

Quebec's International Personality

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A recent cartoon in the Montreal newspaper, *The Gazette*, depicts former Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau, Queen Elizabeth and Quebec Premier Lévesque all seated at a banquet table spectacularly laden with food. Lévesque casually leans in front of Her Majesty to grab a leg of turkey from the Prime Minister's plate. Against a tableau of stunned silence and etiquette abandoned, the Quebec Premier — winking and with mouth full — is seen to be thoroughly enjoying himself.

Indeed, Quebec has enjoyed its role as the *enfant terrible* of Canadian Confederation for quite some time; but the mischiefmaker has, of late, begun to come of age. Since the November 1976 election which brought the *Parti Québécois* (PQ) to power,¹ Quebec's provincial government has actively campaigned for the right to negotiate "sovereignty-association" — what supporters would label "independence," and opponents would call "separation." The Parti Québécois has proposed holding a referendum which would define "sovereignty-association" as some appropriate level of political sovereignty within a framework of economic association with Canada; the favorable outcome of this referendum would empower Quebec to begin negotiations for independence.

In pursuing the primary objective of internal sovereignty, Quebec is committed to promoting itself as a respectable and legitimate actor on the international scene. With this goal in mind, Quebec's Ministry for Inter-governmental Affairs² has a new and compelling *raison d'être* — to promote and legitimize nationalist aspirations before an international audience.

The search for sovereignty and self-determination will inevitably entail accepting external duties and responsibilities; in fact, Quebec has already managed to extend itself wherever possible in the international arena. Whether or not independence does arrive in its anticipated form, the province has seen its

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1. The Parti Québécois was founded in 1968 by René Lévesque, now Premier of the province, and came to power as the majority party in the Quebec National Assembly on November, 16, 1976.

2. The Ministry for Inter-governmental Affairs came into being in 1967 to supervise and coordinate Quebec's growing agencies abroad. It has jurisdiction over both inter-provincial and external relations stemming from provincial competence and constitutional divisions of power. An official presence abroad through delegations and government offices is Quebec's primary means to achieve the short-term goal of international recognition.

external affairs network — which thrives on its promotion of nationalism — become a powerful and self-willed creature ill-suited to the presumption of a secondary role in formulating future foreign policy.

This article attempts to examine the recent conduct of Quebec's external affairs with these specific issues in mind: How smoothly can foreign policy be adapted from theory to practice? How effective is Quebec's emerging international personality in disseminating and institutionalizing nationalist goals at home and abroad?

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF PARTI QUÉBÉCOIS FOREIGN POLICY

The Parti Québécois has come remarkably far in a very short period of time. It was formed in 1968 by the merger of two political pressure groups, the Rassemblement pour l'Indépendance Nationale (RIN) and the Mouvement Souveraineté-Association (MSA). In absorbing some of the more radical tendencies of the former, the new party began to elaborate akin to that of the RIN a foreign policy which had been neutralist, rhetorical and defiant of the United States and Canada.

The RIN program had followed two major precepts.³ The first called for Quebec's independence and for establishment of a planned, socialist economy. The second espoused a curious notion of world decolonization in which Quebec was envisioned to be a colonized country with the perpetual status of *minoritaire* — a condition of alienation, dispossession and depersonalization. Quebec's need for independence was perceived as similar to that of colonies in the Third World. According to this doctrine, Quebec would not continue to live in isolation from the modern world after achieving independence, but would follow a logical progression of cooperation, coexistence and interdependence within a Marxist internationalist context, presumably with close ties to newly independent countries.

While the RIN contributions to the Parti Québécois should not be overestimated, they have left their mark on the current government in the dilemma of adjusting past theories to present needs. The most permeating RIN influence on the Parti Québécois is possibly a belief in the power of an ethnic-based nationalism, fueled by the notion that Quebec has suffered and continues to suffer from economic, cultural, and psychological exploitation. In fact, the rhetoric and image of colonization is endemic to all independence-oriented groups within the province, for whom anti-colonialist arguments have

3. Réjean Pelletier, *Les Militants du R.I.N.* (Ottawa: Editions de l'Université d'Ottawa), pp. 35-48.

retained their persuasiveness.⁴ To an outsider, it is hard to grasp the extent to which this belief is ingrained in the consciousness of Quebec; but it is neither contrived nor purely manipulative, and references by several prominent members of the current government which indicate the depth of perceptions of colonialism abound.⁵

It is precisely for these reasons that early Parti Québécois foreign policy doctrine — limited to a few position papers and speeches prior to 1976⁶ — focused on a desire for neutrality at a time when Quebec was spiritually at home with the developing countries and psychologically removed from the industrialized world. In turn, this translated into a stated intention of neutrality and non-alignment which included opting out of all formal alliance participation, while strengthening ties with the non-industrial world, especially francophone Africa.⁷ While this interest has since diminished, it is still true that many Quebec intellectuals perceive the role of an independent Quebec to be that of a bridge between the industrial and non-industrial world.⁸ It is clear from statements of Premier Lévesque, for example, that Quebec's self-perception is indeed that of a soulmate to developing countries:

Quebec must continually survive important challenges so as to be able

4. For example, see the rhetoric used by Finance Minister Jacques Parizeau following the decision of Sun Life of Canada to move its head offices from Montreal to Toronto, as reported in *Le Devoir*, *The Gazette*, and *The Montreal Star* throughout the second half of January and early February 1978.

5. For example, Deputy Premier and Minister for Education Jacques-Yvan Morin, in a lengthy article in the Montreal daily, *Le Devoir*, in April 1978, spoke of a "new contemporary colonialism" which is stalking Quebec. A more forceful example is to be found in the words of M. Marcel Léger, Minister of the Environment and Director of the Referendum Committee for the Parti Québécois: "A systematic campaign to discredit the Parti Québécois is presently underway and being led by the 'minority which owns Quebec' which controls information and influences public opinion. This minority is made up largely of anglo-Quebeckers and 'francophone economic elites' which act as [their] puppets." (*La Semaine au Québec*, July 16-22, 1978, p. 3).

6. These unpublished papers include: Claude Morin, "Document de travail sur les relations avec l'étranger," prepared for the Continuing Committee of Officials on the Constitutional Conference, 1969; Jacques-Yvan Morin, "La politique étrangère d'un Québec enfin souverain," speech given at Laval University on December 2, 1975, Quebec City; and the 1973 program of the Parti Québécois, "Budget de l'an I," updated in the spring of 1976 as "La politique étrangère."

7. Francophone Africa is the cornerstone of *la Francophonie* — an unofficial group of French-speaking countries from the Caribbean to the Middle East, including Quebec, which meets under the aegis of the *Agence de coopération culturelle, technique et économique*.

8. Claude Morin, "La Politique extérieure du Québec," speech delivered to the Canadian Institute for International Affairs in Quebec City, March 7, 1978, p. 11.

Quebec is today at the crossroads where there are, on the one hand, industrialized countries, and, on the other, the 'developing' countries — which are more often in the process of developing their culture [as well as their industrial base]. Having herself experienced this, Quebec is possibly the best-placed country in the world to forge the link between, on the one hand, economics and culture, and, on the other, the so-called developed and developing world.

to fully realise her cultural identity and to construct, like the African countries, her economic and social development.⁹

Of course Quebec is no African colony. However, this has not prevented many Quebecers from subjectively comparing their lot with that of African peoples or American blacks. Furthermore, it has imbued the Parti Québécois with a sense of identification with less-developed countries (LDCs) — many of which have recently achieved their own independence — that has provided the intellectual basis for the development of relations between Third World states and a Quebec in search of autonomy.

Majority party status subjected much of this theory to serious scrutiny after the sudden election of the Parti Québécois in 1976. Specifically, it initiated a period of redefinition of psychological and actual allegiances. Several necessary choices emerged: the party program called for an independent Quebec to relinquish its role in NATO and NORAD,¹⁰ but efforts to improve its international image argued for pursuing good relations with the United States and the European Economic Community. Furthermore, the Parti Québécois had to transform itself overnight from a coalition of heirs and guardians of various independence proposals into a credible government able to impress the electorate with serious and well-formulated intentions. The rhetoric of bygone days found itself suddenly sacrificed to the needs of coherence and consistency as well as the demands of a realistic foreign policy. Responsibility for this rests primarily with Claude Morin, Minister for Inter-governmental Affairs, and architect of Quebec's recent foreign policy. An acknowledged tactician of great repute, he is to be credited with the flexibility necessary to adapt academic theory to a working and viable foreign policy for a future independent Quebec.

DEFENSE, SECURITY AND ALIGNMENT

Claude Morin announced the new direction of Quebec's external affairs on March 7, 1978, before the Quebec section of the Canadian Institute for International Affairs. His speech, entitled "La Politique Extérieure du Québec," is the only official pronouncement to date on foreign policy. In essence, the announcement reverses the party's former position of neutrality, non-alignment, and closer ties to the developing world.

9. Raphael Mergui, "Québec: un nationalisme tranquille," Supplement to *Jeune Afrique*, No. 178 (November 4, 1977), p. 19.

10. According to the *Document de travail sur les relations avec l'étranger*, prepared by Claude Morin in 1969, article 5 of Chapter 8 originally called for "withdrawal from military alliances such as NATO and NORAD" within a general framework of greater neutrality in international affairs.

These historical ties to Europe and North America dictate the web of our international relations in all areas, . . . Quebec knows that it is part of the community of Western industrialized countries. It cannot isolate itself from a system of defense established within the framework of the Atlantic Alliance, regardless of the method of participation which it will adopt. It is even more evident that we cannot create a vacuum in North America by removing ourselves from NORAD, the system of continental defence. Finally, we accept the sharing of responsibility for collective security and East-West cooperation.¹¹

The unequivocal affirmation that the US and Canada are Quebec's "privileged partners," and that "consistent relations will be maintained with countries which are already our partners,"¹² was primarily directed toward the principal NATO countries. However, signs of a firm allegiance to the Western industrial world had to be qualified on behalf of the Third World audience, in order to assure the LDCs that Quebec would continue its financial and moral contributions to developing countries.

It would be normal for a sovereign Quebec to create its own Agency for International Development, and that the sum devoted to cooperation and development would be as relatively important as that currently contributed by the Canadian government.¹³

Ironically, defining these allegiances placed Quebec policymakers in the same situation as that faced by Canada only a few years earlier. The early years of Trudeau's incumbency saw a re-evaluation of foreign policy and defense commitments, including a serious discussion on the necessity for Canadian participation in NATO and NORAD. While the *Foreign Policy White Paper* of 1970 and the *Defence White Paper* of 1971 both confirmed that "the United States is Canada's closest friend and ally and will remain so,"¹⁴ they also reflected a Canadian ambivalence based on the nature of that relationship. As a result, in 1972 a new direction in international affairs was formulated — the "third option" — which sought closer ties with Europe, Japan and the Third World to counteract an overwhelming US influence in Canadian economic affairs.¹⁵

11. Claude Morin, "La politique extérieure du Québec," Speech, March 7, 1978, p. 17.

12. Jean-Claude Picard, "Un Québec souverain n'entend pas boudier les alliances militaires," *Le Devoir*, March 8, 1978, p. 1.

13. Claude Morin, Speech, March 7, 1978, p. 16.

14. Erik B. Wang, "Sovereignty and Canada-U.S. Co-operation in North American Defence," in *Canadian Perspectives on International Law & Organization*, R. MacDonald, G. Morris and D. Johnston, eds. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), p. 861.

15. Mitchell Sharp, "Canada-U.S. Relations — Options for the Future," *International Perspectives*, Special Issue, Autumn, 1972.

As recently as 1975 Canada was engaged in a debate on its future participation in NORAD.¹⁶ At that time the House of Commons Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence was forced to weigh the political costs and benefits arising from a decision not to renew the agreement. It reached the conclusion that Canada's contribution was indeed waning in significance and could probably be withdrawn without serious implications for North American security and defense. Even so, Canada renewed its NORAD involvement on the assumption that "military relations are usually more important [for Canada] for their political ramifications than for their military significance."¹⁷

In making its NORAD decision in 1975, Canada took into account the obstacles which would be raised to closer ties to the EEC by withdrawing from the pact. Similarly, the EEC is an important focus of Parti Québécois foreign and commercial policy. In fact, the actual value of Quebec's contributions to NATO and NORAD is subject to debate,¹⁸ but that does not lessen the political impact of a decision to opt out of full participation. It is not surprising then that the Parti Québécois revised a position that was untenable and antagonistic, given the overwhelming presence of its southern neighbor.

The Canadian analogy is then relevant. Political ramifications of military agreements are particularly important for a Quebec in search of US understanding. Like Canada, Quebec has had to consider the consequences of a nationalism that ignores diplomacy, particularly when in search of friends and trading partners. At the height of Canada's nationalism — roughly 1970-1976 — the country was willing to openly challenge and re-evaluate certain military alliances. While Quebec's burgeoning nationalism might also permit a rethink-

16. "Defence Policy and Military Involvements," *International Canada*, April 1975, pp. 89-93.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 93.

18. There appears to be some controversy over this issue. Canada currently contributes about 10 percent of the NORAD budget and 20 percent of the manpower. According to a *Time* cover story, ("Secession vs. Survival," *Time*, February 13, 1978, p. 43), one-third of Canada's air interceptor force is presently stationed in Quebec. Not surprisingly, Quebec's contributions on this score are under- or over-played, according to the political penchant of the observer. In the first category, Daniel Latouche has stated in his article "Quebec and the North American Subsystem: One Possible Scenario," in Fox, Hero and Nye, that the Pine Tree Line — an early warning and surveillance capability with radar stations running through Northern Quebec — has had its installations either dismantled or integrated into a larger radar network; and the military airfield at Bagotville consists merely of a "single squadron of CF-101 Voodoo interceptors." (Latouche, p. 359.) On the other hand, another source (John Starnes, "Quebec, Canada and the Alliance," *Survival*, September/October 1977) charges that the Bagotville base is a major component of the Pine Tree Line, which, according to him, is alive and well. Mobil Command Headquarters, for example, located near Montreal, controls all of Canada's ground forces; and there is a brigade group stationed at Valcartier, near Quebec City, committed to the air defense of Northern Norway. It is not my purpose to solve the contradictions, but simply to show that the matter is ambiguous enough to provoke concern among those who are alarmed by a Quebec intention to withdraw from NORAD.

ing of these commitments, its final position could prove to be quite accommodating to the US and Western powers when a sober assessment of the diplomatic scorecard is completed.

The NATO Controversy

Parti Québécois leaders appear to be convinced that "current political attitudes in Washington and New York count for more in the cause of independence than the cooperation of Ottawa and Toronto."¹⁹ According to a *MacLean's* article published in May 1978, the US Consul-General in Quebec City brought discrete pressure to bear on Claude Morin to reconsider the Parti Québécois position on neutrality and withdrawal from NATO and NORAD. It is partly for this reason that Morin's March 1978 speech received rather harsh criticism from the French-Canadian press.²⁰ Morin disturbed many commentators by flouting party conventions, traditions, and the official party program itself, especially in light of his proposal to consider defense as an area for possible association with Canada in a post-independence negotiation.²¹

Criticism of the issues raised in the speech centered around intimations of association with Canada, and less explicitly with the US, on the critical matter of defense and its impact on the nature of sovereignty and the definition of independence. The memory of Canadian army troops rolling into Quebec during the October Crisis of 1970²² left even conservative Quebecers extremely sensitive to a sense of territorial violation. This has been amplified by Morin's intimations that Quebec might, in the context of certain joint trilateral defense arrangements, wind up by renouncing its fundamental rights in the overburdening shadow of US military might.

By opening up another area of association with Canada, and even with the United States, one finds oneself assuming a perspective paradoxical to a sovereign approach. . . . To compensate for our [military] inadequacies, or even to answer for our desire not to be exhausted by military expenditures, we run the risk of waking up in a structure where it will be Canadians and Americans who will come to assure continental defence on

19. David Thomas and William Lowther, "God Bless America," *MacLean's*, May 15, 1978.

20. See, for example, Georges Vigny, "La vraie nature du Québec," *Le Devoir*, March 9, 1978, p. 4 and Jean-Claude Picard, "Un Québec souverain n'entend pas boudier les alliances militaires," *Le Devoir*, March 8, 1978, p. 1.

21. Claude Morin, Speech, March 7, 1978, p. 17.

We have yet to examine the possibility of a common system of defence with Canada.

Why couldn't this be a sector where Quebec and Canada could remain associated?

22. In the aftermath of the James Cross-Pierre Laporte kidnapping by the Fronte de Libération du Québec (FLQ) in October 1970, Prime Minister Trudeau imposed the War Measures Act and sent federal troops into Quebec, which has since become a symbol of Quebec's impotence in the face of federal powers.

Quebec's territory. . . . If today, in the federal ensemble certain among us react badly to the presence of Canadian forces in Quebec, what would they say to this Warsaw Pact solution?²³

This discussion touches on the very nerve center of the independence debate and is summed up in the ambiguity surrounding the goal of "sovereignty-association." When does too much association violate the integrity of sovereignty? Assuming that the original Parti Québécois program is the pristine form of neutralism necessary to assure the type of sovereignty desired, any abrogation of that program is tantamount to a sacrifice and destruction of principles for the dubious goal of gaining acceptance by circles who see no difference between "separatism," "independence," and "sovereignty-association."

Morin's speech and the critical reaction to it were the first indication that the Quebec government would have to take sides against members of its own party and pursue a foreign policy that reversed the trend toward neutrality and non-alignment. While most Quebeckers would probably approve of this new direction, there are a number of radical supporters of independence who most certainly do not. In taking a pro-NATO stand, Morin had to weigh the benefits it would bring in promoting relations between Quebec and the US and EEC against the cost of losing support from radical elements within the Parti Québécois. As a result, the government may find itself walking a tightrope. It is in the midst of campaigning for a referendum on sovereignty-association and must keep the electorate and its widely varying appetites in mind. At the same time it wants to convince external circles that Quebec's intentions are not antagonistic. In this case independence is defined differently for the domestic and international audiences. By stretching the definition too thin in order to please both internal and external critics, Morin and company may win the battle for international recognition but lose the war for independence.

QUEBEC-US RELATIONS

The awesome task of winning over various bodies of US opinion has not daunted the Parti Québécois leadership, and its relative lack of success is certainly not for want of trying. Since the November 1976 election, the Quebec government has attempted to assert its international personality wherever possible — whether through private contacts, cultural exchanges, international conferences or the expansion of its government offices abroad. The intention has been to elaborate on the goals and rationale of sovereignty-association and to improve the poor image of the Parti Québécois abroad.

23. Georges Vigny, "La vraie nature du Québec."

Official US policy on Quebec independence in any of its proposed forms is an obvious and eloquent silence. Washington clearly perceives it expedient not to indulge in speculation about solutions to hypothetical problems with regard to Quebec. Radical developments are neither expected, contemplated, nor provided for. Non-interference in Canada's internal affairs belies the US concern for a problem that has been festering in Quebec for seventeen years and bears that stigma of erratic and disruptive violence. While some Quebec officials encourage the impression that direct Quebec City-Washington diplomatic contacts have been established, the State Department has rebuffed all Quebec diplomatic overtures — including those offered by Morin — and is firm in recognizing only those channels approved by Ottawa.²⁴ Diplomatic insults and injuries, however, pale in comparison to concern for the impact of independence on Quebec-US relations in the sphere of commercial relations.

Commercial Relations and Prospects

At a colloquium sponsored by the Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales (HEC)²⁵ in May 1978 on the question of Quebec's viability as an independent state, several prominent economists and businessmen testified to the extreme degree of economic interdependence among Quebec, the other provinces, and the US. A number of important conclusions were reached which have a bearing not only on certain aspects of Quebec-US trade, but also on current Parti Québécois proposals designed to either economically or psychologically offset that interdependence.

Professor Carmine Nappi, a highly respected economist from HEC, demonstrated the extent to which Quebec's economy is dependent on its export market by ranking the province third only to the Netherlands and Belgium in the relative size of its foreign trade sector, which, in the case of Quebec, is 40 percent of its GNP.²⁶ The US absorbs nearly 62 percent of Quebec's international exports, or \$3.9 billion,²⁷ making it Quebec's largest *foreign* trade partner, followed by the EEC with 18 percent, and Japan with 2.5 percent. While Quebec's dependence on the international market is striking, it is also distinguished by being the region in Canada most dependent on the Canadian

24. David Thomas and William Lowther, "God Bless America."

25. HEC is the graduate school of business studies at the Université de Montréal.

26. Professor Nappi determined this by calculating total "known" exports, *i.e.* international exports of all goods plus exports of all manufactured goods to Canada, plus interprovincial trade of all raw materials, and calculated "known" exports as a percentage of Quebec's GNP averaged out over the years 1969-1974, to obtain a figure of 40 percent.

27. Carmine Nappi, "Sovereignty Association and Commercial Independence," in the Reference Record of the Symposium, *Quebec Independence? The Economic Implications* (Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales, Montreal, May 16, 1978), pp. 117, 119.

market itself. In 1974, for example, 55.9 percent of Quebec's known exports (\$6.6 billion) went elsewhere in Canada, while the remaining 44.1 percent (\$5.2 billion) was absorbed by foreign markets.²⁸ The susceptibility of Quebec's economy to disruption from the curtailment of its export markets is a fear which underlies the government's search for a coherent policy in its international economic relations.

Seeking to counter its dependence on the Canadian economy, Quebec's policy can move in one of two directions: autarky, which flies in the face of Morin's attempt to create an image of an open and accessible Quebec, or increased economic affiliation with the United States. The latter antagonizes those who see sovereignty and any acute form of association as mutually exclusive — the more radical elements of the Parti Québécois, supported by a host of intellectuals and labor groups who resent what they perceive to be an already unacceptable level of US economic infiltration. Nevertheless, increased economic associations with the US is one of the tactics that has been chosen to counteract the possibility of economic association being rejected outright by Canada.²⁹

The most recent advocate of the proposal for economic affiliation with the US is Bernard Landry, Quebec Minister for Economic Development, who toured US financial centers in May 1978. At that time, Landry insisted that continuing economic relations with the US would ensure that Quebec's economy would remain viable after independence and that intensification of these relations would act as a formidable deterrent to Canada's possible rejection of economic association with an independent Quebec.³⁰ Because many of the party faithful would undoubtedly interpret such a scheme as "abandoning the principle of independence and seeking integration into an American dominated economy,"³¹ Premier Lévesque felt compelled to comment that while this proposal was under consideration, it was only one of many alternatives. He made no secret of the fact that the proposal might be judged on its psychological impact alone. However, he also stated that closer economic ties to the US was a feasible strategy:

Quebec already has very close economic ties with the United States — if Canada said 'no,' I know of Americans who would not ask for more than to fill in the gaps. They have rarely refused clients.³²

28. *Ibid.*, p. 119.

29. See Henry Giniger, "Sovereignty Drive of Quebec Includes Seeking U.S. Trade," *New York Times*, May 15, 1978.

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*

32. *La Semaine au Québec*, March 20-23, 1978, p. 1.

This proposal's content could easily be dismissed as whistling in the dark were it not for the extensive press coverage that it received in Quebec during Landry's US tour. One can only assume then, that it was designed purely for its polemical value and impact on the home front. Coming at precisely the same time as the HEC Conference, it is logical to assume that it might have been intended as a smokescreen to persuade Quebecers that their fate did not lie in economic dependency.

The temptation to look south in the form of a free trade proposal between Quebec and the US has respectable academic origins, the original scheme having been proposed in 1970 by Rodrique Tremblay, now Minister of Industry and Commerce.³³ While natural geographic functions might indicate a stronger north-south trade connection, it is clear that this assumption has been recently touted more as a "countervailing force in any proposed association with the other provinces."³⁴ The facts presented at the HEC Conference would indicate a strong psychological need for a countervailing force — even if the US has no intention of acting in such a role.

Recent studies such as those presented at the HEC Conference demonstrate the interdependence of provincial economic activity. It is therefore misleading to assume that Quebec alone will lose revenue and jobs if its exports to Canada are curtailed by failure to reach agreement on the terms of economic association, but several important discrepancies between the impact on Quebec and the impact on Canada do appear. Quebec's interprovincial export industries are protected by tariffs of 9.9 percent, the highest average tariff in Canada.³⁵ In addition, 37 percent of the labor force in Quebec's manufacturing sector is dependent on exports to the Canadian market — the highest percentage of any region in Canada.³⁶ Hence, for Canada to reject economic association with Quebec would theoretically mean: 1) the loss of 55.9 percent of Quebec's export market; 2) the loss of high tariffs protecting interprovincial exports; and 3) the loss of 37 percent of the jobs in its manufacturing sector. While these losses will not accrue to Quebec alone, it should be emphasized, they will affect Quebec *relatively more* than any other region in Canada.

Such bleak considerations cannot affect a government indifferently, and so the author surmises that it was for this reason that Mr. Landry was dispatched on his US tour with his call for intensified economic relations with the US.

33. Although he has modified his views, he is still a strong proponent of decreasing Quebec's dependence on its exports to Canada and increasing exports to the US by diversifying domestic industries making their products more competitive with US goods: "the future of Quebec lies in the development of industries which can sell their products as much as to the U.S. as to Canada . . . the Canadian common market is too small." (*La Semaine au Québec*, March 15-22, 1978, p. 2).

34. Irwin Block, "PQ intensifies U.S. campaign," *The Montreal Star*, April 22, 1978.

35. Carmine Nappi, "Sovereignty Association and Commercial Independence," p. 121.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 122.

Always a very volatile issue, more so in anglophone Canada than in Quebec, the question of an increased US economic presence could only serve to raise Canada's suspicions that any attempt on Quebec's part to curry US economic favors is aimed directly at the heart of the Canadian economy itself. These fears are fueled by the widespread sentiment that a united Canada has had a great deal of difficulty resisting US domination of the Canadian economy and that this task would be made vastly more difficult by an economic alliance of an independent Quebec with the United States.

Hence, many Canadians may feel that Landry's scheme was intended to effectively blackmail them into blindly accepting the concept of economic association, precisely to avoid the threat of a greater US role in Canadian economic affairs. The Parti Québécois has never arrived at an acceptable and clear definition of economic association, which it must do in order to make its referendum proposal on "sovereignty-association" meaningful. Ottawa, on the other hand, has consistently refused to concede what would be a Quebec *fait accompli* if it began to consider Quebec's various proposals for economic association.

Many Quebecers themselves share Canadian concern for the prospect of intensified Quebec-US economic relations. If a united Canada has barely managed to resist total American economic penetration, could an independent and weakened Quebec do so?³⁷ Furthermore, on a purely reactive level, closer Quebec-US ties would be interpreted by the Parti Québécois' radical supporters as a betrayal of the principles of sovereignty.³⁸ In analyzing Quebec's economic relations, the government runs headlong into an overlap of the "national" and "social" issues. The first takes into account the emotional, cultural and psychological impetus of nationalism, and the second concerns Quebec's social and economic progress and development along social-democratic lines. The Parti Québécois is committed to both goals, based on the assumption that independence and a better life for all Quebecers are two halves of the same coin. But are they? Landry's call for closer US ties might speak to Quebec's "social" goal; in a case where no alternatives exist, Quebec might have to seek an intensified Quebec-US economic relationship where the economic and social fabric of the province stand to benefit. How could this fact be reconciled with the more emotional "national" goal of independence — a goal which cannot simultaneously include negotiated dependence on the US? One goal may have to be sacrificed in order to preserve the other. Neither the national nor social goals can co-exist in their pristine form as advocated by the Parti Québécois prior to 1976 and still be accommodating to the realities of external affairs.

37. "Mr. Landry's Pipe-dream," *The Montreal Gazette*, May 1, 1978.

38. Giniger, "Sovereignty Drive . . ."

Thus the concluding statement to the HEC Conference, coming from Finance Minister Jacques Parizeau, chose to ignore the dire warnings of the conference,³⁹ and to stress that economics had no bearing on the primarily emotional issue of nationalism — a clear sacrifice of social for national goals.

Quebec's independence will not be achieved for economic reasons: it will not be because every Quebecker is promised a second skidoo. It will be because, first of all, of an aspiration for identity, the selection of one's own country. . . . It is a highly emotional issue and let us not be afraid of our emotions.⁴⁰

It is a curious and somewhat disconcerting spectacle when the minister responsible for the national balance sheet determines that economics should play a minor role in the issue of Quebec independence. It is perhaps even more disconcerting that he chose to ignore the evidence and issues presented at the conference in his concluding statement. By doing so, he fell into the trap whereby "many Canadians and Quebeckers, right or wrong, view independence as a political choice to be made as between economic and cultural values."⁴¹

Against the background of the HEC Conference, and its tale of economic interdependence, the Parti Québécois government initiated a campaign focused on the US to remind Quebeckers and Canadians that powerful alternatives do exist to a rejection by Canada of Quebec's desire for economic association under an umbrella of sovereignty. Landry has said that in the event of independence, "it is inevitable that Quebec's relations with the United States will be intensified."⁴² The ambiguity of this statement has added further confusion to the search for a definition of sovereignty-association that will appease those Quebeckers inclined to regard invitations to further American economic seduction as unacceptable.

Energy Relations and Their Implications

Until the Quebec Energy Ministry published its voluminous White Paper on energy,⁴³ many Quebeckers and Canadians labored under the misconception that the province had such abundant sources of hydroelectric power at its

39. See Reference Record of the Symposium, *Quebec Independence? The Economic Implications* (Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales, Montreal, May 16, 1978).

40. "Clearing the Air," *The Montreal Gazette*, May 18, 1978.

41. Léon Dion, *Quebec: The Unfinished Revolution* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1976), p. 101.

42. Giniger, "Sovereignty Drive . . ."

43. Direction générale de l'énergie, *L'Énergie au Québec*, Volume 1

1) L'Évolution au cours des Trente Dernières Années,

disposal that it could enjoy a future of self-reliance, with plenty to spare for export. It has even been suggested that Quebec might use its energy surplus as leverage against the US in future negotiations, should it soon find itself a sovereign power. While on his US tour, Landry often mentioned Quebec's abundant endowment of hydroelectric energy.⁴⁴

Hydro-Québec, the provincial corporation, has contracted with the Power Authority of the State of New York (PASNY) to provide New York with 800,000 kilowatts of capacity over a period of twenty years, beginning in 1977, for approximately \$25 million per year.⁴⁵ The contract only applies, however, if a surplus is available for export during Quebec's off-peak season (late spring and summer), which coincides with New York's peak season. Furthermore, New York may be under obligation to return this electricity during its off-peak season (winter), coinciding with Quebec's peak season of usage.⁴⁶

However, the fact that Quebec exports electricity is misleading. Actually, it is acutely dependent on imported energy itself. Hydroelectric power is Quebec's sole indigenous energy resource, and currently supplies only 20 percent of its energy needs,⁴⁷ one-third of which comes from Churchill Falls in Labrador and belongs to the province of Newfoundland. Quebec produces no fossil fuels and uranium has not been found in quantities large enough to be economically exploited.

The Parti Québécois has taken the position that although Quebec's self-reliance will be increased by developing the province's hydroelectric potential, Quebecers must realize that such expansion is limited. Construction costs have risen astronomically in recent years, and remaining hydroelectric potential lies in remote northern regions of Quebec where there are only a finite number of rivers to be harnessed. A recent cost estimate of the huge hydroelectric site at James Bay (the last of the major projected hydroelectric plants) has been revised slightly downward from \$16.2 billion to \$15.1 billion at the cost of scaling down the project's peak power capacity and total annual energy output.⁴⁸ This, in turn, will reduce Quebec's ability to supply energy for export if its internal

2) Les Traits Significatifs,

3) Les Problèmes,

(Editeur officiel du Québec, Québec, Livre Blanc sur la politique énergétique québécoise, décembre 1977), and Volume II, *La Politique québécoise de l'énergie: Assurer l'avenir* (Editeur officiel du Québec, Québec 1978).

44. Giniger, "Sovereignty Drive . . ."

45. "Hydro-Québec," *Prospectus*, Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Inc., (1976), p. 7.

46. Gilles Provost, "L'Hydro-Québec construit-elle nos centrales pour les Américains," *Le Devoir*, June 12, 1978, p. 6.

47. Carl Beigie and Judith Maxwell, "Quebec's Vulnerability in Energy," *Accent Québec*, C. D. Howe Research Institute, Montreal, 1977, p. 1.

48. "Hydro-Québec seeks Major Rate Increases to aid Capital Outlays," *The Wall Street Journal*, September 28, 1978.

needs cannot be adequately met. Contrary to popular opinion, current energy development plans are intended to satisfy domestic needs, not to supply additional capacity solely for export.⁴⁹

Quebec's ability to rely on hydroelectric power to meet a substantial portion of its energy needs is thus severely restricted by capital costs, limits of expansion, and a fundamental inability to substitute electricity for basic uses of oil and natural gas. The most optimistic forecast of Quebec's dependence on energy imports was conducted by Hydro-Québec and predicts that electric power can meet 31 percent of Quebec's energy demand by 1985.⁵⁰ This would increase to 45 percent by 1995, but that figure is based on the assumption that new sources of electrical energy, after the completion of James Bay in 1985, will come from a major nuclear construction program.⁵¹

While the current government agrees with Hydro-Québec's policy of increased self-reliance, it has declared a moratorium on nuclear energy development until 1980. According to Energy Minister Guy Joron, Quebec's needs up until 1990 do not justify a nuclear energy option, and expansion of hydroelectric power facilities would provide more jobs and stimulate the economy more than would nuclear power.⁵² Clearly the government and Hydro-Québec are divided among themselves as to the most reliable means of assuring a future adequate supply of electrical power.

Even if the maximum projected target of 45 percent self-reliance is reached by 1995, the government will still have to import 55 percent of its energy needs in the form of oil, natural gas, and coal. This is a particularly onerous prospect in the event that Quebec, after independence, opts for an independent monetary policy and possibly a separate currency. In this case Quebec would likely face a huge oil and natural gas import bill, which would have a disastrous impact on its fledgling currency. While a high level of dependence on external supplies of oil and natural gas is not unusual in the industrialized world, it is a sobering consideration for a country contemplating some measure of isolation through its quest for independence.

The St. Lawrence Seaway

Within the general framework of Quebec-US relations, the potential problems posed by boundaries and waterways, the St. Lawrence Seaway in particular, is a fundamental issue.⁵³ Should Quebec achieve sovereign status it will

49. Beigie and Maxwell, "Quebec's Vulnerability . . .," p. 28.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

52. Tim Humphreys, "Quebec pulls plug on nuclear energy," *The Montreal Star*, December 16, 1977, p. C1.

53. The Quebec-US border has been free of disputes related to water and environmental pollu-

have to enter as a separate actor into arrangements that are currently bilateral, requiring renegotiation to make them trilateral. The resulting outcome will have an important bearing on US access to the Seaway and waterway transportation rights. The Seaway itself is a major navigational route for both the US and Canada. Of the 2,338 miles from its source to its mouth, 1,000 miles lie within Quebec's territory and consists almost entirely of the river itself.

From the very outset of Canada-US negotiations on the joint construction of the Seaway, Quebec raised objections. The project has always been considered a betrayal of what was regarded to be a national birthright.⁵⁴ This possessiveness has been inherited by the Parti Québécois. As Morin indicated in a London press conference:

[I]n the event of independence, the Quebec government would decide how that section of the St. Lawrence river that lies within the province would be used. After all, we own it.⁵⁵

He hastened to add, however, that there was "no idea that we would use it in a way to cause fright."⁵⁶ Were it to do so, the province would find itself subject to great economic loss, not to mention severe reprisals from abroad.

While Quebec has occasionally charged that Ontario has accrued greater benefits from the Seaway at the former's expense, this has been found to be untrue. Freight ships entering and leaving the Seaway generally change cargo to or from seagoing vessels at Northern Quebec ports, since these vessels are too large to navigate within the Seaway itself.⁵⁷ Quebec, then, does gain substantial revenues from the unrestricted movement of goods along the Seaway.

The US currently enjoys free access to the Seaway for all commercial navigation in perpetuity, according to its treaty with Canada.⁵⁸ While there is no reason to assume that an independent Quebec would abrogate such a treaty — in fact both Lévesque and Morin have stated publicly that they would not⁵⁹ —

tion such as have concerned the Great Lakes region. In fact, the maritime, fishing, and underwater jurisdictions of Quebec and the US do not overlap, or even meet.

54. Jacques Brossard, *L'accession à la souveraineté et le cas du Québec: conditions et modalités politico-juridiques* (Les Presses de l'université de Montréal), p. 508.

55. "Morin à Londres: le Québec décidera de l'usage de sa section du fleuve," *Le Devoir*, May 10, 1978, p. 2.

56. "St. Lawrence is Quebec's, Morin says," *Toronto Globe & Mail*, May 10, 1978.

57. According to an article in *Le Devoir* ("Nouveau record de tonnage à Sept-Îles," January 21, 1978), the port of Sept-Îles at the mouth of the St. Lawrence handles the second largest volume of shipping merchandise in Canada next to the port of Vancouver. Clearly, access to the St. Lawrence is critical to the economy of the province, and it would be commercial suicide to attempt to impose restrictions or changes on its present status.

58. Brossard, p. 511.

59. "Roundtable Discussion on the Future of Quebec," *Contemporary French Civilization*, 2: No. 1, p. 97 (Fall 1977). And "Must the unthinkable happen? Canada, a Survey," in *The Economist*, February 12, 1977, p. 10.

there is nothing to compel a sovereign Quebec to remain a party to treaties which Canada has signed with the US and third countries. Furthermore, unlike areas such as defense or commercial relations, control of access to the St. Lawrence Seaway is not likely to fall into a joint association with Canada. The Parti Québécois has never indicated that it is anxious to have it so. Economic factors will probably compel the government to behave responsibly in this area, but a new trilateral framework would have to be established in which the interests of all three parties would be satisfactorily safeguarded.

Quebec and the US: Summary

The US has been the most prominent focus of Parti Québécois attention in its drive for external recognition, although it seems to have garnered little of measurable value. In fact, a low-key position on the Parti Québécois and Quebec's drive for sovereignty, coupled with a widespread familiarity with the issues at stake, is the most that Quebec can reasonably expect from Washington. The burden of independence lies squarely with Quebec in its future relations with the US — which, in turn, has only to face possible instability of private investments in Quebec, as well as a very real concern for the future political shape of a dismembered Canada in the event that Quebec achieves sovereignty. Disruption of commercial or energy relations would not have any serious impact on the US economy, while Quebec would be presented with a myriad of problems resulting merely from a severance of normal contracts. This asymmetry in Quebec-US interdependence will put Quebec at a disadvantage in negotiation and in relations with the US in general. Furthermore, it is clear that the present government's willingness to regard the US as a "privileged partner" will assure Washington a preeminent role in any future Quebec foreign policy designs.

QUEBEC AS WORLD ACTOR

In Morin's March 1978 address, he ranked individual external relations of an independent Quebec in the following descending order of priority: Canada, United States, France, la Francophonie, the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, Western Europe.⁶⁰ By including the Commonwealth, which has only recently gained Quebec's attention, the province looks toward establishing relations with a whole range of LDCs, in addition to those of la Francophonie. Quebec's present contribution to francophone Africa⁶¹ is mostly in the form of

60. See Claude Morin, "La politique extérieure du Québec," pp. 14-16.

61. In 1976-1977 Canada contributed through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) \$89 million to francophone Africa, which amounted to 18 percent of all bilateral aid

aid through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) as well as technology, skills, and transfers of manpower, and would likely be maintained and even intensified in the event of independence. Attempting to allay the fears of these aid recipients, Morin makes it quite clear that Quebec would maintain its commitment to Africa: "Certain corners are afraid that a sovereign Quebec will abandon all cooperation. I would like to make it very clear: we will take up the brunt of Canadian cooperation in Africa."⁶²

The decision to remain part of the Commonwealth in the event of independence was made in February 1977. Prior to this time it was thought that to accept membership in this international forum associated with the colonialism from which Quebec was still struggling to rid itself would be in contradiction to policies that called for closer ties with France and la Francophonie. Since coming to power, however, the Parti Québécois has shown itself willing to exploit any international contact that would enhance its image as a responsible, mature government, in order to gain greater recognition on the diplomatic front. It was not unexpected then, that Morin, during an official visit to Great Britain in May 1978, would announce his government's intention to request membership in the Commonwealth once sovereignty was attained.⁶³ He also stressed that these ties would not be "incompatible with participation in the francophone community."⁶⁴ Clearly, retaining Commonwealth membership could serve much the same role as membership in la Francophonie — an active exchange with developing countries with positive diplomatic and commercial overtones.

While international concerns were not the central focus of the newly elected government in 1976, they have been given increasing weight, both financially and strategically. Since then the Parti Québécois cabinet has spent as much time abroad on public relations missions as it has in the National Assembly in Quebec City. Official contacts between foreign diplomatic officers and Quebec ministers, bilateral negotiations, international conference participation, trade contracts, and official protocol missions have steadily increased over the past

granted. In the same years Commonwealth African countries received 20 percent of all bilateral aid. Both Canada and Quebec contribute 1 percent of their respective GNPs to financial assistance for development. Quebec's contribution, which amounts to at least \$250 million, would be removed from CIDA in the event of independence and transferred to a Quebec Development Agency — as Morin indicated in his March speech — leaving Canada to either compensate for this loss from its own resources, or substantially curtail its programs — presumably those with francophone Africa.

62. Raphaël Mergui, "Québec: un nationalisme tranquille," p. 8.

63. It is interesting to note that of Quebec's international exports, the EEC absorbs 18 percent, of which the United Kingdom's share is the largest at 6 percent. The UK is then a larger trading partner of Quebec than is France.

64. "Morin à Londres: le Québec décidera de l'usage de sa section du fleuve," *Le Devoir*, May 10, 1978, p. 2.

three years. Furthermore, there has been substantial pressure from within the government and the Quebec Chamber of Commerce to open more Quebec delegations and trade offices abroad. In 1977 the budget for the Inter-governmental Affairs Ministry was approximately \$10 million, with a staff of 275; the corresponding 1978 budget was \$30 million with 466 in personnel.⁶⁵ Quebec government offices abroad now total 21 in all: 8 in the US, 2 in Canada, and 11 overseas.⁶⁶ Of these, Quebec has four *délégations générales* which are responsible for industry, commerce, immigration, tourism, education, and cultural functions abroad. (The remaining 16 government bureaus have somewhat less representational status and concern themselves largely with issues of trade and tourism.) These are surprising figures for a nation-to-be of 6 million people and they underline the determination of the present government to bring its case for political sovereignty before the world.

Quebec would like to make inroads with Common Market countries other than France and the United Kingdom. It has nurtured close ties to Belgium, with whom Quebec's *délégation générale* in Brussels has exchanged all but formal diplomatic recognition. But Quebec propagandists will have to tread softly in Belgium; Morin once ruefully acknowledged that "we have a handicap to overcome: separation is a bad example for others."⁶⁷ Barred by Ottawa for the moment from opening any further *délégations* — a point of great irritation — Quebec has extended ties to other European countries by dividing commercial responsibilities among its European *délégations* and trade bureaus along natural linguistic and geographic lines. Under this scheme, London is responsible for Scandinavia, Dusseldorf for Germany and Austria, Brussels for the Benelux countries.

Francophone Africa remains the gaping hole in Quebec's external affairs network. In February 1978 Ottawa denied Quebec's request to establish a *délégation générale* in Dakar — a proposal which it had been inclined to approve three months earlier.⁶⁸ Given the intense interest which the province has shown in francophone Africa, and its long-standing desire to open new delegations and government offices throughout the Third World, it was logical for Quebec to attempt to augment its representation in Africa, which is presently limited to

65. Donald Page, "Quebec's international future," *Contemporary French Civilization*, 2, No. 1 (Fall 1977), p. 77.

66. Statistics from the Quebec Government Bureau, Boston, Massachusetts.

67. Raphael Mergui, "Québec: un nationalisme tranquille," p. 8.

68. Quebec government bureaus are located abroad in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Lafayette, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C. in the United States; Ottawa and Toronto in Canada; and in Haiti, the Ivory Coast, Japan, Germany, Italy, and Venezuela. *Délégations générales* are in London, Paris, Brussels, and New York. See Lise Bissonnette, "C'est non: pas de délégation du Québec à Dakar," *Le Devoir*, February 21, 1978, p. 1, and "La mission à Dakar: pas d'objection à Ottawa," *Le Devoir*, December 6, 1977, p. 2.

an education counselor within the Canadian Embassy in the Ivory Coast. The Dakar *délégation*, which would have been limited to affairs falling within provincial jurisdiction — culture, education, and natural resources — might also have acted as a spearhead for Quebec designs on francophone Africa, and was hence denied permission to open by Ottawa.

Should an independent Quebec choose to operate on its own behalf in multilateral trade negotiations, such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), it may find itself bargaining from a position of considerable weakness vis-à-vis the industrialized world. The Canadian textile industry, located primarily in Quebec, is a heavily protected industry which would be seriously affected in the event of a substantial reduction in tariffs — the object of the recent Geneva round of GATT negotiations. The industry's annual production amounts to \$3.4 billion, \$2 billion of which is manufactured in the province of Quebec, and of 100,000 jobs nationwide, two-thirds are located in Quebec.⁶⁹ Furthermore, the industry employs 25 percent of the labor force in Quebec.⁷⁰ The province undoubtedly faces serious economic problems posed by the threat of shrinking secondary industries as a result of lowering tariffs on textile imports.

Quebec's interests, of course, are now represented by Canada at the GATT negotiations — a responsibility which Canada might gladly relinquish since it is in conflict with the regional interests of the other provinces, which stand to gain from lowering textile tariff barriers. It is difficult to believe that Canada would willingly continue to bargain on Quebec's behalf according to some future associated economic agreement. Quebec, on the other hand, might have difficulty unilaterally negotiating the extremely high tariffs that would be necessary to protect the textile industry, which depends on the now captive Canadian market to absorb its exports. This poses an enormous dilemma in light of the fact that Quebec would have to compete with other textile exporters, at world prices, for the Canadian market after Quebec achieves independence. It is highly unlikely that Canada would accede to an economic-association agreement which would give Quebec special privileges in the Canadian market. The hypothetical status of an independent Quebec at such negotiating rounds would be difficult to determine, but it seems logical to conclude that it could hardly be better off than under the wing of the more powerful negotiating strength of the Canadian team. Recognizing this fact, Quebec hopes to extend its contacts and increase its visibility among the other principal trading nations of the world.

Another objective pursued by the Parti Québécois in its drive for interna-

69. "Les trois-quarts de textile menacés de disparition d'ici 1985," *Le Devoir*, January 20, 1978, p. 23.

70. "Secession vs. Survival," *Time*, February 13, 1978, p. 34.

tional recognition has been directed toward the various United Nations agencies, especially UNESCO. Taking advantage of a recent federal-provincial division of powers which gives Quebec greater autonomy with respect to immigration, Jacques Couture, the Quebec Minister for Immigration, met with UN officials in Geneva to propose that an official of his ministry work in conjunction with UN committees on human rights and refugees, with the object of studying how these international organizations function.

Couture's proposal to these committees was accepted, and the Minister could claim with some satisfaction that UN representatives were impressed by Quebec's concern and willingness to contribute to solving refugee problems.⁷¹ By gaining such acknowledgment — however indirect — that Quebec does have an individual role to play in international fora such as the UN, the Parti Québécois hopes to establish international legitimacy.

RECENT FRANCO-QUEBEC RELATIONS

"Special relations" between Quebec and France exist to the extent that the affairs of Quebec's *délégation générale* in Paris are acknowledged by Ottawa to be at the outer reaches of the federal grasp. France has often exacerbated federal-provincial relations by pressing Quebec's claim for greater measures of autonomy during the past decade. But it is not at all clear whether France stands to gain from the emergence of an independent francophone entity on the North American continent, which Gerard Pelletier, Canadian Ambassador to France, has pointed out:

If this independent francophone republic sees the light of day, what would it add to the cultural network of France, which already conducts, in its exchanges, privileged relations with Quebec? . . . Quebec's sovereignty will not mean a widening but a retrenchment of the sphere of influence of francophones in North America.⁷²

Nevertheless, France has consistently intervened on Quebec's behalf in international gatherings of francophone countries and organizations, where Ottawa has been reluctant to allow Quebec to be represented as a separate entity. France's role as intermediary and sponsor of Quebec has brought it headlong into confrontation with the federal government on several occasions. It is possible that France feels compelled to champion Quebec's cause in order to preserve its own preeminence among francophone countries. Canada has made impressive inroads on France's once exclusive domain over la Francophonie since it decided a decade ago to turn its diplomatic, commercial and foreign aid

71. Jacques Bouchard, "Echange de travailleurs des secteurs privés," *Le Devoir*, May 10, 1978.

72. "La sécession susciterait l'intégration du Canada aux E.-U.," *Le Devoir*, May 24, 1978, p. 2.

attentions to francophone Africa. Since then, Canada has risen in diplomatic stature to a position on a par with France among francophone states. Quebec openly jeopardizes Canada's stature by challenging its legitimacy as a participant in la Francophonie. By threatening to withdraw from Canadian Confederation — which would leave Canada overwhelmingly anglophone — Quebec would reduce Canada's competitiveness as France's potential co-equal.

Recent Franco-Quebec relations have centered around preparations for and results of Premier Lévesque's well-publicized visit to France in November 1977. The primary objective of this venture was to obtain French recognition of Quebec's aspirations for independence and, most importantly, to have France act as intermediary and sponsor on Quebec's behalf to governments otherwise inaccessible to the Parti Québécois. France's expression of support was expected to give encouragement to those Quebecers who feared that Quebec could become isolated as a result of independence. At the time, Lévesque made it known that he hoped France's enthusiastic reception would positively affect Washington's attitude toward Quebec.⁷³

If this sponsorship was indeed intended to score points with the US the objective met with partial failure, since Washington's position on Quebec has not since noticeably changed. On the other hand, it can be argued that persuading France to acquiesce in playing the role of sponsor on Quebec's behalf was a result of pressure successfully and artfully applied in France's domestic political arena. In early 1977 Quebec embarked on a year-long, well-organized effort to lobby for support from all French political parties within the National Assembly in preparation for the new distribution of political power which had been expected to follow the French elections of March 1978.

This was a dramatic departure from the habitual practice of the Quebec *délégation générale* in Paris which spent most of its efforts courting the Gaullists.⁷⁴ With elections looming and prospects for a leftist coalition victory growing, it was imperative to drum up support from the Parti Communiste Français (PCF), the Socialists, and the "Giscardiens." While support from the Socialists was originally only lukewarm, it nevertheless materialized in time for the French National Assembly to welcome Lévesque and his message of independence with unanimity. This may well have had more to do with internecine warfare than genuine concern for lost cousins, but it did provide Lévesque with a real victory — the lobbying tactic having been effective and, by all measures, successful.⁷⁵ In this case, appearances and not substance are what

73. Henry Giniger, "Quebec Issue: A New Phase," *The New York Times*, November 7, 1977, p. 5.

74. Bernard Descôteaux, "La visite de Lévesque à Paris a élargi l'appui politique français au Québec," *Le Devoir*, December 31, 1977, p. 8.

75. For a report on Lévesque's reception by the French National Assembly, see Descôteaux,

matter in carving out a polished international image, and Lévesque returned home justifiably pleased that he appeared to have won the support of the French-speaking world for Quebec's independence. Whether French unanimity was only due to the vagaries of electoral politics remains to be seen; but for the moment France is playing the role to the hilt. It has agreed to conduct annual meetings between French and Quebec Premiers — an agreement which France has with no other government.

The November 1977 visit is a hard act to follow, and its momentum must necessarily slow somewhat; but the basic relationship and all that it implies for Quebec's international sponsorship has not cooled. A French cabinet minister recently affirmed that France "follows the evolution of Quebec with understanding and sympathy, and its position remains unchanged since Mr. Lévesque's visit to Paris last autumn."⁷⁶ François Mitterrand, leader of the Socialist party, and French Prime Minister Raymond Barre were welcomed by Quebec in early 1979, indicating the continued unanimity of France's support.

While Prime Minister Barre prudently avoided "*Québec libre*" rhetoric, which disappointed some observers, he did press for increased economic, industrial, and technical exchanges and ties between France and Quebec. Until recently, substantive Franco-Quebec relations in quantifiable terms have been less intense than one might suspect — a situation which Barre declared needs to be reversed. With this goal in mind, at least 26 agreements were concluded between French and Quebec industries during 1978.⁷⁷ The Parti Québécois can thus consider its recent dealings with France as an important and positive step, a crucial sign of the times and an omen for the future.

CONCLUSION

The institutional gains achieved by Quebec in the creation and development of a foreign policy will not disappear and cannot be reversed, even if Quebec should remain part of Canadian confederation for several more years. While the priority of the Parti Québécois is and always has been the social and economic evolution of a Quebec free from the constraints of confederation, the party found it beneficial to carry the conflict beyond its borders in order to test the international waters. In so doing, the government has effectively expanded

ibid., and Ronald Koven, "Quebec Independence Drive gets Boost," *The Washington Post*, November 7, 1977, p. A21. See also, Henry Giniger, "Giscard endorses Self-Determination for French Canada," *The New York Times*, November 4, 1977, p. A1; and Henry Giniger, "Quebec Issue: A New Phase," *The New York Times*, November 7, 1977, p. 5.

76. *La Semaine au Québec*, June 24 - July 1, 1978, pp. 2-3.

77. Michel Nadeau, "La coopération entre la France et le Québec prend une allure nouvelle," *Le Devoir*, February 14, 1978, p. 1.

a ministry which operates an international network with a sizable budget, staff, and purpose. It has successfully removed the independence debate from the confines of a domestic audience and broadcast it within an international forum such as that offered by the francophone world. It has sought and obtained support and sponsorship from France to ease its acceptance into la Francophonie.

Since 1976 the Parti Québécois has done a remarkable job of changing its image. It has managed to appease radical elements within the party while revising doctrine, curbing inflammatory rhetoric, and broaching pragmatic commitments and partnerships. With this goal in mind it now pursues consistent commercial, trade and military relationships, with an attitude of deference to the US, while also retaining some of its trump cards — notably, access to the St. Lawrence Seaway. Wherever possible and appropriate the government has made overtures to international organizations — the UN, the Commonwealth, the EEC.

Above all, the Parti Québécois has seen fit to aggravate its conflict with Ottawa — publicizing, polemicizing, and forcefully making its case. To this extent, Quebec has very little to lose and everything to gain. From the party's perspective it can simply chalk up any losses to Ottawa's intransigence — more grist for the independence mill. And any gains, no matter how small or insignificant, are seen to add to the inexorable building of momentum toward the final goal of independence.