

NOTES FOR PM'S INTERVIEWS

These following important points come out of the debate in the National Assembly

1. Much reference was made to the fact that the National Assembly will lose powers. The implication was that powers would be transferred to Ottawa.

Nothing was said about the fact that the powers of the Assembly are to be restricted in favour of the rights of the citizens in the same way as the powers of the Federal Parliament will be restricted.

2. There was a great deal of reference made to constitutional conventions.

Nothing was said about the fact that when implemented the constitutional Resolution actually adopts the convention requiring substantial provincial consent and goes beyond the Supreme Court by giving Quebec an entrenched veto on all future constitutional change.

3. Mr. Ryan insisted that his members vote according to party discipline. _____ voted against the Resolution. What action he will take against them is not clear as yet.

4. One of the ironies of the debate is that the Parti Québécois has been able to pretend to be the great defender of the Supreme Court of Canada and of the basic principles of federalism. The position of Mr. Ryan has enabled them to get away with it.

5. The most difficult issue remains that of legitimacy. It is something which is being stressed by all our opponents. It is interesting that Mr. Lévesque who wants to take unilateral action to break up Canada is concerned about the legitimacy of a package about which seven judges of the Supreme Court of Canada have said:

(p. 50) "The essential federal character of the country is preserved under the enactments proposed by the Resolution".

6. It is too conveniently forgotten that the Resolution before the assembly calls for further consultations with the provinces - a position virtually rejected by Lévesque the day before the Resolution's final drafting.

(N.B. - The Quebec news media have almost totally ignored this aspect of the Resolution).

7. There is a story in the press about a CROP poll taken in April and May which shows strong public support for all the elements of the constitutional package. According to a CROP spokesman, the results would be the same today.

The poll results show 84 per cent of Quebecers support a Charter of Rights and only seven per cent are opposed. In Quebec 56 per cent support the over-all package and 31 per cent oppose it. It should be stressed that the poll does not deal with process.

8. The following excerpts from today's editorial in *Le Devoir* may be of interest:

"Claude Ryan et René Lévesque ont démontré mercredi soir, avec une élévation remarquable, qu'en situation d'urgence nationale, ils pouvaient aller loin sur la même route en sachant qu'ils n'ont pas la même destination. Ces deux hommes ont déjà, dans une autre circonstance, oublié leur différence et assuré pour un temps les obligations communes que leur imposaient leur sens profond du service et leur conception fondamentale et circonstancielle commune des droits du Québec. Quand ce pays fut recouvert par l'ombre froide de la loi des mesures de guerre en 1970, quand des centaines de nos concitoyens furent emprisonnés dans la démentielle demesure de cette époque, René Lévesque et Claude Ryan signèrent avec d'autres un appel à la négociation fondé sur leur appartenance au Québec au-delà de leur différence d'opinion sur un grand nombre de sujets."

"C'est par rapport à ces acquis limités mais suffisants pour nous permettre de durer, de nous développer et enfin, dans les 30 dernières années de changer de siècles en accélérant le rythme de ce développement, que la démarche

unilatérale d'Ottawa constitue un véritable coup de force. Elle aurait pour effet, selon le jugement de la Cour suprême, de restreindre les pouvoirs de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec, de la forcer à modifier des lois déjà démocratiquement adoptées et de limiter la dimension de ses législations futures.

C'est cette menace qui a réconcilié momentanément René Lévesque et Claude Ryan. Selon l'expression de ce dernier, restreindre les pouvoirs de l'Assemblée nationale, c'est restreindre les droits et les pouvoirs du peuple québécois. Pour lui, comme pour le premier ministre, cette perspective est dramatique.

Le refus solennel de cette chirurgie à froid s'imposait. Les perspectives partisans n'ont plus de signification dans un tel contexte".

It should be pointed out with respect to the influence of Le Devoir that in February 1980, Le Devoir advised Quebecers to vote N.D.P. Less than ____ per cent of Quebecers took that advice.

Note: The Press has conveniently camouflaged Broadbent's actual demands and has rather flatly stated that the N.D.P. has "withdrawn its support". Should point out that Broadbent actually only asked for a return to the table "in good faith", a possibility that the Prime Minister hasn't ruled out.