POLITICS AND RELIGION IN QUEBEC

It is scarcely possible to discuss religion in Quebec without at the same time referring to two other dimensions of Quebec society: language and ethnicity. My presentation will consider all three of these aspects in relation to the rise of nationalism which, a year ago, led the separatist government of Mr. René Le vesque to ask for the mandate to negotiate with Canada an agreement concerning the political sovereignty of Quebec within an economic association with the rest of the country. Levesque lost, but 40% of the population said YES to his Referendum.

The connection between nationalism, ethnic origin, language and religion is a complex one. The concept of ethnicity, in particular, is very diffuse. At the risk of over-simplification, let us say that modern nationalism is usually based on a group's actual or mythological common ethnic past and a perceived unity of purpose or need. A commonly-shared language or a commonly-shared religion, ideally one different from that of neighbouring groups, may be seen as vehicles for the maintenance of the nation and a bulwark against outside influences. For example, in Ireland it has often been thought that a country without its own language was only half a nation and that Ireland, in spite of its being Catholic while the rest of the United Kingdom was Protestant, could not long survive as a separate independent state if English remained the only language of the people.

In Quebec, the connection between language and religion has been heightened by a quirk of history. When the Fathers of the Canadian Confederation

gave themselves (or rather gave the British Parliament) the basic Constitution which Mr. Trudeau is now trying to repatriate, the deal that was struck between the French and the English guaranteed the use of the French language in the Federal government and in the provinces of Quebec and Manitoba, as well as education along denominational lines in Quebec schools (the latter to protect the Protestant minority and ensure that it would have access to public funds and the right to autonomous administration). One hundred and ten years later, that part of the Constitution remains unviolable, guaranteeing what is now an anachronism in North America: a school system constitutionally grounded in the religious segregation of children. Catholic school boards dispense education in both French and English schools; Protestant school boards operate English-language schools and have accomodated the Jews who in fact have their own schools as well. Of late, the Protestants have opened an increasing number of French-language schools to take care of immigrants who are not Catholic, as well as English-speaking Protestants who want their children to be educated in the language of the majority.

Amongst the French-Canadians, there has always existed an undercurrent of nationalism, that has surfaced at specific and crucial moments of Canada's history. This latest resurgence, which began in the 1960s, needs explaining in terms of political mobilization, for it has mostly been concentrated in Quebec. At the same time, profound changes have occurred in the fabric of the French-Canadian religious life. As a start, it may be useful to review the relationship between ethnicity and political mobilization and assess which of the current theories appears most plausible for the French-Canadian case. In a second part, I will try to situate the religious factor in the events as they have unfolded so far.

There are three sociological perspectives in the area of ethnic political mobilization: the developmental, the reactive and the competition perspectives. The reasoning behind the first of these, the developmental perspective, is the classic view which affirms that different types of political cleavages will dominate during different phases of the modern polity and that cleavages that are culturally or geographically based will be superceded by functional cleavages, as structural differentiation engulfs the various "value-communities" contained within the boundaries of the nation-states. Economic integration of the periphery to the core will inevitably reduce its cultural and social distinctiveness; cultural and religious traditionalisms will survive only to the extent that the peripheral areas remain outside the sphere of the national economy. Thus this perspective affirms that convergence occurs, and that ethno-religiously-based nationalisms will give way to a civil society in which functional cleavages are paramount, and in particular class cleavages.

This perspective has been seriously questioned in recent years due to the resurgence of ethnicity and value-communities as world trouble spots: most overt conflicts today take place under the banner of religiously or culturally inspired nationalism, although it may be argued that these are merely labels for more profound economic interests. The creation of Pakistan, the revolution in Iran, the Jewish-Arab question, the Basque troubles, the Irish problem, the expulsion of the boat people from South-East Asia - all these bear witness to the salience of religion and ethnicity as cleavage maintainers. The case of the French-Canadians might be felt to be quite different from most of the above examples: because of a very high standard of living, a high degree of industrialization and urbanization and increasing economic integration in

North America, it might be claimed that the French-Canadian is becoming almost indistinguishable from his U.S. counterpart, a sort of "translated" American, and that there is no longer a basis for a separate value-community. Cleavage in a modernized French-Canada will therefore not be founded on ethnic solidarity but on economic interest. The rise of "separatism" in Alberta may be quoted in this connection as an example of economic cleavage rather than a culturally-based ethno-nationalism.

The second perspective, the reactive perspective, affirms that the structural differentiation that accompanies industrialization actually enhances rather than diminishes ethnic distinctiveness. Political mobilization is then the product of exclusionary practices that reward the uneven spread of industrialization. The most desirable rewards are reserved for the members of the core cultural group while members of the peripheral cultural group are assigned to inferior positions. The latter then react and mobilize politically: this results in increased internal communication, greater mutual support, a shared sense of a common objective - all under the banner of ethnic solidarity. "Achetons chez nous!" "Buy from a French-Canadian store!". One would expect the resurgence of this type of solidarity to be particularly prevalent in the less favoured occupational groups as ethnicity is seen as a protection against discrimination: mobilization would be strongest at the periphery and among the working and agricultural classes.

The third approach is the competition perspective. It too holds that industrialization brings about ethnic mobilization, but from another point of view, that is, as a consequence of the competition for the more desirable roles

and scarce resources associated with the development of the core. The larger the population attached to a minority ethnic group, the more likely it is that its elite will wish to use identity as a basis for mobilization. As new competitive opportunities are opened in desirable occupations such as technological employ ment, middle management, financial institutions, political leadership, etc, the elite will formulate plans to increase their influence and to demand equality of opportunity. Nationalism can then be expected to be particularly strong at the core rather than at the periphery. The French-Canadians can then be expected to seek political presence in Ottawa, fight for a fairer share of Civil Service jobs at the Federal level, or promote increased political autonomy at the provincial level. The periphery will be more passive, even possibly conservative, and will have to be led by those aspiring to upward mobility.

With these three approaches in mind, let us review some of the basic facts of Canada as an ethno-religious mosaic. You will see that it is quite complex. Page 1 Table "A" gives demographic data for Canada, Quebec Province, Montreal and the rest of Quebec Province, for 1971. The French form 29% of the Canadian population, the English 44%. Notice that there are almost as many immigrants from other countries as there are French-Canadians. For the province of Quebec, though the French form 80% of the total, English and "others" are about in equal numbers. Most of the latter two groups are concentrated in Montreal, where the French form less than 60% of the population.

Some 700,000 fewer people speak French at home than are of French origin: assimilation has taken place even though French is an official language. Three quarters of the "others" have likewise switched to English. But in

Quebec, only 25% of the others, i.e. 150,000, have switched to French: the rest have adopted English or still speak their language of origin at home. Of the official languages "known", only some 6% of the non-Quebec population claims to know both languages. Even in Montreal, some 25% of the population speaks English only. Generally, it had been felt by many English or immigrant people, up to quite recent times, that one could get along with English only, even in Quebec - for English was the language of trade and business and French was for the "natives". Finally, place of birth statistics: though more than a quarter of the people living in the Montreal region were not born in Quebec province, 95% of those living elsewhere in the Province were born there.

On page 2, table "C", are statistics concerning religious origin and ethnic origin. Only the most important groups have been listed: the Census identifies a far larger number of groups. The word "British" here includes Ireland in terms of ethnic origin. United Church and Anglicans form some 60% of the British group, there being one and a half million Roman Catholics. Dutch, Germans and Scandinavians are sprinkled across many religious denominations. Italians are mostly Catholic, Jews almost entirely Jewish, and the few non-Catholic French are most likely people who have been assimilated in the English majority through intermarriage. There are some 4 1/2 million people of other origins not on the list, of extraordinarily diverse origins.

The situation in Quebec is quite different. The most numerous religious denomination among the British are the Roman Catholics, some 35% of the total (they are probably all Irishmen). The Poles are split up between Catholics and Jews. The Greeks belong to three separate churches. The Germans are Catholics or Lutherans. Only the French, the Italians and the Jews form a homogeneous group from a religious point of view.

This is to some extent confirmed by an examination of the rates of endogamy, Table "B", page 2. The French have an even higher rate than the Jews, a very strong indicator of ethnic solidarity. Italian women have the next highest rates, followed by Italian men and British men and women. The Scandinavians are the ones with the lowest rates: they marry more with the British than among themselves!

The plurality of ethnic origins and of church affiliation explains why these diverse groups have not been able to organize themselves, in reaction to French-Canadian militancy, around an ethno-religiously centered solidarity. But language, surprisingly, has served as a strong focus: most immigrant groups coming to Quebec have in fact insisted on sending their children to English rather than French schools: even the Italians, who are overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, have socialized their children in English, and this has infuriated the French-Canadians. Amongst the reasons given by the immigrants: (i) a rather poor welcome by many French-Canadians; (ii) the perspective that for some children, Quebec will only have been a jumping-off point for the greener pastures of America; (iii) the feeling that English, even in Montreal, will serve the ethnic group more adequately and help maintain contact with friends and kin in Toronto.

Political mobilization of Quebec's minorities, therefore, has been expressed mostly via the language issue. But these minorities have, I should add, a further common interest: the fear of losing freedoms of a more basic kind than the freedom to learn and speak the English language. Many recent immigrants who have fled Europe's and Asia's trouble spots, see political events in Quebec

as a latent threat to civil freedoms. Despite the rhetoric of nationalist politicians who unsuccessfully tried to woo these minorities during the Referendum campaign, there is a deeply-felt fear of the new nationalism. The fact that the Quebec Civil Service is 100% French-Canadian while the Province's population is 21% non-French-Canadian is not encouraging for these groups, nor is the fact that it is now illegal to put up any kind of public poster in a language other than French.

But what about the mobilization of the French-Canadians themselves? Has mobilization taken place in such a way as to give more credence to one or another of the three competing theories I have summarized? And what role is religion playing in such mobilization? There is to my knowledge no serious empirical work published along these lines in the French-Canadian sociological literature. Plenty of "analyses", yes, but very little grounded on hard sociological fact. The best that I can do is to sketch, intuitively, a few elements that might lead one to prefer one or another of the proposed explanations.

Evidence to support the developmental perspective is the fact that although a massive governmental effort was directed to French-Canadians to convince them to vote for the Referendum, and although the question was posed in as "soft" a way as possible and had, by and large, the overwhelming sympathy of the communications media, slightly more than 50% of the French in Quebec rejected the proposal to mandate the government to undertake negotiations with the rest of Canada. Among the reasons given in the public opinion polls was that such a move would not further their economic interests, quite a pronounced shift from attitudes held a century ago, when people preferred social isolation and a rural life-style in order to maintain their ethnic cohesion and defend their faith, even though this clearly meant a lower

standard of living. The effects of industrialization can thus be interpreted as a fundamental erosion of traditional ethno-religious values.

However, it would be possible to counter the developmental perspective by pointing out the extremely passionate nature of the political debate that emerged in French Canada, and more especially in Quebec, about the Referendum. Opponents of political sovereignty for Quebec were just as ardent flag-wavers as supporters, but the opponents were waving two flags rather than one: the Canadian "Maple Leaf" and the Quebec "Fleur de Lys" were seen literally sewn together for the occasion, a double-size symbol conveying a double solidarity experienced as mutually reinforcing rather than mutually contradictory. Seen in this way, the refusal to choose between Quebec and Canada, but to consider these as two levels of civil society, would indicate that industrialization had not weakened ethnic cohesion, but rather made its expression more sophisticated at the political level.

Evidence to support the reactive perspective is not very strong, although it might be claimed that the processes underlying such a perspective were once very much in evidence. As a result of the Depression in the 1930s and concurrently with further urbanization, there grew up at the grass roots level in French Canada a powerful cooperative movement, often based on parish structures and supported not by the elite of French-Canadian society but by the ordinary peasants, fishermen and industrial workers who felt that only by "sticking together" would some progress be made. The expression was "Il faut se serrer les coudes". The Credit Union movement served as a means to encourage local enterprise at the parish level. It was a form of ethnic patronage, and no Englishman need apply to the "Caisses Populaires" for a loan! He had the Royal Trust or the Toronto-Dominion Bank to serve him!

Subsequent events profoundly modified the Caisses Populaires movement, though it did not lose all of its grass roots ideology. By successive stages of coordination and federation, the co-operative movement became a massive financial empire, and today it operates just as any other large banking institution would — and is seen by urban French-Canadians as a service industry rather than a community structure. They will support it out of principle but only as long as it remains competitive with other financial institutions on the market. In fact, some people expect the Caisses Populaires to offer better terms than the competitor! Differential treatment based on ethnic origin, "le bon patronage" as it used to be called, was still held to be not only morally defensible but positively beneficial a generation ago, but such an attitude is rapidly disappearing in favour of a more rational approach to functional relationships in civil society.

Further evidence to counter the reactive perspective comes from public opinion polls: supporters of the Referendum were better educated, had better jobs, were younger. Opponents were less educated, were older and had working-class jobs. There was a high proportion of women and big businessmen, as well as a good proportion of small businessmen, opposed to the Referendum. Artists, students, intellectuals and young couples were in favour of political independence. Such a picture suggests that the ethnic competition perspective is more plausible that the reactive one, but a detailed analysis of the referendum results has not been made and those who have dabbled with it have floundered on the shoals of the ecological fallacy. What does seem clear, however, is that ethnic mobilization of the French-Canadians has centered on the exercise of power.

It could be claimed that Quebec is undergoing "une revanche de l'économie", a revenge of economic power. I allude to that famous phrase in French-Canadian history,

"la revanche des berceaux", the revenge of the cradle, which brought a handful of 60,000 French-Canadian habitants, abandoned in the New World when the French elite returned to France after the fall of the colony in 1759, to multiply themselves a hundred-fold to a grand total of 6,000,000 people two hundred years later. In spite of massive immigration into Canada, first from the United Kingdom and then from other European countries as the West was opened up, the French-Canadians maintained their one-thirds/two-thirds proportion well into the Twentieth-Century... by the simple expedient of having massive families. Table "D", page 3, shows that among married women living in Montreal and born before 1896, those of French ethnic origin had twice as many children as those of British origin, with women of "other" origin situated about half-way. The figure of 6.4 is for urbanized women: in rural areas the birth-rate was even higher.

It is interesting to follow the evolution of the birth rate: except for the period when fertility corresponded with the depression years, British women maintained their birth rate, "others" reduced theirs slightly, but the French rate was cut in half within 40 years! More recent statistics concerning women whose fertility is not terminated indicates that French women are now having fewer children than even the English. Indeed, there are fears that the Quebec population will not be able to maintain itself by natural means and will have to attract more immigrants.

To return to the "revanche de l'économie", it is of course not surprizing that the French-Canadians who are in power in Quebec, strong in their 80% demographic majority in the Province, want to practice the same sort of economic control as

the English-Canadian economic elite has traditionally exercised across Canada for the past two hundred years. Although Canada is an ethnically plural society, economic power has, until recently, been almost exclusively held by an English-speaking elite of British origin, though the British form no more than 44% of the population. A survey conducted by John Porter in the 1950s revealed that of 760 persons holding directorships in dominant corporations, only 51 (or 6.7%) could be considered French-Canadians. Further, ethnic groups other than British or French were not, with the exception of a few Jews, represented at all among the 760 elite. Only 78 were Roman Catholic (51 French and 27 English), a proportion of 10% that can be contrasted with the 43% Catholic proportion of the Canadian population. The economic system has not provided the Catholic middle class with much encouragement in its aspirations to upward mobility, even among those that speak English rather than French. As for the Protestants, the Anglican and Presbyterian churches are over-represented among the 760 elite, a familiar story, no doubt.

"A nation", so goes a rueful European saying, according to Karl Deutsch, "is a group of persons united by a common error about their ancestry and a common dislike of their neighbours". If French-Canadians do form a nation (though not a nation-state), it is certainly not due to a common error about their ancestry! But, for close to two centuries, the element of common dislike has been directed towards neighbours and ancestors alike. The British had conquered their country, but the French-from-France, "les maudits Français fendants", had not only abandoned them but now looked down their noses at these <u>habitants</u> who wore rough cloth and spoke an uncultured French. The French-Canadians saw France as having abandoned the faith and given in to the sin of materialistic pursuits, while they, in the New World, had remained faithful to their heritage. "Je me souviens" is, after all, the motto of Quebec.

Up to quite recently, the survival of the French-Canadian ethnic group was a matter of highlighting both language and religion. Having a priest in the family, and especially having a missionary, was as important as tracing one's genealogy to some obscure colon in the seventeenth-century. French-Canadian society lived in a protective cocoon within which security was provided by the social life of the rural parish and the leadership of the Catholic clergy. The ownership of agricultural land, the maintenance of kinship relations and the preservation of traditions were the overwhelming preoccupations, guaranteed to ward off threats from "foreign", Protestant, English-speaking North America.

But French-Canadians had big families, and soon moved into towns to find work. Industrialization proved to be a mixed blessing: it provided jobs for the surplus population but it undermined the cohesion and solidarity of French-Canadian society. Factory work was a new discipline that had to be learnt. The chain of command in many industries demanded a loyalty that competed with the family, the parish, the Church and rural life in general. Instabilities and tensions were introduced and old feelings about one's place and role in society were displaced. Newer notions of careers and upward mobility displaced some of the old values. Nationalist elements and the clergy now became increasingly anxious allies in condemning industrialization and the depredations of big business. Modernity was seen as immoral and heels were dug in. The politicians, for instance, succeeded in preserving the predominance of the rural vote in Quebec politics by simply not adjusting the electoral map to reflect the new distribution of the population. The unbalanced representation ended only in 1960, three generations after the urbanization of Quebec was well under way. But as French-Canadians were forced to make peace with industry, it was inevitable that they would have to challenge

the English for economic domination of their society. What role would religion and the church play in such a process?

It is well known that everywhere in the Western world, religious practice and the power of the church in secular affairs has generally declined with the coming of industrialization. But possibly nowhere else has this decline been as sudden and brutal as it has been in Quebec. The "quiet revolution" came in 1960, when a new liberal provincial government came to power some months after the death of Maurice Duplessis, premier of Quebec for a generation and self-styled defender of a conservative ethnocentric nationalistic ideology. The forces of change that had been simmering underground since the end of the war finally came to the fore. One of the first things the new progressive régime did was to reform education. This meant to do away with the hold which the church had had on educational institutions and to replace fee-paying elitist classical colleges, hitherto run by the religious orders, by a state-run educational system open to all. Within a decade, Quebec had created an entirely new Ministry of Education where none had existed before. The Constitution stipulated that the schools were to be Catholic or Protestant (and so they remained to the extent that appropriate religious instruction continued to be given), but teachers became employees of the state, curricula were carefully supervised by government officials, and the religious orders lost control of content, personnel and clientele, with the exception of a small number of privately-run schools for the upper-middle classes which were allowed to continue with partial state support.

Similarly, the trade union movement, which had been founded before the war with strong church support and was known as the Confédération des travailleurs catholiques canadiens, the Canadian confederation of catholic workers, changed

its name to the Confédération des syndicats nationaux, the Confederation of national trade unions, thus losing both its religious and its pan-Canadian labels. Behind its change of name, of course, was the disengagement of the church's influence in trade union matters. Today, though the movement is not overtly anti-clerical and still has some active left-wing clerics, it bears little trace of its past involvements with the institutional church. Such photographs as we have recently seen of the Polish Solidarity movement, showing grown men kneeling on the picket line while a priest hears their confession, would be quite unthinkable in Montreal today!

Tables "E" and "F", page 3, give further examples of the decline of the church in the lives of French-Canadians. Table "E" shows the attitudes of Quebec women to contraception, still officially forbidden except by "natural" means by the Catholic church. Only 20% of women approve this position, 80% use contraception and an increasing number of men and women resort to sterilization. Among francophone teachers, employed in nominally catholic schools, less than 50% practice more than occasionally though many are still responsible for religious instruction as well as academic subjects.

Urbanization in Quebec, far from lagging behind the national average, has remained consistently above the average ever since 1890. More than half the population lived in towns by 1916. But two whole generations were to elapse before any discernible weakening of religious practice became evident. There was, to be sure, a gradual decline in the birth rate but, except in West Montreal, it was extremely difficult in Quebec to purchase condoms and pills: the decline was due to heroic efforts of abstinence and counting of days on the calendar.

Then, between 1960 and 1970, a catastrophic decline in religious practice suddenly took place. The church was dropped like a hot potato, as if people were making up for lost time! Anti-clericalism became a public issue while at the same time a new and vigorous militant nationalism was being born, centered around the maintenance of language, echoing old fears of assimilation and capitalizing on the French-Canadian's "mentalité de colonisé", the mentality of the colonized. Indeed, a new sociological law was formulated: the fewer the recruits to Roman Catholic priesthood, the greater the number of enrolments in the University of Montreal's M.B.A. programme!

Thus, one might well ask the following question: what could possibly have been the factors that first delayed, then activated this massive decline of religion as an integrative force in Quebec society? Traditionally, religion and language had gone hand in hand. Now, while riots occurred in the streets of Montreal around the slogan of "Québec français", religion was being unceremoniously dumped. Language would henceforth be the battle-cry of the nationalists. Language, not faith, would be the source of collective pride. Why?

Before I attempt to consider this question, a few words about the general evolution of religious institutions in Canada might be helpful. These have developed quite differently in English and in French parts of the country.

Historically, in English-speaking Canada, the history of churches and sects must be examined in the context of a rapidly expanding capitalist society, as many different people came to this New World, each with their own religious heritage but each having to face the same challenges of settlement and expansion. With the growth of capitalist enterprise, sectarianism as a disciplining force soon lost

most of its importance due to increasing emphasis on various forms of association. In the new settlements, people needed to associate with one another, and so they did. Secular forms of control thus grew up almost entirely outside the province of religious controls, and were therefore able to exist in independence of religious values. On the other hand, these same conditions became increasingly favourable to the growth of religious denominationalism. Increased we th made possible the support of religious institutions making heavy demands in the way of expensive church structures, denominational church colleges, religious newspapers, etc. An expensive religious service, a wedding or a funeral, became an important form of conspicuous consumption; distinctions arising from attendance in exclusive places of worship served to support the system of social stratification (we have already seen this for the Anglican church). The religious teachings of most churches emphasized the virtues of being successful. The bureaucracy of business combined with those of the church and of the state in maintaining firm control over the new capitalist society.

On the other hand, in French- speaking Quebec, the stability of the Catholic church throughout almost the whole of the nineteenth-century led to the creation of a social pocket in which the religious organization stood largely outside the sphere of capitalist expansion. The population tended to remain divorced from the economic and social order of capitalism. Lack of social mobility implied little change in the status of most people: hence a rigid status system bearing little relation to the more fluid class system of capitalism in its expanding mode. Emphasis on ethnic and religious differences, and geographical isolation combined with a distinct language, served to stabilize French-Canadian society and shelter it from the effects of capitalist expansion.

I have already suggested that the French-Canadian has dropped his religion and kept his language. Does this imply a loss of ethnic solidarity? Yes, if one believes that religion is a necessary and basic dimension of any ethnic group. No, if one subscribes to the view that ethnicity is not grounded on common cultural or religious characteristics, but on what is objectively "socially effective" in each specific circumstance.

The anthropologist Frederick Barth argues that the sharing of a common culture (and this includes religious practice) can be more usefully seen not as a definitional characteristic but as a result of ethnic organization. Culture in any case is forever changing, he says, regional differences within any ethnic group can and do exist, ecologic variations exaggerate differences, and while some cultural features may be used by the actors as signals, others may be ignored and sometimes even denied. People may look for overt signals such as dress and language to recognize identity; or else they may look to basic value orientations, i.e. the standards of morality or excellence by which performance is judged. But one cannot predict which of these two features will be emphasized. The critical thing, according to Barth, is self-ascription and ascription by others, i.e. the maintenance of a boundary within which the cultural characteristics of the members, indeed their organizational form, may change. "Objective" differences between ethnic groups may then be irrelevant: no matter how similar members of "A" have become to members of "B", and no matter how dissimilar some members of "A" are from other members of "A", if all say they are "A" and are willing to be treated as "A", then they ARE members of "A".

With this in mind, it is clear no necessary link need exist between the salience of ethnicity and the maintenance of religious fervour. Boundaries may be defined and

preserved on grounds other than basic value orientations expressed via the religious institution. But even if one accepts this perspective, one can still ask why, in French-Canada, the religious institution is no longer a presence and a power at a time of rising nationalism.

One explanation that can come to mind is that the decline in religious practice is not in fact an abandonment of the religious dimension, but an abandonment of the traditional Catholicism that characterized rural society. In the same way as the French-Canadian has undergone a mutation from farm to industry, so too is the homo religiosus undergoing a mutation by first shedding the old trappings of a previous era. In fact, while the influence of the church as a power base has undoubtedly declined to near zero, the above explanation would ascribe no great importance to the present state of religious practice. The label "Catholic" could well remain and within a generation some new cultural manifestation of religiosity would arise. Indeed, there are signs that this is so with the enormous popularity of the charismatic movement. The new French-Canadian "catholicism" may well eventually be more "protestant" and individualistic in character, but the religious dimension may remain a salient characteristic of French-Canadian ethnic identity, albeit under new guises, possibly far more amenable to the spirit of capitalism as heretofore.

Another reading is however possible: if French-Canadian society is engaged in a process of Americanization, that is, a process by which it is losing its fundamental distinctiveness while acquiring a vastly improved standard of living, such solidarity as there is may well be grounded on a rapidly-changing base: from a culturally-signposted ethnic solidarity, the French-Canadian group may be becoming characterized by a politically-defined civil solidarity where the

word "Québécois" no longer has the same meaning as "Canadien français". As functional interdependence in North America increases for the Québecois, integration emerges from the polity rather than on a value basis. Indeed, the religious dimension of French-Canadian history can be seen as that dimension by which values now obsolete had hitherto been expressed and shared. These values, associated for the past two hundred years with a fundamental conservatism and a strict morality, must then be shed. The alternative is the discomforts of cognitive dissonance. In unconsciously seeking to "get their world in order again", French-Canadians have chosen to ditch that element of their past which stood in the way of desirable new goals. Under these circumstances, language, seen as a neutral characteristic with respect to the development of capitalist modernity, can become a symbol of group identity, a mere symbol as Barth would put it, rather than a value-laden orientation. Language, then, is not sacred. Or rather, it is only sacred inasmuch as it serves to maintain boundaries. While an immigrant, a "foreigner", cannot possibly become French-Canadian by learning the French language, he <u>can</u> become a good Québecois by so doing. Thus, according to this perspective, the grounding of solidarity is changing from a culture base to a political base.

Our present Premier, René Lévesque, in the heat of the Referendum campaign, suggested: "A Quebecer is a word which, as far as we are concerned, unites all those who have been born in Quebec, or who live here, and it unites the various linguistic, ethnic, cultural, religious and geographical diversities of Quebec. It is a means of identifying our belongingness to a people and to a land. The word "Quebecer" or "Québecois" (they are equivalent) is by no means the exclusive property of a single group or a single political party". One should not however take political rhetoric for sociological fact.

Having presented to you various competing theories and various perspectives on the recent decline of religious practice in Quebec, I will not be able to point to clear sociological evidence which would permit one to discriminate between the possibilities. Sociology in Quebec is not at present in a position to discuss these questions on the basis of extensive empirical investigations. Although interesting work has been done in other areas, for example that of the new industrial bourgeoisie in Quebec, many sociologists have been extremely busy defending ideological positions rather than trying to ferret out the facts. Some of our most distinguished sociologists have played important full-time political roles in the new Parti Québecois, and theorizing has been favoured over the discipline of solid field work.

Possibly, as well, the new sociologists are not overly concerned with the religious phenomenon, which they may well see as rather passé. Further, many may be concluding that in any case the new Quebec society simply cannot properly be understood by reference to its past. A new book that has made some headway in Quebec is Alain Gras' "Sociologie des ruptures" (Paris, P.U.F., 1979) in which the author contends that whenever a genuine "rupture" occurs, i.e. an event or a development which is both probable and unpredictable, the brutal changes thus engendered render inoperative the discipline of causal rationality. Thus, one may not transfer sociological explanations or sociological laws inferred from an observation in one space-time continuum to another socio-historical space-time continuum without introducing serious validity limits to this transfer operation.

Gras's perspective absolves the Quebec sociologist from becoming too involved with references to the past, for the brútal "raptúre" which he has witnessed

within the space of one generation gives the appearance that the new Quebec society will owe very little to the previous one. This is equivalent to saying that religion as we have known it is no longer to be reckoned with, except in the history books. As for politics, the question is: are we on the road to capitalism or to socialism? It will be interesting to see whether the next generation of sociologists take renewed interest in the role religion plays in such value-laden choices, and whether, when I return to Quebec with an Oxford M. Phil., I will find kindred souls looking empirically at what is happening to French-Canadian, or Québecois, society, both in the area of religion and in the area of politics.

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March 6, 1981

	CANADA	QUEBEC PROVINCE	MONTREAL & JESUS ISLANDS	REST OF Q.
A Population according to ethnic origin - 1971	(All figures in 000)			
French	6,200	4,750	1,330	3,420
English	9,600	640	500	140
Amerindian	300	20	a	a
Others	5,500	610	500	130

a = included in "others"

Language of use (spoken at home) - 1971	CANADA	QUEBEC PROVINCE	MONTREAL & JESUS ISLANDS	REST OF Q.
French	5,500	4,900	1,385	3,500
English	14,500	900	575	325
Other	1,500	300	230	70

Languages known - 1971	CANADA	QUEBEC PROVINCE	MONTREAL & JESUS ISLANDS	REST OF Q.
French only	3,900	3,700	865	2,800
English only	14,500	600	435	165
Both	2,900	1,700	835	865
Neither	300	60	55	5

Place of birth - 1971	CANADA	QUEBEC PROVINCE	(Region)	(Rest)
Quebec		5,300	2,200	3,100
Elsewhere in Canada		250	150	100
Other countries		460	400	60

Source: 1971 Census

B Rates of endogamy Quebec - 1961

	male	female
French	96 %	95
Jewish	93	94
Italian	76	86
British	74	76
Scandinavian	23	27
Scan-British	41	41

Source: 1961 Census

C Religious affiliation and ethnic origin (1961)

CANADA (000)	Brit.	Fren.	Dutch	Germ.	Ital.	Scan.	Jewish
Anglican	2,000	60	32	68		35	
Baptist	430	17	20	53		12	
Lutheran	67		10	293		148	
Pentacostal				15		93	
Presbyterian	692	16	18	26		12	
United	2,800	87	103	186	12		
Roman Cath.	1,415	5,315	78	257	420	28	
Jewish							169
TOTAL	8,000	5,540	430	1,050	450	390	173

(missing values = less than 10,000)

QUEBEC (000)	Brit.	Fren.	Polish	Germ.	Ital.	Ukran.	Jewish
Anglican	162	10					
Baptist	10						
Lutheran				12			
Presbyterian	46	4					
United	125			4			
Roman Cath.	202	4,203	20	17	105	6	
Jewish			7				73
TOTAL	567	4,240	31	39	108	17*	75

(missing values = less than 4,000) (*) includes 9,000 Greek Cath.

MONTREAL METROPOLITAN AREA (000)							
Anglican	112	6		2			
Baptist	7	1					
Lutheran	1			9			
Pentacostal	2	1					
Presbyterian	36	3		1			
United	83	5		3			
Roman Cath.	127	1,332	16	10	98	5	
Jewish	2		7				72

(missing values = less than 1,000)

Source: 1961 Census

D Number of children ever-born to married women by ethnic origin - Montreal 1971

	English	French	Other
Born before 1896	3.2	6.4	4.7
1906-1911 (Depression)	2.6	4.2	3.1
1921-1926	3.1	4.1	2.9
1931-1936 (Fertility not terminated)	3.2	3.4	2.9
Age 20-24	.79	.73	1.06
Age 25-29	1.56	1.47	1.68
Age 30-34	2.53	2.31	2.19

E Attitudes of Quebec women born 1936-1955 (1973 survey)

67% approve couples using contraceptives

20% approve, but with some reservations

20% approve the Roman Catholic Church's position

80% say there is no moral obligation for a Catholic to follow the rule

80% use contraceptives

F Religious practice among Quebec francophone teachers age 20-65 (2/3 under 40)

Q: Do you attend religious services?

A:
- 15% Never
- 15% Once or twice a year
- 22% Occasionally
- 13% Several times a month
- 35% Once a week

(Source: May-June 1978 survey)