Quebec's new self-assertive attitude coincided with, and to some degree was fed by, an era of indecisiveness in Ottawa. The dominant feature of the national political scene in the first half of the 1960s was the absence of a sense of direction. The government's tenuous parliamentary position discouraged a forceful exercise of authority, and many observers professed to detect characteristics of a transition period, where there was no consensus on the shape of things to come.

Irresolution was both a cause and an effect of changing federal-provincial relationships. A general revulsion had developed in all the provinces against Ottawa's postwar moves to consolidate the centralization gains it had made since the 1930s and to expand into new fields. In such circumstances the central government could have been expected to make concessions to satisfy provincial demands, but to many supporters of centralized authority, Prime Minister Pearson seemed too compliant. The power balance was shifting, however, and the personalities involved on both levels of government inclined to a new equilibrium. In a period when vigorous leadership in Ottawa would have compensated to some extent for the lack of a solid parliamentary majority, the national government seemed ill-prepared to match the vitality exhibited by most of the provincial regimes.

The federal government's hesitancy in dealing forcefully with the provinces, and especially with Quebec, reflected the weakness implicit in its minority position in Parliament. The threat of instability tended to sap the government's power of decision. The difficulty was compounded by the Pearson cabinet's reluctance to assert itself effectively in the House of Commons. Neither the prime minister nor his ministers demonstrated any sustained willingness to stave off the slashing attacks of the opposition leader. The government was widely criticized for the lack of a coherent policy in controversial fields.

In retrospect, it will undoubtedly be possible to discern the positive
value in the political disorder that prevailed in Ottawa during that period. It may even be argued, with considerable persuasiveness, that a strong assertion of federal power in the face of the demands for broader provincial autonomy would have brought matters to a head too soon, to the detriment of the Confederation. In closer prospect, however, the dominant impression, the responsible press charged, was of the paralysis of parliamentary procedures and the mockery of the democratic system.

In the 1965 parliamentary elections, the ebullient leader of the New Democratic Party, T. C. (Tommy) Douglas, refurbished an old campaign sally to sum up the widespread discontent over the shortcomings of the two major parties. Mackenzie King, he declared, showed that it was possible to be prime minister for life; Diefenbaker showed that anybody could be prime minister; Pearson showed that Canada did not need a prime minister. Almost immediately after the 1966 parliamentary session opened, however, a situation arose which would have challenged the most domineering government team. The travesty of parliamentary procedure that characterized the exploitation of the Spencer and Munsinger espionage cases in the first few months of the session brought legislative progress to a standstill and elicited expressions of disgust and disillusionment from all parts of the country.

It must be conceded that once the Spencer and Munsinger affairs had been squeezed dry of all source of mutual recrimination, the two major parties permitted the House to get down to business, and a respectable portion of the Pearson legislative program was adopted. Laying the foundation for social and economic progress and implementing an extensive ministerial reorganization are less spectacular, however, than the scandals that reap extensive newspaper and television coverage, and the net result of the session was a lowered public image of the national parliament.

The basic political weakness on the national level was the inability of a single party to win a majority of seats in the House of Commons. The re-emergence of third parties, after a brief return to a bipartite rivalry in 1958, fostered an air of uncertainty which gave the impression of a decline in political purpose and a groping for both programs and leadership. The continued strength of the small parties in recent elections, particularly in 1965, made more obvious than ever the differences within the country itself. The traditional division of Canada is essentially regional. Third parties have served a purpose in the past by acting as safety valves to absorb regional discontent without disrupting the system. A real threat to unity became apparent, however, as the bases of all the parties have tended to become increasingly sectional.
THE PARTIES

The two major parties have many parallels with their American counterparts. They are far from homogeneous; each has two main wings, and a similar outlook on social and economic problems frequently wins support across party lines. Tradition is the major determinant of party loyalty, particularly in recent decades, as the differences on specific issues become increasingly blurred. The Liberals’ strength comes largely from big metropolitan centers, from Catholics, French Canadians, and immigrants. The party is very strong in Quebec, in the cities of Ontario, and in certain parts of the Atlantic provinces. It is very weak in the West. The Progressive Conservatives draw largely from rural regions, especially among Protestants and the elderly. They are strong on the prairies, and they have a solid backing in the Maritimes and in the rural parts of Ontario. The New Democratic Party, which was formed in 1961 after organized labor replaced the farmers as the dominant element in the old Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), is the top party in British Columbia and the second in Saskatchewan. It has replaced the Conservatives as the second party in the city of Toronto; it was the only party to make an appreciable advance in the 1965 elections. Social Credit strength is almost entirely concentrated in Alberta and British Columbia, while the dissident Ralliement des Créditistes has practically no support outside Quebec.

Spurred on by the demands of the old CCF, both major parties have espoused a broad social welfare program. Nevertheless, the old guard in each, long identified with business interests, has managed to retain strong influence, if not control. This has been true despite the emergence of a dynamic social-minded “new wave” among the Liberals and the weight some Western elements among the Conservatives bring to bear on Toronto’s Bay Street financial “Establishment.”

The Liberals have been more successful than the Conservatives in maintaining party unity and in retaining national control of the party in the hands of its Ottawa leaders. This is probably largely attributable to the confidence developed over long years in power, first under Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and subsequently, for most of the period from 1921 to 1957, under William Lyon Mackenzie King’s pragmatic leadership. In federal-provincial relations, the Liberals have reversed, under Pearson, the strong wartime tendency toward centralization. In international matters they favor an active role for Canada through the United Nations. They are sympathetic toward the United States and favor the integration of Canada in the North Atlantic Community.
The divisions which racked the Conservatives in recent years have displaced the center of power within the party from national to provincial spheres. The national party has no real policy; Diefenbaker never used the program that was hastily thrown together for the 1965 election. Despite their espousal of social security legislation, the Conservatives are still more deeply committed than their opponents to favorable conditions for business. This is a hangover from the "National Policy" through which John A. Macdonald dominated the first quarter century of confederation, by fostering industry and commerce over the objections of agricultural interests. Diefenbaker was personally responsible for rebuilding the party's position in the West, but he nevertheless campaigned on the merits of small enterprise, particularly family concerns. A strong attachment to British tradition is a standard party prop. This relic of their British Tory antecedents was a major reason the Conservatives had only token representation from Quebec for most of the twentieth century. The Conservatives are more nationalist than the Liberal Party on international affairs: they would have Canada keep its distance vis-à-vis both the United States and the United Nations.

No more inventive than its major rivals in terms of real alternatives, the New Democratic Party can only propose to do a better job. Its socialism offers a new choice of management, not of political systems. If the NDP program is the most precise and coherent, it is based on a conception of economic planning that is perhaps overly theoretical, and in its social aspects it is hardly distinguishable from that of the Liberal Party.

The Social Credit Movement, which mushroomed on the prairies when bankruptcy threatened the farmer in the depression, has lived on in the vain hope of winning power in Ottawa but with decreasing fervor for its founders' peculiar ideas on monetary reform. Especially in its Quebec version, its appeal has been directed to the little man. Réal Caouette expresses eloquently the resentments of those on the bottom of the economic ladder, who feel oppressed by forces they cannot identify but who hope vaguely to be able to counterattack, if only they can put a champion in the seat of power.

All the parties recognize the existence of two distinct cultural groups in Canada, but with gradations. None is willing to propose in any detail how it would resolve the problem of relations between the two. The Liberals have taken as their own the co-operative-federalism scheme, which developed from an accord signed in 1960 between a Conservative government in Ottawa and Lesage's predecessor in Quebec. They admit the principle of the existence of two nations, but Pearson has been
careful to avoid committing himself to any advantage for Quebec over the other provinces in their relations with Ottawa. The Conservatives reject the principle of two nations. Politically, they consider the French Canadians as just one group among others, and they are therefore little disposed to consider a special status for Quebec. They have, however, proposed a federal-provincial conference to rewrite the constitution. The NDP has supported co-operative federalism from its initial congress in 1961. It formally recognizes the existence of the French-Canadian nation. This presents a serious problem for a party committed to national economic planning. It is undoubtedly influenced, however, by the conviction that it must make definite concessions to biculturalism, if it is to achieve the status of a nationwide party. As might be expected, the Créditistes have gone farthest on the question of a special position for French Canadians. Once their defection from the Social Credit Party was formalized, evolution was rapid, and by 1964 they were backing an "associated-state" rank for Quebec, calling for provincial control of taxation, credit, foreign trade, and immigration.

The political spectrum in Quebec differs from the national norm in more than appearance. Before the Lesage regime, the provincial Liberal Party was still nineteenth century in outlook, at least insofar as its social program was concerned. It was also more anti-French-Canadian nationalist than otherwise. These two traditional positions were abandoned by Lesage, who succeeded in combining his espousal of strong nationalist sentiment with a forward-looking social program. There is some criticism that social welfare was subordinated unduly to his interest in economic expansion, but this may be merely a question of means. The nationalist aspect is more weighty. With a monopoly of power, the ostensibly orthodox federalist team under Lesage moved deliberately to establish an autonomous Quebec.

Lesage had seemed so firmly entrenched by 1966 that the June provincial elections were widely regarded as no more than a formality. The upset victory of the Union Nationale, the Quebec equivalent of the Progressive Conservative Party, was hardly a rejection of the program the Liberals had been implementing. Overconfidence was probably a factor in the Liberal defeat, but the deficiencies of the electoral map are apparent in the distribution of seats which gave the UN control of the provincial legislature with only 41 per cent of the popular vote. In at least nine counties, Le Rassemblement pour l'Indépendance Nationale got appreciably more votes than the difference by which the UN beat the Liberals; in a two-way contest the Liberals probably would have received enough of these separatist ballots to win the election.
The UN is applying substantially the same program that the Liberals had. Both because of its small margin of victory and because of the metamorphosis the UN has undergone, no radical change seems in prospect.

There had been some expectation in 1961 that the UN had lost its raison d'être. It had been closely identified with its long-time leader, Maurice Duplessis, and with provincial autonomy. When Duplessis died and the Liberals showed themselves as autonomist as Duplessis's lieutenants, the future for the UN seemed entirely negative. Such an opinion discounted both the bases of UN support and the personality of its new leader, Daniel Johnson.

The UN had arisen from the confusion of the economic crisis in the 1930s, as much in reaction against the corruption of the Liberal regime of the period as in answer to the need for socioeconomic reform. It won support both among working class and farm elements and from the nationalist middle class. Duplessis outsmarted the liberal segment of the founding group and simply ignored the social program that brought him to power. By the end of World War II his regime was notorious for the same abuses that had cost the old Liberal Party its control over the province, but his efficient political machine and the lack of effective opposition permitted him to stay on top.

The residue of support for the UN among strong nationalists, especially in rural areas, and among those attached to the traditional institutions was essential to Johnson's victory, but that alone does not explain his success. The 1965 UN party congress revealed that Johnson had rejuvenated and restructured the old organization. He had sought out labor leaders and other progressive elements for ideas on which to build a new program. Without alienating old supporters, he instituted an intensive recruitment program and built up new county associations. Many of his candidates were new to politics but alert to local problems. In part the UN drew its support from its independent role; Johnson stressed that it was first of all a Quebec party, without any federal tie. He had virtually a free hand on the issue of nationalism. The 3,000 delegates at the 1965 congress approved a motion to hold a referendum on separatism if the party won power. It stopped short of a commitment to separatism and unilingualism, but Johnson asserted, "What we must claim and obtain for Quebec, as the main seat of a nation, is recognition as a national state."

The interplay of political pressures on both levels of government in a period of rapid transition has sometimes been accompanied by contradictory reactions and by numerous expressions of fear, some valid, others less so, over the ultimate outcome of the many changes in progress or in prospect. In the early 1960s all the provinces had shared to some extent the desire to halt the rapid centralization which had begun in the depression years and had accelerated during World War II. In no English-speaking province, however, had the drive to regain local autonomy been as general and as purposeful as in Quebec, and by 1965 most of English Canada seemed to be edging back toward centralization, or at least to be reluctant to press further against Ottawa’s control. Their changing attitude was due to growing apprehension over the implications of Ottawa’s weakness as well as over Quebec’s ultimate goal. Such fears are expressed almost as frequently in Quebec as elsewhere in Canada.

Many thoughtful French Canadians who refused to be confined to a “Quebec first” ghetto had frequently voiced their apprehension about the separatist threat implicit in too great insistence on Quebec’s uniqueness. Some of them had become increasingly concerned lest the concentration of French-Canadian energies in Quebec rob their ethnic group of any influence on, or participation in, national affairs. They were motivated initially by the desire to share more equitably in the direction of the federal state; subsequently they were moved more by fear for its continuing existence. This apprehension was expressed in a “manifesto for a functional policy” in Cité libre for May, 1964. Signed by seven young French Canadians who had been active in building the base for the quiet revolution, it charged that “the primacy accorded to regional interests and the absence of leadership at the central government level run the risk of bringing about the ultimate dismemberment of the federal state.” Their rejection of narrow nationalism in favor of universal humanism was undoubtedly sparked as much by the statements of Lesage’s cabinet ministers as by the wave of outright avowals of separatist sentiment that had swept over Quebec in the preceding few years. René Lévesque was Minister of Natural Resources at the time, and his frequently frank commitment to “Quebec first” disturbed many thoughtful French Canadians because of the broad popular appeal he enjoys. In his public utterances, Lévesque usually insisted that the
Quebec government’s policies were not directed toward independence, but that it sought full development of its potential within a revised confederation. The press has, on occasion, however, played up the more startling parts of such statements—as in January, 1964, when Lévesque said that for the moment he wasn’t won over to the cause of Quebec independence but that he looked on it as a hypothesis which should be considered along with other possible solutions to the problem.2

The threat of rampant nationalism in Quebec and the relatively lackluster French-Canadian representation in the central government were symptoms of a deep malaise that for years had been undermining Quebec interest in Ottawa. French Canadians have long made no secret of their deep resentment that they were excluded from the exercise of real power in Canada. It is true that during the Duplessis era a number of very competent politicians and civil servants found a more congenial atmosphere in Ottawa, despite the sense of exile most French Canadians experience in their national capital. Lesage is an outstanding example on the political level. Even men of the caliber of Louis Saint-Laurent had little real impact on the federal structure. His tenure as prime minister helped conceal, nevertheless, the paucity of capable men in the Quebec parliamentary delegation.

The reluctance of Diefenbaker to seek out a strong French-Canadian lieutenant and a series of scandals in the early 1960s, all involving French-Canadian ministers, focused attention on the relatively low caliber of the Quebec contingent in the federal parliament. Those of its members who could not be characterized as political hacks, more intent on re-election than on correcting social and economic injustice, were unfortunately ill-equipped for the political infighting they were exposed to. For example, Maurice Lamontagne, former Laval University professor, and Guy Favreau, an exceptionally capable attorney, both found that personal integrity and native ability were inadequate without the fine sense for political realities required by federal ministerial posts.

In the period from 1958 to 1963, when the pace of change in Quebec was accelerating, the province was represented in Ottawa almost entirely by proponents of the status quo. Since 1963 the situation has changed substantially, with many dedicated younger supporters of the quiet revolution intent on expanding on the national level the work begun in Quebec. They are vigorous defenders of French Canada’s interests without being narrowly nationalistic. It was to strengthen this element that

three prominent champions of the quiet revolution identified themselves with the Liberal Party in the 1965 federal elections. Pierre Elliott Trudeau, who had signed the *Cité libre* manifesto, had frequently been critical of the Liberal Party, as had his *Cité libre* teammate and ex-editor of Montreal's massive popular daily *La Presse*, Gérard Pelletier. Both went to Ottawa as Liberals, however, following the 1965 elections, along with Jean Marchand, former Quebec labor chief. They bowed to political realities, seeking seats as Liberals rather than on an NDP ticket, where their political initiation risked being a romantic gesture without practical results. Trudeau justified his decision by citing his disagreement with the NDP's commitment to the two-nations principle, but it seems clear that he was also motivated by the reduced risk of election with Liberal support. In any event, the three were intent on strengthening Quebec's commitment to the Confederation.

The positive effect this act of faith in the national government might have had on politically alert Quebeckers was somewhat blunted by two developments which reaffirmed French Canadians' reservations toward both major parties and the federal government itself. Before Prime Minister Pearson announced his new cabinet line-up, there was considerable speculation on whether he would continue the traditional practice of reserving key economic ministries for English Canadians identified with Toronto financial interests. When he assigned several Quebec representatives to posts of potential, rather than immediate, first-rank importance, many Québécois felt he was treading a depressingly familiar path.

Their pessimism was reinforced when the 1966 parliamentary session opened in a riotous atmosphere with Diefenbaker's single-minded assault on the Pearson cabinet. The confrontation was sharply defined along cultural lines in the bitter exchange climaxed by Pearson's repudiation of the stand taken by his justice minister, Lucien Cardin, who had flatly rejected Diefenbaker's demand to have the Spencer espionage inquiry reopened. Irritation over Pearson's capitulation was not limited to French Canada, but the anti-French overtones of the incident reinforced the low esteem in which most Quebeckers held the federal government.

Subsequently, as Jean Marchand and several other Liberal members from Quebec grew in national stature, speculation again began to measure them against top ministerial assignments. It is increasingly clear, however, that it will take more than a few openings for French Canadians in high-level positions to overcome Quebec's ambivalence toward Ottawa, and indeed toward democracy.
POLITICAL CONCEPTS

The foundations of democracy are not yet solidly established in Quebec. Traditionally, French Canadians have had a fundamental distrust of democratic institutions. Four factors explain this attitude. In the first place, authoritarianism was the French Canadian's only political experience before 1760; and after the Conquest his only defense was the Church, whose hierarchical framework made no provision for democratic initiative. Secondly, his most cherished liberties—religion, language, and civil law—had been granted by the king before any democratic institutions began to function in Canada; subsequent encroachment on them took advantage of the legal structure of democracy. Thirdly, the studies of classical antiquity, which nearly all French Canadian leaders followed in their college training, encouraged the opinion that democracy per se had no intrinsic merits which made it superior to other systems. They inclined to the view that any form of government can work well under proper conditions. Finally, the most persuasive argument was the discouraging example of democracy in action provided by their English-speaking fellow citizens.

Lacking experience in self-government, the French Canadians tended initially to look on democratic institutions as a foreign imposition. The restrictions which kept power in British hands when the first legislative bodies were established in Canada reinforced that impression. In adjusting to their new political situation the French Canadians were inclined to place confidence in the organizational model provided by the Church, with which they increasingly identified. Authoritarianism in spiritual matters encouraged a similar outlook on temporal affairs. This attitude persisted even when French Canadians had won undisputed control in Quebec; it was accentuated by the influence of nineteenth century French Catholicism, with its recriminations against the effects of the French Revolution. Stress was placed on the moral dangers of democracy, and the new leaders in Quebec encouraged the view that virtue and common sense were more important to the public official than the form of government under which he served.

Most English-Canadian historians today readily grant that French Canada has suffered injustice through English-Canadian recourse to the institutions of democracy. French Canadians, understandably, make more of a case of this background, even when they do not spare the shortcomings of their fellow Quebeckers. Abbé Arthur Maheux, a long-time apostle of closer ties between the two language groups, and Pierre
Elliott Trudeau, an exceptionally severe critic of Quebec political mores, have explored in some depth the situation of democracy in Quebec. Without blinking at any of the obstacles the French-Canadian community itself has erected to hamper full recourse to democratic processes, both are caustic in their interpretation of the abuse of democracy by English Canada. They see bad example as a fundamental reason for the alienation of French Canadians from their country's political institutions. Maheux points out that the basic rights which give French Canada its individuality today had practically no dependence on democratic processes. The acts of capitulation at the Conquest, the Treaty of Paris of 1763, the Quebec Act of 1774, and various responses to petitions before a semblance of representative government was instituted in 1791 gave French-speaking Canadians guarantees which have been regularly challenged since. Trudeau traces the origins of French Canadians' disillusionment with democracy to the government which resulted from the Constitutional Act of 1791. With 94 per cent of the population, they took only 68 per cent of the Assembly seats, but even this curtailed majority was meaningless, because real power lay in the nonelective Legislative and Executive Councils, where the English-speaking element was in the majority. "Rep by pop" became the rallying cry of Upper Canada only in the latter half of the nineteenth century, when massive immigration from the British Isles gave the English-speakers the majority. Since confederation, French-language rights in the Manitoba legislature and French schools outside Quebec have been sacrificed, with due regard for the legal niceties, and conscription was rammed down French-speaking throats in both big wars by overwhelming majorities outside Quebec.

As a result of repeated rebuffs in areas the French Canadians consider vital to their future as an ethnic entity, they have developed an obsession over the dilemma of a minority in a democracy. The conviction that the "French fact" in Canada is at the mercy of an organized injustice is expressed by Maheux as the tyranny of the "iron hand of majority." Such an attitude nurtured distrust of the state, which was seen as essentially an instrument of domination. From this viewpoint, democratic procedures seemed a sham, a clever trick to make people believe they were governing themselves. The belief became fixed that the state was not really meant to serve all the people, but only the English-speaking majority. The French Canadian felt no loyalty to such

a state; he considered he was under no moral obligation to its institutions. It was a short step from alienation to willingness to use the institutions of democracy to defeat the objectives of the majority and to cheat, if necessary, to nullify the defects in the system. French-Canadian politicians had become masters of parliamentary manipulation, but their success had not led to closer identification with parliamentary government or with democracy itself, which the system represented for them.

Jean Beetz, University of Montreal professor of constitutional law, explains how mistrust is present even where it applies to the provincial government which is entirely in French-Canadian hands. In the century between the Conquest and confederation, he says, the French Canadians had completely forgotten how to make use of a state or even how to share in it in any meaningful way. This habit persisted and was encouraged by the suspicions of the state transplanted by the French clergy to Canada near the turn of the century, when the lay school squabble in France led to the exile of French religious. The Church distrusted the state as a rival power likely to be dominated by anticlericals. Any state, therefore, was to be regarded with suspicion and, if necessary, thwarted.4

Freedom has always had more of a national than an individual connotation to the French Canadian, and this characteristic has tended to differentiate him further from his English-speaking fellow citizens. Human rights mean to him the guarantees his forefathers had from the British Crown for his language, his religion, and his civil existence. Even his concept of civil rights is centered on property rather than on freedom of expression. The obsession with protecting the community has tended to retard the development in Quebec of specific safeguards for individual rights along the lines of the Bill of Rights in the American Constitution. Indeed, since the Canadian Constitution includes no such guarantees, the Quebec provincial legislature under Duplessis did not hesitate to resort to strong repressive measures. The notorious Padlock Act of 1937, for example, put the burden of establishing innocence on the accused evicted from home or place of business on the charge of using the premises to propagate communism. The 1947 law restricting the distribution of pamphlets was aimed at Jehovah’s Witnesses as well as at Communists. Legal action against Duplessis for denying a liquor license to a restaurateur who went bail for a Witness of Jehovah convicted under that act, resulted in a decision by the Supreme Court

of Canada declaring the act unconstitutional. In a period when most of the other provinces were moving to clear such legislation from their books, the Quebec policies served to accentuate the differences between the two mentalities.

Convinced as they were that the system was rigged against them, or that English Canadians would have little trouble in finding a legal gimmick to circumvent constitutional guarantees, French-Canadian political theorists, nevertheless, sought for years for a magic formula that would protect them against the whims of their confederal partners. Proportional representation got some attention because it seemed to be an admirable defense mechanism for a minority whose energies were directed toward survival. Corporatism also had great appeal in French Canada, particularly since it had long been viewed approvingly by the Church. The major factor in its popularity was the promise it held of putting power in the hands of social forces under French-Canadian control. It is still propounded by a small group of traditionalists, but the great majority of current political economists look to other theories.

As the survival theme gives way to an aggressive assertiveness, the effects of the negative political philosophy which determined for two centuries French Canadians' attitudes toward the state no longer predominate. Although such concepts have not entirely disappeared, the new dynamism which motivates Quebec today has other preoccupations. The changed evaluation of the state is apparent in the rejection of the minority status which Quebec is convinced is an intrinsic defect of the system that has prevailed since the Conquest. The demand for equality implies a new direction in Quebec's search for a *modus vivendi* with the rest of Canada.

Evolving out of the social consciousness that French-Canadian universities have been propounding since the war years, a new appreciation of democracy has gained increasing acceptance. It was not until 1942 that the "Social Weeks," which had been convoked nearly every year since 1920 to study concepts of current interest, undertook a consideration of all aspects of democracy. The leading lay and clerical figures who participated in the sessions agreed that the drawbacks they saw in the democratic system were accidental rather than essential, and they recognized that democracy favors, on the whole, the common good and safeguards fundamental rights. It would be rash to consider this conclusion a watershed, but it is indicative of a new sense of direction that was beginning to develop in the arid atmosphere Duplessis had fostered.

The following year, Laval's social science faculty was established. While its initial impact on political matters was negligible, it began to
show the way to break free from defensive and narrowly nationalistic confines. By 1956, when two Quebec priests, Gérard Dion and Louis O'Neill, published a sharp attack on political corruption, change was clearly on the way. They used the legislative elections, which had returned the Duplessis machine to power, to assail political immorality in general. Their specific charges of corruption amounted to a primer in civic responsibility. What they had to say was news to practically no one; what was new was that it was aired publicly and publicly deplored as immoral as well as politically reprehensible.

When the Liberals succeeded in ousting the Union Nationale in 1960, Lesage clamped down on patronage. He insisted on bids for public works, and instituted special investigations of kickbacks. Not all Liberals subscribed to so drastic a reform of political mores, but public opinion was swayed sufficiently to oblige the rejuvenated Union Nationale to adhere to the same principles. To what degree traditional cynicism toward the state has been permanently tempered by such evidence of political purity is hard to judge. It is clear, however, that French Canadians are developing a new understanding of the state. They are more and more alert to the power they can wield in their own province. As they differentiate increasingly between “their” state and the national government, they are giving a new social emphasis as well as a refurbished version of nationalism to their thinking.

Nevertheless, despite French Canadians’ new awareness of the state as an instrument of community goals, many of those who profess the greatest concern over their future as a national entity continue to exhibit a deep reluctance to rely wholeheartedly on their elected representatives to forward their group interests. Antistatism is almost certainly at the origin of the paralegal “States-General,” which is aimed at rallying all sectors of the French-speaking population of Canada behind a “Magna Carta of the French-Canadian nation.” The once nearly moribund Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste, which has found new vitality in a revival of nationalism, put the idea forward in 1961 as an occasion for all elements of society to meet and exchange views. The justification advanced for the proposal was that the whole community had never had the opportunity to express itself directly on the basic orientation and constitutional reforms nationalists demand.

After several false starts, a preliminary congress of the States-General was held in November, 1966. The 1,800 delegates who assembled for these sessions represented the 108 counties in the province, French Canadians living outside Quebec, and numerous associations of all types. The territorial spokesmen had been picked at local conventions
where members of any organizations grouping French Canadians were free to nominate representatives. The others were selected by *corps intermédiaires*, that is, special interest groups, on the provincial level. Though the labor federations and the Quebec farmers' organization declined to appoint delegates, a number of their members participated in a private capacity. Chambers of Commerce, women's organizations, student and other youth groups, and such widely disparate associations as credit unions, parent-teacher councils, recreation clubs, and church-warden societies swelled the roster. Political parties were invited to participate, but only as observers.

The organizers of the States-General denied any intention of substituting for Parliament. Nevertheless, their intentions were so obviously political that they felt constrained to exclude from the 1966 agenda any discussion of the fundamental options which are the ultimate objective of their activity. No formal treatment of independence was permitted at the first general assembly because it was recognized that such a topic was too divisive to be considered without more careful preparation. Instead, debate was limited to such questions as manpower, labor mobility, broadcasting, the armed forces, and offshore natural resources. Additional sessions planned for 1967 and 1968 were intended to consider the future of French Canada in the light of all the political options open to Quebec. The intention was to be able to present to an eventual constitutional assembly, convoked by the provincial parliament, the results of the deliberations of *les forces vives*, the dynamic elements of the community. Implicit in this maneuver is the thought that the elected representatives of the people will have no choice but to ratify the proposals put forth by would-be spokesmen for the popular will, which should somehow have more direct expression through the States-General.

*L'ÉTAT DU QUEBEC*

Pragmatism rather than ideology was the theme when the Liberals won power in Quebec. "Maîtres chez nous" signified a greatly expanded role for the state, as the provincial government strove for broad social justice and greater economic independence. That was the aim of the quiet revolution.

Jean Lesage had served over a dozen years as a member of the federal parliament when he quit Ottawa in 1958 to take over the leadership of the provincial Liberal Party. His federal experience covered a wide variety of national and international assignments; he had held two cabinet posts and headed several Canadian delegations abroad.
Lesage is more a man of action than an intellectual. He was too keen a politician to alienate the old guard in the Quebec Liberal Party, but when he became premier he surrounded himself with exceptionally capable young men whose energies and ideas were applied to a wide range of problems. Initially, he concentrated the efforts of his government on modernizing the educational system, reforming the civil service, and pressing economic expansion in terms of Quebec's needs. He did not hesitate to use the full power of the state in the economic field, especially after 1962, when he sought re-election with a mandate to nationalize the electric power industry.

Lesage denied that there was any ideological connotation in state action in the economic domain. The citizens of Quebec, he stressed, do not have large accumulations of capital at their disposal; they have only one powerful institution: their government. It is, therefore, only a matter of practical common sense to use the power available. Subsequently, as he asserted Quebec's autonomy in various fields of social action, in cases where Ottawa had developed federal or joint federal-provincial programs, he insisted that it withdraw from all areas which fell within the provincial jurisdiction under the Constitution.

If the changes the Lesage administration put into effect in the first two years it was in office seem extraordinarily comprehensive, it must be remembered that the need had become increasingly apparent in the immediately preceding period, but there had been little prospect of starting them while Duplessis was in power. A sizable start had, in fact, been made in the few months Paul Sauvé served following Duplessis's sudden death, and when Sauvé in turn died unexpectedly, Antonio Barrette carried on. Nevertheless, the real transformation came with Lesage, who brought an air of confidence as well as a program.

Not all the reforms announced in the early months of the Lesage regime actually got under way, and some of those that began with high hopes have foundered. Even discounting the false starts, however, the record is impressive. The two most spectacular achievements, or at least those which produced the most controversy in the first years of Liberal control, are the overhauling of the educational system and the nationalization of the electric industry. The former affects directly almost every family in the province, and the latter gave a psychological lift to the French-speaking element far out of proportion to any benefit, real or fancied, to the economy. The proposed comprehensive economic plan has been postponed progressively as the dimensions of the problems involved became more clearly defined. Similarly, proposals for the creation of a new steel complex ran into a series of roadblocks. Nevertheless,
a number of economic innovations are in operation. The General Investment Corporation is a going concern, although its orientation is the source of continuing controversy. A vast shift of federally controlled funds to provincial hands has been made for numerous programs formerly operated or shared by Ottawa in education, health, public assistance, and public works. An electoral reform was put through (although, unfortunately for the Liberals, it was not as extensive as population shifts warranted), and some reorganization of the bureaucracy was undertaken, particularly in the ministries of National Resources and Mines, Agriculture and Colonization, and Welfare and Family. There is still, however, much dissatisfaction over many aspects of the whole bureaucratic structure.

Perhaps the most serious criticism of the domestic facets of the Lesage program is that it was middle-class-oriented, and hurt rather than helped labor and farm interests. Even the provincial pension program was denounced as being primarily a subterfuge to give the government an investment kitty with which more management jobs can be created for French-speaking university graduates.

It certainly is implicit in regard to many if not all the socioeconomic joint programs from which Quebec has withdrawn that some increased cost is involved, if only to compensate the parallel administration structure. This is a common objection on the grounds of efficiency when English Canadians are faced with demands for translation into French of federal documents or publications. If Quebec is obliged to bear an additional financial burden for the privilege of remaining French, does some segment of the provincial population bear a disproportionate share of the burden? If the quiet revolution has been mainly successful in giving jobs to engineers and various levels of white-collar technicians, is this a social cost Quebec labor will find acceptable over the long run?

The aspect of Lesage's program which might seem at first glance to pose the most direct threat to confederal unity is Quebec's initiatives in international relations. This is virgin territory for federal-provincial jurisdiction, and there is wide scope for conflict. Quebec's initial venture, the opening of a delegation general in Paris in 1961, created no problem, particularly since a precedent existed in the sort of consulate Ontario has long maintained in London. The cultural "understanding" Quebec signed with Paris in February, 1965, created more of a flurry. Ottawa seems to have made halfhearted attempts to discourage France from signing and subsequently decided to make the best of it by exchanging letters with Paris. Although this agreement, and a subsequent one signed in November, 1965, covered areas clearly within provincial
competence—teacher and student exchanges, scientific research, technical training, exchanges in the fields of the arts, literature, theater, and broadcasting—French Canadians read great political significance into them. They were looked upon as definite steps toward a special status for Quebec within the Confederation. Though these were the first international agreements ever signed by Quebec, they do not seem to have been outside provincial competence. The Canadian Constitution is deficient on the question of international competence where matters clearly under provincial jurisdiction are concerned. A precedent has nevertheless been set.

When Lesage opened Quebec's economic agency in Milan in 1965, accords with Italy were in prospect in the fields of immigration, tourism, education, and cultural affairs. Quebec is developing its own immigration policy; an immigration office was established in 1965. The specific intention is to develop a service to orient New Canadians in Quebec toward assimilation into the French-speaking community. Most of these locate in the Montreal area where a choice is available and, except for an earlier generation of Italians, most immigrants opt for English.

Quebec has had its eye on a role in the foreign assistance field, and a program for aid to developing countries has been set up in the provincial Ministry of Education. Quebec wants to administer the program which sends French-Canadian teachers to Africa and permits French-speaking Africans to study in Canada. The hope is to give an international flavor to one of the new institutes, which are to serve, somewhat on the junior college model, as a transition to the university in Quebec's revamped educational system. The Ministry of Education foresees an expanding role for Quebec in training African technicians to help fill the gap between the native elite and the mass of the population in the French-oriented nations of Africa.

The provincial government has established two types of structures for the purpose of forwarding Quebec's international ties. On the administrative level, delegations general have been established in London and New York in addition to the representatives in Paris and Milan. These shelter officials from the ministries of the Quebec government with specific interests in the country in question. Co-ordination is to be assured by an interministerial commission of external affairs created in October, 1965. An assistant to the minister in the Ministry of Federal-Provincial Affairs (now the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs) is permanent chairman of this body, which includes undersecretaries from the ministries of Education, Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Health, Industry, and Commerce. Although the Ministry of Natural Resources is not
included, it is almost certain that this important area of provincial jurisdiction will not be neglected in Quebec's drive for international status. Moreover, many nationalists are calling for official representation in the U.N.'s international bodies.

Though the question of a foreign competence for Quebec is certainly fertile in possible conflicting jurisdictions, the whole field of external affairs is sufficiently remote from the daily existence of the vast majority of Canadians to reduce the emotional content in any consideration of allotting new powers to Quebec in this area. The Constitution presents no real problem in this regard, as long as the provincial government is careful not to step beyond the legal limits. Only to the extent that foreign affairs is an additional irritant to the normal condition of virtual or actual tension in the provincial-federal relationship can Quebec's initiatives in this field be considered a threat to the Confederation.

More than a potential irritant seems to be hidden, however, under the frequent use Lesage has made of the expression "Etat du Québec." He has engaged in some curious double talk to play down the political significance of the term, which he denies can be translated into "State of Quebec." His reluctance to limit himself to the official expression is understandable, when he points out that in international French usage the prevailing sense of "province" is that of a division of a state. Nevertheless, the germ of the political content of his reasoning is apparent here, because he rejects the implication that Quebec is subordinate to Ottawa. He has been at pains on occasion to speak of the eleven governments, pointedly refusing to put the federal regime in a position above that of the provinces. The expression conveys to him the idea that Quebec is more than a territorial division of the Confederation. History, he says, has invested the Quebec government with the responsibility of safeguarding the culture of French Canadians. The expression "Etat du Québec" would not include the English-speaking citizens of the Province of Quebec. These semantic niceties may be harmless enough in a cultural context; the expression is political dynamite when it is charged with the burden of defending French language rights on a national scale.

The critical confrontation is less likely on the division of federal-provincial competence, where administrators and technicians can be expected to find accommodations within the framework of broad political agreements, than on the question of recognition, at the national level, of the practical equality Quebec government spokesmen have frequently demanded for the two ethnic groups. This means real power within the federal cabinet and key economic ministries, not the
second-rank posts traditionally the fief of French Canada. It means top posts for French Canadians in the federal civil service. It may even mean an adjustment in the practices of the other provinces in regard to French-language rights. This last change can hardly be achieved nationally without constitutional readaptation.

Lesage maintains that a durable solution to the biethnic problem can be found in weighting the minority’s side of the scale. Essentially his argument for two majorities involves a concept of collective rights which has little meaning in the normal parliamentary framework. If English-speaking Canada can be brought to accept the idea of a two-nation state, of a Canadian nation in which the individual holds certain rights as part of a separate community within the civic society, the two-majority concept may begin to make sense. The French Canadian is not content with the rights he possesses as a Canadian, because he feels they do not protect him in the basic factors which distinguish him from other Canadians. A wedding of the concepts of individual and collective rights may be essential to the continuing existence of the Confederation.

Lesage undertook, without great success, to convey some of this when he made a speaking tour of the Western provinces in the fall of 1965. He proposed a double view of Canada: the vertical image of the ten separate provinces and a horizontal image that presents the result of a common endeavor of the two major ethnic groups. From the latter viewpoint there are two majorities, two societies, unevenly distributed across the country but each having the right to its existence on an institutional basis of its choice. The English-speaking society is in the majority on a national level, but in Quebec the majority is French-speaking. Because it has its own power base, the Quebec government should be recognized as spokesman for the French-language community across the nation, Lesage maintained. His purpose was to lay the groundwork for English-Canadian acquiescence in the concept of two cultures, on an equal footing from one end of Canada to the other. Lesage returned from his Western tour with a realization that more time is necessary, if such a program is to have any hope of success. Unless some such view of Canada can eventually be accorded official recognition, however, Quebec nationalists may succeed in imposing another solution.

SEPATISM

For over 200 years the will-o’-the-wisp of independence has beckoned to the French Canadians, all of whom acknowledge the emotional
appeal of a state entirely under their own control. Few of them would reject separatism if it were the only way to get the fundamental changes they want put into effect as assurance on the future of their cultural identity. This is not to say, however, that any considerable number of French Canadians have aligned themselves with one or another of the various movements dedicated to the preservation of the national psyche through the erection of an independent French-speaking state; quite the contrary. Nevertheless, most of them are less inclined today than ever before to rule out a priori the possibility of secession as a solution to the problem they pose to Canada.

Separatism is not a new phenomenon in Canada, nor is it exclusively a matter of Quebec particularism. Unrest in various English-speaking provinces put confederation in question a number of times in the past 100 years. Almost as soon as it accepted confederation, Nova Scotia threatened to pull out over economic differences, and subsequently the provincial legislature proclaimed the right to secede. In the mid-1930s, separatist movements began to take shape in several provinces. Nova Scotians were again dissatisfied; they were told by their premier that their first loyalty was to the province rather than to Canada. In the West, complaints about Ottawa's protectionist policies reached such serious proportions that the House of Commons was alerted to the danger the country might split.

The embryonic separatist movement which sprang up in Quebec at that time had numerous parallels with current broad expressions of French-Canadian nationalism. It was anticentralizationist in its origins, autonomist rather than separatist. Nationalism was particularly strong among students, lawyers, doctors, and engineers. The dearth of openings in industry, finance, and commerce for the few technically qualified French-speaking university graduates provided a preview of the competitive situation which helped spark the unrest of the 1960s. Several of the theorists of the earlier period are acknowledged by many of today's separatist leaders as their mentors.

Today's out-and-out separatists deny that they have anything in common with the autonomists, who want to maintain the Confederation. The proponents of independence for Quebec disclaim any further belief in the efficacy of confederation, or in the possibility of modifying the British North America Act to achieve a satisfactory compromise. They dwell on the injustices that French-speaking minorities in the other provinces have been subjected to, and they despair of Ottawa's ever agreeing to look on the French- and English-speaking communities as equal partners.
The separatists have developed a complex about the idea of a national minority. They charge that those who accept the Confederation are resigned to the hopeless future of a perpetual minority. That means, they insist, admitting the continual need to petition, to lodge claims; it results, they say, from a confusion of nationalism with the defense of group rights. The defender of rights is resigned to a minority status; the extreme nationalist wants independence. Earlier nationalist crises failed, say the separatists, because an amelioration of the condition of dependence was all that was sought. In a nation-state, they proclaim, the problem dissolves.

The expectation that political independence will embody the answer to all problems characterizes all brands of separatists. While some present elaborate blueprints to cope with any possible contingency, others are content to concentrate first on winning political freedom, confident that subsequent problems will come equipped with built-in solutions in a sovereign nation-state. Since recriminations against the economic domination of English-speaking Canada and other "foreign" interests, including the United States, are the starting point for most separatist arguments, it is assumed by pro-independence spokesmen that economic freedom will be assured when political sovereignty is attained. Many will argue that Quebec's standard of living would be no lower in an independent status than it is now. That is frequently denied, especially by English-speaking Canadians. The fact seems to be that no one can really say with any degree of certainty what effect independence would have on the economic condition of the average Quebecker. What is more to the point is that the issue is not a determining factor in the thinking of the separatists. They are hopeful the economic situation would not deteriorate, but they are prepared to accept a sizable temporary drop in living standards, if need be. Over the long run, they argue, an independent Quebec could organize better for economic planning, with control over all taxes and finance. They are confident that their nation-state could bargain for better terms in a Canadian common market, or even in the European Common Market. If foreign capital made itself obnoxious, there would always be the convenient expedient of nationalization.

It would be a serious mistake to dismiss the Quebec separatist movement as the work of crackpots or to minimize its influence. Its major defect is a lack of means. For want of manpower and funds, the organizational framework of the various separatist groups falls far short of the grandiose plans the leaders and militants have elaborated. The educational level of most active members is usually high, and there is a
broad representation of professional fields in all the groups. The high proportion of middle-class elements is indicative of both its orientation and its weakness. The lack of extensive working-class participation reflects the reservations of most Quebeckers. They see little or no personal advantage in a divorce from the rest of Canada. That is the major difficulty the separatists face in following a democratic road toward their goal.

The technical competence of the active separatist elements and the relative concentration of support in the Montreal area are clues to an important basic factor in the whole situation. It is paradoxical, from the English-Canadian point of view, that the increasingly high level of functional education in Quebec is intensifying French-Canadian nationalism. English Canada had long taken it for granted that a shift in occupational emphasis in Quebec and a broader educational base would hasten the assimilation of French Canada. English-speaking Canadians are now slowly adjusting to the idea that modernization of Quebec’s educational system is not making French Canadians any more ready to discard their own culture. This is not an isolated phenomenon, as evidenced by the observation of Karl W. Deutsch and Otto Bauer that social and educational progress intensifies a people’s internal cohesion and differentiates it more sharply from others.⁵

It is significant that the nationalist ferment is most intense in the Montreal area, where the competition between French- and English-speaking Canadians is most direct. Increasingly, the French-speaking element seeks accession to job opportunities heretofore monopolized by English-speaking Canadians. The result has been an intensified nationalism among the new aspirants. It is particularly surprising to find overt support for some degree of separatist sentiment among those who have a firm grip on the achievement ladder within the English-speaking “Establishment.” Even the supposedly anglicized Saint James Street junior executive leaves no doubt where his basic loyalties lie.

In sum, the separatist movement is more influential than membership figures or voting support might indicate. It is a small minority, but it contains a substantial core of active and eloquent militants. Most of its spokesmen preach patience; they are no longer noisy and aggressive, or partial to action for the sake of action. The leaders are not hysterical agitators, but intelligent men who present calm and reasoned arguments for the positions they espouse. Their effectiveness is limited, however, by

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their inability to rally all separatist activists in one organization. Divisiveness stems mostly from a difference in social outlook, but personal rivalry is also an important factor.

The rapid evolution of postwar Quebec has encouraged the grafting of separatism onto a wide variety of political philosophies whose proponents have little in common save the goal of an independent French-speaking nation-state. The transition from the traditional concept of Quebec autonomy hinges largely on the work of a professor of French at Montreal's École des Hautes Études Commerciales. Raymond Barbeau's single-minded dedication to the French language led, in 1957, to the first of a number of separatist organizations which have sought to arouse nationalist sentiment in the past few years.

Barbeau found the two basic ideas for his proposed corporatist republic in the work of two theorists of the 1930s. The Alliance Laurentienne and the magazine Laurentie were established by Barbeau to propagate the principles elaborated by Abbé Wilfrid Morin, who published Nos droits à l'indépendance politique in 1938 (reprinted in 1960 by the Barbeau group as L'Indépendance du Québec). It sought to "demonstrate that the French-Canadian nation has the right to its full and entire autonomy." Morin considered the influence of language fundamental to the integrity of a nation and argued that a nation should seek its own independent political existence if three requirements could be met: justifiable grievances, no infringement on the rights of others, and viability. Barbeau agreed with Morin that la nation laurentienne fulfills these requirements. The political structure that appealed to Barbeau was elaborated by Dostaler O'Leary's Séparatisme, Doctrine Constructive (1937), an apologia for corporatism.

Barbeau's magazine foundered in the early 1960s, but he continued his campaign through innumerable speaking engagements and a series of books which emphasize in turn different aspects of the central theme. In the first of these, J'ai choisi l'indépendance (1961), he argued that "Laurentia" was the indispensable condition of the continued national existence of French Canada. He expressed confidence that the corporative reorganization of Quebec would permit the state to dominate foreign capitalists; nationalization would be a further rein on foreign influence. He suggested including the Maritime Provinces in his proposed independent state and bringing to Quebec any French-speaking Canadians in other provinces who wanted to retain their French cultural identity.

In Le Québec est-il une colonie? (1962) Barbeau enumerates instances of French-Canadian "subjection" in various fields and expresses
the conviction that any attempt to adjust the Confederation to improve
the lot of the French-speaking minority would be illusory, because the
majority would dominate. Because demographers predict a decline in
the relative strength of the French-speaking element, he pleads for early
independence. The thesis of La libération économique du Québec
(1963) is that the economic inferiority of French Canadians is the
consequence of their political impotence in the Confederation. He sees
decision-making as the key to Quebec's economic prosperity and calls
for French Canadians to take this function into their own hands. Le Québec bientôt unilingue? (1965) calls for the "cultural decolonization"
of Quebec. Barbeau rejects the idea of a bicultural and bilingual state,
and demands that French be declared the only official language in the
province.

Although Barbeau's fanatical devotion to the French language strikes
a responsive chord in the hearts of other proponents of an independent
Quebec, his political concepts have less appeal. The tight organization
of highly centralized corporate societies in which he would like to
compartment the various sectors of the economy is much too static a
structure to draw much support today. The totalitarian overtones of such
a scheme are not entirely absent from the programs of other separatist
leaders, but they profess not to aim at a state frankly dominated by an
elite. Many who respect Barbeau's ability as a pamphleteer or rabble
rouser are reluctant to commit themselves to his authoritarian organiza­
tional concepts. By 1963 he had decided to dissolve his group and fuse it
with one of the newer separatist parties.

Revulsion against the rigidly structured national edifice envisioned by
Barbeau was evident in the origin of le Rassemblement pour
l'Indépendance Nationale, which was founded in 1960. André
d'Allemagne and the thirty-odd students, journalists, artists, and profes­
sional men and women who started the RIN thought they would
compromise the idea of independence by giving their organization a
political identity. They purposely dissociated themselves from any kind
of political engagement and undertook to function as a pressure group.
They hoped to influence the public through meetings, press commu­
niqués, and personal persuasion, depending on moderation and reason
to bring others to their way of thinking.

Within two years, however, the movement was badly split over this
method of procedure, and one of its better-known members, Marcel
Chaput, broke away and organized the Parti Républicain du Québec.
Chaput had won considerable publicity over his separatist activities
while he worked as a chemist for the Defense Research Council. He had
been one of the founders of the RIN, and his book, Pourquoi je suis séparatiste (1962), had had an extraordinarily wide dissemination. By mid-1963 the PRQ was deeply in debt, and Chaput resorted to hunger strikes in an effort to elicit sufficient funds to keep the organization going. When this quixotic effort failed, he resigned and the PRQ evaporated. In the meantime, the RIN had decided definitely to undertake political action, and Chaput returned to the fold in time to run as a candidate in the 1966 provincial election.

The RIN’s hope of capitalizing on nationalism and economic discontent was jolted early in 1966 by the formation of the Ralliement National. This was an electoral alliance of the Ralliement des Créditistes and the Regroupement National. The latter had broken with the RIN in 1964, ostensibly over violent methods proposed by certain RIN militants. Basically, however, the split seems to have been a manifestation both of the traditional Montreal-Quebec rivalry and of the more conservative outlook of nationalists outside the metropolitan area. The Regroupement had proclaimed its adherence to Christian-Democratic principles, and the RN laid claim to the same orientation. Its election manifesto called for associated-state status rather than for outright independence. The distinction seemed specious, however, because the manifesto would give Quebec control of money and credit, justice, external affairs, commerce, and immigration. Since that would leave little but national defense to Ottawa, it hardly differed from the outright separatist programs of rival independence proponents. Its ninety candidates got 3 per cent of the votes cast in the election on June 5th. Subsequently it sought unity with the RIN but was rejected.

The RIN’s seventy-three candidates got 5.5 per cent of the total vote. Its role in the defeat of the Liberals gave it momentum, and by the fall of 1966 it had extended its organization into 83 of Quebec’s 108 counties. The social composition of its militants is shifting: whereas most of its strength had initially been concentrated among students and the liberal professions, increasing numbers of white-collar workers and technicians were among the delegates to the fall, 1966, convention. It is still deficient in farmer support, however, and has only a small proportion of labor-union members. The average age of its 10,000 members is slightly above 30 years; its most active militants are in the 30- to 40-year bracket. The moderately socialist program Bourgault espouses is based on the belief that the state is the only tool which will permit French Canadians to take over control of their own economy. The RIN objective is to proceed by steps, nationalizing prosperous enterprises—the Bell Telephone Company is a favorite target—so that the profits can be rein-
vested in the national interest. Independence is no longer proposed as a solution, but as an instrument to plan the economy and assure cultural autonomy.

Ideological tensions are a continuing threat, however. The October, 1966, RIN congress failed to agree on resolutions which would have defined the party as social democratic, with proposals for a mixed economy insofar as production is concerned but clearly socialist in regard to distribution. A strong bid for labor support is evident in other resolutions which the congress adopted. The RIN is now on record with proposals for worker participation in profits and ownership. Party leadership proclaims its intention to establish a powerful political machine aiming at eventual control of Quebec. Bourgault takes the public position that “liberation” may be the work of a lifetime.

REVOLUTIONARIES

It is ironic but understandable that the separatists won more attention as a result of the erratic and poorly planned acts of terrorism committed by a handful of reckless youths than from the years of peaceful agitation by more orthodox propagandists. The series of bombings which upset the Montreal area in April and May, 1963, drew universal press condemnation across Canada, especially after one man was maimed and another killed. Such outrages attracted international interest, however, and created a deeper impression in English-speaking Canada than all other separatist activity. The effect was partially nullified when the police revealed how few were involved, their youth, and how haphazard their attacks had been. Subsequent thefts of arms, manifestations, and bombings in 1964, 1965, and 1966 did little to change the situation.

Le Front de Libération Québécois had originally combined two groups of young men, nearly all from families in modest circumstances. Those responsible for the bombings were skeptical about being able to keep secret any long-range revolutionary action and impatient to perpetrate some unusual exploit, which would stimulate the indépendantiste parties and draw public attention. The second group was equally intent on revolution, but recognized the need for preparation. Since October, 1963, the FLQ has published a clandestine mimeographed bimonthly, la Cognée. It proclaims that the Front is convinced it must proceed “scientifically” toward revolution. It admits that there was an almost total absence of planning in the early bombing escapades. The people who publish la Cognée probably had a hand in the later bombing
incidents; some of these were attributed to l’Armée de Libération du Québec, which is presumably the military branch of the FLQ. The two youths convicted of killing a clerk in a robbery of a gun shop in August, 1964, claimed to belong to l’Armée Révolutionnaire du Québec.

In mid-1966 bombing incidents which cost two lives indicated that the FLQ was attempting to play a role in labor disputes. In one instance, a seventeen-year-old student was the victim of a bomb he had apparently placed at a textile plant in a gesture of solidarity with striking workers. In the second outrage, an employee of a shoe factory, which continued to operate despite a labor wrangle, was killed.

The Montreal police believe that the FLQ must be taken seriously. According to the head of the police anti-terrorist squad, the FLQ is organized like the French resistance, in three-member cells; he believes that it is increasingly anticapitalist as well as separatist. He is convinced it has a good number of members dedicated to independence through violence, if necessary. It is questionable, however, whether more than a handful of poorly organized dreamers can be involved.

Among the other separatist groups which have achieved some degree of notoriety, the best known is probably Reginald (Reggie) Chartrand’s Chevaliers de l’Indépendance. Chartrand, one of the most colorful activists, is the proprietor of a gymnasium which specializes in teaching self-defense. He has been prominent in a number of indépendantiste manifestations, including the demonstration in Quebec in October, 1964, on the occasion of Queen Elizabeth’s visit to the city. His organization professes to serve working-class interests; he ran for the provincial legislature on the RIN ticket in 1966. Others which have had some brief public mention include the Jeunes Patriotes and the Phalange, which wavered between opting for recognition as a rightist-oriented political party and assuming the role of a secret society.

A clandestine status seems to be an easy way out of a fruitless bid for political recognition. When Chaput’s hapless PRQ dissolved, it advised its members to join the Front Républicain de l’Indépendance, which grouped a number of former PRQ members. It gave itself an aura of secrecy by hiding the identity of its chief behind an algebraic “x.” Its subsequent activity, if any, has been equally veiled.

Only one of the original separatist movements identified itself in class terminology. The Action Socialiste pour l’Indépendance, which Raoul Roy founded in 1960, grouped a small number of agitators who have had little direct impact on the Quebec public. Like Barbeau’s Alliance Laurentienne, however, it was a seedbed for more aggressive organizations. Roy introduced the themes of decolonization and of revolution in
la Revue Socialiste, which he puts out at irregular intervals, but much of his energy is directed toward lengthy discussions as to whether independent Quebeckers should call themselves "Francs-Canadiens" or "Bo-réliens." Despite its efforts to establish a working-class base, the AS has remained little more than a name. It probably can be considered the forebear, however, of the group which has worked hardest to give itself a working-class façade, the Mouvement de Libération Populaire.

The MLP developed out of a small group which began to publish the monthly Parti pris, in 1963. Proclaiming themselves Marxist-Leninists, these young—mostly in their early twenties—university graduates in literature or philosophy called for a strong state and a single party. These are the key to all other problems facing Quebec, in the view of Parti pris. Les Damnés de la Terre, by the Martinique-born Negro psychiatrist Frantz Fanon, who became the theorist of the Algerian revolt, has been cited frequently by the Parti pris team as a model for the revolution it intends to effect in Quebec. André Major, one of the original MLP group, saw duplicated in Quebec the struggle of a nation and a class which Fanon described. Decolonization—that is, the elimination of outside political and economic influence—is the objective of a revolution which will be national and socialist in Quebec, as it was in Algeria, Major maintained. The first step is to create a revolutionary elite, which will make the French-Canadian people alert to their colonial status and lack of political power.

By mid-1965 the Parti pris club had about 100 members. It adopted the MLP label in an effort to make itself more appealing to the working class, and absorbed several small organizations—Révolution Québécoise, le Groupe d’Action Populaire, and la Ligue Ouvrière Socialiste—none of which had any appreciable following.

Although its acknowledged ultimate goal is revolution, the MLP proclaims that it is not yet at the stage which will permit revolutionary action. The MLP sees itself as a movement which will form militants with an eye to the creation of a revolutionary party—the "instrument for seizure of power." The revolution will be achieved, it proclaims, only when Quebec will be governed by Quebec workers. Its immediate program stresses moderate social and economic reforms and "national liberation," which includes unilingualism and "national recuperation of the economy."

The Parti pris group makes no secret of its lack of members, funds, and organizational skill. It has very little support outside the Montreal area and no real working-class base, despite its claim to be the avant-garde of labor. Even at the University of Montreal it could muster only forty
members in 1965. Nevertheless, its eventual influence cannot be discounted. The intellectual qualities of the MLP’s most prominent members are recognized by its most vigorous critics, and its magazine enjoys a wide circulation in intellectual circles. It has taken some hesitant steps to make itself known to labor; its vow to correct its acknowledged lack of skills in this area must be given some weight.

In the meantime the MLP-Parti pris group is eager to use the electoral system to conquer the democratic state it considers a caricature of democracy. To that end, the MLP members of the Parti Socialiste du Québec succeeded in getting a PSQ commitment to present candidates in the 1966 provincial elections, over the objections of the more experienced democratic socialists in the party. The PSQ was founded in 1963 in an effort to unify the leftist elements committed to an autonomous Quebec. Its democratic members split with the New Democratic Party over the nationalist issue. It is a hodgepodge of different tendencies, including “orthodox” and “revisionist” socialists, indépendantistes and associated-state advocates, intellectuals and working-class representatives, Catholics and nonbelievers, and finally members of different generations. It would set up an independent socialist republic in Quebec if English Canada rejected its desire for a new constitution based on equality and freedom for both members of a two-nation confederation.

The PSQ is practically nonexistent on the local level and showed little sign of life beyond evidence of splits and resignations in the first two years of its existence. At its second congress, in March, 1966, the experienced labor union members among some 230 delegates argued against a commitment to enter the provincial elections. They cited the lack of money, time, and people, and urged efforts to develop a membership to justify PSQ claims to being a workers’ party. The Parti pris element carried the day, however, with the argument that elections served to make the party known, pointing to the experience of the Créditistes, who started with only about 5 per cent of the vote.

A further sign of the times was the conversion of the Quebec section of the Canadian Communist Party into an “independent” party in November, 1965. The “autonomous and distinct” PCQ favors self-determination for the province, according to its chief, Sam Walsh. He claims 150 members in 5 Quebec cities.

There is little effort made by these self-styled Marxist parties to conceal their insufficiencies in practically every area where political action is imperative, if they are to win power. By 1965 even the veteran separatist leaders, who had earlier been hopeful of mass conversions to their cause, were admitting publicly that they were few in number,
badly divided, and in no position to put an effective organization into operation. They remained convinced, however, that their ideas were making progress. Barbeau maintained that numerous organizations were being infiltrated by crypto-separatists and Chaput appealed to others, who were reluctant to identify themselves openly with the movement, to locate themselves in strategic positions against the day they would be able to swing important organizations to declare for independence.

Even in the most exciting moments of the bomb scare period, the separatists were convinced the press was party to a conspiracy of silence in regard to their activities, and as their doings became less newsworthy, their resentment toward the communications media has been increasingly plaintive. Joint action continues to elude them, despite their recognition that only a co-ordinated electoral campaign could give them any hope of attaining even limited success.

ANTISEPARATISM

The weakness of the various separatist organizations is generally recognized, yet the movement, or at least the concept of separatism, continues to play a role in current political thinking in Canada. The Lesage government robbed the separatist organizations of many of their arguments, through the gains it made, particularly in social and fiscal matters. The leaders of the various separatist groups, with the possible exception of Pierre Bourgault, have been singularly unsuccessful in establishing a public image, but the movement itself is conceded to have made an impression. The idea is no longer dismissed out of hand; it is attacked, but it is given recognition as a possible alternative to Quebec's current status. To that extent it continues to pose a threat to Canadian unity. It could become a real danger through political escalation. The nationalist appeal is traditional, and the danger of political outbidding on nationalist themes is always present. Specialists in various fields have attempted to counter that danger by pointing out the origins and implications of separatism.

A tentative explanation of separatism as a socioeconomic phenomenon was undertaken in 1962 by two Montreal professors—one a sociologist, the other an economist.6 Raymond and Albert Breton related the appearance of the three twentieth century manifestations of separatism in Quebec to several concurrent developments, in Canada and else-

where, and hypothesized that economic rigidities are the determining factors. They pointed to the increase in xenophobia in English-speaking Canada and in the United States in the early 1920s and in the mid-1930s, citing the intensity of anti-Semitism in both countries and the popularity of the Ku Klux Klan in the United States. They suggested that institutional rigidities which tended to restrict upward social mobility may explain both the restiveness of the American Negro and of the French Canadian in the early 1960s. When institutional “plateaus” are reached, the effect is more pronounced on groups near the bottom of the social scale. The middle class within such groups is particularly affected because of its increasing importance in the labor force, and especially because its social, economic, and political aspirations are higher. These aspirations manifest themselves in opposition to existing institutions, which are seen as obstacles to advancement, in a reforming impulse, and in the rejection of some aspects of the group culture which may serve as convenient scapegoats. Because of the sweeping nature of separatist demands, the Bretons question whether there is any possibility the desire for independence will be met. They leave room, however, for real social transformations to be generated by the same confrontation of middle-class aspirations and institutional plateaus.

There is probably considerable validity in the Breton thesis, but both the scale and the framework of today’s separatist movement are considerably enlarged. In the earlier instances, the impact outside Quebec was very limited, and the political commitments within the province were negligible. While the Bretons’ prediction that a reduction in institutional rigidities will bring about the disappearance of both Quebec separatism and Canadianism is probably accurate as far as the current crop of avowed separatists is concerned, there are other factors which can alter the eventual outcome. In the first place, the major political parties have brought the populace to expect a very strong nationalistic stand toward Ottawa. The positions key public figures are increasingly committed to must eventually elicit acceptance or rejection from the English-Canadian part of the country. To a certain degree the problem is already out of the hands of French Canada. Where earlier socio-economic confrontations were handled on a regional level or without setting the French-speaking community against the English-speaking community, the current situation involves large areas of English-speaking Canada. Moreover, among the other factors which must be considered today, great weight must be given to the wider cultural horizons available to French Canadians. Earlier separatist movements were isolationist in all respects; the current ferment is tapping aspects of
the international French cultural community which were foreign to the prewar nationalists. Finally, the effect of new educational and technical developments on an expanding middle class, or rather on a more alert and politically more sophisticated and prosperous working class, will not be easily predicted.

Opponents bear down heavily on the economic problems that independence would create and on the difficulty implicit in merely severing present economic links. It would be a tremendous task, for example, to liquidate and share the wealth now under federal government control. The banking system would have to be restructured; the institution of a central Quebec bank would involve economic restraint, because the new national government would have to concern itself with the balance-of-payments problem. There would be insufficient local savings to make up for the withdrawal of foreign capital, if the separatists' desire for economic independence were implemented. Since Quebec's loan potential would be relatively limited, it would be impossible to get the funds needed for massive state intervention. Tariff barriers would rise between Quebec and the rest of Canada, and Quebec would have less bargaining leverage than it now has with Ottawa in influencing Canadian tariff policies. Without the weight of English-Canadian wealth and numbers, Quebec's bargaining power vis-à-vis the United States would be even less than at present. Industries which had originally located in Quebec in order to gain access to the whole Canadian market would be deprived of the major reason for their existence. With a smaller population to bear national administration costs, the per capita burden would be greater in an independent Quebec. The lower standard of living argument is probably the most forceful, partly because this question is a constant source of Quebec discontent. It is common knowledge that Quebec's standard of living is about 10 per cent below the national level; it has been about 28 per cent below the Ontario norm at least as long as the Confederation has been in existence. Opponents of separatism predict a further reduction if Quebec severs ties with the rest of the country, citing the adverse effects of tariff and investment restrictions.

In purely political terms the single most telling argument against pushing for an independent Quebec is the fate of the French-speaking minorities in the other provinces. Though most Quebec-firsters dismiss the question as irrelevant, the thought of abandoning one and one-quarter million conationalis is a difficult hurdle. For generations the Quebec population has been propagandized on its importance to the maintenance of the Diaspora, and separatist leaders would have great difficulty making their point that an independent Quebec could actually
do more for French rights, as some of them argue, than is possible within the Confederation. Others just say flatly that those outside Quebec are already anglicized, or will be very shortly, and that there is nothing Quebec can do about it.

The most incisive criticism of the political and philosophical basis of the separatist thesis has been presented by Pierre Elliott Trudeau, the University of Montreal law professor and Liberal Member of the House of Commons whose work on *Cité libre* did much to pave the way for the rapid political evolution which took place in the first years of the Lesage government. He has frequently expressed his irritation and dismay over the attitude of the generation which reached the age of twenty around 1960. Many of the leaders of this age group—the first in Quebec, as he says, entirely free to devote its energies to bringing the nation into today's world—are looking instead to a narrow nationalism which can only dissipate their strength to no avail. He charges that the separatists are really preparing a counterrevolution. Their goal, he insists, is a national-socialist totalitarian regime.\(^7\)

Trudeau argues that separatism is based on a misunderstanding of the meaning of self-government: it does not mean national self-determination. The states which have gained independence since World War II have attained the status Canada reached in 1931, when the Statute of Westminster confirmed Canadian independence, he maintains, and there is no nation-state among them. Those intellectuals who have been sidetracked by their preoccupation with nationalist themes are betraying the nation, he continues. They are politically reactionary, because a nationalist government is essentially intolerant, discriminatory, and, in the long run, totalitarian. He cites Acton: "Whenever a single definite object is made the supreme end of the State . . . the State becomes for the time being inevitably absolute."

In sum, Trudeau says, English Canadians have never been strong except through the weakness of the French Canadians, who allowed their rights to fall into disuse. To re-establish those rights within the framework of confederation implies a fundamental transformation in the image of Canada that English Canadians have made for themselves. Trudeau believes this can be done because neither side is strong enough to crush the other. Whether the English Canadians can bring themselves to grant the cultural equality French Canadians demand is, however, the all-important question. The type of plural society a bicultural

nation must embody requires a more extensive adjustment on the part of the previously predominant culture than U.S. experience on the religious, and probably on the racial, level can provide. The changes English Canadians must accept, says Trudeau, are their problem. His categoric attitude implies, of course, that English Canada has no choice, if Canada is to survive. If, however, English Canada proves unresponsive to Quebec's concept of reason, the threat to confederation is reduced to its simplest expression.