

Conclusions

Throughout its history, Quebec has gone through different periods which shaped its society, going from a conquest, a time of change and adaptation during the Quiet Revolution, soft and radical separatist stages, and even a period of violence during the 1960's with the terrorist attacks by the Face for the Liberation of Quebec. During its first two hundred years of history, Quebecers had to live under the shadow of Anglophones and the Catholic Church, being unable to occupy important economic or politic positions or to take decisions within the country or even their province.

Francophones have never lived under terms of equality: "(...) French Quebecers have often felt they were not only a minority group in Canada, but an oppressed minority. Even in Quebec, where the French speakers are the majority, political and economic life was often dominated by the English."¹ After the changes that the Quiet Revolution brought to the province, Quebecers started demanding the right to have a special status and the most radical Quebecers even wanted to their own independent country.

Preservation of the French culture, specifically of the French language, has always been their main concern in the province. It is true that the fight to defend it became more visible after the Quiet Revolution of the 1960's, but this does not mean that it was completely unexistent before. What happens is just that before the Revolution, Quebec nationalism was not strong enough to directly affect Anglophone's interests and therefore, influence the policies of the federal government. The fear of being assimilated gave the Catholic Church legitimacy to occupy the power in the province with an "ultramontane" or clerical nationalism, against modernization and democracy, with

¹ Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, *The Referendum*, <http://newsworld.cbc.ca/flashback/1995/>

religious communities, classical colleges and spiritual values as the motors of the society until 1960.²

French's felt that their survival was not guaranteed anymore when large numbers of English-speaking immigrants started arriving to the province. A threat that arrived with Anglophones was Anglicism's.³ Even if the interaction of two languages that coexist in one region is inevitable, in Quebec this was not an interaction, it was an invasion. French language became more and more influenced by English, while English was almost not touched by French. Mass media would also play an important role in the erosion of French.

English T.V. shows, newspapers, music and movies heavily influenced Francophones. This was the result of being isolated in an English speaking country and of having the United States as neighbour, with all the weight it has over the population, especially young Quebecers. Additionally, Francophones were obligated to use English because of the lack of terms in their language, especially in the fields of technology and science. Key sectors of the economy and politics were in hands of Anglophones, situation worsened by Quebecers' poor education.

They were also affected when the British government adopted policies of assimilation like the Royal Proclamation of 1763, which stated that the population of the province could not enter the western territories without a special permit, French legislative system was abolished and Roman Catholics were not allowed to participate in

² Claude Bélanger, *The Ultramontane Nationalism: 1840-1960*, Marianopolis College, <http://www2.marianopolis.edu/quebechistory/events/natpart3.htm>

³ Wikipedia, *Quebec French*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quebec_French

the government, a decisive factor for Quebec's isolation and oppression,⁴ causing the number of Francophones to decrease until French became a minority language in Quebec.

Another element that contributed to the erosion of French in Quebec was the decline in the birth rate that took place between 1960 and 1970; in this period Quebec had the lowest birth rate in the country. This, plus the fact that less Canadians spoke French throughout the whole country, lowered the percentage of Francophones in Canada. Population decrease is always one of the biggest problems of a minority, since the ability to influence the society and to ensure that their rights are respected usually depends on the size of the group. Consequently, this caused Allophones to be less attracted to integrate into the French speaking group; rather, they integrated to the English speaking community increasing the decline of French-speakers.

Before the Quiet Revolution, English was the language of business in Quebec. It was not until after it that French enhanced its place in businesses and politics and started taking the province's decisions in their hands. Now that Quebecers had more influence, nationalism was stronger and Francophones demanded more protection for their language. They had to take new measures to protect French culture, what concluded in the creation of several laws such as Bill 22, Bill 86 or the Charter of Rights of the French Language (Bill 101). These factors, plus the civil rights movement that took place all over the world during the 1960's helped to increase the nationalist feeling among Francophones; women and natives followed the trend and demanded equality too. All this has had results in the current situation of French in the province.

⁴ Claude Bélanger, *Royal Proclamation (1763)*, Marianopolis College, <http://www2.marianopolis.edu/quebechistory/readings/royal.htm>

Realistically, measures taken by the government have not been enough, the situation is still not completely equal. Even in the sixties, when the language policies were more strict, English continued to enjoy more strength, as statistics given by the Office of the French Language show: 25% of elementary and secondary school students in Quebec are instructed in English, 19% of magazines and other periodicals in Quebec are published in English and 35% of all movies shown in Quebec theatres are in English.⁵

This government's failure to guarantee equality among its citizens led some Quebecers to assume a more radical position. The formation of the FLQ in the 1960's is considered as one of the darkest periods in Quebec's history. Contrary to what happens in other separatist movements like the ones taking place in the former Soviet Republics or within Spain, the October Crisis is the only moment in which terrorism has been present in Quebec. Canadian society has always been characterized by pacifism, so the appearance of this group was an exception to the rule.

At the beginning of its existence, the FLQ did have support from the society, who felt that the group would finally represent and fulfill their demands. But after the bombings, kidnaps and murders of the October Crisis, the FLQ lost support among Quebecers and Canadians.⁶ Even if some Canadians criticized the federal government for applying the War Measures Act, I believe that this was the right thing to do. Otherwise, the FLQ might have continued its terrorist attacks until things were out of the government's control. In fact, it is believed that the US and Israel Consuls were planned to be kidnapped and one of its cells supposedly attempted to bomb the Statue of Liberty.⁷

⁵ Office of the French Language, quoted in Sylvain Neuvel, *Language and Language Laws in Quebec*, http://www.neuvel.net/Quebec_ling.htm#Laws (accessed March 15, 2004).

⁶ Wikipedia, *October*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/October_Crisis

⁷ Ibid.

Thanks to the government's strong position there has been no more violence in Quebec since then. Violent actions and declarations like "we are going to win because there are more boys ready to shoot members of Parliament than there are policemen."⁸ caused that the FLQ lost its support and led to the victory of a less radical secessionist political party, the Parti Québécois, in 1976.⁹

What the Parti Québécois' defeat showed is that democracy and peace are one of the most important political principles in Canada and that its population would not accept a terrorist movement to survive within the country. For example, the results of the Referendums held in 1980 and 1995 showed that those who want Quebec to separate from Canada were a smaller percentage of Quebecers than those who preferred to continue being part of Canada. During these two votings the country was very close to separating, specially in the 1995 Referendum, when the separatists lost only 49.4 per cent against 50.6 per cent to those who voted to stay in Canada.¹⁰

From 1995 to 2004, things have changed in Quebec. Separatism has lost most of its supporters in the province, as the defeat of Parti Québécois in 2003 showed. Even though the Parti achieved many advances for the society, such as the Charter of the French Language and recognizing for the first time the First Nations' right to self-determination, as well as calling for both Referendums, now, Quebec's society has new concerns. Quebecers are more worried about the economic situation of the province than about separating from Canada. Those supporters of independence are now older and their proposals does not really influence new generations. According to Steven Pearlstein

⁸ Michel Chartrand quoted in Wikipedia, *October*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/October_Crisis

⁹ Wikipedia, *Front du Libération du Québec*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FLQ>

¹⁰ Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, *Quebec Referendum*, <http://www.newsworld.cbc.ca/flashback/>

“Quebecers have finally reached a consensus. They've decided to move on to something else. “(...) For too many Quebecers, the secession debate has become sterile.”¹¹

In fact, a third Referendum promised by the Parti Quebecois during its last government did not take place, most probably because they knew that the support from the society would not be enough to win it.¹² Also, Canadian former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien made it more difficult for Quebec to separate with the passage of the Clarity Act. Even the political editor of *Le Devoir*, Quebec's only pro -independence newspaper believes that "The movement is a little bit stalled. (...) Even a lot of separatist organizers and militants are asking themselves publicly whether it is possible to win. That's quite a change."¹³ Separatist Quebec former Premier Lucien Bouchard's advisor has declared that "Under existing conditions, the chances of success for independence, in my view, are nonexistent," and that separatists' "historic window of opportunity... is now completely shut." ¹⁴

After the Quiet Revolution, Francophones have occupied more important political and economical positions; since then, three Quebecers became Prime Ministers: Pierre Trudeau (1968-1979 and 1980-1984), Brian Mulroney (1984-1993) and Jean Chrétien (1993-2003). The incomes of French- and English-speakers in the province and throughout Canada are now almost equal and rose 2.7 per cent. The economy in the province is one of the most stable ones in the country: in 2002 Quebec's gross domestic

¹¹ Steven Pearlstein, "Quebec's Separatist Fire Appears Ready to Flicker Out," *Washington Post*, March 9, 2000, <http://www.vigile.net/00-3/wash-post.html> (accessed March 19, 2004).

¹² Jacques Richard, *Quebec's Premier Resignation Intensifies Crisis Within Separatist Movement*, February 5, 2001, <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2001/feb2001/can-f05.shtml> (accessed March 21, 2004).

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Jean -Francois Lisee quoted in Ibid.

product (GDP) increased 4.3 per cent, growing faster than the rest of the Canadian and U.S. economies.¹⁵

Even if 2001 was characterized by disinvestment, 2002 enjoyed a new growth, especially in stock investment by business and capital. Quebec businesses investment represented 34.6 billion dollars in 2002, mainly in fixed capital. Domestic demand raised, due to the increase in employment, incomes and lower taxes causing Québec's foreign trade balance to decrease (3.4 per cent), but it experienced an increase in its inter – provincial trade (3.6 per cent).¹⁶

After years of suffering a bad economic situation, this growth has been also caused by the fade of separatist feelings and in return, healthy economy has calmed the independence urge. Polls continue to show that Quebec's society does not want another referendum on the sovereignty issue and that they are satisfied with the province's current status. "They don't want a referendum, and even if there were to be one, they don't think it would settle anything because the thing they really want, a renewal of the federation, is not on the table. So the debate has reached a dead end."¹⁷

This position is particularly strong among young Quebecers who did not live the discrimination and inequality that the past generations went through. They now have new concerns; for example, in year 2000, radical student groups interrupted a Youth Summit in Quebec City demanding lower tuitions and more resources for social programs instead

¹⁵ Quebec Institute of Statistics, *Economic Situation in Quebec in 2002*, http://www.stat.gouv.qc.ca/publications/bulletins/economie/sit_eco2002_an.htm (accessed March 20, 2004)

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Jean-Marc Leger, quoted in Ibid.

of the usual political issues. Now, instead of taking politics courses, they are enrolling in International Relations.¹⁸

In 2003 Jean Charest was elected Premier of Quebec. Being from the Liberal Party, he focuses on issues like reforming the health care system, cutting taxes, reducing spending and the size of government, rather than the old separatist requests of the Parti Quebecois. The Parti Quebecois had control the province since 1976, only interrupted by two Liberal administrations from 1985 to 1994. Charest defeated the Parti Quebecois candidate by almost twelve per cent.¹⁹ The former Premier Lucien Bouchard had announced that he would call for another Referendum but "The sense of anger that allowed Quebecers to contemplate a break with Canada just isn't there anymore."²⁰ He resigned in 2001 and left his place to Bernard Landry,²¹ who is one of the firmest supporters of the sovereignty – association idea, wanting to implement institutions inspired by the European Union.²²

In 2003, Quebec's separatism suffered another defeat, maybe definitive this time. Paul Martin, former Finance Minister, became Canada's Prime Minister after been elected leader of the Liberal Party; former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien announced that he would retire on February 2004. Chrétien's efforts during his career in politics have been directed towards keeping Quebec in Canada. He was against the Meech Lake Accord that would have given Quebec a special status and more recently passed the Clarity Act, which sets stronger rules for a possible separation.

¹⁸ Pearlstein, *Quebec's Separatist*, *Washington Post*, March 9, <http://www.vigile.net/00-3/wash-post.html> (accessed March 20, 2004).

¹⁹ Wikipedia, *List of Quebec General Elections*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Quebec_general_elections#2003_general_election

²⁰ Alain Dubic, quoted in Pearlstein, *Quebec's Separatist*, <http://www.vigile.net/00-3/wash-post.html> (accessed March 20, 2004).

²¹ Wikipedia, *Lucien Bouchard*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucien_Bouchard

²² Wikipedia, *Bernard Landry*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bernard_Landry

While Chrétien concentrated on avoiding Quebec's secession, Martin's main goal is to give Quebec a more powerful and influential position. He, contrary to Chrétien, supported the Meech Lake Accord and one of his first actions as Prime Minister was the formation of the Council of the Federation to strengthen the provinces' influence on federal decisions, what made him very popular among Quebec's voters. Even though Paul Martin was not born in Quebec (but in Windsor, Ontario), he has lived more than half of his life there and Quebecers have accepted him as one of them.²³ His three main goals, social foundations; economic growth and the creation of more jobs with better incomes and promoting Canada's international position,²⁴ reflect modern Quebecer's concerns.

We should also give big importance to current demographic situation, both in Quebec and in Canada, as well as in the United States. Demography has had a main role in the history and evolution of the movement, seriously affecting the separatist cause. If the social factors are combined with the political and economical factors, they may finish with separatism once and for all.

The first situation against that may help stop independence from happening is the decrease in the number of voters who support separatism. "According to Statistics Canada, the population of Quebec will experience little growth through the remainder of this decade (the result of the lowest fertility rate in the developed world)."²⁵ Quebecers over 60 years will rise to 30 per cent of Quebec's population.²⁶ These voters are usually

²³ Peter Black, *Paul Martin: Quebec's Favourite Adopted Son*, November 14, 2003, http://www.tomifobia.com/black/paul_martin1.shtml (accessed March 21, 2004).

²⁴ *People's Daily*, "Martin Becomes Canada's New PM," December 13, 2003, http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200312/13/eng20031213_130320.shtml

²⁵ Angus Reid, "Three Trends Spell," <http://www.ligi.ubc.ca/media/oped/030422deathofseparatism.htm> (accessed March 22, 2004).

²⁶ *Ibid.*

against big changes, so seeing that the province is living a stable economic situation may prevent them from seeking such a big change. Plus, and as mentioned before, separatism does not count with the young generation's support so this would mean a narrowing of their supporting electoral base. Also, the number of voters who support federalism will probably grow during the administration of Charest. This combination of the old generations, the ethnic voters, who does not want to separate from Canada, and those who are in favour of federalism, would constitute a very hard to defeat opposition for separatists.

The second factor would be the growth that other provinces, especially British Columbia and Alberta are experiencing. This increasing power, though it's a point in favour to Charest's demands of more power to the provinces from Ottawa, could also affect independence desires since secession can not be declared unilaterally and the provinces would use this renovated strong federalism to stop it. It has been clear that the rest of Canada does not want Quebec to obtain more privileges than they have and they also realize the economic importance of Quebec, so it is very unlikely that they would allow Quebec to leave the confederation.

Also, the Hispanic population in the United States is expected to be of 45 million by 2010, becoming a bigger minority than African Americans.²⁷ These numbers tell us that the U.S. government will try to prevent Quebec's independence. It would clearly affect its internal stability to have a separatist movement taking place so close to their border since it may influence the Hispanic population in the United States to demand more respect to their rights and a better treatment.

²⁷ Reid, "Three Trends Spell," <http://www.ligi.ubc.ca/media/oped/...>

And most importantly, the economic factor. The influence that French's and French-Canadian people have had on the development of the United States is enormous. Many Americans have French and French-Canadian ancestry, many American communities have French names, including states like New Orleans. In recent years, commercial ties have been stronger than ever.²⁸ "One-half of Quebec's total exports are destined for markets in New England, the Mid-Atlantic, and North-Central regions of the United States."²⁹ being this the province's most important bilateral relation, even more than the one it has with the rest of the Canadian provinces; in fact, its exports to the United states between 1988 and 1997 doubled, while the ones to the other nine provinces only grew 12 percent and this trend has been going on for several years.³⁰

The same happens with direct investment which also comes mainly from the United States. More than 400 U.S. companies operate in Quebec, especially in the high-technology sector.³¹ A situation of politic, social and economical instability would affect the perception that these companies have, pushing them to take out their capitals. In the academic sector, Quebec has strong relations with the U.S., and they share projects like the American Council of Quebec Studies, the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States or the American Association of Teachers of French. Even though tourism from the United States is not an important source of resources, these economic and cultural ties are attracting more American visitors.³²

²⁸ *Quebec's Relations with the United States*, <http://fhss.byu.edu/POLSCI/FacultyPublications/fryquebecsrelations.htm> (accessed March 22, 2004).

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ministry of the Industry and Commerce, *Le Commerce Extérieur du Québec Depuis la Mise en Oeuvre de l'Accord de Libre -Échange*, quoted in Ibid.

³¹ *Quebec's Relations with*, <http://fhss.byu.edu/POLSCI/FacultyPublications/fryquebecsrelations.htm> (accessed March 22, 2004).

³² Ibid.

For these reasons, Quebec's separatism would be too damaging to the United State's society and economy, as well as creating political conflicts with Canada's federal government since the United States' support to the separatist movement would be seen as an illegal intrusion into Canada's internal affairs. An independent Quebec would disrupt the relation that the two countries have. U.S.-Canadian relation which includes many economic and security treaties and agreements, such as the 1965 Automotive Agreement, NAFTA as well as cooperation in multilateral organizations like NATO, the United Nations and the World Trade Organization.³³ If Quebec was to separate from Canada, its assimilation and integration into these structures would be crucial to maintain the United States' benefits from its relationship with Canada.

If a new referendum is held and the "yes" side wins and Quebec decides to acquire full independence, it would have to be by an important majority to obligate the federal government to allow a constitutional change; if Ottawa decides not to support the independence, independence would need to be supported by the biggest majority possible for Quebec to take the risk of separating unilaterally.³⁴ This situation would badly affect the province's economy, causing an isolation situation.

A similar environment of what could happen to Quebec if it decides to declare its independence unilaterally is currently taking place in the island of Cyprus. Cyprus was divided in 1974 when Turkish troops invaded the north of the island in response to an Athens-backed coup aimed at uniting the island with Greece, unilaterally declaring Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, recognized only by Turkey. In 1999 Turkey's

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Bill 99 gave Quebec the right to separate from Canada unilaterally and it was passed in year 2000. For further information on Bill 99 refer to Appendix 4 *Bill 99* available at http://doc.gouv.qc.ca/dynamicSearch/telecharge.php?type=2&file=/E_20_2/E20_2_A.html

petition to enter the European Union was accepted, with special articles regarding Turkey's presence in Cyprus. Cyprus is also trying to enter the EU, but the European Union Council has underlined the fact that a political solution will facilitate Cyprus's participation to the European Union. For this purpose, a pacification in the zone is being sought.³⁵

A solution must be reached by March 31, 2004 after the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan presented a new plan to put an end to the conflict. The former plan proposed a republic led by a federal senate made up of six Greek Cypriots and three Turkish Cypriots. Turkish Cypriots will continue to rule the northern part of the island, even after Greek Cypriots return. Fewer Greek refugees will be allowed to return to their homes on the Turkish part of the island until the Turkish Cypriot's per capita income increases and Turkish soldiers will be allowed to stay in the island, though in a limited number.

The Greek side rejected the plan arguing that it gives Turkish Cyprus more privileges. Even if no agreement is reached after Kofi Annan presents his own suggestions, a Referendum will be held on both parts of the island on April 20, 2004. If either side rejects it, the pacification process will be frozen. Only the Greek Cypriot part of the island will then join the European Union alone, and Turkey will face a reverse to its efforts to enter the European Union, expected to occur on year 2010. It is important to note that Turkish Cypriots are 18 per cent of the population but control 37 per cent of the territory and they enjoy political equality alongside the Greeks while continuing to be protected by thousands of mainland Turkish troops. Turkey's Islamist Prime Minister,

³⁵ Helena Smith, "Cypriot Leaders Hand Over to UN," *The Guardian*, February 14, 2004, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/cyprus/story/0,11551,1148045,00.html> (accessed March 29, 2004).

Recep Erdogan, said that his party's resounding victory in local elections in Turkey on March 29, 2004 strengthened his hand in the talks on Cyprus.³⁶

If Quebec decides to declare its independence unilaterally, the new state would not have the recognition of Canada or the international community, bringing this similar problems to the ones Cyprus is facing today. Treaties Quebec has right to by being part of Canada would have to be re-negotiated, this time without the support and prestige of being part of Canada. If what happens is a sovereignty-association situation, the rest of the country and Quebec would probably have an association in foreign and security policy but this would not include international economic policy, such as NAFTA. Most probably, Quebec would establish a separate and independent foreign policy, just like Canada did when it separated from Great Britain.³⁷

We can not forget that since the role of the State is changing due to the globalization process, national governments are losing its capacities to fully control their economies and in Canada, the State's role seems to be reducing. More and more functions that were left to the State are now done by private institutions and deregulation is affecting its legal capacity. This is why being part of a powerful regional block is so important nowadays. Especially with the growing power of the European Union and Asia, Quebec needs the advantages that being part of the NAFTA provides, such as easy

³⁶ Helena Smith, "Turkish Leader Takes Initiative in Cyprus," *The Guardian*, March 30, 2004, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/cyprus/story/0,11551,1180739,00.html> (accessed March 30, 2004).

³⁷ The latest development on this issue took place on March 31, 2004, when Kofi Annan presented his new plan. Under it, many Greek Cypriots would be able to return to homes under a Greek Cypriot government and the rest would receive compensations. This way, Turkish Cypriots, will come together with Greek Cypriots under the European Union. The EU would provide political and financial support to implement the plan, which also proposes a reduction in military forces and establishing a single government. Unfortunately, this thesis was finished before the conflict came to an end, but the result may show us that coexistence between two different groups within one country is possible if cooperation and will exists among their members.

access to the world's biggest market; unemployment would rise and incomes would fall. The rest of Canada and the United States' economies would also suffer the consequences of this independence since they would lose Quebec's market. Some of the U. S. border communities that depend on commerce with Quebec would be particularly affected.³⁸

But past electoral results showing that independence feelings are dead in Quebec may not be final. "History has shown support for sovereignty increases when the PQ is in opposition."³⁹ People believed that separatism was dead after the 1980 Referendum results and yet in 1995 they come back with more strength, to the point that a second referendum was held; this time secessionists lost by only 53, 498 votes.⁴⁰ "Quebecers don't have the stomach right now for another draining and divisive battle, but they also don't have a very deep or profound attachment to Canada. It's a very unsteady state, which means things can change very quickly."⁴¹

Maybe Jean Charest won't be able to definitively bury separatism and it may be reactivated among some groups. But I do not believe a new movement will have enough strength to achieve full independence. To me, Quebec's future is *in* Canada not without it. Quebec and Canada would both lose too much compared to the benefits they would get. Ottawa, with Paul Martin's new ideas of equality for all the provinces, will play an important role in helping to stop separatism from rearising. I believe that the new generations of Quebecers have realized this and that in case they continue fighting to get

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Francois-Pierre Gingras, quoted in Reid, "Three Trends," *The Vancouver Sun*, April 19, 2003, <http://www.ligi.ubc.ca/media/oped/030422deathofseparatism.htm> (accessed March 22, 2004).

⁴⁰ Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, *Quebec*, <http://newsworld.cbc.ca/flashback/1995...>

⁴¹ Richard Nadeau, quoted in Pearlstein, "Quebec's Separatist," <http://www.vigile.net...> (accessed March 21, 2004).

more privileges, they will do so, not through violent or radical means, but through appropriate legal negotiations.