

Report from Canada

Many Crises Beyond Québec

by Mark Wegierski

If Canada impinges at all on the average American's consciousness it is mostly as a tourist destination, "a large friendly country" with red-coated Mounties and vast areas of unspoiled wilderness. Canada is generally considered a safe, if staid, country; a reliable ally of the United States in which nothing of much significance can happen. However, it must be said that, in the last few decades, the processes of history (or post-history, i.e. of late modernity) have bitten Canada with a vengeance.

To put it succinctly: the quiet, orderly, lawful atmosphere of a British backwater (such as that portrayed in the *Anne of Green Gables* stories, and exemplified in the national motto of "peace, order, and good government") is gone forever, replaced by the great noise and conflict of the multifarious tendencies and currents of late modernity. Toronto, the largest city in Canada, located in the heart of the richest Canadian province of Ontario, is a huge, cosmopolitan entrepôt of over 4 million people, with over a third of its population of non-European descent. It is expected that by the year 2001 (according

to projections based on the 1991 Canada Census), over half of Toronto's population will be of non-European descent, while Canadians of British descent will number less than a third of its population. This is a significant change from the situation in 1961 when visible minorities (persons of non-European descent), together with native Indians, numbered less than three percent of the city's population, while Canadians of British descent formed a large majority in the city. The massive immigration from the Third World began in the late 1960s. Since 1987, Canada has received approximately a quarter-million immigrants a year, most of them from the Third World, and Canada's population today is approaching 30 million. It must be understood that the overall increase in population of European descent is very low. Nearly all of the immigration inflow, and a substantial portion of the local birthrate, can be attributed to visible minorities. It is anticipated that by the year 2001, over 20 percent of the population of Canada will not be of European descent. Residents will be concentrated mainly in the three great metropolitan areas of Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver, where influences on culture will be greatly multiplied and augmented by the overwhelmingly urban focus of late modern civilization. Given the rapidly ageing native-born population and continuing high immigration, the non-Euro-

pean population of the entire country could easily reach 40 to 50 percent by the year 2020.

Generally it can be said that the Canadian State is today "bursting at the seams." There is a constitutional crisis concentrated on the province of Quebec, where a majority of Quebec's French-speaking population inclines toward separating from Canada and creating an independent nation. Attitudes toward Quebec in English-speaking Canada have ranged from some degree of traditional disdain in earlier times, through a stance of hyper-accommodation in more recent times, to a sharp stance of opposition today — because of liberal fears of Quebec's "tribalism" and possible "illiberalism." An exasperated English-Canadian traditionalist might well be supportive of Quebec separatism, since the Québécois can be seen as trying to preserve their distinctive identity against the internationalist liberalism which overwhelmed English Canada decades ago.

The native Indians (officially called "Native Peoples," "Aboriginal Peoples," or "First Nations") are also loudly demanding recognition as a "distinct society" — though, of course, they expect to continue to receive huge support-payments and special privileges from the Federal and all other levels of government. Recently, in British Columbia (Canada's westernmost province) a land-claim settlement costing the pro-

Mark Wegierski is a Toronto-based writer and historian. He is a frequent contributor to THE SOCIAL CONTRACT.

vincial government hundreds of millions of dollars was reached. Many native Indians view virtually all of Canadian territory as “up for grabs,” and the costs of these land-claim settlements will easily run into the billions. In Canada's Far North, a semi-sovereign Inuit (Eskimo) country has already been established, called Nunavut.

In 1992, the province of Ontario, under the leadership of the New Democratic Party (NDP) — Canada's social democratic party — enacted legislation formally establishing employment equity, the Canadian version of affirmative action. These measures had been *informally* in place for decades, and no countervailing legislation by the recently elected right-leaning (Progressive Conservative) government in Ontario is likely to change this. There is a general tendency in today's Canada to promote women (i.e. feminists) and visible minorities into government positions at all levels, while the private sector has, according to some reports, been even more effective in these procedures than the government bureaucracies.

It must be added that the country has virtually no armed forces; does not maintain any kind of effective control over its borders; and sustains a national debt that is reaching \$600 billion Canadian (\$1.00 Canadian equals about \$0.72 US), a debt which is significantly more per capita than in the U.S. The idea that Canada has adopted some kind of immigration policy better than that of the United States, focused on “quality” immigrants (as was argued in the *National Review* article, “The Immigration

Debate: Facts and Fancies” by Peter Brimelow, February 26, 1996, pp.44-47) is sheer nonsense. First of all, Canada receives many more immigrants *per capita* than the United States. The so-called Canadian screening process is a big joke. The few consciously conservative Canadians (as well as the Left-liberal media in Canada generally) view American immigration policy as “very tough” in relation to what goes on in Canada.

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Canada might well be described as constituting some kind of perverse height of social liberalism, anti-patriotism, and all the negative features of late modernity. The Left-liberals in Canada carry out their usual totalitarian rule through a virtually unchallenged monopoly over the mass-media and education systems (from daycare to universities). At the same time, they have at their disposal vast political networks in the governmental bureaucracies, as well as in the special-interest groups, notably feminist, gay-rights, and visible minority organizations, which are almost completely subsidized by state funds, that is, by the long-suffering taxpayer. Though Canada can certainly be quite a physically pleasant place to live in (especially if one is relatively affluent, or has labored hard for decades to

achieve that dreamed-of “middle-class” lifestyle), in terms of spirit, tradition, historical consciousness, and real patriotism, it is a lifeless desert. It is probably the most hostile Western country for persons hoping to live in an environment of rooted tradition.

Canada seems to combine all the negative elements of the Swedish system, that is, an enormous degree of government debt, the rewarding of the nadirs of lifestyle and behavior through the so-called welfare-state, and

normative totalitarianism — with all the negative elements of the American system, that is, “political correctness,” racial conflict, radical feminism, “gay rights,” florid individual lifestyles and a collec-

tive moral wasteland, as well as the vapid North American pop-culture, vulgarity, and stupidity. Canada is well on its way to becoming a Third World country — as opposed to Sweden; but it also lacks what in the United States could be called “the conservative counterculture.” To top things off, it even lacks the economic dynamism of the United States: in America, people get upset about a seven percent unemployment rate, in Canada, any unemployment rate below 10 percent is considered equivalent to a “boom.”

Canada has been driven into its current state by over thirty years of Left-liberal governance by the Liberal Party, supported by the New Democrats. “The great leader,” Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Canada's Prime Minister from 1968 to 1984 (with the exception

of a few months in 1979-1980), to a large extent imposed his Left-liberal vision on the whole country. This was in fact an incredibly intensive revolution. Trudeau's forerunner and promoter was Liberal Prime Minister Lester Pearson, who governed from 1963 to 1968. He initiated the whole process by the repudiation in February 1965 of the traditional Canadian flag, on which the Union Jack figured prominently, and the subsequent negation of all the British roots, traditions and institutions of Canada. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, who governed from 1984 to 1993 as the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, a party almost wholly co-opted by Left-liberalism, significantly increased Third World immigration from its already high rates under the Trudeau regime. In 1987, he moved the immigration numbers up to about a quarter-million per year, where they have remained ever since. In Trudeau's last year in office no more than 54,000 immigrants were received. Because of his carrying through of the Canada-US Free Trade deal, as well as NAFTA, and of his institution of the highly-unpopular Goods & Services Tax (GST — the Canadian equivalent of a value-added tax) Brian Mulroney is conventionally considered as "very right-wing." To condemn Mulroney as *too liberal* would be seen in Canada as a sign of "swamp-fever" politics. Mulroney also uttered some sharp rhetoric about "fighting the deficit," but, in fact, the growth of the Canadian national debt curve under his government was practically logarithmic.

In this entire period, with the

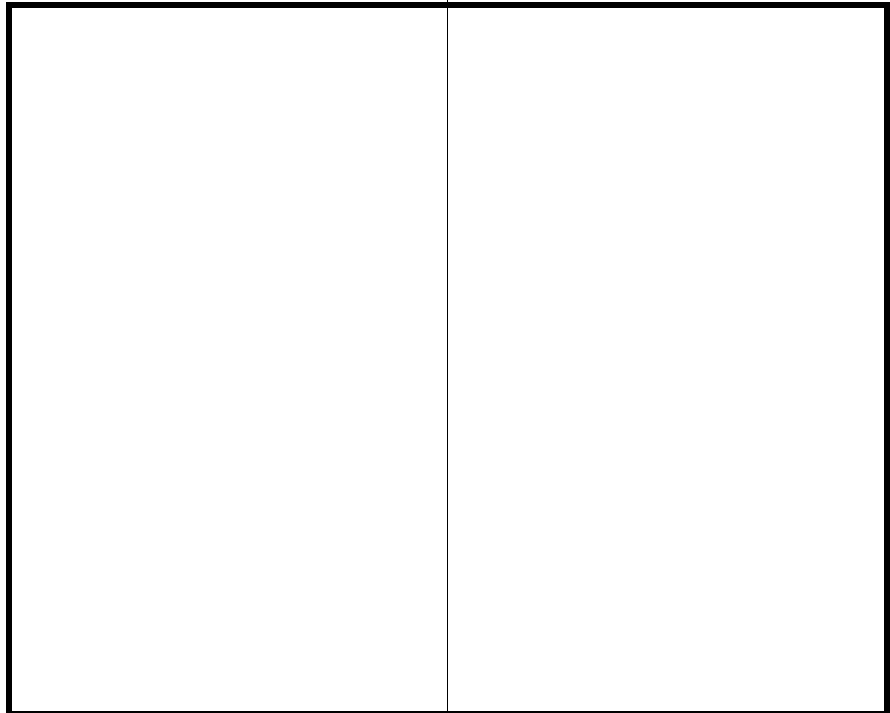
ongoing repudiation of Canada's British and European roots, the myth of a "multicultural" state was hurriedly manufactured. It may be said, however, from the perspective of the last few years, that what is emerging in Canada is *one*, all-powerful, hyperliberal culture, with the most multiracial population on Earth. Canada, it seems, has become the waystation of the world.

Expressing any of these sentiments would terminate the career of a politician who dared to utter them in public.

The right-leaning Reform Party, which emerged in 1987 as virtually the only "voice of opposition" to what is going on in Canada today, is clearly, on a Continental European or world-historical scale, a very thin gruel indeed. The Reform Party exists only at the federal level, although it has entered into alliances with

the provincial wings of the Progressive Conservative party in Alberta and Ontario. These provincial wings are markedly more right-leaning than the federal Progressive Conservative party, which now has two seats in the Parliament, and is widely expected to disappear entirely in the next election.

What is particularly troubling about the current situation is that Left-liberalism, by focusing exclusively on economics, is able to generate much popular resistance against "the neoconservative triumph," and to characterize conservatives generally as "rich fatcats and cronies of business." In fact, from day to day, Canada sinks ever-deeper into the morass of Left-liberalism, in all of its multifarious dimensions. Crime is increasing every year, the "new illiteracy" of jaded media-junkies (as opposed to the



"old illiteracy" of decent toilers on the land) has taken hold; there is generally a washout of traditional norms, historical memory, religion, etc. It is ever more difficult for relatively normal persons to live (or properly raise children) in this kind of environment. The future of Canada does not appear to be very bright.

Any ideas of true immigration reform constitute a distinctly utopian project in Canada. The Immigration Association of Canada (IAC), the main immigration-reform group, is a tiny voice crying in the wilderness. The right-leaning Reform Party, which claims to have the largest federal party organization, and has 52 seats in the federal Parliament, has promised to lower immigration to 100,000-150,000 persons per year, and institute such common-sense measures as effective screening and deportation of persons with criminal records, but its chances of leading the government after the next election are remote. The governing Liberal Party (which won 177 of the 295 seats in the Federal election of 1993) is edging towards its goal of an annual immigration of one percent of the current population, which would today be 300,000 persons. For some reason, this one percent figure has become accepted as a virtually scientifically infallible optimum for immigration, without considering such sobering statistics as the fact that in two decades, if starting from zero, over 22 percent of the population would be foreign-born.

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Canada emphatically lacks what could be seen in the United States and in many countries in Europe as some comparatively dynamic conservative infrastructures. Neoconservatives are considered in Canada to be about as "far right" as one can respectably be. One of the most prominent figures of Canadian dissent is David Frum, who is busy making his career in neoconservative circles in the U.S. One of his earlier pieces in *Saturday Night*, one of the main magazines of Canada's Left-liberal establishment (which is now, incredibly, considered by the Canadian Left to be in the hands of the neoconservatives!) endorsed the high-immigration policies of the Mulroney government as supposedly constituting a method for reducing "big government." Andrew Coyne, also considered "very right-wing" in Canada, actually argues for an even more wide-open immigration, on the grounds that it would get the economy moving. The Fraser Institute, Canada's most prominent right-wing think tank, focuses almost exclusively on economics. One of its media analysis packages suggested that issues of immigration were being treated in an extraordinarily harsh and negative light by the mainline Canadian media —

i.e., immigration wasn't being praised enough!! The National Citizens' Coalition (NCC) is also heavily economic and fiscal in focus, mostly uninterested in social

and cultural debate. A few small groups like the Voice of Canadians, and a few prominent media people like Michael Coren and Peter Worthington, can hardly be considered as constituting a meaningful infrastructure. It should also be noted that the regional subcultures of Western Canada, notably in the province of Alberta, are somewhat more friendly to some kinds of conservatism, and are able to support a right-leaning newsmagazine, *Alberta Report* — published in British Columbia as *B.C. Report*, and in Saskatchewan and Manitoba as *Western Report*. However, the critically-active persons and resources available to Left-liberals outnumber all the right-leaning groups (including those of the most nominal or dubious provenance) by astronomical factors. The situation for traditional Canada today can probably be fairly described as hopeless.

Every state and nation comes to know and move through the crisis of late modernity in different ways. Although the opponents of the system are not rotting in gulags, Canada's is not a society that is truly free, nor is it built on the authentic will of its majority populations. □