Unit Six: Canada Matures: Growth in the Post-War Period (1945-1970)

6.5: Rise of Quebec nationalism: leaders, separatist ideologies
The Rising Tide of Quebec Nationalism
• Since becoming part of Canada Quebecois have been concerned with *la survivance*—survival of their language, religion, culture and identity.

• Their slogan has been: Je me souviens (I remember).
Québec

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Je me souviens
La Survivance in 1950s Quebec

- Led by Maurice Duplessis and the Union Nationale.
- Focus on:
  - Improving Quebec economy
  - Encouraging Quebec nationalism
  - Catholic Church control of the education system
• As a result:
  – Most businesses were run by American and English people (Quebeckers had to speak English to get the best jobs).
  – Education focused on classics, religion, etc and not on business and science.
  – Most poorly paid workers in the country were French Canadians—even in their own province.
“Rocket” Richard Riots
Quebec nationalism and frustration was displayed during the “Rocket” Richard Riots in Montreal.
• When fan favourite Richard was suspended from the playoffs by the anglophone NHL president (Campbell), many Quebecois took this as prejudice and an attempt to ensure a French team wouldn’t win.

• When Campbell showed up in Montreal for the final games, angry taunts turned into a riot.
Jean Lesage
By the 1960’s Quebec was ready for change.

A new leader, Jean Lesage of the Liberal Party, promoted a new agenda that was termed the **Quiet Revolution**:

– Pride in French language, literature and traditions.
– Modernizing Quebec’s economy.
– Control of education system with new focus on business.
• The new slogan was **Maitre Chez Nous** (masters in our own home).

• It proclaimed Quebec was not a province like the other but a nation with its own culture, history and government.
The Separatist Movement

• Lesage and the Liberals tried to bring about change under Canadian laws.

• Some French-Canadians wanted to separate from Canada because:
  – Their interests were completely different from Canada’s.
  – They thought change was happening too slowly or might never happen.
The FLQ

• In 1963 the **Front de Liberation du Quebec (FLQ)** was created with the goal of achieving Quebec’s independence from Canada.

• The slogan was “Independence or death!”

• Throughout the 1960’s, the FLQ planted bombs in government buildings and mailboxes in English speaking Montreal.
Union Nationale

• In 1966, The Union Nationale under Premier Daniel Johnson came to power calling for greater equality and independence from the government in Ottawa.

• The began to call for a special place in Canadian Confederation.

• By 1968, the mood had swung toward separation and a new party emerged.
The Parti Quebecois (PQ)

• In 1968 Rene Levesque formed the PQ which called for sovereignty—Quebec would become an independent country with economic ties to Canada.

• A speech by President Charles de Gaulle of France “Vive le Quebec libre” spurred this movement. p 283.

• PM Trudeau passed the Official Languages Act (1968) and poured money into Quebec in an effort to undermine growing discontent.
Quebec in Crisis: 1970’s

The FLQ, Sovereignty and the Language Debate
• By the mid-1970s Quebec’s future was uncertain due to:
  – De Gaulle’s “Vive le Quebec Libre!” speech
  – French support of the PQ
  – PM Trudeau’s federalist policies
  – The October (FLQ) Crisis
  – The Language Laws
The 1970 Election

- **Liberal Party**: Henri Bourassa-supported federalism (ties with Canada) but wanted Quebec to take more control of its powers and revenues.

- **Parti Quebecois**: Rene Levesque-supported more radical approach and thought Quebec could only be strong through sovereignty (independence from Canada).
Results

• Liberals won because of English vote
• PQ got 25% of French vote.

*Clearly many French Quebecers supported separation from Canada.*
Pierre Trudeau

- Meanwhile, Trudeau (Liberal) became PM of Canada.
- He was from Quebec (English and French parents) and opposed separatism.
- He was a strong federalist and believed Ottawa should have more control over all the provinces and their resources.
Trudeaumania

• Many Canadians supported the young and charismatic Trudeau (especially the “flower children” of the 60s) for his reforms on:
  – Abortion
  – Divorce
  – Homosexuality
  – Birth control
• In a show of support for French Canadians Trudeau passed the **Official Languages Act** which:
  – Recognized both French and English as Canada’s official languages.
  – Encouraged federal workers to be bilingual.
*Many canadians saw this as favouritism to francophones.*
• Trudeau believed in a united and bilingual Canada.
• He proved he would NOT support Quebec separatism in 1970’s.
The FLQ

• The **Front de Liberation du Quebec (FLQ)** was a radical group who wanted separation from Canada.

• By 1970 the FLQ had set off several bombs to draw attention to their cause.
• FLQ beliefs:
  – Canadian government didn’t speak for Quebec.
  – Resented English businesspeople and embraced socialism (sharing the wealth).
  – Saw violence as only way to preserve French culture and interests.
  – Thought English wanted to keep French poor or “anglicize” them to make money off French backs.
Questions

• Read Pages 279 to 283
• Answer the following questions
• #’s 1, 2, 3 and 4 on page 283
The October Crisis 1970

- Oct 5: Members of FLQ kidnapped James Cross (British trade commissioner) as he represented rich English business.
- For his release, they demanded:
  - Release of their members from jail
  - $500,000 in gold
  - Safe passage to Cuba (communist country)
  - Publication of their manifesto (statement of beliefs)
Police Response

• To buy time to find Cross, police agreed to have the manifesto read on the CBC.
• Instead of discrediting the FLQ (as police had hoped), the FLQ gained more support from students and frustrated French Quebecers.
Many supported the Manifesto
The Manifesto

• Outlined the above beliefs.
• Called for Quebecers to go on strike and join the revolution to claim what was rightfully theirs.
• Its tone was passionate and persuasive.
The Crisis cont’d

• 5 days later another group of FLQ members kidnapped Pierre Laporte, a Quebec cabinet minister to show support for the FLQ.
• Strikes of support were organized
• The Quebec government asked Ottawa for help to restore law and order.
• The army was sent in.
• The next day Trudeau used the **War Measures Act** to arrest and detain suspects.
• **Civil liberties were suspended** and hundreds were rounded up without being charged.
How far are you willing to go?

Just watch me...
October 17\textsuperscript{th} - the body of Laporte was found in the trunk of a car.

Abducters claimed he accidently strangled himself trying to escape.

They were later tried and convicted.
• James Cross was found alive and his abductors let him go in exchange for safe passage to Cuba.
• He was returned safely.
The Aftermath of the October Crisis

• Trudeau and the Canadian premiers tried to create a new constitution that would satisfy ALL Canadians

• They agreed to the **Victoria Charter**:
  – Quebec could determine its own social policy.
  – Provinces could have a voice in appointing Supreme Court judges.
  – The constitution could be amended if some of the provinces agreed to the change.
• Quebeckers refused to accept the plan because they could not veto any constitutional change and would remain a minority

• No Prime Minister has ever been able to successfully change the constitution to ALL the provinces satisfaction

• It remains in limbo...
The (continued) Language Crisis

• The Official Languages Act resulted in:
  – Spending millions to train the civil service to be bilingual.
  – Promoted francophones to management positions.
  – More French programs in provincial schools.
  – New Brunswick became Canada’s ONLY officially bilingual province.
• But Quebec was still concerned about the preservation of the French language (they were still outnumbered 9:1 in Canada).
• The Bourassa government passed Bill 22 to preserve French in Quebec but...
Many anglophones and francophones opposed Bill 22

- Anglophones said it did too much.
- Francophones said it didn’t do enough.
- As a result, the PQ gained more power and soon a separatist party ruled Quebec.
The PQ passed **Bill 101**:  

- French became official language of Quebec.
• All signs had to be written in French only.
• All immigrants (including kids from other provinces) had to schooled in French.
Only children of English Quebec parents could attend English schools.
Questions

• Read Pages 328 to 333

• Answer the following questions

• #’s 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 a & b, and 6 on page 333