daily existence. They insist that a middle ground be sought if Canada is to continue to exist.

The semantic distinctions between nation and nationality are largely irrelevant in this context. The champions of French-Canadian nationalism are indifferent to the views of the fathers of confederation or to the choice of words which made confederation acceptable. D. M. Potter points out that nationalism rests on two psychological bases rather than one. In addition to a feeling of common culture, there is also present a feeling of common interests.17 In the current instance, the ideas behind the words are clear; nationalist aspirations relate the socioeconomic status of a dynamic segment of the Quebec population to the potential embodied or envisaged by the elements which make up that segment. Self-interest makes the Québécois impatient with linguistic niceties, which they see as legalistic fetters to block their access to power. Forsey strikes them as accepting the existence of a nationality as long as it is

merely a community without a formal political organization. He would stall at granting the national trappings which make a society—that is, a nation in the political sense.

Karl Mannheim traces the growth of national aggressiveness to social disintegration.\(^\text{18}\) Disintegration is probably too strong a term to apply to the transformations Quebec society is undergoing today, but no one attempts to deny that wide-ranging change is in progress. Assessment is complicated by the ethnic factor and by the impulsion to make up for economic lag. The degree to which an accelerated social evolution gives impetus to political revolution is probably more closely related to self-interest than to cultural differences. If the forces pushing for influence today opt for a narrowly nationalistic program to achieve their objective, they have many of the prerequisites at hand.

The role of national consciousness in activating group distinctiveness is brought out by Karl W. Deutsch, whose application of communication theory to nationalism has established the basis for a quantitative study of its objective aspects. His work is particularly apt in relation to the Quebec situation: he stresses the role of national consciousness in making individual members of a given people explicitly aware of their membership in the national group at a time when other, non-national changes in society, economics, and culture make the group characteristics and group membership increasingly important to the individuals concerned.\(^\text{19}\) The careful methodology Deutsch has developed to analyze even such subjective aspects of nationalism as the national will and national consciousness stems from what he calls a “functional” definition of nationality. Membership in a people, he says, consists essentially in wide complementarity of social communication. He equates membership with the ability to communicate more effectively and over a wider range of subjects with members of one large group than with outsiders. Rather than specify nationality in terms of particular ingredients, he looks to a detailed analysis of the functions performed.\(^\text{20}\) The range and effectiveness of social communication within a given people may tell us, he believes, how effectively it has become integrated and how far it has advanced, in this respect, toward becoming a nation.\(^\text{21}\)

For a retrospective appreciation of the basis of French-Canadian

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nationalism, however, it is probably more useful to recognize characteristics than to analyze their origin. To that end, reference to the categories associated with classical historical analysis should suffice. Boyd Shafer, a disciple of the pioneer U.S. student of nationalism, Carlton Hayes, has enumerated the conditions he considers essential before nationalism fully materializes. Among those that practically all French Canadians would consider applicable to their situation are common cultural characteristics, including language, customs, manners, and literature; a belief in a common history and in a common origin; a common pride in the achievements of their nation and a common sorrow in its tragedies; a devotion to the entity called the nation, which is more than the sum of the fellow nationals; a love or esteem for fellow nationals (not necessarily as individuals). 22

The histories of Garneau and Groulx have done much to implant a solid emotional foundation for all of these; there would be some hesitation, however, on the part of a large number of French Canadians, to give full assent to the last two of them on an ethnic rather than on a pan-Canadian level, and even more would have reservations about a second group of Shafer's requirements: a certain unit of territory; common dominant social and economic institutions; and a disregard for or hostility to other like groups, especially if these seem to threaten the national existence. The territorial question is a major deterrent to adherence to the separatist dogma, because of the problem of the French-Canadian "Diaspora" outside Quebec if an independent "Laurentia" were established. As to the second point, there is little question that a Christian social philosophy has at least been given lip service in Quebec; there are serious misgivings, however, about how the absence of French Canadians from control of the "dominant economic institutions" would bear on an independence move. Many proponents of an enlightened humanism would take violent exception to the last of these as vindictive and self-defeating. For the majority, however, the memory of English-Canadian nationalism in successive confrontations on the school question and on conscription enhances a sense of French-Canadian solidarity independent of any pan-Canadian sentiment. This is a particularly touchy aspect of the Canadian relationship. The emotions it arouses are evident in the reaction of a strong nationalist to a recommendation of the Provincial Commission on Education in Quebec.

The Parent Report cited "the air-tight separation" between the ver-

sions of history taught in Quebec and recommended that both French- and English-speaking groups be given a good knowledge of both French and English regimes in a program with the same general lines for all. Michel Brunet, of the University of Montreal's History Institute, believes this recommendation is naïve. There are two different presentations of history in Quebec, he says, because the Quebec population is made up of two distinct collectivities, each with its own historical evolution. Their experience is not identical because they did not always face the same problems; even when they did, their response was not at all the same. Brunet is not a separatist; he is a debunker of the legends for which his master, Canon Groulx, is largely responsible; he believes the French element must continue to support confederation, but he favors a revision to safeguard the rights of the linguistic minority.

On Shafer's two remaining points, the picture is much less clear, because they are the essential questions insofar as a separate national existence is concerned. The first is a common independent or sovereign government, or the desire for one, and the second is a hope that the nation will have a great future. Brunet's analysis of French-Canadian history centers on the dilemma embraced by these two concepts. He saw three dominant ideas in Quebec history: agriculturalism, antistatism, and messianism. The first of these is no longer pertinent; the others are essential to an understanding of French Canada's future. Brunet holds that fear of the state prevented French Canadians from making adequate use of the provincial government the Confederation put in their hands. Today, when state intervention is essential in so many socio-economic spheres, they are finally beginning to utilize this instrument. Will they be content to use it within the confines of the Confederation? The answer will depend on a reinterpretation of the messianic function. French Canada is reassessing the missionary role it has traditionally seen as its peculiar charge. If a majority of French Canadians become convinced that their cultural interests can be advanced without hindrance only by concentrating efforts on the territory where French-Canadian political control is beyond doubt, the outlook for confederation is dim.

For the pro-independence elements, Shafer's ten requirements are satisfied only within the confines of a sovereign state. For many others, they are satisfied in the context of confederation. For a still indeterminate number of French Canadians, the question is yet to be answered.

24. La Présence anglaise et les Canadiens, pp. 113–66.
If the classic sequence of nationalist sentiment as it evolved in Europe is extrapolated to modern Quebec, some unsettling parallels appear. Particularly if the English-speaking middle class in Quebec is considered as an element foreign to the current evolution of Quebec society, the developments described by Hans Kohn in *Idea of Nationalism* require little transposition to fit the French-Canadian pattern. The biggest hurdle would be to assume that the ideas of popular sovereignty must first be accepted—that is, that the traditional concepts of authority must give way to a secularized view of society. The patterns of economic life must be ruptured by the rise of a middle class ready to break with the past. Quebec could be compared to the Central European states where nationalism, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, found its expression largely in the cultural field. In France, Great Britain, and the United States, the more powerful middle class was able to assert itself at that time in the economic and political spheres. The Central European states eventually followed the same path. The pressure of an aggressive middle class is the cardinal factor in the quiet revolution.

The central theme of French-Canadian nationalism, in what might be considered the period of cultural predominance, was the service of nationality to religious belief. That is no longer true. Kohn lays great stress on the transfer of basic loyalty from religion to nation. "The fixation of man's supreme loyalty upon his nationality marks the beginning of the age of nationalism." This state of mind, he says, is a driving force intent on the highest form of organized activity, a sovereign state. Some form of autonomy or pre-state organization is acceptable only as a stopgap. "Nationalism demands the nation-state."

It is enlightening in that regard to consider a statement made by Henri Bourassa at the beginning of the century. Bourassa's life was devoted to the flowering of a pan-Canadianism where French-language rights would be unequivocal. Nevertheless, he could look on the possibility of a free French state in North America, where there would be no need to share with another "race," as a legitimate and attractive dream which might be realized sooner than indications suggest. Bourassa was a champion of Canadian autonomy vis-à-vis London. That step has been

taken; Canada is now independent. In the minds of many French Canadians today, however, that was not the ultimate step.

CONCLUSION

The possibility of applying Deutsch's quantitative analysis to the Canadian problem is much more complicated today than it might have been in the 1950s. Deutsch proceeds on the assumption that the evolution of a confrontation between two cultural groups can be predicted by quantifying all aspects of nationalism which lend themselves to measurement. The limiting factor is whether major efforts are made to foresee and control the forces at work.29 On the basis of the Central European examples Deutsch cites,30 the Quebec hinterland could have been expected to supply indefinitely sufficient replacements to maintain the linguistic equilibrium Montreal has experienced in recent generations. The influx of non-French-speaking immigrants threatened that equilibrium, however, and helped generate a reaction from French Canadians.

Despite the long history of nationalist sentiment in Quebec, economic determinism was largely untrammeled until the quiet revolution got up steam. This development injects a major subjective element that will strain the validity of Deutsch's equations. It also raises questions on the geographic confines of the problem. Should the confrontation of the two language groups be studied on a Canadian basis or be confined to the Province of Quebec? Or should it be limited to the island of Montreal? French-Canadian nationalists insist that the future of their cultural identity will be determined by the trend in the metropolis. Their ability to counterbalance the numerical weight of an accelerated socioeconomic evolution will probably be the preponderant factor.

How effective they may be is suggested by both Deutsch and Hayes in somewhat parallel terms. Deutsch stresses national consciousness arising from the assertion of unalienable rights, first in the language of religion, then in the language of politics, and finally in terms involving economics and all society.31 Hayes saw three important factors in the propagation of nationalism, the first being the elaboration of a doctrine by various intellectuals.32 Despite the flood of propaganda more or less

30. Ibid., p. 137.
directly aimed at developing an ideology for French Canada, there is still no clear delineation of a theory that can lay claim to wide acceptance. As Philippe Garigue points out, neither the Church nor the Confederation proved to be satisfactory foundations for the erection of such a theory, and the sense of alienation at the base of most separatist dogma is essentially negative.  

This has not prevented separatists from acting on the assumption they have something positive to propose. Hayes’s second factor was the championing of the nationalist doctrine by a group of citizens who find it satisfying and perhaps remunerative. There is little evidence that the various proponents of Quebec’s independence have yet found substantial monetary return for their efforts. There seems little doubt, however, that an increasing number of individuals who have identified themselves with the separatist movement have derived considerable personal satisfaction from their endeavors. They are convinced they have made an impact on the popular mind—which is the third element in Hayes’s scheme. They are satisfied that they have had some success in conveying the impression of a valid solution, which has elicited a partial expression of the popular will. This is the determining factor, in the opinion of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, who believes that neither language nor geography nor history is sufficient to delimit a nation.

A creed of nationalism and the will to implement it are probably more powerful than the economic arguments against it, at least if the promise of independence entails only a limited period of privation. The Rassemblement pour l’Indépendance Nationale (RIN) has stressed the economic problem, but holds out the hope of a brighter future. Though some Quebec commentators have used the economic argument to depreciate the appeal of separatism to the relatively well-off Quebeckers, some English Canadians have cautioned against counting too heavily on the economic deterrent. Prudence is warranted because the economic consequences of independence cannot be predicted with any degree of certainty, and particularly because the political imponderables are even more elusive.

Rupert Emerson believes that when a nationalist movement gets into full swing, the people at large are likely to follow the lead of the active nationalist elite, although they may have given little evidence earlier of


political interest. Although Quebec seems far from such a state of affairs at present, this warning may have more validity than surface indications suggest. The surprising support the RIN president received in 1966 in an eastern Quebec county raises questions in that regard. The RIN seems to have exploited skillfully an especially flagrant example of insensitivity to the language issue on the part of the major industrial employer in the county. The special circumstances in that instance made a nationalist appeal effective. It is significant, nevertheless, that one-third of the electorate in a single district could be swayed by this issue. Though nationalist dissatisfaction has been largely associated with the growing urban middle class, the rural unrest which put a Créditiste bloc in the national parliament can probably be readily exploited for nationalistic purposes.

Pierre Elliott Trudeau echoes Kohn in citing the threat of fascism inherent in nationalism. Trudeau bolsters his warning insofar as Quebec is concerned by citing the shaky commitment to democracy implicit in both the historical developments which culminated in the arbitrary attitude identified with the Duplessis regime, and in the poor examples in the practice of democracy English Canada has provided. Emerson questions, however, whether nationalism has a clear tendency to produce one or another type of political institution. It has been associated with almost every kind of regime. From the point of view that nationalism was initially a liberating force in France and Germany, and because it takes off from a wider recognition of democratic participation in government, an autocratic administration is not inevitable. What will eventuate in Quebec depends on too many variables for clear indications to emerge before a sharper confrontation of the two language groups takes place.

Separatism has still only minority support. A broader participation of French Canada in the direction of the Confederation is at least as likely an outcome as an independent Quebec. Economic and social factors may be preponderant in the long run, but, in the meantime, cultural questions provide a sounding board with a wide audience.

37. Emerson, op. cit., p. 18.