

**Social Studies 11**

**The “Quiet” and Not So “Quiet Revolution”**

**Quebec and Canada**

**1914 -1998**

LEARNING IN ACTION SERIES 

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**Quebec and Canada** 

**1914 -1945**

- Each of the two twentieth century world wars had brought with it domestic tension related to the issue of conscription.
- There had been passionate opposition to conscription in Quebec in 1917 and again in 1944.
- After 1945 Quebec-Canada relations appeared to be relatively calm but problems remained very close to the surface.



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**The Problems of Quebec** 

**after 1945**

- The population of Quebec was leaving the farms for jobs in the cities.
- Higher educational levels tended to make Quebecers more critical of their situation in Canada.
- It was increasingly apparent that the English speaking minority in Quebec controlled the economy.
- The power of Ottawa and the influence English language was growing.



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## La Revolution Tranquille



- Maurice Duplessis, while he remained premier of Quebec, managed to control the forces of change.
- His death in 1959 opened the way for fundamental changes in Quebec.
- No longer would the citizens of Quebec be willing to accept second class status in their own province.

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## “Maitres Chez Nous”



- Duplessis' approach to politics in Quebec was conservative and paternalistic.
- People were discouraged from questioning traditional authority.
- He was, however, a Quebec nationalist and stressed to Ottawa that Quebecers must be “masters in their own house.”

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## What Were the Problems?

- Unemployment in Quebec was the highest in Canada.
- The English minority in Quebec were better paid and had better jobs than the French speaking population.
- Most top civil service positions were held by English speaking Canadians.
- The birth rate in Quebec was falling and new immigrants preferred to learn English.

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## The Government of Jean Lesage



- Duplessis' Union National party had been in power for 18 of the previous 23 years.
- The Liberals under the leadership of Jean Lesage now embarked on a difficult and expensive program.
- The slogan of change continued to be "Maitres Chez Nous."



Duplessis' Funeral in 1959



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## The Program of the Lesage Government Sought to



- Eliminate corruption in the Government of Quebec.
- Improve public services particularly, transportation, health care and education.
- Improve wages and pension benefits for the citizens of Quebec.
- Develop new industries and to access the natural resources of the province.



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## Quebec and Ottawa



- Lesage placed new demands on the central government to allow Quebec to take over complete control of programs like health and education.
- He wanted more control over the economic development of Quebec and a greater share of tax revenues from Ottawa.
- It was also made clear to Ottawa that Quebec wished to be consulted on any matter affecting the provincial interest.



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## Daniel Johnson and the Return of Union Nationale



- Lesage and his government were defeated in 1966.
- Daniel Johnson, the new Premier, did not abandon the goals of the Quiet Revolution.
- Johnson's approach was to establish closer ties with France.
- The fear in Ottawa was underscored by the visit of Charles de Gaulle and his "Vive le Quebec Libre!" speech in 1967.



DeGaulle in Quebec  
[Click here to see the speech \(CBC Archives\)](#)



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## Violence in Quebec



- By 1963 there was a growing trend among some small radical groups in Quebec to arm themselves.
- Bombs were planted and military supplies stolen.
- Most French-Canadians opposed these lawless acts but Ottawa felt that it had to respond.



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## Ottawa Responds to Nationalism in Quebec



- All the provinces were granted greater autonomy and more money to run provincial programs.
- The new Canadian flag was adopted in 1965 replacing the old "Red Ensign."
- The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism was established in 1963 to study French language and culture in Canada.



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## The Commission Reports



- Canada was to be officially bilingual with English and French the official languages of Parliament and the federal courts.
- Government services should support minority language groups in all provinces.
- More French-Canadians should be employed in the federal civil service.
- French was to be the primary language of business and government in Quebec.



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## Trudeau and Quebec



- In 1968 Pierre Trudeau became the Prime Minister of Canada.
- He was a French-Canadian federalist with strong views on Canadian unity.
- Mr. Trudeau rejected separatism and focused on bilingualism in government.
- Large sums of money were spent to achieve this goal with mixed results.



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## Problems With Bilingualism



- It was difficult for older unilingual Canadians to learn a new language.
- English Canadians began to feel that the French language was being given an unfair degree of support and a backlash developed.
- Even among some French-Canadians there was opposition to the extent of the effort to encourage the use of French in English Canada.



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## Robert Bourassa Takes Power in Quebec 1970



- Robert Bourassa believed that Quebec's place was in Canada.
- In the first year of his government he was forced to deal with a radical separatist group the FLQ.
- The Front de Liberation Quebecois wanted the independence of Quebec and were prepared to use violence to achieve this end.

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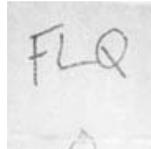
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## The October Crisis 1970



- After seven years of bombings and other acts of violence the FLQ embarked on one last desperate act of defiance.
- On October 5, 1970 they kidnapped James Cross the British Trade Commissioner to Canada.
- This was followed by a separate kidnapping of the Quebec Minister of Labour - Pierre Laporte.



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## The October Crisis II



[Click here for Trudeau's "Watch me" speech, from the CBC Archives.](#)

- The FLQ issued a list of demands which included the release from prison of several members of their group.
- On October 16, 1970 Prime Minister Trudeau invoked the *War Measures Act*.
- This act gave the government special powers of arrest and had been requested by both the government of Quebec and the city of Montreal.



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## The October Crisis III

- Nearly 500 Quebecers were arrested and jailed although very few were ever brought to trial.
- The FLQ was outlawed and the Canadian Armed Forces patrolled the streets of Montreal and Quebec City.
- Pierre Laporte was murdered but James Cross was eventually released.



Laporte's body found, from CBC Archives.

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## Debate: FLQ Crisis – True or False?

- Pierre Trudeau was right when he enacted the War Measures Act
- Canada is being too soft with their position on Quebec
- Canada cannot survive without Quebec
- All Quebecois complain about Canada
- Quebec should not be allowed to sign the Constitution act of 1982
- Another referendum on separation will result in Quebec's departure from Confederation
- Quebec is a Distinct Society
- If Quebec separates from Canada, Canada has the right to invade Quebec
- Life is better with Quebec than without it
- The FLQ was right to use violent means to achieve separation

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## Rene Levesque and the Parti Quebecois



- Most Quebecois were opposed to violence and terrorism but at the same time many supported a separate Quebec.
- This gave rise to a new separatist political party - the Parti Quebecois - led by Rene Levesque.
- Levesque led his party to victory in the provincial election of 1976.



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## Levesque and Bill 101



- One of the most controversial measures of the Parti Quebecois was Bill 101 - *The Charter of the French Language*.
- This bill made French the only working language in Quebec.
- English speaking Quebecers felt the bill went too far and deprived them of their rights as Canadians in a bilingual country.



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## Bill 101



- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1 All business in the Quebec government and courts will be carried out in French. | A ) speak French at work.          |
| 2 French is to be the only official language in Quebec.                           | B ) be served in French in stores. |
| 3 The people of Quebec have the right to  | C ) be taught in French.           |



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## The Quebec Referendum



- The Parti Quebecois organized a referendum on sovereignty-association for May 20, 1980.
- This meant independence from Canada but the retention of close economic ties.
- Claude Ryan the Liberal leader in Quebec urged Quebecers to vote “non.”
- The campaign was very passionate and divisive.



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## The Quebec Referendum II



- Federal politicians, like Pierre Trudeau, supported the “no” side in Quebec.
- The actual referendum question was complex and did not attract the support the Government of Quebec wished.
- 82% of the population turned out to vote and 59% rejected the proposal.



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## The Quebec Referendum III



<b>Francophones</b>	→	<b>Oui 60% Non 40%</b>
<b>Anglophones</b>	→	<b>Oui 9% Non 91%</b>
<b>Immigrants</b>	→	<b>Oui 16% Non 84%</b>



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## The Reaction of the Federal Government



- In 1969 Pierre Trudeau took many of the recommendations of the "Bi and Bi" Commission and incorporated them in the *Official Languages Act*.
- This act was given a muted response in Quebec as most Quebec nationalists didn't care about encouraging the French language across Canada.



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## Referendum 1980 – Sovereignty-Association



- Define "Sovereignty-association" in your own words. Do you think it is the same as separation?
- If the same question had been asked of Canadians outside of Quebec in 1980, what do you suppose the results would have been? Why?
- In the 1980 referendum, those who voted "No" tended to be English-Speaking, newly immigrated, older, poorer, and less educated. "Yes" voters tended to be French-speaking, younger, wealthier, and better educated. Why do you think each of these groups voted the way they did?



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## Multiculturalism in Canada



- Biculturalism was not supported by the "Bi and Bi" Commission as the multicultural nature of our country was already an overwhelming fact.
- In 1977 "The Task Force on Canadian Unity" was established to study and make recommendations on the state of Canadian unity for all Canadians.



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## The Winds of Change



- The 1980 referendum convinced Pierre Trudeau that constitutional change was necessary.
- The Liberal government of Pierre Trudeau finally undertook the difficult task of patriating the constitution.
- This was achieved in 1982 but without the approval of Quebec.

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## Robert Bourassa's Demands for Quebec - 1987

- "Distinct society" status.
- A veto for Quebec on any future constitutional amendments.
- More power over immigration to Quebec.
- The right to opt out of cost sharing programs with the federal government.
- The right to nominate Supreme Court judges.



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## Distinct Society

- What did this term mean?
- Was Quebec to be considered *different* or *special*?
- If Quebec was to be special did this mean that *additional powers* would be given to the Quebec government?

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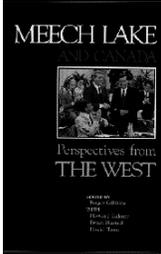
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## The Meech Lake Accord 1987



- Meech Lake was an effort to complete the constitutional process and meet some of Quebec's demands. It included
  1. The confirmation of "distinct society" status for Quebec in order to bring the province into the constitution.
  2. The right to allow provinces to nominate Supreme Court judges.
- The accord was not ratified by all ten provinces and failed.



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## The Failure of the Meech Lake Accord



- This accord was acceptable in Quebec but eventually failed in Manitoba.
- It was seen in Quebec as a rejection by the rest of Canada.
- The separatist movement in Quebec was revived by the emotion surrounding the failure of "Meech."



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## The Bloc Quebecois



- The failure of the Meech Lake Accord resulted in the formation of a new federal political party - the "Bloc Quebecois."
- This party attracted support only in Quebec but won enough seats in 1993 to become the official opposition party in Ottawa.
- The first leader of the "Bloc" was Lucien Bouchard.



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### **The Meech Lake Accord Qs**



- What was the Meech Lake Accord?
- What do you think "Distinct Society" means?
- How did Quebec citizens react to the failure of the Meech lake Accord?



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### **The Charlottetown Accord 1992**



- This was the second attempt to amend the constitution. It promised -
  1. "Distinct society" status for Quebec.
  2. Aboriginal self-government.
  3. Senate reform.
- It failed to pass a national referendum in October 1992 when a large majority Canadians voted no.



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### **Charlottetown Accord Qs**



- What was the Charlottetown Accord?
- Why did it not succeed?
- If it was successful, would it have satisfied Quebec? Why or why not?



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## The 1995 Quebec Referendum



- In 1995 the people of Quebec voted on the question of sovereignty.
- Jacques Parizeau, the premier, led the “Yes” forces in Quebec but the question was defeated by a narrow margin.
- The “No” side won by 51 per cent to 49 percent.
- There was shock in the rest of Canada but no immediate solution.



Copyright 1992 Gary Jones

Parizeau's "Money & the Ethnic Vote" speech, from the CBC Archives.



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## The Calgary Summit



- In September of 1997 nine provincial premiers proposed a constitutional amendment which would recognize Quebec's “*unique character*.”
- This was received with considerable skepticism by the Parti Quebecois government of Lucien Bouchard.



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## The Supreme Court Ruling 20 August 1998



The federal government asked the Supreme Court three questions in 1996.

1. Can Quebec secede unilaterally from Canada under the constitution?
2. Does it have the right to secede unilaterally under international law?
3. If there is a conflict between Canadian and international law, which takes precedence?



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**The Constitutional Right to Secede (Question 1)** 

- “The Constitution (guarantees) order and stability, and accordingly secession of a province ‘under the Constitution’ could not be achieved unilaterally...”
- Negotiation with the other provinces within the terms of the constitution would be required for Quebec to secede.



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**International Law and the Right to Secede (Question 2)** 

- The court decided that the right to secede exists but not at the expense of the stability and integrity of Canada.
- Only if a people were colonized or oppressed would the court consider unilateral secession acceptable.
- This, clearly, does not apply to Quebec.



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**General Conclusions of the Supreme Court (Question 3)** 

- The court ruled that there was no conflict between Canadian and International law. The Supreme Court’s ruling was open to interpretation by both sides but offered little comfort to the separatist movement in Quebec. Quebec can hold another referendum on a “clear” question and if it wins this referendum Canada and Quebec must negotiate the terms of secession.



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## Problems Associated with Quebec Separation

- What happens to the large French speaking population outside of Quebec?
- What happens to the anglophone population inside of Quebec?
- How do we divide the economic resources and the national debt of the country?
- How does the rest of Canada remain united?




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## Recent Changes in Quebec



- Some people think that the tide has turned against the Separatists.
- Immigration is reducing the influence of “pur laine” Quebecers – the chief supporters of separation.




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## Recent Changes in Quebec

- In the 1992 Quebec election, the Parti Quebecois was rejected.
- Jean Charest’s more federalist Liberals returned to power.



PQ  
75  
(42.7%)



LIB  
48  
(43.7%)



ADQ  
1  
(11.8%)




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## A Nation in a Nation?



- Liberal leadership candidates and a Conservative Prime Minister both supported public statements to this effect.
- In late 2006 a number of people suggested that the circle could be squared by declaring Quebec a nation within a nation.
- In a Parliamentary motion, only 16, including North Vancouver's Don Bell, voted against the motion (21 were absent and 2 seats were vacant).
- Is anything really changed? What does this mean for Canadian nationhood?



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## Summary



Constitutional debate in Canada continues and the question of national unity remains an unsolved problem.

- Quebec remains outside of the Canadian Constitution.
- The PQ government in Quebec does not intend to hold another referendum until they are assured of *winning conditions*.
- At the moment these conditions do not exist.



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## Multiculturalism & Aboriginal Rights (p. 246, 250-256)



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## Multiculturalism in the 1980s



- 1988: Canadian Multiculturalism Act
  - Provides a legal framework for multiculturalism in Canada
  - Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship established to promote multiculturalism
    - Now part of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration



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## Multiculturalism in the 1980s



- Not all Canadians agree with multiculturalism
  - For: strengthens Canada, makes all feel welcome, increases cultural knowledge/ respect and national unity, spreads values of tolerance and equality
  - Against: emphasizes differences not similarities, prevents a common national identity, can lead to isolation and conflict



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## Multiculturalism in the 1980s



- Other Difficulties
  - School and national holidays based on Christianity (ex. Christmas and Easter)
  - Multicultural Festivals (ex. Chinese New Year and Ramadan)
    - Superficial? (food, dance, music, and costumes)



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## The First Canadian



### C-3PO: The first Canadian...



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## The Fight for Aboriginal Rights



### ■ Toward Self-Government

- 1980: Assembly of First Nations formed to negotiate with the federal government
- 1982: Aboriginal rights and right of self-government included in Canadian Constitution
- Self-government would give First Nations control over education, culture, justice system, and natural resources
  - Much work to determine how self-government would be practiced
  - Self-government would require land



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## The Fight for Aboriginal Rights



### ■ Land Claims

- Bands and Aboriginal organizations begin the process of reclaiming land taken away by the government
  - Specific Claims – claims on land where treaties were signed, but not followed and/or more land was taken than agreed upon
  - Comprehensive Claims – claims on land taken without any treaty agreement
- 1980s: many different claims slowly making their way through the court system



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## The Fight for Aboriginal Rights



### ■ Oka Crisis (1990)



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## The Fight for Aboriginal Rights



### ■ Oka Crisis (1990)

- Oka, a town in Quebec, decides to expand a golf course into land claimed by nearby Mohawk nation, considered sacred
- Mohawks put up blockade to prevent construction
- Quebec Provincial Police called in to remove the blockade; they storm the blockade and use tear gas
  - Gunfire breaks out, a police officer is killed



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## The Fight for Aboriginal Rights



### ■ Oka Crisis continued

- Conflict escalates, more blockades put up by both sides
- Quebec government calls in Canadian troops
  - Stand-off between two sides (picture)
- After over two months, negotiations succeed
  - Blockade and stand-off ended
  - Federal government buys disputed land, gives it to the Mohawks



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## The Fight for Aboriginal Rights



### ■ Land Claims in British Columbia

- Very few treaties signed by government and First Nations in BC historically
- Aboriginal groups lobby provincial government to open treaty negotiations and formalize land ownership
- 1990s: BC Treaty Commission set up to negotiate and resolve land claim issues



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## The Fight for Aboriginal Rights



### ■ Land Claims in British Columbia continued

- Nisga'a (Northwest BC) were the first group to make a land claim in 1912, but it was dismissed
  - 1993: take their case to Supreme Court of Canada, win the right to make land claims
  - 1996: agreement reached between province, federal government, and Nisga'a
    - Nisga'a receive 2000km of land (8% of claimed land), partial control of natural resources, self-government, and \$190 million for their lost land
    - Nisga'a agree to give up tax-exempt status



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## The Fight for Aboriginal Rights



### ■ Land Claims in British Columbia continued

- Delgamuukw ruling (1998)
  - Supreme Court of Canada rules that Aboriginal groups had a legitimate land claim if they could prove continuous historical occupation of the land being claimed
  - Aboriginal oral records ruled as valid as written records (huge step forward)
- Nisga'a agreement and Delgamuukw ruling set the standard for further land claims



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## The Fight for Aboriginal Rights



### ■ Land Claims in BC continued

- BC government and Aboriginal groups agree on ground rules for land claim talks
  - No private property would be included
  - Payments for lost land would be limited to what the province could afford
  - Aboriginal groups are not to ask for all historical land, but enough land and control over resources to be self-sufficient



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## The Fight for Aboriginal Rights



### ■ Nunavut (1999)

- Creation of Nunavut territory was the result of the largest treaty ever negotiated in Canada
- It was a treaty with the Inuit; they gained control of 1.6 million square kms in the Arctic
- Land claims continued into 21<sup>st</sup> century



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