In the course of his wartime campaign to reconcile the two "founding races" of Canada, Abbé Arthur Maheux catalogued for an English-speaking audience the fears that motivated their attitudes toward each other. The French-Canadian birth rate was a prime worry for English Canadians, he felt, because it embodied the threat of numerical superiority within a generation. This would strike English Canada as a kind of military defeat, with all the implications of French domination that nineteenth century British-firsters had railed against: Catholicism would oust Protestantism and the standard of living would be lowered because of the old-fashioned and narrow-minded ideas which shaped French Canada's views on life. They felt resentment because they believed that French Canadians did not care to learn English and thought that all Anglo-Canadians were "British-minded." Finally, they did not believe French Canada was doing its share in the war effort.

The salient feature in French-Canadian history, Maheux judged, was the Conquest of 1760, and French Canadians felt the process was still going on. Assimilation by the majority was a constant threat in the eyes of a minority of only 30 per cent in a continually growing country. The Canadiens dreaded any change in the British North America Act because they were sure provincial autonomy would thereby be curtailed, at their expense. They were apprehensive lest any liberalization in politics, economics, or education decatholicize the country. They distrusted the trends in labor unions, especially under U.S. or socialist pressure. They were convinced they were virtually excluded from the federal civil service and from worth-while posts in the armed services because they were not Freemasons and that they were being confined to a Quebec "reservation." Finally, they were alarmed at being entangled in dangerous enterprises undertaken through excessive loyalty to the British Crown.¹

Abbé Maheux could have cited more damning accusations to describe wartime animosities, particularly when the conscription issue had aroused normally even-tempered individuals on both sides to verbal excesses they would be ashamed to acknowledge today. His relatively restrained tally of mutual recriminations is a sufficient basis, however, to demonstrate how vastly sentiment has shifted in less than a quarter of a century.

The change in outlook on both sides is startling. The generally relaxed attitude of an increasing number of English Canadians toward Quebec is perhaps the most auspicious sign insofar as a continuation of the union, or the establishment of a more balanced partnership, is concerned. It is not yet clear how much of the change can be attributed to indifference and how much to a genuine effort to understand the other side. The Orange lodges no longer wield the power they once did, but they continue undaunted their attacks on popery and all things French. The tenor of the English-language press, however, particularly in Ontario, is significantly different from what it was even in the initial years of the quiet revolution. There is a new readiness to concede that French Canadians may be justified in their resentments and aspirations. In part, the dissolution of any basis for the fear of French numerical superiority has favored a willingness to consider the other point of view; the influx of a variety of immigrants has fostered a new openness to cultural diversity. In the long run, perhaps the controlling factor is the growing need of English Canada for French Canada as an essential ingredient in concocting a national identity.

Whether the desire to adapt will be a sufficient cement is contingent in large measure on the range of the new purposefulness evident in Quebec. Both extremes among French-Canadian activists meet in a common rejection of English Canada. Their influence on the moderate bulk of the population will depend on the success of current measures to meet Quebec demands on political, economic, and social levels and on future moves for juridical confirmation of changing relationships. On nearly every count, today's French Canadian has sloughed off the implications inherent in Maheux's list. He repudiates the implications of the Conquest and with it the inferiority complex that obliged him to conform to a pattern he unconsciously resisted as alien and unjust. He has modified his obsession with minority status by adopting the theory of two majorities, which gives him at least the illusion of freedom of action in an area he is confident he controls. He is pressing for constitutional reform in the calm assurance that he can guide the direction of change or reject any alternative. He is in the midst of organizing the most modern school system on the continent; he has shaken the self-
sufficiency of the economic oligarchy he is determined to supplant; he has begun to reassert political perception without limiting his options. He has given wide latitude to organized labor, even in publicly owned enterprises. He faces the happy prospect of being sought out for jobs in private industry as well as in the federal bureaucracy. He is ready to envisage a Quebec "reservation" because he is prepared to release it, if need be, from ties to English Canada and allegiance to the British Queen.

Paul-Émile Borduas and Frère Untel share much of the credit for undermining the fears Abbé Maheux enumerated, but so do the historians who demythologized the pre-Conquest era and the sociologists who explained postwar Quebec to itself. The debunking period, which began to make itself felt in the mid-1950s, was at once an explanation of modern French Canada and a cause of its renaissance. It evidenced a new sense of self-reliance, a readiness to look at things as they are. At the same time it was a basis for a new wave of nationalism which undertook to change an intolerable situation, once the origins of the problem were better understood. The compensatory illusions nurtured by an inferiority complex have given way to a new dynamism which is potentially far more disruptive of national unity. The old theme of a chosen race with a providential mission has been discarded, but its nationalistic message is revived in the new commitment to French culture and to reforms which demonstrate the capabilities of the Québécois on a level with other North Americans. Charles Taylor points out the pressure the new French-Canadian intellectual puts on himself. His aim is to erect a modern French-language society comparable in efficiency to that of the dominant cultural element on the continent. The ultimate proof of this ability to match the best in English-speaking America is to achieve and maintain an administration autonomous politically as well as socially and economically.

COEXISTENCE

Quebec's willingness to seek a new political relationship with English Canada will increasingly tend to be a function of whatever accommodation can be attained on socioeconomic levels. Sociologists have speculated on the differences in outlook and objectives of the two main groups in Canada, but there is little empirical evidence to substantiate

an objective opinion on the degree to which the cultural milieu will
determine the French Canadians' economic acumen. The traditional
view is to contrast the presumed logical framework of the Latin mentality
with the supposed pragmatic adaptability of the Anglo-Saxon. Ready
generalizations of this sort are probably more misleading than helpful in
attempting to assess the future relationships between the two groups.
This is a fascinating field for investigation; at present the basis for
hypothesis is extremely thin.

The analogy with French Canada's past is almost certainly not valid.
It implies undue emphasis on differences in mentality and in cultural
patterns which determine thought processes. The disintegration of tradi­
tional scales of values warrants caution in forecasting the road that
change will take in all spheres. An anomaly in the new situation is that
Quebec is becoming more French as it becomes more pluralistic on the
religious level. As the old cliché that language is the guardian of the
faith is disproved and discarded, it is now possible for non-Catholic
groups to be assimilated into the French-Canadian milieu or to confirm
their adherence to a culture which leaves them free to reject the domi­
nant religion. Many of the most dynamic elements of the cultural
renaissance Quebec has been undergoing identify with the mass of
French Canadians in language alone.

These elements tend toward a more intransigent commitment to
French culture, perhaps partly through a compensatory reflex. This does
not suggest a reduced capability to adapt to a North American context.
On the contrary, it entails the intention to compete in all that the
modern world offers without surrendering to an English-language intel­
lectual climate. Even for those who adhere wholeheartedly to the ortho­
dox creed, the adaptation to new pursuits need not be seriously disrup­
tive of their cultural heritage. Technicians in France have been able to
cope with pragmatic situations which have not fitted neatly into
coherent patterns of logic. As more and more French Canadians un­
dergo similar training, they can be expected to make the transition as a
matter of course.

An important international role may develop for French Canada
when the essentials of industrialization are more clearly understood. The
tendency to dismiss disparagingly as “Americanization” many aspects of
mass culture inseparable from modern industrial civilization will disap­
ppear as non-American cultures evolve their own accommodations with
the future. Individual French Canadians and French-Canadian compa­
nies have demonstrated their ability to compete successfully with Eng­
lish Canadians in a number of fields. In the past, a high proportion of
French-Canadian businessmen have displayed reluctance to expand their small-scale operations into new or broader areas where their experience would warrant extending their holdings. This parallels a pattern common in France where successful businessman have intentionally drawn back from new ventures which would have enhanced their economic positions considerably. Such aversion to opportunities an American businessman would welcome is a recognizable trait of a culture which puts greater stress on other aspects of success. It does not imply a lack of ability; it reflects a choice. As business and technical fields attain greater social prestige within top French-Canadian circles, there is no reason not to expect a transformation in this regard. In view of the relatively high level of Canadian technology, such a cultural transfer should be expected to be carried via Quebec to other French-speaking regions.

Within Canada itself, however, more serious problems of adjustment will be faced, and the political repercussions will be of profound importance for the Confederation. Assuming the development of wide technical competence within the French-speaking community in Quebec, it will be only a question of time before most industrial establishments in the province will be operating in a French-language environment, barring a drastic reversal in the current willingness of much of English-Canadian management to comply with pressures toward Frenchification of Quebec. This should present no insurmountable problem for the individual plant or Quebec branch of a national organization. It may be critical, however, on the level of regional or national management when French-speaking Quebeckers seek top-level jobs outside the provincial framework. Nathan Keyfitz has raised intriguing questions on the role the team concept has played in the past in limiting the highest management levels to individuals who think alike and trust one another because of social connections as well as background and training. If this situation is to change it will require a remarkable degree of adaptability on the part of English-Canadian management. Whether or not this can be limited to purely linguistic levels will depend, however, on whether or not the mental outlook of French-Canadian technical and business graduates can be reconciled with what is considered today to be distinctively North American corporate practices, without debilitating the cultural basis which gives the French Canadian his identity. As in the past, the French Canadian will probably be prepared to bear the burden

of bilingualism in his relations with his peers in a national context. This will probably be true in the future only in so much as his cultural distinctiveness is not held against him in determining his role in the national organization he is identified with. Otherwise national unity on the political level will not be possible. It implies, however, a higher degree of national solidarity than seems likely in the immediate future, because it would require an acceptance of biculturalism which would extend far beyond political equality for the two cultures.

National unity as it has been conceived in earlier years is flatly rejected by Quebec proponents of pan-Canadianism. Michel Brunet, for example, accepts the idea that history, geography, economic necessity, and political ties have united both French- and English-speaking Canadians on the same territory in the interior of the same federal state. This is a union which each generation must adapt to in its own fashion, he insists; he maintains that there is no permanent solution to the problem of coexistence within this union. When compromises are reached, he believes, French Canadians must maintain responsibility for their own struggle for cultural survival through a government under their own control—that is, political power must be real to be effective.

Although French Canada now seems capable of exerting sufficient pressure on Ottawa to assure some measure of recognition for the French language in the federal civil service, it is far from clear how any carry-over in the business world can be made effective on the national level without a metamorphosis of English Canada's business hierarchy. This is not a real problem in the immediate future, but it must be faced eventually in the context of the complete equality French-Canadian nationalists now demand. Brunet is probably correct in reasoning that reliance on the good will of Ottawa to maintain the cultural survival of French in Canada is a fatal delusion. Quebec must be in a position to exert pressure for political ends. If French culture is to have any life beyond Quebec's borders, however, it must hold promise of fulfillment in all levels, and the further the national economy is integrated through the expansion of big corporations, the more frequently the problem will crop up in a nonpolitical context.4

For the time being, French-Canadian moderates accept the idea that two different cultures can co-operate on a specific concept of political union. They reject the status quo, however, and insist that substantial modifications of the Constitution and in the functioning of the present

political institutions will have to be made. They believe that it is necessary to rethink Canadian federalism and make profound adjustments in it as it exists today.

If coexistence can be encompassed in new political accords, it must take into account the status of the French-speaking community in the whole of Canada, as well as the status of Quebec in the Confederation. In terms of the larger problem of biculturalism on a national level, it may seem a comparatively easy matter to recognize a special status for Quebec. There is no lack of suggestions, ranging from proposals for a unitary state to the loosest possible type of confederation.

On the theoretical level, the single state would have the advantage of satisfying French-Canadian demands for equal treatment across Canada and English-Canadian interest in developing an identity clearly distinct from the United States. The debit side of this proposal rules it out for the foreseeable future. From the Quebec point of view, it would condemn French Canada irretrievably to a minority position everywhere in the country, robbing the French-speaking community of all political leverage and putting it legally at the mercy of a majority whose history in regard to French-language rights would not warrant such confidence. For much of English-speaking Canada, especially west of the Great Lakes, any recommendation giving French national parity with English below the federal level would be an intolerable intrusion into local affairs.

An idealistic variant of the unitary solution has been put forth by a long-time apostle of French culture in Canada, whose nationalist views are now somewhat out of fashion. Albert Lévesque, whose Action Canadienne-française publishing house accommodated a comprehensive sweep of French-Canadian thought in the 1930s, would establish a national school board independent of both Ottawa and the provinces. Under his proposal, a Canadian Education Council would be empowered to levy taxes to support separate French and English school systems across the country. A parallel bicephalous Arts, Letters, and Sciences Council would have control of broadcasting, postgraduate training, and research, all maintained by a separate cultural tax. In addition to the unreserved opposition to such ideas by most English Canadians, Quebec nationalists would be extremely averse to any scheme which would open the way to extensive national financial support for the English-language universities in Quebec.

Nevertheless, a number of thoughtful English-speaking Canadians are groping toward a solution which will provide a national basis for the protection and evolution of French culture in Canada and reduce the areas in which Quebec is competing with Ottawa. The essentials of Levesque's proposal are apparent in a more recent suggestion based on a clear distinction between French Canada and Quebec. The need for Quebec to claim a special status would be obviated by a program elaborated by D. Kwavnick, an Ottawa political scientist. In addition to the usual recommendations for French-language schools where warranted and the use of French as a working language in the federal civil service and in the armed forces, he would place cultural affairs in the hands of semiautonomous English and French sections of the Canada Council. Hopefully, French Canadians would be induced to look to Canada rather than to Quebec; Canada would become in actuality the state of both French and English Canadians.

Kwavnick admits that the satisfaction of French-Canadian aspirations requires a revolution in English-Canadian thinking to parallel the intellectual metamorphosis in French Canada. In effect, however, he is asking also for a further revolution in Quebec's mentality. The impression is deeply imbedded in French-Canadian minds that Ottawa is English Canada's government. The Parliament in Quebec City embodies the national aspirations of many, perhaps a majority of French Canadians. This feeling is expressed in the two-nation concept that is propounded under a number of forms ranging from vague proposals for a sort of dual sovereignty across Canada to a flat demand for a union of two independent nations joined politically in a loose federation similar to Europe's evolving Common Market.

Though such schemes stand little chance of winning acceptance in English-speaking Canada, they share a common recognition that Quebec is unlikely to surrender real political power for a shadowy national equality. The basis for an intermediate solution, which has the merit of concentrating on the areas most directly concerned, has been advanced separately by two political scientists who have established reputations in the field of Canadian affairs. Professor Donald V. Smiley sees a convergence of the problem of cultural dualism and the largely economic disputes which array central Canada against the other provinces. He would postpone the search for a federal solution to the problem of coast-to-coast biculturalism in favor of a short-range *modus vivendi* to be

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worked out by Ontario, Quebec, and New Brunswick. Maurice Lamon­
tagne, former professor at Laval and ex-cabinet member under Pearson, 
suggests that cultural equality could be achieved in short order in the 
heart of Canada if Ontario and New Brunswick made French an official 
language. These two provinces adjacent to Quebec shelter the bulk of 
the French-Canadian Diaspora. The three provinces account for 70 per 
cent of Canada's population, and Ontario and Quebec control 80 per 
cent of the country's industrial production.

The implication is clear: if these provinces developed a policy on 
cultural equality, the rest of the country would eventually acquiesce.
Some such proposal may eventuate from the deliberations of the Royal 
Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism or from the study 
groups Ottawa and Quebec have established to consider constitutional 
problems. The requirement for provincial action is a major stumbling 
block. New Brunswick's first Acadian premier has already been tarred 
with the brush of ethnic favoritism by opponents of the radical social 
reform program he pushed through the provincial legislature in 1966. 
He would probably be extremely reluctant to initiate a move so ob­
viously partial to his own linguistic group. If Ontario led the way, 
however, he might be able to follow. Ontario's Premier John Robarts 
had put himself on record against the proposition that the Quebec 
government has any responsibility for the French-speaking citizens in 
the other provinces, but he has also publicly proclaimed the inviolability 
of existing constitutional guarantees for the French language and cul­
ture. He has alternately pleased and disappointed French-Canadian 
spokesmen as he has seemingly responded to contending pressures on 
the question of linguistic rights. A prime consideration where political 
expediency is involved, however, is his presumed ambition to inherit 
Diefenbaker's mantle as leader of the Progressive-Conservative Party. 
The handicap of a limited ability to speak French might not be in­
superable for a politician who had demonstrated his good will by leading 
a major break-through in the field of French-language rights.

SCISSION

The only alternative to a national compact giving practical expression 
to the type of equality French Canadians demand is the withdrawal of

7. "The Confederation after the unwanted election," Canadian Forum 
Quebec from the Confederation. This is the avowed goal of only a small minority of activists. In view of the youth, dedication, and organizational skill of the well-educated, politically conscious Québecois in the separatist movement, the question is of some significance for the future. Much more important than the number of professed separatists, however, is the willingness of many other French Canadians to look on separatism as an acceptable option. For the first time since confederation, responsible political leaders in both major provincial parties proclaim their recognition of independence as a choice open to Quebec. They affirm their fidelity to confederation, but in the same breath they demand reform and express or imply the threat of secession. In the past, Quebec leaders who dreamed of an independent French-speaking state considered it a probably unattainable goal. At most, they hoped it might be possible at some remote future date—if French Canada could survive. Survival itself was an objective so questionable of attainment that group energies had to be harnessed to bolster it within the Confederation—the only framework that seemed capable of supporting it. Suddenly, much that seemed impossibly remote appears almost within reach. If not within immediate grasp, it looms breath-takingly close.

The greatly increased readiness to consider independence feasible may not consciously fashion objectives, but it weights decisions and supplies coherence to previously half-formulated ideas. Perhaps the most concrete evidence of a new sense of purpose in Quebec government policy has been the move toward a modern economy under state guidance. Political mastery is avowedly to be built on an economic and social base now in the making. Provincial autonomy is the professed goal; complete independence is depreciated but not repudiated. The dilemma Quebec independence would pose for the French-speaking minorities in the other provinces is probably a major deterrent to more forthright statements of intent.

The need for the basic decision may not be faced until and if the French-language community in Quebec arrives at the level of social and economic self-sufficiency which would assure it all the elements of a "complete society." There is no doubt about where that leads in the mind of at least one apostle of French-Canadian nationalism, who poses and immediately answers the rhetorical question, "When will the day of nondependence arrive for the Canadian Frenchman?" "When the French-Canadian element of the Canadian population will have achieved adulthood," he answers—that is, when it has sufficient numbers and the range of institutions which will permit it to attain perfec-
tion. But in the case of a nation, he contends, this can only signify total sovereignty, the final stage of self-government.9

Historian Ramsay Cook has pointed out the irony of the situation: when English Canadians are more and more disposed to look on the French-English association as the best guarantee of Canada’s survival as a political entity, French Canadians are increasingly inclined to see their ethnic survival in another context.10 In theory at least, the right of the French-speaking citizen to demand service in his own language from the federal bureaucracy is now formally acknowledged, as is the right to work in French within the bureaucracy itself. Quebec’s fiscal autonomy within areas of provincial jurisdiction is no longer questioned; its right to conclude international accords in specific fields is recognized. The demand for state-supported French-language schools and for French-language TV and radio stations across the country is winning sympathetic attention. These are giant steps, even if much of the progress so far is on paper or represents a new attitude, rather than being actual fulfillment of the promises English Canada is making.

Quebec continues to press for a constitutional court based on recognition of a special status for civil law; it keeps up its efforts to win undisputed responsibility in the exploitation of its natural resources. Many nationalists in Quebec proclaim the need for a separate press service assuring French-language coverage on a broader scale than presently available.

Increasingly insistent is the demand to make French the only official language in Quebec. This would be a move in the direction of an exclusivism both groups in the other provinces find disturbing. For the French-Canadian minorities, it seems to be an unnecessary provocation that will confirm the English-speaking provinces in their anti-French policies. For English Canada, it represents a disquieting desire to erect a barrier against the rest of the country.

That, of course, is not the intention of all proponents of French unilingualism in Quebec. Paradoxically, one of the theorists of French-Canadian independence sees such a move as a step toward more peaceful relations between the two language groups. Raymond Barbeau argues that giving French alone official status in Quebec would end the language war in Canada.11 Barbeau does not conclude, however, that

confirmation of Quebec as an exclusively French-speaking state would weaken his hope of seeing it fully independent.

In early 1966 Eric Kierans cautioned English-speaking Canadians against assuming that separatism is not dangerous because its partisans are few. A desire for independence exists in the hearts of all French Canadians, he warned, and it can be exacerbated as quickly by indifference as by hostility. They do not want to be governed by people who do not understand them, he claimed, and are determined to look elsewhere if necessary to avail themselves of a more creative and more rewarding existence.¹²

Kierans' admonition was a salutary reminder to his compatriots, but there is no evidence of any widespread response. Although the federal government has proceeded with commendable dedication to meet French-Canadian requirements, English Canadians in general have been lulled by the collapse of separatist violence, and many are bored by the whole question of Quebec nationalism. Although some English Canadians were shaken by the ability of the Rassemblement pour l'Indépendance Nationale to fill a Montreal hockey rink for an election rally in the spring of 1966, they were probably too ready to be reassured by the failure of any indépendantiste candidate to win a seat in the provincial legislature. Even the French-language press shrank initially from acknowledging the RIN's role in upsetting the Lesage team. The independence movement has demonstrated, however, that it is more than a nuisance on the political level. By determining the outcome of the provincial election, it shifted the course of the quiet revolution. The change of regime may not be to the liking of many who are sympathetic to the objective of the RIN, but it cannot fail to impress them with the success of a small band of dedicated propagandists.

The RIN is committed to work for independence within the framework of democratic institutions. Other groups with more radical programs are still active. The Parti pris movement has not renounced its objective of Marxist-Leninist revolution; though the terrorists identified with the bombings and robberies of 1963 and 1964 are still in prison, their organization was not destroyed. Two years after the last act of obviously political violence attributed to the Front de Libération du Québec, the police were unable to locate the source of the FLQ publications la Cognée and Avant garde, which continued to appear with disturbing regularity. The Montreal police take the threat seriously. There is no doubt that the French-Canadian public entertains a high

¹². La Presse (March 22, 1966), p. 25.
degree of sympathy for the individuals involved, if not for the actions they took to impress on English Canada the depth of their emotional revulsion against the status quo.

Political violence is not part of the Quebec tradition, but there was no wave of mass indignation over the outrages perpetrated by the FLQ terrorists. The morbid delight of the Quebec public in the escapades of the Montreal petty criminal Georges Lemay reinforces this suggestion of a corruption of moral values. Such an attitude parallels the widely publicized phenomenon noted in a number of U.S. cities in recent years, when whole neighborhoods studiously ignored acts of savage violence in their midst. Because the bulk of the population does not feel involved in events whose impact is not direct and personal, relatively small groups exert influence far out of proportion to their size. The majority react as if they were viewing a drama on television. Quebec political activists can be expected to be alert to the likelihood they can rely on the lack of conviction of masses they intend to manipulate by violence or the fait accompli.

Despite its relative political sophistication, Quebec might be an easy victim for either mass excitation or maneuver from technocratic points of vantage. Gérard Pelletier advances a persuasive argument against the likelihood of a nationalist rebellion in a population with full control of its educational system, political freedom and civil liberties, a high degree of industrialization, and a high standard of living.¹³ This argument may be beside the point, however. There seems little likelihood that English Canada would resort to arms to maintain Quebec in political union. If Quebec decided to pull out of the Confederation, the confrontation with the rest of the country would be over means, not over the question of whether it could or could not secede. In this context, the parallel of France in 1958 is more apt than that of the underdeveloped countries, which lacked all the advantages Pelletier cites. A change of regime within the autonomous Province of Quebec could set the stage for negotiations leading to an independent État du Québec.

Such an eventuality has a highly unreal flavor in the mid-1960s; it cannot, however, be dismissed as totally improbable. To the extent that Quebec has been undergoing revolutionary change, a pattern common to the early stages of more violent upheavals is predominant; the proponents of constitutional gradualism have had little difficulty retaining control of developments. In the course of revolutionary movements, nevertheless, there is more often than not a period in which new

agitators take advantage of the potential for more rapid change. The succession of events from the summoning of the States-General in 1789 to the Terror four years later is the classic example. It is almost ludicrous to refer to it in the Quebec context today. Yet, another, unofficial, States-General is in preparation. The paralegal legislature of French Canada which the Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste is assembling will offer a platform for all the French-speaking malcontents in the Confederation and will give them a chance to foment whatever wild action they may feel called to undertake. On the other hand, the session may be no more than an occasion for the verbal pyrotechnics dear to Quebec hearts. It will be a milestone, however, for any proponents of violence who are determined to force a situation that the mass of the population will feel constrained to accept. Is revolution ever otherwise? A more insidious threat to democratic processes in Quebec may arise from a precipitate adherence to modern technology. Early in 1966 a group of French-Canadian university and political spokesmen explored tentatively the dangers technocracy represents for Quebec. They acknowledged that the new technical elites are indispensable to the industrial society which is necessary for an economically autonomous province. They expressed concern, however, over the power technical knowledge puts in the hands of individuals in key administrative or advisory posts. In the name of efficiency, those who make a religion out of nationalism may be tempted to circumvent democratic debate and try to manipulate the country without recourse to its elected representatives. Laval sociologist Jean-Charles Falardeau epitomized the problem when he said, “Our society is crowned by a governing elite of technocratic experts before it has adequately learned how to practice democracy.”

The danger cited here is relatively long range and threatens only indirectly the Confederation structure. In the meantime a more unsettling political problem may evolve from the emergence of thousands of new French-Canadian university graduates whose job opportunities will be in fields where English-Canadian predominance has been the norm.

THE AMERICAN CONTEXT

If domestic considerations alone were involved, English and French Canada would long since have reached tacit accord on how much leeway each could permit the other. Their conflicting views on assimilation have governed the evolution of their relationship, but blocked

lasting agreement. Assimilation was probably never a feasible policy, despite the numerical inequality of the two "founding races" throughout the century of confederation, yet English Canadians acted on the assumption that it was inevitable. Their reasoning on this and other angles of their relationship with French Canada was warped, because their frame of reference on internal matters has never been confined to the national borders.

Even when Canada was a British colony, its proximity to the United States was presumed to assure the early evanescence of French. Lord Durham's Report drew this explicit conclusion. The compromise incorporated in the British North America Act, a quarter of a century later, when Durham's recommendations proved unworkable, was no more than an expedient in English-Canadian eyes; Quebec was expected to forsake French eventually because of the overwhelming disproportion of English-speakers on the continent. After the lapse of a century English Canadians are partly resigned and partly relieved that Quebec has not abandoned French. Nevertheless, although they are beginning to look to French Canada as a key to their own national identity, they still recoil from the full implications of forthright acceptance of the "French fact." They are reconciled to the legal separation of Canada from the United Kingdom; they cling to their comforting affinity with the United States.

English Canada has always cast the United States in a curiously ambivalent role. Anti-Americanism is a basic element of Canadian nationalism. As Britain's world influence waned and English Canada was obliged to search more diligently for its raison d'être, the desire to establish a distinction between Canadian and American became more feverish. Since 1951 a succession of royal commissions dealing more or less explicitly with U.S. influence on Canada resulted in recommendations that steps be taken to protect the Canadian public from the cultural impact of the mass media originating in the United States. As U.S. investment in Canada increases, cries of alarm over the threat of economic imperialism highlight the dilemma of Canadians who recognize the need for development resources but are apprehensive about the possibility of foreign domination. Former Finance Minister Walter Gordon's efforts to win the Liberals to a policy of economic nationalism warm over an anti-U.S. theme but propose no solid alternative. He would increase the cost of Canadian independence without being able to affect the policies of U.S.-controlled enterprises operating in Canada. The 25 per cent differential in the standard of living between the United States and Canada has been borne more philosophically in the
past by the national image-makers, who normally were less exposed to its effects than the less national-minded individuals who elected to seek personal advancement south of the border. The willingness of all English Canadians to pay the price of nationhood is being undermined by Quebec’s new assertiveness. The old war cry of “French domination” could easily arouse animosities which would make a new assessment of Canadianism more critical than at any time in the past. This is now evident in implied and explicit threats from English Canadians that union with the United States would be preferable to a bicultural country subject to a veto from Quebec.

The willingness of English Canadians to consider absorption in the United States confirms French-Canadian suspicions that loyalty to the Confederation has never been as wholehearted on the English-Canadian side as in French Canada. The United States has been an escape hatch which individual French Canadians have availed themselves of at least as frequently as their English-speaking fellows. Theirs were personal decisions, however, and left the national image more or less intact. What is now proposed by many unofficial spokesmen for English Canada is a mass repudiation of Canada’s past. There is more than a hint of spitefulness in some of this sentiment, which conveys the belief that French Canada has no real choice. Peter Plow, the Montreal businessman who has publicly expressed his *mea culpa* for English Canada’s sins against the *Canadien*, imparts this impression when he envisions a “greater continental United States” in which the very idea of a separate Canadian identity will melt away. If there is no Canada, he asks, could there be a separate Quebec in a vast English-speaking continent? Not for long, he believes, because Quebec would become another Louisiana.15

Similarly, the English-Canadian historian A. R. M. Lower has suggested that freedom from Quebec might well be freedom from a milestone. He speculated that foreign policy in a Canada without Quebec would take on a simplicity and unanimity it could not have in the Confederation; he hoped that a Canada without Quebec might soon find its feet against the United States.16 Such readiness to ignore the deep divisions among the English-speaking provinces points up the problem most English Canadians are loath to face. They are seeking

alternatives which will permit them to sidestep the basic decision they must make if Canada is to remain united. Most of them are still reluctant to face the thought that Canada's raison d'être must be found within itself. Too many of English Canada's articulate spokesmen are still looking for it south of the forty-ninth parallel, or beyond. As Quebec's quiet revolution got under way, novelist Hugh MacLennan, for example, pleaded eloquently for fidelity to Canada's world mission. The Canadian experience, he proclaimed, can show, through the sharing of a country and a continent, how the nations of the world should learn to live with one another.¹⁷ English-Canadian terms dominated the relationship of the two groups too long, however, for the majority to accept in the course of only a few years the need for a more equitable distribution of the burden of cohabitation. The bulk of the English-speaking population of Canada still perceives only dimly the implications of a bicultural existence.

English Canada's reluctance to face squarely Quebec's full-partnership demands was evident long after the scope of the quiet revolution was clear. In large part, procrastination stems from the economic base of the problem, which in English Canada's thinking looms larger than its purely political aspects. Because of U.S. economic power the American factor assumes undue proportion in every equation English Canadians devise to relate the data which describe Canada's future for them. This is evident in the title of the imaginative article Roy A. Matthews published in 1965. "Canada, 'The International Nation,'" betrays both a repugnance to give full weight to political pressures and the desire to seek outside the national borders a solution to an essentially domestic problem. Matthews' long-range concept of regional markets is probably valid but not necessarily germane to the immediate problem of convincing French Canada to remain in the Confederation. His proposal to upgrade foreign-language study in general as a step toward making Canada a model for future international co-operation strikes French Canadians as a subterfuge to reduce French to the level of a foreign tongue.¹⁸ Equating the various cultures which compose the Canadian mosaic is anathema to Quebec, because English is the lingua franca for the other minorities, and French Canadians infer, not incorrectly, that such reasoning means to relegate French to a similar folkloric status.

For generations the two language communities in Canada made a fetish of ignoring one another. They rarely felt the need to communicate over the language barrier. That day is past; they are now more and more cognizant of the gap that divides them and more inclined to do something to bridge it. Consequently much that both French and English Canadians have said about one another in recent years has been addressed more or less directly to each other. In most such instances they have been talking at each other; as a result they have tended to talk past each other. They have used the same words, but the import has been different. They have been too engrossed in unburdening themselves to give much thought to the need to listen. Nevertheless, a conversation of sorts has begun; it can hardly yet be called a dialogue, but there is no doubt that the two solitudes are dissolving.

Before a real dialogue can be initiated, however, a common vocabulary must be found—not in the sense of a single language, but in agreement on the ideas behind the words, whether they are enunciated in English or in French. In effect, the B. ’n’ B. Commission was given that assignment, but since it grew out of French Canadians’ desires to make their grievances known, the Commission may, in the short run, raise more English-Canadian hackles than otherwise. Nevertheless, many English Canadians who dismiss biculturalism as “utter nonsense” are not motivated by ill will toward French Canada. An increasing proportion of them are prepared to accord a special status to Quebec in the Confederation. For most of them, the scope of French-Canadian aspirations is still obscured behind a semantic cloud, but probing may reveal a basis for accommodation.

Imperfect as the exchange between the two communities may be, it has begun to produce tangible results. The threat of an early rupture of the Confederation was less imminent in 1966 than it may have seemed in 1964. Much of the credit for the more relaxed atmosphere is due to Prime Minister Pearson. The qualities of leadership, which have seemed wanting in his parliamentary role, shine through much brighter in an administrative context which bears directly on the most critical problem he faces. His parliamentary record may have been tarnished by indecision. Yet the diplomat’s instinct for compromise, which helps explain this impression, may in the long run be his saving grace, and Canada’s.

If the prime minister has been lacking in firmness on the floor of the House, it was probably not out of weakness. He may have overreacted to
a semblance of power, but the sensitivity he displayed on such occasions has stood him in good stead on the federal-provincial level. He has probably been too ready to concede to his parliamentary opposition power dimensions it did not possess. The chances are much less that he has erred in sensing the political force Quebec represents. A more arbitrary temperament might have failed to recognize the symptoms or have decided to risk the danger they signaled.

Pearson understands the magnitude of the problem posed by the increasingly sharp confrontation of the two language groups. Whether English Canada will follow through on the course he plotted or whether he is steering directly enough to satisfy the majority of French Canadians may not be apparent for some time. What is evident, however, is that Pearson grants the importance of the French fact to Canada. He appreciates the political power the French element exerts through its control of Quebec. In effect, his policies are an acknowledgement of Quebec’s key position in the Confederation.

A clearer picture of power relationships within Canada is beginning to emerge as a result of French Canadians’ increasing insistence on the rights they maintain the Constitution guarantees them or on those they insist their numbers and geographic concentration warrant. The Pearson regime has begun to satisfy this demand in both concrete and symbolic terms. Ottawa had little choice insofar as extending financial facilities to Quebec for social welfare programs was concerned, and making French a working language in the federal service is an obvious condition of a bilingual state. The need for a French-language radio station in British Columbia may seem much less apparent, but it has psychological value far beyond the service it will render to the handful of French-speakers on the West Coast.

There is a counterpart, however, to these steps to mollify Quebec nationalism. After several years of hesitant acquiescence in Quebec’s fiscal demands, the Pearson government began in 1966 to apply a program it stressed was directed toward strict compliance with the Constitution. The intention was to obviate the need to accord a special status to Quebec. By insisting that all the provinces assume their responsibilities in social welfare programs, Ottawa aimed at eliminating the occasion for Quebec to achieve a special relationship to the federal government.

Correct and proper as a policy of scrupulous adherence to the Constitution might appear, it is not without serious drawbacks from the point of view of national unity. It might be considered desirable to reassert the principle of confederation as a counterweight to the centripetal policies
English Canada has leaned toward more and more, especially in social welfare and education. The further regionalization of the traditional political parties evidenced by the results of the 1965 parliamentary elections gave warning, however, that the old centrifugal proclivities of some of the English-speaking provinces were not too far beneath the surface. The election, in 1965, of several vigorous proponents of pan-Canadianism from Quebec brought needed balance from the French-language community, but the hope of achieving a bilingual party, with broad representation to express national unity, has been dissipated by the poor showing of the Liberals in the West. Furthermore, despite the Liberals' success in rallying new support in Quebec, and growing recognition of French in the federal service, French-Canadian pressure for constitutional revision continues. By swinging back toward the more equitable distribution of responsibilities provided for in the Constitution, Ottawa seeks a balance between federal and provincial ascendancy. With nationalism riding high in Quebec, however, any encouragement from Ottawa for greater provincial autonomy risks abetting the forces the federal government wants to check. Moreover, Ottawa runs the further risk of opening the way for both major parties in Quebec to engage in an orgy of nationalist outbidding over such issues as the province's international role. If, as federal government spokesmen imply, Ottawa is moving to assert its international competence in cultural matters, in which Quebec has only recently shown any initiative, separatist propagandists will have additional opportunities to exploit.

The reforms Ottawa has inaugurated to improve the lot of French Canadians in the federal structure are in part an acknowledgment that justice demands them. They also express to some degree the realization that the national identity is increasingly in need of the special cachet French culture gives the Canadian nation. The predominant factor, however, is the federal government's recognition of the political power French Canada wields through the control it exerts over the Province of Quebec. English Canada's leaders are adjusting the national image because they are beginning to admit that Quebec is the key to Canada's continuing existence. Because of its strategic geographic location and its cultural distinctiveness, Quebec determines the future of the Confederation. English Canadians have suddenly become aware that the cultural aspect is important to their future as Canadians. They are learning that it may be necessary to their national existence, and consequently they are prepared to pay a price commensurate with the benefits they expect from the relationship.

If this implies too great a dislocation of the current loci of power, the
Confederation may not survive. The government’s new appreciation of power relationships has been strong enough to impose the principle of basic rights for French in the federal bureaucracy. The rumblings of discontent became more widespread as the early stages of implementation inconvenienced unilingual English Canadians. The issue could be dynamite; some Conservatives have shown an inclination to exploit it in the House.

It will be a stiff test as French Canadians press more insistently for key posts in the bureaucracy, and particularly in the cabinet. Ambition for the latter will threaten the close link between economic and political power that has characterized Canada even more than it has the United States. This area will be the heart of the problem even though emphasis may seem to be placed on satisfying strictly cultural demands. Complete cultural fulfilment implies untrammeled entrée for French Canadians to any post in the federal government. When these traditional political barriers are breached, the question of how much the Confederation is worth to English Canada will be framed essentially in terms of French Canadians’ access to economic power.

If the Confederation is to continue, the reply must emanate from a definition of national objectives to which both groups will contribute. It will not be the clear-cut definitive answer that the more literal-minded advocates of once-and-for-all solutions demand. It will take account, however, of certain semiconstants that a common history has endowed with relative durability. Until very recently, the landmarks of confederation were a succession of more or less subtle pressures exerted by the English-speaking community on French Canada, which is now trying to reverse the process. Since 1960, English Canada has been on the defensive, as the demands from Quebec become louder and more insistent. From this experience is emerging an awareness that a democracy embracing two different cultural communities requires from both more than the normal willingness to compromise. Slowly, comprehension is growing that in such a situation, concessions cannot be expected on a basis of meticulous reciprocity. Lasting political stability will almost certainly not be possible if French Canada is limited to a national role strictly commensurate with its numerical strength or with its control over only one province among ten. If it is, dissatisfaction with the economic and political framework in which the Confederation has evolved in its first century will make Quebec increasingly responsive to the lure of independence.