

## All The World's A Circus

# Quebec keeps Brian

I am an avowed federalist. I am an unabashed, dyed-in-la-laine, Canadian nationalist who is vehemently opposed to Quebec separation if for no other reason than if Quebec leaves Canada, every man, woman and child now living west of La Belle Province would be 560 miles closer to Moncton, New Brunswick. If you've ever been to Moncton on two consecutive Mondays, you know the case for keeping Quebec in Canada is an issue worth taking up arms over.

At the present time, even we nationalists are passing through the "What if she goes?" stage of our constitutional crisis.

This Canada-wide public act of self-flagellation, (Citizen's Forum on Canada's Future), led by Keith Spicer (Motto: I'll make you forget Donald "\$800 a Day" McDonald) is designed to identify and isolate those Canadians who have a constitutional conviction and make sure they lose sight of it.

In Canada, sticking to your convictions has become very un-American.

Of course, it would have been a lot cheaper to send Keith Spicer to a brothel in Buffalo where a lady in black leather tights would have put red marks on his bare parts with a cat-o-nine-tails, but then why should she have all the fun?

No, we will do this ourselves and in public.

And it's a real boost for committee rule -- the theory being that if one prime minister, 10 provincial premiers and an Indian named Elijah can't agree on the constitution, then let's get the opinions of 26 million people who, after 100 years, still cannot decide if margarine should legally be allowed to

be yellow.

There is one and only one sacred Canadian domain in which Canadians live and would take up arms to defend and that is the State of Florida.

Saskatchewan could wrap itself up in Saran Wrap and declare itself a hot house and nobody in this country would care. Let some state legislator mess with the "Early Bird free Buffet" in any Florida lounge and you'll see CF-18 fighter jets scrambling over Cold Lake Alberta.

But the "what if" beat goes on.

And it started me thinking. What if Quebec really does leave Canada? Is there anything to be optimistic about in this separation scenario?

Well, frankly, yes there is.

For example if Quebec leaves Canada, so do the Montreal Canadiens.

This of course means that the Toronto Maple Leafs could switch from the pitiful Norris Division, over to the classy Adams Division and thereafter keep coming dead last among far superior teams. This would still make them the doormat of the National Hockey League, but now they'd have a damn good reason.

And with Quebec out of the Canadian picture, that much-talked-about high-speed rail link along the Quebec City to Windsor corridor would then become the much-talked-about high-speed rail link along the Cornwall to Windsor corridor and travel time would be reduced by at least two hours and 10 minutes.

(I know what you're thinking. You're thinking do I really have to go to Cornwall to get to Windsor. No, of course not. I too have been to

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William J. Thomas

## Life, According To "Baba"

# Feuding in the family

"You can pick your friends, but not your family."

Truer words were never spoke, especially when you look at them in the light of the terrible relationships between members of too many families. Why? Why does this phenomenon exist? Is 'blood truly no thicker than water' (to turn an old adage around) when it comes to living under the same roof with bodies containing the same hereditary blood as oneself? But why do some families get along so well, and others scrap like cats and dogs almost from day one?

Yer ole Baba would truly like to find the answer to this great perplexity of human relationship, and why some people have a much better one with absolute strangers who become friends, than they do with their own parents or siblings or relatives.

I call it the 'Ann Landers Syndrome' which prompts people to open up as freely as they do in print to a stranger-confessor advice columnist. Why? Is it easier for them to discuss such intimate problems in their lives with strangers than with close family relations? Or is it that we get too close to the 'family forest' sometimes that we can't see the problems for all the 'familial trees' getting in the way?

How else to explain why so many of the police calls in any town or city are to a 'family situation' threatening to blow up into a mayhem of blood and brutality. Does the proximity of bodies living on a daily basis under the same roof and sharing all the necessities of life, bring about some kind of inflammatory irritation which automatically explodes when the pressure builds up too much?

Personal living space is a commodity in short supply when great numbers of people have to live in close quarters for long periods of time, usually in poverty conditions. It takes patience, understanding and character to handle such a situation. Yet how do they manage it in such densely populated countries as India, China and Japan, and others? Either by resignation or becoming inured to it through daily exposure. Orientals have developed a philosophy over the centuries which enables the individual to shut himself off mentally from the crush of bodies about. Personal living space is acknowledged a ritualism of extreme politeness.

Which may be well and good for these others who have developed an acceptance of one kind or another to cope with such a situation, but how does that help us here on this continent, in this country, where we are not faced with such horrendous overcrowding? It still does not answer why family members do not get along with each other. Is it 'bred in the bones' as the old saying goes, or is it a matter of parental example? Or, lack of example, which might be more to the point. If the parents don't get along, how can the children be expected to.

Basic human relationships begin at home. Without kindness, understanding, compassion, conversation, teaching and example-setting, no one can survive even their own personal living space in the family circle. Inevitably they will go seeking all these qualities, or things, in friends who will accept and love them, warts and all, and give freely of their

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Olga Landiak

# Straight talk for OFAH from Wildman

"I have a principle in politics: always say what you mean, and always tell the truth. Then you don't have to worry about having a good memory. And I don't have a very good memory."

(Bud Wildman, Minister of Natural Resources and Native Affairs, at a lunch meeting with journalists at the OFAH convention in Thunder Bay, February 22, 1991)

Wildman, so far, seems to be following that principle. He's saying the same things to non-native audiences as he is to native conferences. The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) had public misgivings about Wildman coming to speak to them - given his dual cabinet portfolio of Natural Resources and Native Affairs.

Before the convention, OFAH Executive Vice-President Rick Morgan wondered out loud whether it was right to have the man in charge of Ontario's natural resources also in charge of negotiating a new deal with the

province's native groups - a key component of which will be new arrangements over the management of fish, wildlife, and timber resources.

With that kind of advance publicity, Wildman would have been playing politics the traditional way if he had "soft-pedalled" the NDP government's

commitment, stated by Bob Rae in his inaugural speech as Premier, to "negotiate self-government agreements with Ontario's native people during our first term of office." Instead, Wildman made it clear to the OFAH that it was full stem ahead.

"Settling land claims and negotiating self-government for aboriginal peoples are major priorities of this government," he said in his key-note speech to the convention. He went on to outline how the Supreme Court of Canada's ruling in May of 1990 on a case in Nova Scotia (known as the

Sparrow Case) "had essentially said what native people have been saying all along [that] aboriginal peoples in this country have first priority for the fishery, in fishing for food for personal consumption, so long as there is conservation of the resource."

To the OFAH, talk like this is much like waving a red flag in front of a bull. In 1981, a

former Minister of Natural Resources, Allan Pope, reached a fishing rights agreement with Grand Council Treaty Three. That agreement was negotiated with Treaty Three with no public consultation and never announced officially until after the existence of the agreement was leaked to a right-wing columnist with the Toronto Sun. The OFAH, along with hundreds of other non-native northerners who question the principle of aboriginal rights, led a public outcry that forced the

Conservative provincial government in 1981, and the Liberals in 1986, to shelve any such agreements.

Wildman used his OFAH speech to point out that, however some non-native northerners feel about aboriginal rights, the Sparrow case forces all governments in Canada to treat the principle of aboriginal rights differently.

At the lunch meeting with journalists, Wildman made it clear that the Sparrow case goes beyond previous court decisions, which only reinforced rights outlined in Treaties. "The Sparrow decision reinforced aboriginal rights in general, not just Treaty rights," Wildman said to the journalists.

In his speech to the convention, Wildman explained how the province's somewhat unofficial "leniency policy" was being formalized as a result of Sparrow decision. Under the old policy, conservation officers would in effect look the other way when native

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**NORTHERN  
INSIGHTS**

by Larry Sanders

