

# Durham MP predicts dire results of 'Yes'

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passed along the road, there was screaming, cheering and flag-waving out the bus windows.

Downtown Montreal was crippled with traffic as the thousands of cars, vans and buses inched their way into the city.

On the lead bus from Durham, Shepherd said the response to the rally from local residents has been terrific.

"The people were feeling frustrated and quite frankly, so were the politicians. This rally gives people a chance to do something. What impressed me was the sheer size of it. Organized in just two days, this entire country is now involved," he said.

Shepherd's outlook was one of guarded optimism yesterday. "Parliament Hill has been like a deathwatch. It's been doom and gloom. We are virtually walking into the unknown," he said.

Shepherd offered a dire prediction should the rally not have its desired effect.

"There is a lot of tension and apprehension. If the results of the vote are 52 to 48 per cent for the Yes side, there will be upheaval and there will be all kinds of violence. But I predict a slim margin for the No side. It is not what we wanted, but it will at least give us some breathing space," the Durham Riding MP said.

## Rally was emotional

They came from all walks of life, from all age groups and all parts of the country. The No rally in Montreal was truly an emotional event. *The Tribune's* Joan Ransberry reported.

The mood of the rally went beyond the competition and beyond Ottawa, the politicians and bureaucrats. This was Canadians taking matters into their own hands. No one mentioned money, economics, there was no talk of Liberals, Bloc or Reform, Ransberry reported from the scene.

"We had quite a welcome when we came out. As we drove into Montreal, flags were waving. There were faces painted, sirens going off, people just going wild. We saw very few Oui signs, but there were dogs, babies dressed in Canadian flags. Participants were spirited but very serious," she said.

# 'Still fighting battle of Wolfe, Montcalm' former residents accuse separatists

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ne native town of Terrebonne, near Montreal. The bilingual secretary at Summitview Public School said francophones from the more affluent centres of Quebec are misleading those who can least afford the disruption of separation.

"They're telling the people from Gaspé everything's going to be okay for them if Quebec separates," said Winters. She said the Yes supporters are open to the same emotional persuasion as were the separatists who were whipped into a frenzy by French president Charles De Gaulle's "Vive Le Quebec Libre" cry three decades ago. "I think they're still fighting the battle of Wolfe and Montcalm. They're very emotional."

Winters said a Yes victory would probably see an exodus of non-francophone Quebecers similar to what happened when the Parti Quebecois came to power in the mid-1970s, along with a large protest from the province's native population.

Margaret Vatcher, a Stouffville senior who lived in the mining town of Noranda from 1936-71, says she is confident the No side will prevail. "I don't think they're going to separate," said Vatcher, who said she strongly opposes sovereignty for Quebec. She said that while it was the intellectuals of the province who were singing the separatist tune in previous referendums, it's the young people of Quebec who are being wooed this time. "All my friends there are seniors and they're afraid they'll lose their pensions if Quebec separates."

Vatcher, who predicted a "mass evacuation" if the Yes forces win, said Quebec has "nothing to gain and a lot to

lose" by opting for sovereignty. "I don't think it makes sense. Things have changed for the better in Quebec. They're in a position to have as much as anyone else in Canada. They shouldn't be pulling the country apart. She called Quebec "a beautiful place", and said she gets angry when she hears people criticize the province. "I've lived there. They've got a lot to offer, and they don't criticize us."

Bert Girard was born in Quebec's Eastern Townships, moving to Ontario at the age of 20. He said his francophone family and friends in his native province share his opposition to separation. "I'm confused," said Girard. "I'm wondering what the hell they're trying to do." He said he understands that Quebec's francophones want to hold onto their heritage, but feels the separatists are "going too far. I'll be curious to find out what happens if the Yes side wins," he said. Girard agreed with Vatcher that the Yes side was appealing mainly to younger Quebecers.

Joanna Murphy and her husband Dennis spent a little less than a year in Hudson, just outside Montreal near the Ontario border, three years ago. She said the predominantly anglophone population of that town didn't consider sovereignty a significant issue and that they often joked about it. She too suggested a Yes victory would cause an upheaval among anglophones in the area.

"The feeling I got was the English speaking people would leave if the Yes side wins," she said. "We were strongly against separation, as were the people we knew there."



## Helping hand

Jane Clarkson, Jenifer Martin and Lyssa Emamalle were busy working in the kitchen at the Legion Hall this week, for the semi-annual Ladies Auxillary roast beef luncheon, but not too busy to share a laugh.

Photo: SJOERD WITTEVEN

## Government

# Winter roads will still be safe despite cuts to services: MPP

Budget cuts will not put safety on the streets and roads of Stouffville in jeopardy this winter, government officials have vowed.

When it comes to winter maintenance, including snow removal on provincial highways in the local area, it will be "business as usual" this winter, Durham-York MPP Julia Munro told *The Tribune*.

A union president, however, has stated that cuts in the works for provincial highway patrols pose a grave danger to drivers in Ontario.

"The real threat to road safety in Ontario this winter isn't the weather, it's the Mike Harris government," said Leah Casselman, president of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU).

The cuts will not be severe, said Munro. The provincial Ministry of Transportation will axe \$7 million from its \$130 million budget.

"The cuts will be spread across the province so it isn't that much," said Munro. She added, "Safety will continue to be our number one priority. We will maintain the current level of service."

Casselman does not share Munro's viewpoint. He said information obtained by the union shows the ministry has proposed cutting road patrol hours across Ontario from 24 hours to 16.

Also, Casselman said the number of patrols will be reduced by 40 per cent. Each patrol will cover 190 kilometres, a 65 per cent increase over the current 115. Sand and salt spreaders will be reduced by 12 per cent. The number of plows on the roads will fall by 10 per cent. There will be 125 fewer seasonal staff, Casselman said.

At the municipal level, snow removal, sand and salt spreading will not change this winter, Whitchurch-Stouffville mayor Wayne Emerson has vowed.

"We will not jeopardize safety on the streets," said Emerson. "We'll keep safety in mind when striking the (roads) budget. There might be some changes to sidewalk (clearance), but not for the streets or (municipal) roads."

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