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TITLE OF THESIS/TITRE DE LA THÈSE

The Parti Québécois and the Politics of
Concerted Action: A New Corporatism?

UNIVERSITY/UNIVERSITÉ

CARLETON

DEGREE FOR WHICH THESIS WAS PRESENTED/

GRADE POUR LEQUEL CETTE THÈSE FUT PRÉSENTÉE

M.A.

YEAR THIS DEGREE CONFERRED/ANNÉE D'OBTENTION DE CE DEGRÉ

1980

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The Parti Québécois and
The Politics of Concerted Action:
A New Corporatism?

by

Brian Tanguay

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Political Science

Carleton University

OTTAWA, Ontario

September 1980

The undersigned recommend to the Faculty
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THE PARTI QUEBECOIS AND THE POLITICS OF
CONCERTED ACTION: A NEW CORPORATISM?

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ABSTRACT

Since coming to power in 1976, the Parti Québécois has attempted to establish a policy of concerted action in Quebec. Inspired by the practice of a number of social democratic states in Western Europe, the PQ has sought to draw up a "new social contract" with its "social partners." For labour and capital, the terms of this proposed social peace treaty involve a trade-off between increased access to the state's policy-making structures and a commitment on their part to moderation and realism in the bargaining over the distribution of income in society. It is hoped that this agreement will considerably reduce industrial strife in Québec and thereby lead to increased economic prosperity.

The PQ's concerted action is really no more than corporatist window dressing for the status quo. It involves no radical redistribution of power in favour of the working class, and the participation it offers the social partners in economic planning is derisory. In view of the hostile or indifferent responses the PQ's corporatist initiatives have elicited from the organizations of business and labour, its chances for even short-term survival are remote.

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INTRODUCTION

One of the chief preoccupations of the Parti Québécois since coming to power in 1976 has been the attempt to lay the groundwork for a "new social contract" in Quebec. This concern has been manifest in the government's framing of economic policy during the past three years, in its attempts to establish a peaceful, harmonious system of labour relations in the province, and in numerous speeches and articles of its leading spokesmen. To a large extent, the PQ has staked its electoral future on the belief that it is possible to forge a partnership between labour and capital--under the benevolent supervision of the state--when previously there were only conflict and distrust between the "social partners:"

We are going to set up a mechanism which could prove essential to the future of our collectivity...I am speaking here of consensus and collaboration...The objective is to begin to shed old ideas and old struggles in order to establish a climate of social peace in Quebec.¹

The result of this new social partnership, if not exactly an industrial Elysium, will be increased prosperity and an attenuation of industrial conflict, or so the argument goes. In essence, the PQ is attempting to extract from the organizations of business and labour a commitment to realism and moderation in the bargaining over the division of the national product. In exchange for this self-abnegation, the "social partners" will be given a voice in the determination of economic policy, thereby ensuring that the nation's economic priorities accord with the legitimate desires of all social groups.

Is it possible, as the PQ contends, to bring capital and labour together in a harmonious and mutually beneficial relationship without making any fundamental changes in the foundations of the capitalist economy (namely profit as the motor element in the process of accumulation and the private appropriation of the fruits of production)? Can a system of functional representation in policy-making act as a palliative for some of the structural problems posed by the modern capitalist economy (unemployment, inflation, industrial strife)? These are the types of questions with which this study is primarily concerned. In addition, I shall attempt to elucidate the precise nature of the "partnership" offered by the PQ to the trade unions and business. Put simply, I shall argue that the PQ's plan for a concerted action--whereby there is a sharing of responsibilities among the social partners for the planned, orderly development of the economy--in Quebec is really no more than "corporatist window dressing" for the status quo:

Should participation come to anything at all--and there is a good chance that it will come to absolutely nothing--it is likely to result in purely window-dressing corporatism: For no matter what form the new councils, committees and assemblies take, the present holders of economic power are not prepared to turn over important areas of decision-making to them. A serious shift of power over economic decisions implies a risk of reducing productivity, and neither the Government nor the business groups see any compelling need to run such a risk.²

Cohen's animadversions apply to the French method of indicative planning but they could as well have been directed to the PQ's efforts to foster dialogue and consensus by means of a policy of concerted action.

I should point out that I am here using the term corporatism advisedly, for this is surely one of the most loaded words in the social sciences. By using the term "corporatist" to describe certain elements in the péquiste ideology and the inchoate political structures it is now attempting to make operative, I am in no way attempting to dismiss the péquistes as covert fascists, in spite of the still widespread--and mistaken--assimilation of corporatism to fascism. In the first chapter of this thesis, therefore, I shall attempt to strip the concept of corporatism of its lingering suggestions of jackboots and brownshirts and show that it is indeed applicable to contemporary liberal democracies. Like Leo Panitch, I shall argue that corporatism is "primarily about state-induced class collaboration;" the term will be used in this study to designate a "political structure within advanced capitalism which integrates organized socio-economic producer groups through a system of representation and cooperative mutual interaction at the leadership level and mobilization and social control at the mass level."³ A substantial portion of this first chapter will be given over to an historical examination of the genesis of corporatist ideology, the study of which is instructive for at least three reasons. First, it illuminates the internal inconsistencies of this mode of thinking, inconsistencies which I shall argue are reproduced in the corporatist structures and practices of certain liberal democratic states. Secondly, by comparing the classical, romantic versions of this ideology with its contemporary manifestations, I shall be in a better position to state why and when corporatist elements are incorporated

4

into the advanced capitalist economic system. Finally, it will enable me to determine to what extent ideological factors can predispose a government to adopt corporatist strategies of economic development. This last element will be of particular importance for chapter two of this study, when I proceed to an examination of the Parti Québécois.

Chapter two of the thesis will consist of an examination of the various ideological currents within the PQ and of the corporatist strand in péquiste ideology. In speaking of the corporatist tendencies of the PQ, one must be careful to take into account the heterogeneous nature of this political party. As a number of studies have shown, the PQ is a rather uneasy coalition of disparate elements from Quebec society, each with its own privileged vision of the ideal future polity. For some, the tension within the party is one between "technocrats" and "participationists,"⁴ for others it involves social democrats, socialists, and "the right" (those who attach overwhelming importance to the goal of national independence and therefore neglect other social and economic objectives).⁵ This ideological rift is paralleled by a structural conflict within the PQ which pits the parliamentary wing of the party against the party's mass organization.⁶ In the second chapter, then, I shall sketch the ideological leanings of the various component groups in the PQ and attempt to demonstrate the affinity between corporatist ideology and the "vision" of the dominant, or what is often called the technocratic faction of the party. I shall argue, along with Clinton Archibald, that the corporatist ideology and initiatives adopted by this faction have as one of their objectives "...de mettre en veilleuse

les différentes perceptions des différentes classes sociales qui seraient autrement diamétralement opposées. On espère de la sorte développer une conscience nationale, ou mieux, une classe ethnique de citoyens québécois, tous unis dans le même 'processus irréversible'."7

The third chapter focusses on the specific policies of the PQ government in which the party's corporatizing tendencies have been the most evident: strategies of economic development and institutionalized consultation in the province. In particular, the structure, function, and objectives of the socio-economic conference--the consultations between the state and the peak associations of business and labour--will be considered. I shall also attempt to outline the responses of the "social partners" to the government's initiatives; why should the former want to cooperate (at least initially, and no matter how hesitantly) in the scheme, and how have they viewed its results? The significant attitudinal barriers to the development of liberal corporatism in Quebec will also be examined: business's settled aversion to yielding any of its decision-making prerogatives to organized labour and a suspicion held by a large sector of the trade union movement that the PQ's social democratic image is more apparent than real. As a number of political scientists have pointed out,⁸ social democracy plays an important role in ensuring the stability, and sometimes even the success, of liberal corporatism; only when there is a social democratic government in power are the trade unions willing to accept the types of sacrifices (moderation in wage claims, for example), which

"concerted action," or a "new social contract," or "tripartism" entail. Though the PQ has attempted to cultivate the image of a progressive, social democratic party, the remarkable ineffectiveness of the PQ government's efforts at fostering social consensus and dialogue is in part attributable to the fact that it is not, by most standards, a social democratic party. The PQ would like to duplicate what it considers to be the outstanding economic success of a number of social democratic countries in Western Europe--hence its ineffectual attempts at concerted action--but its lack of strong ideological or structural links to the labour movement vitiates these efforts.

The fourth and final chapter will briefly examine the structural impediments to the implantation of liberal corporatism in Quebec--the nature of the "peak associations"⁹ in the province, the system of collective bargaining, and the open nature of the province's economy. If the willingness on the part of the "social partners" to cooperate in a policy of concerted action were there, what would be the likelihood of its success, given the institutional framework for its development that presently exists in Quebec? Briefly, I shall argue that the prospects for the PQ's corporatist vision, a vision of a dynamic capitalist economy in a politically sovereign Quebec founded on collaboration among the "social partners," are indeed limited.

A final note on terminology: nowhere in the PQ's program, or in the government's documents will one find a reference to "corporatism" (neo-, quasi-, liberal, or otherwise). Given the sordid intellectual history of the term and the particular connotations it has in Quebec (of which more in Chapter Two), this is not surprising. The PQ prefers more innocuous terms such as "concertation" (in the French, rendered here as "concerted action"), "dialogue," and a "new social contract." Nevertheless, in this study, concerted action, tripartism, and liberal corporatism will be used interchangeably, for they all describe a form of institutionalized functional representation in policy-making. In addition, although the term social partners, constantly used by the PQ to describe social classes (workers, capitalists, managers), ought to be set off in quotation marks (since the PQ is attempting to articulate a certain vision of society when using this phrase), in the interests of style and economy the words social partners will hereafter appear without the apologetic quotes.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE CONCEPT OF CORPORATISM AND ITS APPLICABILITY TO MODERN LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES

Corporatism: A Contested Concept

In the literature of contemporary social science, the word "corporatism" is quite often understood to be a term of opprobrium. To designate a political regime or a party ideology as corporatist is, expressly or implicitly, to link it to the repressive, totalitarian practice of such ostensibly corporatist states as Mussolini's Italy, Portugal under Salazar, and Vichy France. To many social scientists, corporatism is synonymous with fascism; it is regarded as the legitimating doctrine used by Nazi and Italian ideologues to mask the brutal dictatorship of the executive upon which their regimes were founded.¹ Since the defeat of fascism in 1945, it has often been assumed that corporatism, too, could be relegated to the dustbin of history; its application to the political systems of the advanced capitalist nations of Western Europe and North America is considered by some to be totally inapposite. Illustrative of this widespread belief was the reaction of a number of political scientists to a paper read by two of their Canadian colleagues at a recent colloquium on political life in Canada. The authors, whose paper dealt in part with the "neo-corporatist tendencies of the Parti Québécois," were castigated for having associated a democratic and progressive party with national socialism and fascism.²

In spite of the images of the one-party state still conjured up by the term, a growing number of social scientists have, in recent years, been attempting to rehabilitate corporatism as an analytical concept. Their objective has been "to strip the concept [of corporatism] of its pejorative tone and implication"³ and employ it in the study of certain structural changes which have been occurring in the advanced capitalist nations of the west over the past sixty years. As early as 1947, for example, Ralph Bowen discerned two general tendencies at work in the highly industrialized liberal democracies which, he argued, were evidence of a drift towards corporatism. These were the expanding role of well-organized "interest groups" in the political process and the consequent diminution in the status of the individual political actor; and the primacy of collective agreements concluded between trade unions and employers' associations over atomistic competition in economic life. The institutional products of these trends, Bowen affirmed, presented "significant analogies to the guilds and corporations of an earlier 'bound' society..."⁴

Although Bowen's use of corporatism in the study of the advanced capitalist nations of the west is not without its insights, his conceptualization of corporatism is excessively broad. If we were to attach the label "corporatist" to those countries in which the clash of group interests and a system of collective bargaining were integral components of political and economic life respectively, then every advanced capitalist country in the western world would fall under this rubric. Slightly less comprehensive, though still not entirely adequate, interpretations of the growth of

corporatist structures in liberal democratic societies were provided in the mid-1960's by Samuel Beer and Andrew Shonfield. According to Beer, government's attempts to manage or control the modern capitalist economy from the interwar period on, have engendered a form of quasi-corporatism whereby the three primary economic interlocutors--government, organized business, and organized labour--are brought into close and constant contact in a variety of consultative and planning bodies. Through these corporatist mechanisms, government seeks to secure the advice, or expertise of the large producer groups; their acquiescence, or cooperation in the economic programs pursued by the state; and their approval of the overall objectives of state economic policy. This extra-parliamentary process of bargaining and negotiation, Beer argues, tends to displace, in specific policy areas, traditional modes of decision-making, and thereby attenuates the authority of Parliament. In Beer's usage of the term, then, corporatism is synonymous with the "new group politics," which is the pre-eminent mode of interest representation in the collectivist era (the latter being taken to mean that period of modernity in which the state is committed to welfarism and intervention in the capitalist economy).⁵

If Beer and Shonfield see the essence of the new corporatism as consisting in functional representation in the framing of economic policy, other social scientists have made more ambitious claims for this concept. To some, corporatism is an economic system *sui generis*, one that is gradually superseding modern capitalism. For others, corporatism denotes

a distinctive system of interest representation, one which implies a configuration of state-group relations different from that which prevails under pluralism. And, in addition to the previously noted confusion between fascism and corporatism, the latter has been confounded with elite accommodation, state intervention of any sort, and syndicalism.⁶

The confusion surrounding the use of corporatism as a descriptive term is mirrored at the normative level. To some observers, corporatism--often appearing in the semantic guise of "tripartism," or "concerted action," or "institutionalized consultation"--is the only practicable alternative to muddling through the economic crisis which currently besets the highly industrialized countries of the west. Thus, to Ed Finn, a Canadian trade unionist, the choice confronting policy-makers in these nations is between a system of collective bargaining founded on confrontation and a form of tripartism. The first is merely a variant of "the law of the jungle," leading ineluctably to an "economic rat race;" the latter represents a "more rational and mature approach based on co-operation and consensus-seeking."⁷ To others, however, corporatism is an abomination. At best, it entails the co-optation and emasculation of the voluntary associations of the working class; at worst, it is "fascism with a human face."⁸

In view of this remarkable divergence of opinion concerning the correct meanings, both descriptive and evaluative, of corporatism, the central task of this chapter will be to attempt to lend some conceptual

clarity to this term. The concept of corporatism will be used in this paper to designate a political structure which allows for the participation of the organized producer groups, along with the state, in the formulation of economic policy. In exchange for their admission into the decision-making centres of the economy, the organizations of labour and capital are expected to act "responsibly," moderating and controlling the demands of their members. The origins of this political structure lie in the need to cultivate a consensus on national economic priorities and in the desire to eliminate conflict between the socio-economic "partners" over the division of the national income, consensus and cooperation between capital and labour being considered by the state to be the preconditions of growth in the advanced capitalist economy. This definition is largely compatible with those proposed by Beer and Shonfield. However, my conceptualization of corporatism, like those of Panitch and Colin Crouch,⁹ will involve a recognition of the unequal influence exerted by the organizations of business and labour within this structure and of the different benefits redounding to each participant. In other words, the class bias inherent in corporatism, which ensures that it is primarily organized labour that is controlled through participation in this structure, will be emphasized. At the same time, the state's active and far from disinterested role in this structure will be taken into account. On these crucial aspects of corporatism, Beer, Shonfield, and a number of other social scientists have been markedly silent. In addition, the relationship between liberal corporatism and parliamentary democracy--the extent to which they can co-exist--will be explored.

One might contend that my working definition of corporatism includes a certain ideological *parti pris*. By casting the concept of corporatism in class terms, that is, by questioning the neutrality of the state in such a set-up and by positing an inherent class bias in corporatist structures, it could be argued that I am allowing normative considerations to penetrate my analysis. Indeed, I do not claim that my conceptualization of corporatism is strictly non-evaluative. It could not be, for the debate over the nature and desirability of corporatism is linked to the larger debate over the distribution of power in society, the necessity of social change (or the need to reinforce the status quo), the legitimacy of the present structure of authority in industry, and the problem of who gets what in society, and why. As Panitch has trenchantly observed, "the debate over definitions is really a debate between different theoretical frameworks, in which normative and ideological preferences play their part."¹⁰

Corporatism in Theory and Practice:
Its Genesis and Subtypes

Corporatism, as an identifiable social doctrine and philosophical movement, was an outgrowth of the nineteenth century romantic and conservative reaction in Europe. The revolt against the individualistic and rationalistic philosophies of the Enlightenment and against the mystique of the French Revolution drew together in the 1860's and 70's Social Catholics such as René de la Tour du Pin of France, Wilhelm von Ketteler

of Germany, and Karl von Vogelsang of Austria; disciples of the utopian socialists Henri de Saint-Simon and Charles Fourier; monarchists such as Joseph de Maistre, and, in the twentieth century, Charles Maurras.¹¹ These disparate philosophical currents were united by a common abhorrence of the economic chaos--in the form of strikes, depressions, and deteriorating workmanship--which seemed an ineluctable by-product of *laissez-faire* capitalism. To these self-styled "corporatists," the source of these evils lay not so much in the capitalist economic system itself as in the liberal and individualistic philosophies informing this socio-economic order. The mechanistic conception of society articulated by liberal philosophers--the view that society is merely an aggregation of radically free individuals--and the notion of the individual as an acquisitive, calculating "atom" were deemed to be in contradiction with man's essentially social nature. Liberalism, the corporatists contended, acted as a corrosive agent on society, dissolving the customs, traditions and hierarchies inherent in the social organism and therefore blinding the individual to the complex of mutual rights and duties that bound him to his fellowman. This atomization of man and the annihilation of social bonds led inexorably to the social strife and economic misery which afflicted capitalist society.

Thus, according to the corporatist vision, if the dominant philosophy in society could be amended, a truly "moral" economic order would follow, one which remained in all essentials capitalist. But this right-ordering of society could only be accomplished if liberalism were superseded by corporatism, and not socialism. The corporatists were repelled by the

"Godless" theories of Marx and his followers, and they were convinced that revolutionary socialism was simply the logical extension of liberalism. Both liberals and socialists placed undue emphasis on equality and preached the religion of progress, whereas the corporatists stressed the organic growth of a hierarchical society. The corporatist design was to adopt a "middle course" between liberalism and socialism in order to achieve social peace:

Class strife, depressions and insecurity would be phantoms of the past. All this would be accomplished without scrapping private enterprise, without reverting to an outmoded regime of laissez-faire, and without succumbing to socialism or other forms of statism.¹²

The corporatist socio-economic order would place society before the individual: it would be a living entity, a "corpus" with a head and appendages much like a human body. Harking back to medieval conceptions of "separate autonomies,"¹³ the corporatists called for the restoration of the intermediary associations that had been swept away by the political and commercial revolutions of the 17th and 18th centuries. Corporations, consisting of delegates from all employers and workers in a given industry or profession, would mediate between the individual and the state. Each corporation would have the power to set prices and wages in its own sphere of activity and to regulate itself through the enactment of rules of conduct and the adjudication of disputes. The ambit of each corporation's influence was to be clearly delimited, and the proper functioning of society would depend on cooperation among its constituent groups. The state's role would be to ensure that cooperation, and to make certain that private interests

were in accordance with the common good. Finally, some of the more ambitious corporatist schemes envisaged the creation of an Industrial Parliament, or Chamber of "Estates." This was to be a deliberative assembly comprising the various industrial and professional associations in society which would replace, entirely or in specific sectors of political life, traditional parliaments based on territorial representation.¹⁴ This aspect of classical corporatist theory, the corporatists' often contemptuous dismissal of democracy, and the later example of the fascist states have given rise to the settled belief today that corporatism and liberal democracy are antithetical. This, as I shall argue later, is not quite the case.

Most observers agree that this classical version of corporatism was never much more than an ideological aspiration. The romantic longing for a pacific system of labour relations within the capitalist economy patterned after the allegedly harmonious union of estates in the Middle Ages went unfulfilled. And for good reason: the early theories of corporatism failed to specify by what mechanism the interests of the worker and those of the employer could be reconciled without altering in any substantive way the cornerstones of the capitalist economy, namely, the profit motive and the private appropriation of the fruits of production. Broadly three "solutions" to this theoretical predicament were sketched. The first, advanced by the Social Catholics, involved the assumption of a spontaneous moral regeneration which was to accompany the first tentative steps taken to reorganize the economy along corporative lines. Fostered and canalized

by the Catholic Church, this moral revival would ensure the unanimity of classes posited in theory.

The second solution, which will be germane to my later discussion of liberal corporatism, descended from the theories of the utopian socialists, Fourier and Saint-Simon, and of the founder of modern positivism, Auguste Comte. It placed its faith in the ability of an elite caste of experts--an "enlightened technostucture"--to plan the economy in minutest detail and reveal to the organized associations of capital and labour where their interests lay.¹⁵ Finally, in those countries that proclaimed their ideological affinity with corporatism--Italy, Germany, Portugal, Spain and Austria in the 1930's and Vichy France--still a third solution was proposed. As Panitch has aptly noted, these fascist and authoritarian regimes provided "a rude answer to the question of how the social harmony trumpeted in theory would in fact come to replace the competition and class conflict of capitalist society"¹⁶: coercion. Whereas the Social Catholics and monarchists within the corporatist movement would have delegated a large measure of authority to the semi-autonomous corporations constituting the state, in the actual practice of these regimes, the corporations were mere creatures of the state. Rather than trust to the spontaneous development of class harmony, the authoritarian states legislated a number of heterogeneous corporations into existence which then assisted in the brutal suppression of industrial and class conflict.¹⁷

The preceding considerations should serve to underscore the remarkably diverse ideological guises which corporatism has assumed. Social Catholics,

monarchists, utopian socialists and fascists have held widely divergent views on the precise nature of the corporatist order to be installed on earth, but all have shared a core concern: the eradication of industrial strife within capitalism through the rapprochement of capital and labour. Moreover, a myriad of institutions have been proposed by the various corporatist thinkers for the achievement of this grand reconciliation of classes. Within the liberal tradition itself, a genuine aversion to the patent injustices of the free market system, combined with the desire to avert possible revolutionary pressures on the capitalist system arising from a disaffected working class, has led to an accommodation between liberalism and corporatism.

The classical and liberal variants of corporatist theory share to a considerable extent the same political lexicon: both talk of the need for "harmony," "cooperation between classes," an "ordered" economy, and the pre-eminence of the "common good" or, in more contemporary terms, the "national interest." The liberal corporatist, like his classical predecessor, inveighs against the evils of unchecked competition and the overly individualistic ethos that pervades modern society. However, whereas the classical corporatist sought economic reform in order to reacquire for man a position in a "moral" economy, his liberal counterpart jettisons all such romantic pretensions. Liberal corporatism, as the very name suggests, is an ideological hybrid: it incorporates certain aspects of corporatist thought--the emphasis on class harmony, cooperation, order, common interests--with some of the tenets of liberalism--the appeal to the

individual's money-making desires as the motor force in the economy, the commitment to parliamentary democracy and civil liberties, the protection of private property--in an attempt to rescue the threatened position of capitalism itself. The dictates of economic efficiency and the need to sustain, or recover, high levels of productivity and economic growth require that the working class be fully integrated into the capitalist economic order by means of such quasi-corporatist mechanisms as incomes policy, "joint committees," consultative forums, and the like. The leitmotiv running through much of the liberal corporatist literature is one of impending industrial apocalypse: if the corporatization of the economy does not take place, giving workers a "voice" in the productive process as a *quid pro quo* for their commitment to maintain industrial peace, then the capitalist cause is lost.

The nature of liberal corporatist ideology is clearly revealed in two highly illuminating essays written by J.M. Keynes in the mid-1920's. In these articles, Keynes affirms that the transition from economic anarchy to a rational, stable, and socially just economic order can be effected by "adhering to a middle course" between an obsolete system of *laissez-faire* and Bolshevism.¹⁸ Clinging to outmoded theories of liberalism, Keynes avers, will simply endanger the capitalist economic system. A similar theme can be found in Mackenzie King's massive and turgid volume, Industry and Humanity.¹⁹ King believed that the capitalist order could only be salvaged by bringing about a change in the attitude of each "partner" to industry. A nascent Industrial Parliament composed of a network

of joint committees of management and workers; a profit-sharing scheme; an Industrial Magna Charta, delineating the rights and duties pertaining to each partner; and a minimum standard of welfare would ensure a true partnership between capital and labour and usher in a new industrial order based on harmony and class cooperation. This liberal corporatist state, King argued, would not trammel individual initiative, nor would it subvert the traditional hierarchy of manager over managed.

Even a cursory examination of King's Industry and Humanity will suffice to point up the serious flaws in the liberal corporatist vision. The "partnership" between capital and labour, which is the cornerstone of the proposed industrial commonwealth, is a fraud; it is one in which labour will always remain a subaltern. King's unequivocal support for the existing structure of authority in industry bears out this assertion:

No one expects pit bosses in mines or foremen of works to have the sagacity of managers. That is why the workings of collieries and large industrial establishments should never be at the mercy of pit bosses or foremen, if it is at all possible for the management to avoid it.²⁰

For King, the overriding objectives of economic reform were to ensure social peace, foster capital accumulation and the growth of productivity, and consolidate the primacy of management over labour; giving workers a limited voice in the conduct of economic affairs was simply the price that would have to be paid in order to achieve these goals. A striking illustration of just how limited labour's voice would be in this new economic order was afforded by King's Industrial Parliaments scheme: capital was allowed two representatives (owners and managers) in these bodies to

labour's one. King thereby ensured that the industrial "partners" were distinctly unequal in terms of influence within his corporatist framework.²¹

Liberal corporatism, as articulated by men like Mackenzie King, involves no radical shift in the balance of class forces in favour of labour; rather, it is a means of controlling and disciplining the work force, of rendering it amenable to the profitability requirements of capitalist production. Although the corporatization of the capitalist economy might entail some undeniable gains for organized labour (in terms of greater influence in determining the conditions of work, a limited say in economic decision-making), it can generally be conceived of as an attempt to "turn organization itself into a means for regaining control over labour: its organizations are used to buttress the authority of employers..."²²

As an actual political and economic structure, liberal corporatism is associated with the twin requirements of ensuring industrial peace and dampening organized labour's wage militancy within the context of an advanced capitalist economy. Liberal corporatism emerges "pragmatically and unevenly, not by the unfolding of some concerted, grand corporatist design;"²³ it is an *ad hoc* response to the structural difficulties inherent in the managerial, or monopoly capitalist economic system. The three principal problems confronting governments in the postwar period which underlie the growth of liberal corporation in such countries as the Netherlands, West Germany, Belgium, Austria, Sweden, and, to a lesser extent Great Britain, are:

- i) the increased economic and political strength of the organized working class which attended the postwar commitment to policies of full employment;
- ii) the increased vulnerability of individual nations to shifting patterns of world trade and a rapidly changing technological base;²⁴ and
- iii) as a corollary of the first two, the need (perceived by the state and the capitalists themselves) to combat an inflationary spiral and to minimize disruptive strikes, lockouts, etc., since inflation and industrial strife undermine a nation's competitive position on the world market.

As Leo Panitch points out in his seminal essay on the development of corporatism in liberal democracies, one of the by-products of the commitment to full employment in postwar Europe was a strengthening of the bargaining position of trade unions. The latter "were in a much stronger position than heretofore to raise money wages. If these increases were passed on in price increases...this had the effect, given the growth rate of productivity, of affecting a country's foreign competitiveness. If the increases were not passed on in an inflationary spiral...the motor force of the capitalist economy--profits--tended to be squeezed."²⁵

Given this situation, and in light of a country's always precarious position on the world market, some governments have endeavoured to fashion a *modus vivendi*, or a "new social contract" with the organized producer groups in society--business and labour. In exchange for giving the latter representation on economic planning boards or other policy-making bodies, the government expects a commitment to moderation in the formulation of wage demands and the determination of prices. Some form of voluntary incomes

policy, national economic planning councils, and tripartite consensus-building mechanisms are therefore the key components of a liberal corporatist institutional configuration.

Four characteristics of this state-interest group collaboration in policy formation merit particular attention. First, liberal corporatism does not merely involve greater "consultation and cooperation of government with organized interest groups which is...common to all constitutional democracies with a highly developed capitalist economy. The distinguishing trait of liberal corporatism is a high degree of collaboration among these groups themselves in the shaping of economic policy."²⁶ The role played by the state in this process of bargaining and negotiation may range from that of highly active and visible participant to one of passive guide remaining in the background. In the latter case, the state might appear simply to ratify policy approaches already arrived at by the interest associations themselves. Corporatism will be institutionalized to varying extents in different countries depending on the precise nature of the economic difficulties facing the country in question, its party system, the strength of the labour movement, the importance of social democracy and ideologies of "social partnership," and a number of other factors which will be fully examined later in this chapter. In Austria, for example, a semi-public Joint Commission on Prices and Wages, composed of an equal number of representatives from the trade union federations and the employers' associations, and chaired by the Federal Chancellor or Minister of the Interior, vets the wage claims of individual unions and the pricing policies of individual enterprises. Although it does not have legal powers to compel agreement

to its decisions, it can "recommend sanctions to the Ministry of the Interior..."²⁷ In the Netherlands, the Federation of Labour, a private organization similar in structure to the Austrian Joint Commission, oversees wage agreements and issues recommendations to the government "on national economic policy, social security, wage policy, and industrial relations."²⁸ And in West Germany, corporatist institutions such as the Konzertierte Aktion (KA) fulfil the functions of educator of public opinion, propagandist for government economic policy, and information gatherer for the trade unions and employers' associations. Lehmbruch affirms that the Konzertierte Aktion

was conceived as a 'discussion round' with an educative function, intended to provide the organized interests with an understanding of macro-economic interdependencies. On the basis of 'guidance data' provided by the government, the actors should be able to calculate the consequences of their activities and thus be induced to accordingly change their behaviour in the sense of conformity with 'economic reason'.²⁹

The West German experience with the Konzertierte Aktion is of particular relevance to this paper, for the KA, both in its purpose and in its operation, presents a number of analogies to the policy of concerted action somewhat haltingly set in motion by the Parti Québécois since 1976.

Secondly, liberal corporatist institutions involve primarily the peak associations of labour and business, not simply any interest groups. It is the relationships between, on the one hand, trade unions and employers' associations and, on the other hand, between these interest groups and the state, which characterize liberal corporatism. Since the overriding

objective of liberal corporatism is to ensure industrial peace by eliminating conflicts over the distribution of income in society, it is therefore the functional interest groups that constitute the focus of corporatist strategies:

...corporatism is specific to those groups which are class based. Other groups not founded on the social division of labour, or at least related to it only indirectly and through several mediations, such as issue-oriented groups, ideological groups, groups based on regional, sexual, or generational bases, or groups based exclusively on the sphere of distribution such as consumers and tax-payers, will not be found to be among the principal constituent units of corporatist structures.³⁰

In order to promote their particular concerns, therefore, such pressure groups as Greenpeace, anti-nuclear groups, WARP (Women Against Rising Prices), or the Consumers Association of Canada will intervene in the political process at the level of Parliament or the civil service; they will interact one-on-one with the state in its various guises. "Moreover, though certain interest associations-- agricultural or consumer groups for example--might be included in corporatist schemes, their role will be restricted to that of observer or secondary participant they will not have a decisive influence."³¹

The third noteworthy aspect of liberal corporatism resides in the element of state control over the interest associations inherent in this institutional form. By collaborating voluntarily with the state in framing certain elements of economic policy, the peak associations of business and labour become responsible for the implementation of these policies.

The trade union federations and the employers' associations can then be expected to enforce compliance with the centrally determined objectives among individual unions and firms. Rehegning on any of these decisions would bring considerable adverse public opinion to bear against the culprit; the interest association guilty of such behaviour would be accused of acting irresponsibly, of placing its sectional interests above those of the nation, or of holding the nation up to ransom. It is in this sense, then, that liberal corporatism presupposes "the state's reciprocal influence on interest groups and their consequent employment as agencies of mobilization and social control for the state vis-à-vis their members."³²

Finally, although liberal corporatism does involve the devolution of some of parliament's authority over economic matters, particularly as regards incomes, pricing, manpower, and investment policies, to corporatist institutions not directly accountable to the public, it does not imply the eclipse of parliamentary democracy. Parliament and traditional modes of interest representation (interest group lobbying, pressure group politics) retain very important functions in those countries which today can be characterized as liberal corporatist. As Lehmbruch has perceptively noted,

the relationships of corporatism and party government, in highly developed capitalist countries with liberal constitutional governments, tend to develop toward a structural differentiation into subsystems which permits them to absorb higher problem loads. Instead of being rivals, both subsystems are interconnected by a sort of symbiosis which may take varying forms. This relationship, however, may not be a stable one.³³

The unsuitability of parliament as a consensus-building mechanism of the type required by the advanced capitalist economy underlies this "structural differentiation into subsystems." Government's dual role as disinterested arbiter of the nation's interest and ideologically committed political party, combined with the decidedly non-expert cast of parliament, necessitates some extra-parliamentary forum for the discussion of such crucial national issues as voluntary wage restraint, price controls, manpower and investment policies, etc. These questions must be debated in a dispassionate manner by "experts," and thus shielded from the vagaries of electoral politics. Lehmbruch again points out that a majority party wishing to engage in consensus-building activities would have to enter into bargaining that "might restrict its freedom to choose competitive electoral strategies. Therefore, it may be in the interest of political parties to shift responsibility for matters such as business-cycle policies to a 'corporatist' subsystem formed by organized interests and the administration."³⁴

The Bias of Liberal Corporatism;
The Requisites of a Stable Corporatism

It might be supposed that institutionalized consultation and functional representation in policy-making are the means by which the state bends refractory private interests to the requirements of the common good. This, not surprisingly, is the image of liberal corporatism most cherished by its proponents. The close collaboration of society's "partners," it is argued, under the watchful eye of an officially neutral state, constitutes the best

guarantee of the good of the nation as a whole. Although conflicts among the various interests in society are bound to exist, the argument continues, they will take place within acceptable--and manageable--bounds, without causing irreparable harm to the nation's economy or social fabric.

A corollary of the foregoing view is the notion that the state, business, and labour are equal partners in any corporatist arrangement. The voluntary character of the "social contract," the fact that each participant is nominally free to enter into or leave any corporatist set-up, makes it appear as though this entente is an exchange between equals. Moreover, liberal corporatism is often championed by social democratic and self-styled progressive governments and is therefore presented as an integral component of the planned economy. According to this view, trade union restraint in formulating wage claims is more than compensated for by the redistribution of wealth in favour of the working class effected by the social democrats and their "humanization" of the capitalist economy, rendering it more responsive to the requirements of social justice and equality.

A neutral state standing above the clash of particular interests and reconciling the latter with the "national interest;" a partnership among equals--government, business, and labour; a progressive allure, positing the necessary relationship between the new corporatism and economic planning, social justice, and equality: these are facets of the "official" ideology of liberal corporatism used by assorted social democratic, left-leaning, and liberal reformist governments in an attempt to secure trade

union acquiescence in policies of wage restraint. But, as a number of political scientists have emphasized, the official ideology of corporatism obscures the essential bias of this structure. First, the much-vaunted social reforming potential of liberal corporatism and economic planning has, in practice, proved to be illusory. Given that one of the fundamental characteristics of liberal corporatism is the acceptance of the cornerstones of the capitalist economy--the profit motive, the protection of private property, and the existing structure of authority in industry--a government is severely constrained in its efforts to redistribute wealth in society. Overly zealous attempts at reform can undermine "business confidence," lead to investment strikes, and generally unhinge the economy. Historically, then, voluntary wage and price moderation in the interest of a planned and equitable economy tends to blur gradually into mere wage restraint. In Britain, for example,

...policy moved quickly from a concern with evening up the distribution of earned income, viewed as a benefit to be shared more equally, to an emphasis on wage restraint, concerned basically with relating income increases to productivity gains...More attention was given to controlling incomes than prices, justified by the requirements of a simple market logic in the priority task of sustaining industrial investment. Moreover, while prices and incomes strategy was seen originally as inseparable from national planning, it soon became a dominant preoccupation in its own right, used as a means of restoring order in a wage-decision system which creates wider problems of economic disequilibrium as a result...of its 'high exposure to group conflict'.³⁵

Notwithstanding the official ideology of liberal corporatism, the state in any such arrangement is not an impartial arbiter of the common good; nor are the organizations of labour and business "equal" partners. There is a more or less tacit alliance between the representatives of government and those of management: it is management's expertise and information that the state seeks, not those of organized labour. Union cooperation in consensus-building mechanisms is sought primarily to give credence to the myth of partnership and because Union cooperation is important, perhaps crucial, for success in incomes and manpower policies. Most importantly, union participation may be expected to widen the circle of those initiated into the rationality of which planning is the medium."³⁶

In short, labour's accession to equality in liberal corporatism is contingent upon its prior acceptance of the "language" of modern management. This language (the planning "rationality" alluded to by Watson) implies that labour and management will acknowledge a hierarchy of problems confronting the modern economy; similarly, the range of acceptable--and feasible--solutions to these problems will be defined in advance. Only those approaches which are "system-maintaining" will be considered; solutions envisaging substantive socio-political change will be disqualified from the outset.³⁷ In his excellent survey of planning practice in contemporary France, Italy, and the U.K., Watson has perceptively rendered the bias inherent in policies of concerted action and consensus-building:

Another aspect of consensus-building...has been its biased nature. Notwithstanding the participation of a variety of interests, an established hierarchy has existed in the effectiveness of their contributions. A *de facto* convergence between planners, officials and industrial management has dominated the process...the key to planning's effectiveness is seen to lie in speaking the same language as that of modern, large-scale management, given a prior acceptance by the political authorities of the prevailing authority structure in industry. The major industrial interests have thus little need to resort to pressure tactics on any scale. The terms of the discussion are inherently biased to serve their principal concerns, while pushing the unions and social interests, whose concerns are made to appear tangential if not hostile to the business of planning, into a reactive, defensive posture.³⁸

Liberal corporatism is by no means currently the dominant pattern of state-producer group relations in the Western democracies, nor has it been at any time in the postwar period. It is a strategy for maintaining profitability, growth, and economic efficiency in the advanced capitalist economy which recommends itself to government, employers, and trade unions only in certain specific situations. If the organizational strength of labour is accepted, that is, if legal limitations on the right of workers to organize are not contemplated by the state; if manifestly coercive measures such as statutory wage and price freezes and the prohibition of strikes are not adopted; if high levels of unemployment are not relied on to "discipline" the work force: in such a situation, liberal corporatism might be on the political agenda. However, employers as a group are often wary of entering into a "new social contract," for such an arrangement opens up to the trade unions a number of concerns which traditionally have been the unchallenged preserve of management--the mere necessity of divulging to the trade unions information on costs, pricing of goods, and

investment is bound to raise management's hackles. As Crouch points out, "capitalist interests within liberal societies enter corporatist arrangements with great reluctance--they are corporatists *malgré eux*. They may be driven to corporatist strategies because these offer the only hope of coming to terms with a militant labour movement..."³⁹

Even if a liberal corporatist strategy is agreed upon by government, employers, and trade unions, there is no guarantee of either its success or its stability, for this type of political structure is subject to a number of tensions which tend to limit its effectiveness as a solution to the structural difficulties of the advanced capitalist system. A number of conditions would seemingly have to be met if tripartite consensus-building and concerted action are to be even moderately successful:

- i) The labour movement (social democratic parties which are structurally linked to the trade unions) must occupy a prominent position within the party system of the country in question, that is, it must have gained access to the governmental and administrative decision-making centres. Historically, this has occurred in those countries where the social democratic party has either formed a majority government (e.g. Sweden) or participated in a ruling coalition (e.g. Austria, West Germany, the Netherlands). Given the bias inherent in liberal corporatist structures, what could possibly induce the trade unions to participate in such an arrangement? Obviously, labour organizations must be granted certain minimal concessions in exchange for their cooperation in maintaining social peace and combatting inflation; promises of participation in economic planning, redistribution of wealth, amelioration of working conditions, etc. are more likely to be believed if they issue from a social democratic government.⁴⁰

- ii) Ideologies stressing "social partnership" must be an important element in the country's political culture. The greater portion of government leaders, trade unionists, and employers must subscribe to the notion that there exists within capitalist society a community of interests, and that this common ground--sometimes referred to as an intrinsic interdependence--can be revealed to labour and capital alike, usually through the agency of an elite group of technocrats. In those countries where the trade unions are allied to a powerful Communist Party and adopt an uncompromising "class conflict" stance, the growth of liberal corporatism will be greatly impeded. This has been the case in postwar France and Italy, for example, in spite of the existence of a corporatist institutional framework in the former--a fairly extensive system of indicative planning and *commissions de modernisation* in which labour, management, and civil servants collaborate in certain areas of economic planning. Here again, social democracy, with its explicit rejection of class conflict as the "dynamic of social change,"⁴¹ plays an important role in facilitating the development of liberal corporatism.
- iii) If liberal corporatism, especially programmes of voluntary wage restraint, is to be successful, there must be strong, highly centralized peak associations of business and labour which can effectively "speak" for their members as well as enforce compliance to the guidelines among individual firms and unions. The trade unions must therefore be characterized by a high degree of centralization (i.e. the leaders of the large unions must have considerable influence over the rank and file) and of concentration (i.e. the union federation must exercise considerable control over its affiliates).⁴² As well, the existence of industrial unionism, which cuts across craft lines and includes all categories of workers in an industry, and a highly centralized system of collective bargaining in which unions and employers are able to negotiate all-inclusive agreements that have an industry- or economy-wide application, would increase the

likelihood of success of tripartism.⁴⁵ The presence of a highly centralized, non-fragmented employers' association would in like manner add to the effectiveness of liberal corporatism, though these organizations need not be centralized and concentrated to the same degree as the union federations, since it is primarily the labour force that this strategy is designed to discipline, not the individual firm.⁴⁴

- iv) Liberal corporatism is most likely to function successfully in those countries which are unitary states "with strong central powers" and whose economies are "comparatively self-sufficient." Excessive dependence on foreign capital or resources, penetration by multinational corporations, and a weak central government tend to preclude the possibility of planning the economy to the degree required for a stable liberal corporatism.⁴⁵
- v) The existence of a severe economic downturn in the country in question would aid in the institutionalization of liberal corporatism by increasing labour's and business's willingness to curtail their own narrow demands for the good of the nation.

The principal factor underlying the instability of liberal corporatism is the contradictory position in which it places the trade union leadership (the union federations). Caught between their *raison d'être*, on the one hand--i.e. the representation and articulation of the demands and concerns of the unionized workers--and the exigencies of the social compact, on the other--i.e. restraint in the matter of wage claims--the leadership often becomes isolated from the union base. In such a situation, the rank and file may come to view their own representatives as constituting part of the machinery of exploitation and subordination, particularly when wage

restraint is not offset by prices-and profits controls. This can lead to wage drift (in those countries where some shop-level bargaining exists in conjunction with centrally determined guidelines), the collapse of the "social contract," and the resurgence of industrial strife in the form of work stoppages, wildcat strikes, etc. (this was the case in the Netherlands in the late 50's and early 60's, and in Sweden in the early 70's).⁴⁶ In order to regain its legitimacy in the eyes of the rank and file and thus shore up a faltering liberal corporatist arrangement, the trade union leadership may feel compelled to demand a higher price for labour's continued cooperation in the maintenance of social peace--a movement toward profit-sharing, participation in investment planning, and even industrial democracy or co-determination.⁴⁷ Often, the breakdown of liberal corporatism (caused by government's unwillingness or inability to grant greater concessions to labour) will elicit a coercive response on the part of government, whether in the form of statutory incomes policy, the application of "restrictions directly on the unions themselves--by strengthening them vis-à-vis their membership and by limiting the right to strike,"⁴⁸ or the alteration of the ground rules of collective bargaining through the codification of the unions' duties to the nation which must be incorporated into negotiations over the wage contract.

The Argument: An Overview

In the ensuing chapters of this thesis, I shall be looking at the tentative steps taken by the Parti Québécois government since 1976 to integrate the organized producer groups into the decision-making structures of the provincial economy. My analysis will attempt to provide answers to a number of important questions, among them: To what extent are the programs of "concerted action" pursued by the PQ a manifestation of liberal corporatism, and why? What is the likelihood of success of the PQ project in light of the not insignificant structural impediments to the growth of liberal corporatism in Québec? Among these obstacles, the most notable are the attitude of the trade union leadership towards tripartite consultation and consensus-building; the peculiarities of trade union organization in Québec; and the nature of collective bargaining in the province. Prior to considering the development of liberal corporatist structures in Québec, however, I shall turn, in chapter two, to an examination of the ideological factors which have predisposed the Parti Québécois to adopt corporatist strategies of economic development. Particular attention will be paid to the technocratic and social democratic elements in the party ideology, as well as to the PQ's conception of the role and nature of the state in modern society, its view of class, and the proper place of unions in society.

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25. Panitch, "Development of Corporatism," p.76.
26. Lehmbruch, "Liberal Corporatism and Party Government," pp.94-95.
27. Jack Barbash, Trade Unions and National Economic Policy, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1972), p.50; cf. Lehmbruch, "Liberal Corporatism and Party Government," pp.102-103.
28. Barbash, Trade Unions, pp.67-69.
29. Gerhard Lehmbruch, "Corporatism, Labour and Public Policy," paper submitted to Symposium on Social Policies in Comparative Perspective, 9th World Congress of Sociology, Uppsala, 14-19 August 1978, p.9.
30. Panitch, "Recent Theorizations," p.176.
31. Lehmbruch, "Liberal Corporatism and Party Government," p.96.
32. Panitch, "Development of Corporatism," p.66.
33. Lehmbruch, "Liberal Corporatism and Party Government," p.93; cf. Panitch, "Recent Theorizations," p.173; "The corporatist political structure is partial in the sense that it does not displace parliamentary representation, bureaucratic administration, and interest group lobbying, but exists alongside them and is in many ways interwoven with them."

34. *Ibid.*, p.100; cf. Birgitta Nedelmann and Kurt Meier, "Theories of Contemporary Corporatism: Static or Dynamic?" Comparative Political Studies 10:1 (April 1977), pp.51-53.
35. Michael Watson, "A Comparative Evaluation of Planning Practice in the Liberal Democratic State," in J. Hayward and M. Watson, (eds.) Planning, Politics and Public Policy, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p.449.
36. *Ibid.*, p.469.
37. *Ibid.*, pp.458-459.
38. *Ibid.*, pp.468, 470.
39. Crouch, "State, Capital and Liberal Democracy," p.24.
40. Panitch, "Development of Corporatism," p.78; cf. Lehmbruch, "Liberal Corporatism and Party Government," p.111.
41. Panitch, "Development of Corporatism," p.72. Regarding the French case, see Lehmbruch, "Liberal Corporatism and Party Government," p.111 and Shonfield, Modern Capitalism, pp.231-232.
42. Lehmbruch, "Liberal Corporatism and Party Government," p.110.
43. Finn, "Tripartite Consultation," p.68.
44. Panitch, "Corporatism in Canada," pp.79-80.
45. Economic Council of Canada, Third Annual Review, "Prices, Productivity and Employment," (Ottawa, 1966), p.159.
46. Panitch, "Development of Corporatism," pp.81-84.
47. Lehmbruch, "Liberal Corporatism and Party Government," p.119.
48. Leo Panitch, Social Democracy and Industrial Militancy: the Labour Party, the Trade Unions and Incomes Policy, 1945-1974, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p.164.

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CHAPTER TWO
THE PARTI QUEBECOIS AND THE
ROOTS OF LIBERAL CORPORATISM IN QUEBEC

Classical Corporatist Ideology in Quebec

Quebec in the late 1930's and early 1940's was the one region in North America where corporatist doctrines found a receptive audience and gained a degree of philosophical respectability.¹ During this period, a host of French Canadian thinkers, using such forums as the influential journal, L'Action national, the Semaines sociales, and the Ecole sociale populaire,² disseminated the teachings of Popes Leo XIII and Pius XI and advocated a form of corporative social organization as the solution to the economic depression and social chaos spawned by *laissez-faire* capitalism. Much like their 19th century European predecessors, Québec's Social Catholics conceived of corporatism as a "middle road" between socialism and liberalism which would eradicate class conflict and usher in a moral social order. Moreover, the French Canadian proponents of corporatism believed that the attitudes of society's partners could be changed, the economy reformed, and social progress restored, all without succumbing to the authoritarian experiments of fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. Like all conservative corporatists, however, the French Canadian exponents of this philosophy were characteristically vague on the question of precisely how this social harmony could be achieved.³

The extent to which corporatism held sway in the political and philosophical debates in Quebec during the immediate prewar period can be gauged from the fact that the electoral program of the Union Nationale in 1935 was, in large part, a corporatist manifesto. Among the document's more radical proposals was the provision for the abolition of Quebec's upper house, the Legislative Council, and its replacement by an economic council. The latter would group together delegates from the various trade unions, professional organizations, and employers' associations in the province. This proposed second chamber, clearly modelled after the corporatist scheme of representation outlined by Pius XI in his encyclical, Quadragesimo Anno, (1931), was to advise the Legislative Assembly on all economic matters.⁴

Although corporatism figured prominently in the ideological controversies in Quebec during the 30's and 40's, it is doubtful whether this idea was ever embodied in that province's institutions or actually pursued in the policies of any of the provincial governments of that time. This is so in spite of the fact that at least one Canadian political scientist has mistakenly argued that the Duplessis régime was a "reflection" of the corporatist doctrine espoused by certain sections of the traditional Québécois elite (clergy, Catholic intellectuals).⁵ Once in power, (1936-1939, 1944-1959), Duplessis made certain that the obviously corporatist proposals in the UN's program were simply discarded; the economic council, for example, never took form. Nor was "le chef's" government in any way interested in integrating the organized producer groups into the decision-

making structures of the economy; its predominant concern was rather the cultivation of a healthy "business climate" in Quebec in order to attract as much foreign capital as possible. Duplessis' "open door" approach to economic development rested to a considerable degree on the use of state legislation to prevent or obstruct the organization of workers and the state's coercive powers to limit the effectiveness of strikes and walkouts. Far from being consulted by their economic "partners," the trade unions were frequently forced to cope with the extremely reactionary anti-union legislation enacted by the U.N. government, the general purpose of which was to ensure a plentiful supply of cheap and docile labour for the foreign developers.⁶

An exhaustive study of corporative organization in Quebec, undertaken by Pierre Harvey in 1953-54, underscores the singular failure of corporatist ideology to be translated into practice. According to Harvey, no organization in Québec could be designated a true corporation in the sense that the term had been used by, for example, the editors of L'Action nationale. Although certain professional associations (those of lawyers, notaries, doctors and dentists, for instance) were to some extent self-regulating, they lacked one essential characteristic required by corporatist theory: they did not extend across class boundaries. Whereas the corporations advocated in theory would have grouped together the delegates of both Capital and Labour, in Quebec, "...selon l'expression souvent utilisée (et un peu paradoxale), toutes nos corporations sont des corporations de <patron>."⁷ As for the workers' associations in Quebec, Catholic trade

unions such as the Confédération des travailleurs catholiques du Canada (C.T.C.C.), although inspired by the teachings of Leo XIII, did not embody corporatist principles of organization. It is true that the philosophy which informed Catholic trade unionism was essentially a corporatist one, stressing the mutual rights and obligations of society's hierarchically ordered classes, collaboration between Labour and Capital, and social harmony. In practice, this philosophy led to a downplaying of the strike as a tool for promoting workers' interests, and to a respect for the "rights" of capital. The constitutions of many Catholic trade unions called for the creation of joint councils of workers and employers in order to further the "economic partnership," but, due largely to the lack of interest shown by the employers for such schemes, institutionalized class collaboration failed to take root in Quebec.⁸

It is by no means my intention in this chapter to establish a causal link between the corporatist tendencies of the present Parti Québécois government and the classical version of corporatist theory adumbrated above, still less to argue that corporatism in some way forms an essential part of a peculiarly Québécois *weltanschauung*. The corporatist discourse that can be distilled from a number of documents and policy proposals of the PQ government is firmly rooted in the philosophical tradition of liberalism and shares only certain broad characteristics with the romantic, conservative variants of corporatist ideology that proliferated in Quebec during the 1930's. Both the Parti Québécois and the Catholic intellectuals of L'Action nationale can be considered supporters of a corporatist vision

of society in the same sense that Mackenzie King and Pius XI can be subsumed under this category. Both the PQ and L'Action nationale aim at the rapprochement of labour and capital within capitalist society; both emphasize class collaboration and harmony (not class conflict or competition) and both decry the economic anarchy engendered by *laissez-faire* capitalism. However, the contributors to L'Action nationale cast their philosophical gaze backwards, to the moral economy of the Middle Ages, and evoked the image of the organic, hierarchical society based on craft and agriculture, whereas the péquiste advocates of a corporatist restructuring of the national economy couch their argument in rationalistic and technocratic terms. According to this latter line of reasoning, a growth-oriented and efficient economy must be founded on the concerted action of society's partners, and concerted action implies the institutionalized representation of the organized producer groups in economic policy-making. Briefly then, L'Action nationale and its epigones were not at all comfortable with the idea of a highly industrialized, urban, technologically advanced Quebec, while this constitutes the very essence of the PQ project.⁹

The purpose of the present chapter will be to attempt to locate the antecedents of the PQ government's liberal corporatism in terms of the party's overall ideological orientation. I shall argue that this corporatism is in part a strategy adopted by a government desirous of maintaining industrial peace, coping with a militant labour movement, and consolidating as broad a coalition of Québécois as possible for the referendum on sovereignty-association. At the same time, a number of aspects of péquiste

ideology can be considered to have facilitated the government's adoption of corporatist strategies of economic development: a profoundly technocratic and statist view of society and economic progress, a desire to simultaneously rationalize and reform the capitalist economic order, and a self-styled "favourable bias" towards the working class. It must be remembered, however, that the PQ is far from being a homogeneous political party: since its creation in 1968 it has been divided by a number of rancorous ideological and structural conflicts. Before examining the roots of liberal corporatism in péquiste ideology, therefore, I shall briefly describe the origins of the PQ and indicate the source and extent of its internal cleavages.

The Parti Québécois: Its Origins and Internal Cleavages

The provincial election of 1960 is generally considered to have been a watershed moment in Quebec's social history, for the victory of Jean Lesage's Liberal Party symbolizes, to a certain extent, Quebec's belated entry into the modern era. Although previous tremors, such as the Asbestos strike in 1949, had been felt, indicating that Quebec was indeed a modern society beset by all the problems inherent in industrial civilization, the province remained, at the ideological level at least, static and backward-looking. La survivance--the jealous defence of the French Canadian language and culture, the unwavering commitment to the values of Roman Catholicism, the glorification of the rural way of life, and the conviction that French Canada had a spiritual mission in North America--was the central ideological

leitmotiv in Quebec until the 1950's.¹⁰ During the course of the "Quiet Revolution" initiated by Lesage's government, however, a new nationalism¹¹ gained ascendancy in the province. Unlike the traditional ideology of *survivance*, the nationalism of the 60's looked resolutely to the future, extolling the virtues and potentialities of industrialization, science, and technology, and making obeisance to the modern gods of efficiency, reason, and progress. This new nationalism exhibited three principal characteristics. First, it looked to the Quebec state as the primary political actor in Quebec, the instrument of the collective will of all Québécois. The exponents of the new nationalism therefore demanded an active role for the state in planning the economy, ensuring equality of opportunity, and, if necessary, redistributing income. This contrasted sharply with the anti-statist bias of the traditional nationalists in Quebec. Secondly, the demand for an independent, or autonomous, Quebec gained prominence at this time; previously, the traditional nationalists had been willing to keep the federal political structure in place. Lastly, the new nationalists were much more radical in their demands for the French language in Quebec than their predecessors; they envisioned a unilingual French state, and often denied the existence of any acquired linguistic rights of the anglophone minority.¹²

The various spokesmen of the new nationalism were by no means agreed, however, on the means of bringing Quebec fully into the modern age, nor were they certain of the contours of the future ideal Quebec state. Some groups, inspired by the decolonization movements in Africa and Asia,

adopted a radical socialist vocabulary and preached the revolutionary path to national liberation. Such was the orientation of the Front de Libération du Québec (F.L.Q., founded 1963) and the Armée de Libération du Québec (A.L.Q., founded 1964). Others, less audacious ideologically, or more politically astute, depending on one's point of view, were staunchly committed to the rules of electoral politics and espoused a moderate reformist liberalism or social democracy, as in the case of René Lévesque's Mouvement souveraineté-association (M.S.A., founded 1967).¹³

A popular and quite compelling account of the origins of this new nationalism has focussed on the changing class structure in Quebec at the time of the "Quiet Revolution." According to this view, the new nationalism was largely a middle-class phenomenon, drawing its core of committed supporters and its most vociferous advocates from the intelligentsia and the employees of the burgeoning public bureaucracy. The members of this nascent bureaucratic middle class--young, well-educated and francophone--felt that their occupational mobility, their career aspirations, were blocked by the political and economic structures associated with the Canadian federal system. Moreover, they considered the benefits of the modernization of the Quebec economy to be accruing solely or primarily to the anglophone economic elite in the province (and in the rest of Canada and the United States). Consequently, they called for the establishment of a strong, interventionist state in Quebec which would francize the economy and ameliorate the francophone's position within it. Thus, the exponents of the new nationalism were, for the most

part, concerned with altering the distribution of wealth as between ethnic groups, and only secondarily, if at all, with radically transforming the class relations inherent in capitalist society.

This conceptualization of Québécois nationalism in the 1960's, though it has great merit, suffers from an overly mechanistic and economistic view of the genesis of nationalist sentiment. Charles Taylor, one of the major proponents of this bureaucratic middle class thesis, at the same time cautioned against too rationalist and utilitarian an interpretation of Quebec nationalism. According to Taylor, the social ferment engendered by the Quiet Revolution was not merely a function of the agitation for more and better jobs by a newly important francophone elite, it was also an outgrowth of an identity crisis afflicting this elite. In Taylor's view, the new Québécois middle class accepted the North American values of "economic achievement, social progress and democratic mores...Insofar as they identify themselves as French Canadians, they are nagged by a sense of collective inferiority in those fields which they prize."¹⁴

It was from this new social matrix that the Parti Québécois emerged. At the PQ's founding congress, held in Quebec City October 11-14, 1968, René Lévesque's M.S.A. and Gilles Grégoire's Ralliement national (R.N., founded 1966) joined forces in order to promote Quebec's political sovereignty within a Canadian common market. Shortly after the creation of the PQ, the independentist and social democratic Rassemblement pour l'Indépendance nationale (R.I.N., founded as a political movement in 1960, transformed into a political party in 1963), led by Pierre Bourgault,

disbanded; many of the former "*ministes*" joined the new party as individuals. It would appear that the R.N., a conservative separatist party harking back to the Catholic, corporatist nationalism of the 1930's, exerted minimal influence on the PQ's ideological orientation, in spite of its status as one of the charter members of the new party. As for the R.I.N., René Lévesque, the PQ's president, had always had a profound distaste for its members' "irresponsible" political practices, in particular their penchant for taking to the streets and participating in sometimes violent demonstrations. Lévesque would therefore have preferred that the R.I.N. continue to function, either as a political party or a pressure group, after the formation of the PQ; this would have served to enhance the PQ's image as a responsible, moderate, and technically competent spokesman of "*indépendantisme*"¹⁵ As it was, the individual "*ministes*" militating within the PQ, along with the newer generation péquistes, those who had had no prior membership in a political party, succeeded in radicalizing the party's position on two important issues: the question of the linguistic rights of the anglophone minority in Quebec (they would be severely circumscribed) and the proposed economic association with Canada after independence (independence replaced sovereignty-association as the party's catchword). The dominant group within the PQ in 1968, however, was the group of former Liberals associated with René Lévesque. This latter group's overriding concern with economic efficiency and rationality has since come into frequent conflict with the desire of the former "*ministes*" and many of the newer generation péquistes to create a non-exploitive economy and participatory democracy in Quebec.¹⁶

The Parti Québécois, therefore, can be conceived of as a somewhat fragile coalition of socialists, social democrats, reform-minded liberals, créditistes and ex-Union Nationale members, each group having its particular vision of the good society and its own conception of the proper role and structure of the political party in contemporary society. As one political scientist has suggested, it is primarily nationalism, in the sense of a common commitment to some form of political independence for Quebec, and to a lesser extent René Lévesque's "charismatic" personality, which bind together the dissimilar and at times fractious tendencies that constitute the PQ.¹⁷ As long as the national question remains unresolved, the various factions within the PQ can be expected to subordinate their differences on social and economic issues and work together towards the primary objective of securing Quebec's independence (or sovereignty).

Yet, on a number of occasions--during the party's biennial congresses, or over the question of whether to actively support striking workers, for example--Lévesque's "vision" has been challenged, and the ideological conflict within the PQ has erupted in all its virulence. One such incident was the "La Presse Affair" of October 1971, in which the PQ's executive council voted six to five not to participate in a solidarity rally for the striking La Presse newspaper workers. This decision was seemingly reached out of a fear that the rally would degenerate into violence; PQ involvement in such an affair would possibly have harmed the responsible and moderate image the party was attempting to cultivate among the middle-class voters of the province. Robert Burns, long associated

with the party's left wing, denounced the executive's timorousness, and dismissed the party as a slightly more progressive wing of the provincial liberals. According to Burns, the PQ ought to associate itself more clearly and unequivocally with the struggles of the working class and stop tailoring its program in a vain effort to attract those voters repelled by the more adventurous aspects of the independence movement.¹⁸

The "La Presse Affair" was more than simply a disagreement over electoral tactics; it highlighted a fundamental ideological conflict that has bedevilled the PQ since its creation in 1968--the tension between "technocrats" and "participationists," or, in alternative terms, between reformist liberals and social democrats. A simple dichotomy of views such as the one presented here no doubt fails to do justice to the complexity of a political formation such as the PQ. Nevertheless, I would argue, along with a number of political scientists, that the nature and importance of the ideological, tactical, and policy disputes that have occurred within the PQ since 1968 can best be elucidated by referring to this conceptual framework.¹⁹

Put simply, the technocrats and the participationists in the PQ are separated by their differing conceptions of the role the state ought to play in an independent Quebec, the extent to which the capitalist economic system should be reformed (or whether it should be overthrown) and the relationships that should prevail between political party and social class. The technocratic viewpoint is preponderant in the party hierarchy (i.e. Cabinet, since 1976) and is represented by ex-Liberals

associated with Lévesque (Jean-Roch Boivin, Lévesque's principal aide, for instance), former high-ranking civil servants such as Claude Morin, and other party notables like Jacques Parizeau, Bernard Landry, and (prior to his resignation from the party on September 22, 1979) Rodrigue Tremblay. These technocrats emphasize the need to use the Quebec state to create a planned, efficient, growth-oriented economy. Political sovereignty is seen to be the solution to the Quebec question inasmuch as it would permit the repatriation of the economy's major "*centres de décisions*";²⁰ eliminate the wasteful duplication of services which the federal political system entails, and ensure greater participation on the part of francophones in the upper echelons of the economy. The state is, in this view, a sort of "friendly demiurge"²¹; the elite corps of experts working in the various state apparatuses are to coordinate economic activity, set national economic priorities, and correct market anomalies:

L'Etat est le grand moteur des économies contemporaines. Ses responsabilités immenses, la puissance des leviers dont il dispose, les impôts qu'il perçoit...et surtout son droit de légiférer font de lui à la fois l'animateur indispensable et le coordonnateur suprême du développement économique.²²

The shibboleths of the technocratic faction in the PQ, then, are state planning, rationalization of the economy (by eliminating antiquated or slow-growth industries and facilitating the concentration of economic power in the high-productivity, high-technology sectors of the economy), and administrative efficiency.

Implicit in this technocratic ideology is the belief that economic growth is the keystone of cultural and social progress:

...il ne fut jamais aussi évident qu'entre la science et la technique d'une part, la culture de l'autre, il n'y a pas opposition mais complémentarité essentielle. Ce sont en effet le progrès technologique et l'expansion économique qui, en libérant le travailleur, font de la culture un bien également partagé...²³

as well as the precondition of an equitable distribution of income in society:

Il faut faire admettre que nous sommes responsables de la rentabilité collective. Cette rentabilité est la seule façon d'améliorer la viabilité de l'ensemble de la société. Il faut avoir un gâteau qui s'accroît pour mieux le partager.²⁴

Ensure economic and technological progress, this argument seems to be, and other social and cultural problems, particularly those connected with an unequal distribution of goods in society, will take care of themselves.

A corollary of this faith in the possibilities of economic progress is the unwavering conviction that change must be incremental; why risk the certain benefits of a planned and efficient economic system for the dubious outcome of a revolution? Indeed, the uncompromising, doctrinaire socialists who preach the ultimate revolution endanger freedom and civilized life, according to this view. There can be no shortcuts, the technocrats argue; Quebec's political sovereignty must first be achieved, and only then will society evolve "vers un ordre nouveau qui subordonne les objectifs économiques aux objectifs humains et sociaux. Mais on ne cherche pas à sauter les étapes."²⁵

The final noteworthy aspect of this technocratic ideology is its avoidance of any reference to social class. There are divergent interests in any democratic society, the technocrats agree, but these differences are ultimately reconcilable. It is the state's role to draw out the points of convergence which unite the various groups in society and thereby cultivate the consensus which is at the root of all social progress. This tendency within the PQ, therefore, denies the validity of the notion that class conflict is the motor element of social change: dialogue among a variety of interests must always take precedence over the politics of confrontation.²⁶ The technocrats also rigorously eschew any conception of class politics; in particular, they view the PQ not as the instrument of any one class in society, but as the representative of all interests:

...nous [le PQ] avons cet avantage inouï que nous ne devons rien aux organisations syndicales. Cet avantage, il faut le maintenir. Nous avons les mains parfaitement libres à leur égard. Nous ne leur avons rien demandé pendant les dix années de travail qui ont été nécessaires pour bâtir ce parti, le ramifier, l'enraciner, et l'amener au pouvoir... Organiquement, nous n'avons aucun lien, ce qui fait que nous pouvons être le gouvernement de tous, sans avoir de ficelles dans le dos.²⁷

Thus, though the PQ ought to promote and defend the claims of Quebec's working class (since the traditional parties in the province, beholden to big business, will not) and maintain a "favourable prejudice"²⁸ towards the workers, structurally, it must keep its distance from the trade union organizations.

The centralization of economic and decision-making power; the rationalization of industry and public administration; faith in the powers of science and technology; a belief in progress: these are the dominant themes that are interwoven into the speeches, articles and documents issuing from a certain section of the PQ. This section, which I have labelled technocratic,²⁹ is principally concerned with creating a healthy capitalist economy in an independent Quebec. Although many of the technocrats within the PQ, especially René Lévesque himself, endeavour to present themselves as Swedish-style social democrats, the conception of social democracy they have in mind bears a distinct resemblance to what might more appropriately be called liberal reform. This ideological tendency is situated squarely within the reigning philosophical tradition of liberal democracy in North America. Apart from a greater emphasis on state planning and public enterprise, this technocratic vision does not constitute a radical departure from the "basic social values, economic structures, or political traditions that our North American outlook is founded upon."³⁰

It may seem a cavil to draw a rigorous distinction between liberal reform and social democracy. Certainly some aspects of the PQ's program are inspired by European social democratic practice--the desire to ease union certification procedures, make the unions one of the three "major interlocutors" in economic planning, and "humanize" the capitalist economic order, for example. As well, the PQ has displayed the legislative prudence and fiscal conservatism--in contrast to its progressive program--exhibited by many social democratic governments in Europe. Nevertheless,

in view of the PQ's lack of structural ties to the labour movement, the efforts on the part of the PQ hierarchy to dissociate the party from possibly violent and "irrational" trade union struggles, the class composition of both the PQ's electoral support and its membership (predominantly new middle class; see Tables 2.1, 2.2, 2.3) and the method of party financing (individual contributions; no support from the trade unions themselves), the PQ cannot be considered a traditional social democratic party.³¹

Unlike the technocrat, the participationist views the state with some mistrust, seeks greater individual participation in all aspects of policy formation and in the political process itself, calls for the immediate replacement of the traditional economic criteria of growth and profit by more humane, social objectives, and believes that the political party ought to be actively engaged in the political process on behalf of the oppressed and working classes in Quebec. The participationist element within the PQ, which according to Murray consists mainly of those members who had not been active in any political party prior to joining the PQ--trade unionists, legal advisers to the trade unions, social animators, teachers, students, and journalists³²--did not really succeed in altering the ideological tone of the party program until 1971-72. With the publication of Prochaine étape...quand nous serons vraiment chez nous in 1972, it appeared that the members of the PQ's executive council finally realized the need to temper the party's statist, technocratic outlook with an authentic commitment to the creation of a participatory democracy. In particular, the authors

TABLE 2.1: Occupation of delegates to 4th National Congress
of the Parti Québécois

OCCUPATION	% OF DELEGATES IN OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY
Professional, Administrators	18.5
Teachers, Students	34.0
White Collar Workers, Civil Servants	26.9
Skilled, Semi-skilled Workers	9.0
Unskilled Workers	2.3
Farmers	1.8
Unemployed, retired	2.6
Housewives	4.9
TOTAL	100.0

Source: Daniel Latouche and Edouard Cloutier, Le Devoir, 26 February 1973.

TABLE 2.2: Social Composition of PQ Electors, 1970 Election

OCCUPATION	% OF CATEGORY VOTING PQ IN 1970
Professionals, Administrators	30
White Collar Workers	46
Students	44
Farmers	4
Skilled Workers	30
Unskilled Workers	25
Housewives	30
Unemployed	17

Source: Parti Québécois, Le citoyen: Le Parti québécois en bref (1972).

TABLE 2.3: Class Origin of PQ Candidates, 1970, 1973 Elections

SOCIAL CLASS	E L E C T I O N S					
	1970		1973		TOTAL	
	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)
Traditional Bourgeoisie						
1) liberal professions	15.7	(17)	19.1	(21)	17.4	(38)
2) Business	23.2	(25)	20.0	(22)	21.6	(47)
New Middle Class	52.8	(57)	53.6	(59)	53.2	(116)
Workers and Salaried Employees	3.7	(4)	2.7	(3)	3.2	(7)
Farmers	1.8	(2)	2.7	(3)	2.3	(5)
Other	3.7	(3)	1.8	(2)	2.3	(5)
TOTAL	100	(108)	100	(110)	100	(218)

Source: Vera Murray, Le Parti québécois, p.34.

- o The liberal professions include doctors, lawyers, notaries, etc.
- o Business includes industrialists, financiers, administrators, merchants, entrepreneurs, insurance salesmen, etc.
- o The New Middle Class includes public/parapublic sector employees (teachers, journalists, criminologists, sociologists, political scientists, economists) as well as engineers, supervisory personnel, and foremen.
- o Workers and salaried employees include indirectly productive workers (office workers, sales people, advertising workers) and unproductive workers (transport workers, support staff of cultural and educational institutions).

of Prochaine étape... envisioned a society in which workers would be represented on the boards of directors of both public and private enterprises, certain industries (those related to forest products, for example) would be operated according to the principles of self-management, trade unions would participate along with business associations and the government in the framing of economic policy (more of that later), and the blind pursuit of economic-growth-at-all-costs would be ended. Nevertheless, the participationist thrust evident in the 1972 manifesto is hedged in with a welter of qualifications:

...à ceux pour qui la participation, les centres de décision communautaires, la réorganisation du pouvoir traditionnel représentent les objectifs les plus urgents, on doit aussi faire admettre qu'il y a des étapes à franchir entre la grande entreprise internationale et l'autogestion, et que la décentralisation des décisions recouvre pour le moment au moins autant de problèmes que de solutions.³³

In the most recent editions of the party program, however, the participationists' influence is much more pronounced than it was in the early 70's. At the party congress of 1974, for example, the delegates expressed a desire to avoid an overly centralized and technocratic (their word) system of economic planning in favour of one which would foster citizen participation at all levels of the planning process. The 1975 and 1978 editions of the program are the most far-reaching, and in many respects socialist, documents thus far produced by the PQ. The sections on economic and social policy commit the party to placing social progress

above economic progress; "establishing an economic system that eliminates all forms of worker exploitation and meets the real needs of all of Quebec's citizens, rather than the demands of a privileged economic minority;" achieving "social justice through an equitable distribution of wealth and the total elimination of poverty;" and obtaining full "equality for men and women in all sectors of society."³⁴ These objectives, if actually pursued, would entail a radical transformation of the capitalist economic system; as such, they are not at all consonant with the tone of moderate welfare liberalism still conveyed by certain sections of the 1978 program, especially the chapters dealing with economic development and the role of business in an independent Quebec. The recent party programs, therefore, exhibit a certain ideological schizophrenia which arises out of the attempt to reconcile two opposing discourses, the one moderate and essentially liberal, the other unreservedly socialist. But it is important to note that the socialist provisions in the programs rarely go beyond the level of vague generality; they remain aspirations, to be fleshed out at some time in the more or less distant future. As well, the instrumentalities proposed for achieving the socialist transformation of Quebec society are either nebulous or non-existent.³⁵

The participationist elements within the PQ have not been as successful in altering the character of the party's daily political action as they have in radicalizing the party program. In particular, the PQ has not come out clearly on the side of Quebec's workers and exploited classes, as Robert Burns and others in the party would have liked.³⁶

The party has not set up the permanent consultative organs with the trade union federations called for in the 1971 and 1975 editions of the program, nor has it shed its unwillingness to take to the streets and actively support the struggles of the workers, the unemployed, and the unorganized in Quebec. To some members of the PQ's left wing, the party hierarchy has become obsessed with the PQ's electoral image. Out of a fear of alienating the mythical "average voter," the PQ's leading tacticians avoid associating the party with intemperate union struggles, and this strategic circumspection has led Robert Burns and Guy Bisailon, among others, to question openly the authenticity of the party's professed "favourable prejudice" towards labour. If the results of Réjean Pelletier's 1973 survey of party leaders are still valid, however, it is unlikely that the PQ's relationship with organized labour will become any more intimate in the near future.³⁷

One of the principal tools at the disposal of the participationists in their effort to radicalize the PQ has been the party's open, democratic structures. At the PQ's founding congress, a group of independentists (among them André Larocque, who subsequently sat on the PQ's executive council and acted as Robert Burns' chief parliamentary aide) succeeded in giving to the new party an organization unlike that of many traditional parties in the liberal democracies. First, in addition to being an instrument for gaining political office, the PQ was to carry on the tasks of political education and propagandizing; it was to politicize both its membership and the Quebec electorate. To fulfil this dual role of

election machine and political educator, the PQ was endowed with a double structure:

- a) a "program sector" comprising three committees:
 - i) the documentation committee, charged with gathering and disseminating information to party members and conducting necessary research for the party;
 - ii) the animation committee, which is to encourage the active participation of all PQ members in the affairs of the party;
 - iii) the program committee, whose role is to ensure the distribution and study of the party program, and make certain that it is adhered to by the various party organs; and
- b) a "services sector" again composed of three committees:
 - i) the publicity committee, charged with cultivating the party's image;
 - ii) the organization committee, which is to build an electoral "machine" capable of ensuring the PQ's victory;
 - iii) the finances committee, whose function is to raise the funds needed by the party, and make sure that all donations are properly obtained.³⁸

In principle, each sector is equally important, and the educational function is to be an ongoing one, not merely an adjunct of the electoral struggle.

It is doubtful whether the PQ's double structure has ever functioned precisely as it was intended to. Judging from the ready availability of the party's programs, and the numerous studies undertaken by the party (among them La Souveraineté et l'économie), the PQ has fulfilled its education function to a greater degree than most other Canadian political parties, federal or provincial. Nevertheless, as Murray points out, electoral concerns have predominated within the party, and the PQ's role as educator of public opinion has frequently been shoved into the background:

coincé, d'une part, entre la volonté de ne pas laisser les structures du parti entraver la possibilité d'une victoire électorale et, d'autre part, le souci de ne pas sacrifier la démocratie de participation à une victoire électorale, le parti a choisi de se concentrer en priorité sur sa fonction électorale... Pour beaucoup de <participationnistes>, la prédominance du <secteur services>, qui résultait de cette situation, a été contraire aux Statuts du parti. De plus, elle a fait perdre au parti une des caractéristiques importantes le distinguant des partis traditionnels.³⁹

Although it would be incorrect to label the party's dual structure a total failure, it has in all probability not been utilized to the extent that its supporters would have liked.⁴⁰

The second innovative (at least in North American terms) aspect of the PQ's internal structure is the apparent pre-eminence of the party's mass organization over its parliamentary representation. Rather than being a typical elitist, or cadre party, according to Duverger's typology,⁴¹ in which the party itself often exists as a mere emanation of the leader and his coterie of advisers, the PQ is formally committed to internal

democracy. The party's biennial congresses are, so to speak, parliaments of the independence movement, during which all members are given the opportunity to participate in the elaboration of party policy. The political "line" adopted by these congresses is, in theory, inviolable: it cannot be flouted with impunity by either the party's executive or its parliamentary wing. There is, therefore, in the party constitution an article providing for the supervision of the PQ caucus, or in the event of its coming to power, the PQ Cabinet, by the Conseil national (the supreme body in the party between congresses, composed of the 110 riding association presidents, the members of the executive and the six committee chairmen).⁴²

The PQ's democratic statutes have not been sufficient, however, to prevent the growth of an "inner circle" within the party, a small elite composed of the leader (now Prime Minister) and his close advisers (many of whom are Cabinet ministers) which exerts a preponderant influence in determining party strategies, policy proposals, and legislative timetables. The emergence of a nascent parliamentary "oligarchy" within the PQ has been accelerated by the party's accession to power on November 15 1976--the exigencies of presiding over a vast and complex state system and of formulating day-to-day government strategy have served to augment the role of this parliamentary elite. In this regard, the PQ has experienced the same fate as most other parties which operate according to the conventions of British-style responsible government. Although this tendency towards the centralization of effective power within the party

poses few ideological problems for traditional cadre parties--indeed, they often make a virtue of the dominant role assigned to the leader and the small band of professional politicians close to him--it runs directly counter to the PQ's commitment to internal democracy. Thus, as has been the case with the British Labour Party, the PQ's extra-parliamentary organization has periodically revolted against what it views as the usurpation of the party's decision-making centres by a parliamentary-based minority.⁴³

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to describe in detail the evolution of the balance of forces within the PQ since 1968, or to document exhaustively the growing dominance of a parliamentary elite in the formulation of party policy. However, two types of events can be considered symptomatic of this latter trend: The first has been the propensity for certain party notables to ignore the decisions of congress, or to give to them a highly idiosyncratic interpretation, one often at odds with the spirit of the party program. Perhaps the most blatant example of this phenomenon involved Claude Morin and the advent of the "*étapiste*" referendum strategy. At the party's 5th national congress (November 1974), a resolution was passed incorporating into the PQ program the notion of a conditional referendum on Quebec's accession to sovereignty. If, and only if, Canada balked at negotiations with Quebec on the subject of independence, a PQ government would unilaterally assume all the powers of a sovereign state after consulting the Quebec population by means of a referendum. The authors of this resolution in no way intended to

dissociate the act of voting for the PQ from support for independence. However, within a year of this congress, the party's position on the referendum was radically altered by Claude Morin. In an interview given to the Quebec City daily, Le Soleil, Morin implied that the next election in Quebec would be fought solely on the issue of good government; the referendum on independence would constitute a stage in itself and would be held--unconditionally--some time during the PQ's first mandate. Morin here was evidently making party policy *extempore*; his "interpretation" of the referendum strategy was later backed up by Lévesque and adopted as party policy by the National Council. All this occurred, of course, without consulting the party membership who had overwhelmingly rejected the notion of an unconditional referendum at the previous party congress.⁴⁴

The adoption of the *étapiste* approach to independence was clearly the dominant facilitative factor in the PQ's electoral victory of 1976: it enabled the party to win over those (primarily francophone) voters who, although not supporters of independence, were extremely dissatisfied with the performance of Bourassa's liberal government.⁴⁵ But this brilliant electoral manoeuvre made a mockery of the PQ's vaunted democratic structures: it was not until after the election had been fought and won, that the party rank and file, at the 6th national congress, formally approved the *étapiste* strategy. In this case the congress was simply a plebiscite on strategic and policy choices previously made by the party elite.⁴⁶

The sixth (May 1977) national congress provided further evidence of the growth of a parliamentary oligarchy within the PQ. At this congress, a number of radical resolutions were adopted, including one favouring free abortion on demand and another calling for the abolition of private schools. The tenor of these proposals deeply annoyed Lévesque and a majority of the technocrats close to him, so much so that the Prime Minister felt compelled to affirm the government's independence from the party's decision in congress. According to Lévesque, the party program should be viewed more as a guide, a "constant source of inspiration," than as a binding legislative blueprint:

Un gouvernement ne doit pas plier devant le parti, parce qu'il doit être le gouvernement de tous les citoyens, mais il doit tout de même considérer le parti comme une sorte de leader moral politique et respecter cette espèce de conscience qu'il représente.⁴⁷

Remarks such as these would lead one legitimately to wonder whether the PQ's internal democracy is not more of a sop to the militant wing of the independence movement (the participationists) than it is a genuine commitment to individual participation in the formulation of party policy. So long as the decisions of congress accord with the wishes of the party hierarchy, and do not upset the party's strategic considerations, then internal democracy and extra-parliamentary control of the PQ's legislative wing remain fundamental priorities of the party. The moment congress becomes "irresponsible," or "unrealistic," however, internal democracy is, for all practical purposes, jettisoned.

In summary, the Parti Québécois is a party which, in terms of its program and rhetoric, has apparently become increasingly radical over the past decade. Since forming the government in 1976, however, it has become evident that "the socialist component of the PQ now plays a minor role within the party. The technocrats are firmly in the saddle."⁴⁸ The strictures of Cabinet government and the overwhelming need to marshal the PQ's resources in order to win the referendum on sovereignty-association combine to ensure the primacy of Lévesque and his close associates in Cabinet over the rest of the party. The PQ's extra-parliamentary organization has, in recent years, made a number of attempts to check the emergence of a decision-making oligarchy within the party, but these have thus far been nugatory. Two of these attempts can be briefly mentioned. The first was the creation by the 6th congress of a permanent Program Commission, composed of five members (only one of whom is an MNA), which is to be informed of all the government's legislative proposals and determine whether these conform to the PQ program. In spite of this arrangement, the governing elite retains considerable margin for manoeuvre, since the program does not specify legislative deadlines; the government can always argue that the moment is not propitious for the introduction of any bill it deems too "radical." The second attempt to control the party's parliamentary organization involved the election of Louise Harel, a prominent member of the party's left wing, to the position of vice-president of the national executive at the 7th congress (1979). Harel, who seemingly wishes to strengthen the party's role as watchdog and critic of the government, and

who was elected in spite of Lévesque's tacit support for another candidate, Pierre Renaud, has yet to alter noticeably the party's direction. Nevertheless, her election constitutes a visible sign of the rank and file's desire not to be totally subservient to the party hierarchy.⁴⁹

This extended examination of the internal conflicts, both ideological and structural, within the PQ has had one overriding purpose; to demonstrate that the PQ, in spite of its heterogeneous membership and fissiparous tendencies, is dominated by the technocratic, statist, and mildly reformist element within the party incarnated in its leader, René Lévesque. It is this technocratic vision which impregnates many of the PQ government's legislative proposals, and it is to this technocratic faction that the liberal corporatist strand in péquiste ideology can be traced. I therefore now turn to a very brief consideration of the specifically corporatist elements in the PQ program.

The Liberal Corporatist Strand in the PQ's Ideology

Corporatist themes are present in all of the PQ program, but they are particularly pronounced in the early (pre-1973) party literature. The PQ's corporatist tendencies derive from four principal assumptions:

- 1) the belief that the way to social progress lies somewhere in between the twin traps of utopian leftism and traditional capitalism erected on a Hobbesian view of man;

- ii) the belief that organized groups in society are the basis of political life, and that the individual's participation in economic or political activity must be channeled through certain legitimate, representative organizations;
- iii) the belief that a successful, efficient economy must be a planned one, and that the plan must be the product of collaboration among society's three major partners--business, labour, and the state;
- iv) the belief that industrial conflict can largely be eliminated by incorporating the trade union organizations into the decision-making apparatus of the state.

Assumptions i) and ii) are not, in themselves, evidence of corporatist intentions on the part of the PQ. Like many other contemporary political parties, corporatist or otherwise, the PQ decries both the "jungle" of *laissez-faire* capitalism and the "fascism of the left" which inevitably results from a too hasty attempt to construct a secular utopia.⁵⁰ The correct model for social and economic progress, according to the PQ, is to be found in the planned economies of the Western European nations, particularly Sweden.⁵¹ However, it is in the PQ's conception of the planning process that its corporatist tendencies manifest themselves.

For the technocratic faction in the PQ economic planning is an inherently democratic and pluralist undertaking, since it involves the active participation of all representative groups in society in determining economic priorities:

Le Plan doit être, en effet, le pendant économique de cette valorisation du citoyen que nous tâchons aussi d'approfondir sur le plan politique. Dans les deux cas, bien sûr, il s'agit nécessairement du citoyen "organisé," faisant valoir ses vues à l'intérieur de groupes où il se sente à l'aise et adéquatement représenté...C'est donc collectivement, par l'irruption massive de toutes les catégories les plus représentatives de la population, que l'élaboration du Plan permettra d'ouvrir la voie à la démocratisation de l'économie

à une participation sans cesse plus éclairée des citoyens à l'orientation du régime et aux décisions complexes qu'elle exige.⁵²

However, the pluralist cast given here to economic planning is quickly lost: initially the democratic "irruption" of an unlimited number of competitive groups into the decision-making process, planning becomes a corporatist system of bargaining among the three major economic agents-- state, business, and labour. According to the PQ:

Les syndicats deviendront...avec l'Etat et un monde patronale également bien structuré, l'un des trois grands "interlocuteurs" qui seront appelés à s'exprimer de la façon la plus décisive dans la mise au point du Plan.⁵³

La caractéristique fondamentale d'un Plan est que tous les agents principaux d'une économie nationale acceptent périodiquement de confronter leurs objectifs, leurs projets, ou leurs demandes, puis de les rendre compatibles et d'agencer leurs opérations en conséquence.⁵⁴

Functional representation in the framing of economic policy and a high degree of collaboration between the organized producer groups in this process: these, as we saw in the first chapter, constitute two minimal conditions for the existence of liberal corporatism in any given society. But a third element is necessary for the completion of the liberal corporatist framework, namely, a certain amount of state control over the associations of business and labour (primarily the latter). This element too is present in the PQ program, as the above quotations from Prochaine étape... bear out: a PQ government would expect the peak associations of business and labour to discipline their membership ("agencer leurs opérations") and enforce obedience among their constituents to the stipulations of The Plan. In particular--and this is characteristic of liberal corporatism--the PQ government would expect labour to

comply with the legislative and administrative measures adopted by the state in exchange for its voice in economic decision-making:

L'Etat doit rechercher la collaboration de représentants autorisés des organismes syndicaux et mettre sur pied les structures permettant un mécanisme de consultation permanente et efficace... Des comités spéciaux et autres mécanismes de consultation doivent être formés et maintenus pour favoriser la discussion et l'acceptation mutuelle préalable à toute mesure législative ou administrative envisagée par l'Etat ou préconisée par le monde du travail.⁵⁵

In order to render the trade union and employers' associations more effective in their roles of economic interlocutor with the state and agent of social control, as well as to create the institutional framework necessary for a stable and efficient corporatism, a PQ government would introduce legislation

- i) requiring the compulsory unionization of all workers in Quebec (though they would be free to join whatever union they wished);
- ii) facilitating sectoral collective bargaining in which the peak associations of business and labour would participate along with representatives of the state; and
- iii) obliging employers to designate an employer association to represent them in sectoral negotiations.⁵⁶

This legislation is clearly designed to eliminate some of the structural impediments to the development of liberal corporatism noted in the first chapter--fragmented union federations and employers' associations, plant-level bargaining, and non-involvement of the peak associations of business and labour in collective bargaining. These reforms would, moreover, entail

a significant centralization and concentration of the powers of the business and labour federations and this, in principle, should increase the effectiveness of the plan and of such measures as wage and price controls, should the latter be needed to dampen inflation in the national economy.

Although the PQ's corporatist intentions have been toned down somewhat in the party's most recent programs--the heavy hand of the state is less visible, for instance⁵⁷--liberal corporatism remains the linchpin of the PQ's approach to economic development. The 1978 program calls for the creation of a number of tripartite bodies, among them a textile and clothing commission which would "propose a coherent textile policy [and] let the government know when imports threaten jobs" and commissions responsible for "applying the legislation on working conditions (except for the public and parapublic sectors)." These instances of the formal representation of the producer groups in the decision-making structures of the state are aspects of an overarching system of economic planning which is founded upon permanent tripartite consultation and consensus-building.⁵⁸

Finally, the PQ's liberal corporatism shows itself in a desire to eliminate industrial conflict by giving labour a say in the management of the economy (though the extent of this "voice" is not specified):

Tous, y compris les militants syndicaux, sont d'accord pour déplorer le grand nombre et l'ampleur excessive des conflits du travail. Cependant, ce n'est pas en restreignant le droit d'association ni le droit de grève que la société québécoise les évitera, mais plutôt en appliquant des mesures de conciliation préventive et surtout en associant les travailleurs aux informations et décisions pertinentes à chaque palier, à partir de l'entreprise elle-même (ou du secteur) jusqu'au rôle social et économique de l'Etat.⁵⁹

The PQ here is echoing the belief of Mackenzie King and other theorists of liberal corporatism that workers will submit to those measures required for a high-productivity, efficient economy if they are aware of the dictates of "economic reason" and apprised of certain "macro-economic interdependencies."⁶⁰ Discussion rounds, dissemination of economic data, and freer access to information for the trade union organizations are, in this view, the requisites of a peaceful industrial relations system. With the proper consultative machinery in place, the PQ argues, those industrial disputes which arise from a lack of understanding on the part of the economic "partners" or from an entrenched confrontationist attitude, will be greatly reduced. This faith in the powers of discussion, somewhat undeveloped in the PQ's programs, is at the root of the PQ government's constant recourse to economic summitry, and will be considered in greater detail in the following chapter.

To sum up this chapter: liberal corporatism is merely one strand in the PQ's varied ideological discourse. It is a liberal corporatism since there is no question of the PQ's abrogating parliamentary democracy, suspending civil liberties, or doing away with either the profit motive or private property. At the same time, the emphasis on functional representation in the state's policy-making organisms, state-fostered class

collaboration, and tripartite consensus-building mark this as a distinctly corporatist ideology. Championed by the PQ's technocratic faction, this liberal corporatism views modern industrial society as an intrinsically harmonious whole composed of interdependent groups, each with a specific role in the economic process. Conflicts of interest among these groups, and in particular between the organizations of capital and labour, are not considered to be fundamental or irreconcilable; rather, they are seen to occur over certain technical issues which are amenable to rational solution. Like Mackenzie King, the PQ believes that the clash of interests in capitalist society can be attenuated, and public unity maintained, through the agency of a neutral state acting as arbiter of the common good:

Un Plan global est le produit d'une concertation des intentions et des projets, à la suite de négociations entre les groupes et d'arbitrages de la part du gouvernement.⁶¹

Moreover, a PQ government would rely heavily on "the enlightened foresight of technocratic planners"⁶² to ensure the social harmony (and therefore economic growth) which is typically the ultimate objective of liberal corporatism. There is a certain amount of determinism in this ideology: the beneficent state has only to bring together the various interests in society, and out of the mass of data, statistics, and reports compiled by the experts, the one feasible solution to the economy's problems will impose itself, and be accepted by all sides.

The PQ's liberal corporatism is deficient in a number of other respects. First, it is silent on the question of whether power in capitalist

society is distributed in such a way as to give a predominant voice to one (or more) class(es) in determining the content of the "national" interest. As one observer, commenting on the PQ's early programs, aptly noted, "L'Etat n'existe pas comme une force neutre et objective: la nature et la signification de ses activités sont inévitablement affectées par la configuration de la structure sociale, par le rapport de forces." Jean Meynaud went on to argue that, if historical precedent is a valid indicator, the state in any capitalist society will be predisposed to interpret the nation's interest in such a way that it conforms quite closely to the interests of management and capital. This has been the case in the planned economies of Western Europe, the reforming intentions of many social democratic governments notwithstanding.⁶³ Moreover, as I argued in the first chapter, the planning process itself involves an intrinsic "bias" which ensures that certain kinds of demands are outside the ambit of the tripartite consultative organisms. In particular, organized labour must "speak the same language" as modern management--that of system-maintenance--if it is to gain admittance to the planning structures of the state.⁶⁴

The final lacuna in the PQ's liberal corporatism concerns the ambiguous nature of the "partnership" between labour and capital; the influence each of these would exert within the proposed corporatist framework is left unspecified. In its latest programs, the PQ seems to imply that tripartite planning would be a coming together of equals, particularly since the party espouses a type of co-determination as the proper form

of organization of industry.⁶⁵ Earlier party pronouncements, however, indicated that the PQ considered the roles of the state and of business to be primordial in elaborating The Plan; organized labour in this instance was clearly considered to be a "junior" partner.⁶⁶

In the following chapter, therefore, in an attempt to illuminate the theoretical and practical inconsistencies in the PQ government's liberal corporatism, I shall examine specific policies, particularly those concerned with economic development, which most clearly exhibit the government's corporatizing tendencies. My analysis will focus on three sets of questions:

- a) Do the PQ's efforts at tripartite consensus-building overcome the asymmetry which seems to be inherent in this political structure?
- b) What role does the state play in the corporatist set-up? What has been the response of the state's "interlocutors?" Why would business and labour be willing to participate in such an arrangement? Given the contradictory position in which liberal corporatism has historically placed the trade union leadership, why would the unions in Quebec allow themselves to be co-opted into the policy-making organisms of the state?
- c) What results have the PQ's tripartite consultative mechanisms obtained? Has there been a reduction in industrial conflict in the province? Have the industrial "partners" evinced a greater willingness to dialogue with one another?

REFERENCES

1. Actually, this statement needs some qualification: a number of commentators have pointed out that corporatist ideology enjoyed a certain fashionability in the U.S.A. during the Great Depression. Indeed, the New Deal legislation was, at least in part, inspired by European corporatist ideology. See Shonfield, Modern Capitalism, pp.309-312; Bowen, German Theories of the Corporative State, p.4.
2. The Semaines sociales were symposiums on social issues held annually at different locations in Quebec from the early part of this century until the 1980's. Each Semaine sociale--an ambulatory university, in the words of one of its prime movers, Father Archambault--addressed a specific social problem or dealt with a certain aspect of Catholic social doctrine. See Marie Agnes Gaudreau, The Social Thought of French Canada as Reflected in the Semaine Sociale. (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1946), p.10. L'Ecole sociale populaire was "an organization sponsored by the Jesuit Order in Montreal" and set up for the purpose "of studying and propagating the teachings of the Church on a wide range of moral, educational, and social problems." Herbert F. Quinn, The Union Nationale, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979; first published 1963), p.56.
3. For a sampling of this corporatist literature, see J.-B. Desrosiers, "Principes et description de l'organisation corporative," L'Action nationale XI:2 (February 1938), pp.143-155; Wilfred Lebon, "Corporatisme social et corporatisme politique," L'Action nationale XII:1 (September 1938), pp.43-55. For a very brief but serviceable analysis of this corporatist doctrine, see Denis Monière, Le développement des idéologies au Québec. (Montreal: Editions Québec/Amérique, 1977), pp.276-280.
4. Quinn, The Union Nationale, pp.60, 309-310. As Quinn explains (in *ibid.*, ch.4), the U.N. was formed in 1935 from the fusion of the Parti conservateur, led by Duplessis, with a radical nationalist, breakaway faction of the provincial Liberal Party, the Action Libérale nationale (A.L.N.) whose leader was Paul Gouin. In exchange for his becoming leader of the new party, Duplessis accepted the A.L.N.'s corporatist-tinted program for social reform as the U.N.'s election platform.
5. Once again, the culprit is J.T. McLeod, "The Free Enterprise Dodo," p.12.

6. "It should be noted that Duplessis succeeded in purging the radical nationalist element from the U.N. shortly after coming to power (Paul Gouin resigned from the party just prior to the 1936 election). See Quinn, The Union Nationale, pp.74-76. For an examination of Duplessis's eminently liberal approach to economic development and his discriminatory attitude towards organized labour, see *ibid.*, ch.5; Monière Développement des idéologies, pp.301-304.
7. Pierre Harvey, "Les corporations professionnelles dans la province du Québec," L'Actualité économique XXX:1 (April-June 1954), p.59; cf. *idem.*, "L'Organisation corporative dans la province du Québec," L'Actualité économique XXIX:3 (Oct.-Dec. 1953), pp.411-433.
8. For an overview of the organization of Catholic unions in Quebec and their association with corporatist philosophy, see Louis Maheu, "Problème social et naissance du syndicalisme catholique," in Fernand Harvey, ed., Aspects historiques du mouvement ouvrier au Québec (Montréal: Boréal, 1973), pp.119-149, especially, pp.131-132; cf. Jacques Rouillard, Les syndicats nationaux au Québec de 1900 à 1930 (Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1979), pp.228-229. As for the CTCC's unwillingness to resort to the strike, see Carla Lipsig-Mummé, "Quebec Unions and the State: Conflict and Dependence," Studies in Political Economy, no.3 (Spring 1980), p.127. According to Lipsig-Mummé, the CTCC led only nine of the 507 strikes called between 1915 and 1936.
9. Two of L'Action nationale's epigones were L'Alliance Laurentienne, founded in 1957 by Raymond Barbeau, and Le Regroupement national, a splinter group of the R.I.N. created in 1964. Both hoped to establish a Christian corporatist social order in an independent Quebec. See Henry Milner and Sheilagh Hodgins Milner, The Decolonization of Quebec (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973), p.178. I should like to make it clear that I am not arguing that liberal corporatism is the only, or even the dominant ideology within the PQ. As subsequent sections of this chapter will bear out, several ideologies, some of them mutually exclusive, coexist within the Parti Québécois. For a provocative and contentious treatment of the dissonant voices within the PQ, see Reginald Whitaker, "Liberalism and Nationalism: The Contradictions of the PQ," unpublished paper, February 1980.

10. According to Marcel Rioux, La Question du Québec (Paris: Seghers, 1969), ch.4, the dominant ideology in Quebec from the period immediately following the 1837 Rebellion to the 1950's was one of conservation: "cette idéologie idéalis[ait] les traits de la société québécoise de la deuxième moitié du XIXe siècle; cette société étant effectivement catholique, de langue française, agricole et traditionnelle." (p.89). From 1945 on, this conservative nationalism was vigorously contested by a small group of intellectuals, journalists, politicians, and trade unionists. This latter group advocated Quebec's "catching-up" (*rattrapage*) with the liberal democratic and capitalist practice in English Canada and the United States. For a similar analysis, see Kenneth McRoberts and Dale Posgate, Quebec: Social Change and Political Crisis, rev.ed. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1980, first published 1976), chs. 5,6.
11. I am using "nationalism" here in the sense that Léon Dion uses the term in Nationalismes et politique au Québec (Montréal: Hurtubise HMH, 1975), pp.16-17: "Par mouvement nationaliste, j'entends toute forme d'action collective menée sous l'influence d'une conception du vouloir-être de la collectivité nationale et souvent en réaction contre l'action d'autres collectivités jugées étrangères ou adverses, qui vise à la mobilisation des membres de façon à promouvoir la solidarité d'appartenance et de destin de même que les projets concernant l'organisation de la vie culturelle, économique, et politique jugés convenir à cette collectivité." Cf. David Cameron, Nationalism, Self-Determination, and the Quebec Question (Toronto: Macmillan, 1974), ch.2. It should be noted that the new nationalism began to take form as early as 1945; it did not simply appear in 1960.
12. For an effective contrast between the old and the new nationalism, see David Kwavnick, "The Roots of French-Canadian Discontent," Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science 31:2 (Nov. 1965), pp.512-518. See also Quinn, Union Nationale, pp.238-249; Dion, Nationalismes et politique, chs. 1,2,3; James de Wilde, "The Parti Québécois in Power," in Richard Simeon, ed. Must Canada Fail? (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1977), pp.20-21.
13. This is by no means an exhaustive classification of the diverse movements within the new nationalism. For greater detail, see Milner and Milner, Decolonization of Quebec, ch.8.

14. Charles Taylor, "Nationalism and the Political Intelligentsia: A Case Study," Queen's Quarterly 72:1 (Spring 1965), p.160. Other sources used in this interpretation of the new nationalism include Hubert Guindon, "Social Unrest, Social Class and Quebec's Bureaucratic Revolution," Queen's Quarterly 71:2 (1964), pp.150-162; Albert Breton, "The Economics of Nationalism," Journal of Political Economy 72:4 (August 1964), pp.376-386; Alex Macleod, "Nationalism and Social Class: the Unresolved Dilemma of the Quebec Left," Journal of Canadian Studies 8:4 (November 1973), pp.3-15; Murray, Le Parti québécois, pp.30-36. It should be noted that this interpretation of the new nationalism fails to account for the existence of some groups in Quebec who did not subordinate the social question (the distribution of wealth in society, for example) to the national question. For some of the avowedly Marxist nationalist groups in the province, the resolution of the national problem was a prerequisite of the successful termination of the class struggle. For an illuminating discussion of the ambiguous relationship between Marxists and nationalists in Quebec, see Macleod's article, cited above.
15. See Jean Provencher, René Lévesque: Portrait of a Québécois, trans. David Ellis (Toronto: Gage, 1975), pp.254-256; André d'Allemagne, Le R.I.N. de 1960 à 1963 (Montréal: L'Étincelle, 1974), pp.132-133.
16. The origins of the PQ, the ideological orientations of its founding members, and the influence exerted by each of these groups within the new party are examined in Murray, Le Parti québécois, pp.11-30; Don Murray and Vera Murray, De Bourassa à Lévesque (Montréal: Éditions du Quinze, 1978), ch.4; Juris Dreifelds, "Nationalism and Socialism in French Canada," in Paul Fox, ed. Politics: Canada, 4th ed. (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, Ryerson, 1977), pp.168-175; Réjean Pelletier, Les Militants du R.I.N. (Ottawa: Éditions de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1974), pp.35-60.
17. Murray, Le Parti québécois, p.21.
18. For a brief examination of the importance of the "La Presse Affaire," see *ibid.*, pp.204-210.
19. Among those that see the central tension within the PQ as being one between technocrats and participationists are Murray, *ibid.*, pp.27-30, 120-121; Jorge Niosi, "Le gouvernement du P.Q. deux ans après," Les Cahiers du Socialisme, no.2 (Fall 1978), pp.33-71; Henry Milner, Politics in the New Quebec, ch.7; Robert Boily, "Le pari du P.Q.: un État fort et efficace dans une démocratie de participation," Maintenant, no.94 (March 1970), pp.74-87. Obviously, not all members of the PQ fit into such a neat classification as the one developed by these authors. Ex-créditiste Gilles Grégoire, for example, cannot easily be subsumed under either category, nor can such former members of the U.N. as Jérôme Proulx, or (before his death) Jean-Guy Cardinal. At

the same time, grouping together under the title of "participationists" such dissimilar individuals as Robert Burns, Claude Charron, Guy Bisaillon, Guy Chevrete, Richard Clément, André Larocque, and Pierre Bourgault glosses over the substantial ideological differences that separate these figures. On the whole, however, the technocrat-participationist dichotomy is a useful heuristic tool for understanding the evolution of the balance of forces within the PQ since 1968.

20. The notion of "centres de décision" is crucial in many of Jacques Parizeau's writings. See his "L'avenir économique d'un Québec souverain," Maintenant, no.91 (Dec. 1969), pp.300-303 and no.93, (Feb.1970), pp.43-46. Cf. the study published by the PQ's documentation committee, La Souveraineté et l'économie (Montréal: Editions du Jour, 1970). This document is an extreme manifestation of the statism which suffuses the thought of those péquistes belonging to the technocratic faction of the party. It was also partially authored by Parizeau himself.
21. The phrase is Léon Dion's in The Unfinished Revolution, trans. Thérèse Romer (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1976), p.34.
22. Parti Québécois, Programme, Action politique, Statuts et Règlements; Edition 1971, (Montréal: Editions du Parti Québécois, 1971), p.7; cf. *idem.*, Prochaine étape... quand nous serons vraiment chez nous (1972), p.22. This document, drawn up by René Lévesque and the executive council of the PQ constituted the party hierarchy's response to the charge of excessive moderation laid against it by members of the PQ left, notably Robert Burns, in the wake of the "La Presse Affair." It was intended to demonstrate that the PQ was indeed a party of the left, but apart from a few concessions to the new catchword of "participation," Prochaine étape... is a profoundly technocratic, and in parts liberal corporatist, document.
23. Parti Québécois, Programme... Edition 1971, p.24.
24. René Lévesque, La Passion du Québec (Montréal: Editions Québec/Amérique, 1978), p.78.
25. Parti Québécois, Prochaine étape... p.56, (emphasis added). For a virulent denunciation of the "ultra-gauchistes," see René Lévesque's "Mini-manifeste," drawn up immediately after the "La Presse Affair," and included in the Programme... Edition 1971, pp.37-39. Lévesque dismisses the apostles of the ultimate revolution as "nos missionnaires de la table rase qui grenouillent dans les chapelles marginales de la révolution-mirage ou encore de cet ultra-gauchisme doctrinaire et désuet qui n'a jamais mené qu'au fascisme de gauche." (p.37). Lévesque is convinced that the only realistic goal to which progressives can aspire in the North American context is Swedish-style social democracy. See La Passion du Québec, p.48.

26. See Lévesque's "Mini-manifeste," Programme...Edition 1971, pp.37-39 for a succinct presentation of this point of view; cf. Réjean Pelletier, "Les rapports entre le P.Q. et les syndicats," Le Devoir, 26 March 1974.
27. Lévesque, La passion du Québec, pp.75-76, emphasis added.
28. *Ibid.*, p.76.
29. Perhaps the best definition of technocracy has been advanced by Theodore Roszak, The Making of a Counter Culture (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1969), pp.5,7: "By the technocracy, I mean that social form in which an industrial society reaches the peak of its organizational integration. It is the ideal men usually have in mind when they speak of modernizing, up-dating, rationalizing, planning. Drawing upon such unquestionable imperatives as the demand for efficiency, for social security, for large-scale co-ordination of men and resources, for ever higher levels of affluence...the technocracy works to knit together the anachronistic gaps and fissures of the industrial society...In the technocracy, everything aspires to become purely technical, the subject of professional attention. The technocracy is therefore the regime of experts--or of those who can employ the experts." Cf. Jean Meynaud, Technocracy, trans. Paul Barnes (London: Faber & Faber, 1968), chs.1,4,5.
30. René Lévesque, Speech to the Economic Club in New York, reprinted in Globe and Mail, 26 January 1977.
31. On the conservative and prudent cast of social democracy in Europe, see Ralph Miliband, The State in Capitalist Society (London: Quartet Books, 1973), pp.88-106. For a brief analysis of European social democratic parties, see W.E. Paterson and Ian Campbell, Social Democracy in Post-War Europe (London: Macmillan 1974). On the PQ's putative social democratic orientation, see Niosi, "Le gouvernement du P.Q. deux ans après," pp.34-35; Jean-Marc Pottle, "The P.Q. in Question," This Magazine 11:6 (December 1977), pp.27-30; and Charles Halary, "The New Quebec State," Our Generation 12:1 (Summer 1977), pp.6-18. Finally, the notion of liberal reform is adapted from Gad Horowitz, Canadian Labour in Politics (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), p.32: "Social reform, yes; extension of public ownership, yes; the welfare state, yes; increased state control of the economy, yes; but not too much. Not socialism."
32. In other words, the "new middle class recruits" to the PQ. See Murray, Le Parti québécois, pp.29-36. According to Murray, "la force du P.Q... aussi bien au niveau de ses membres et de ses militants qu'au niveau de sa clientèle électorale, reposait surtout sur la nouvelle classe moyenne liée au développement de l'appareil étatique." (p.33).

33. Parti Québécois, Prochaine étape..., p.57.
34. Parti Québécois, Official Program of the Parti Québécois, 1978 Edition, (emphasis added), pp.17,29. See also *idem.*, Les Dossiers du 4^e Congrès national du Parti Québécois (Montréal: Les Editions du Parti Québécois, 1974), p.187.
35. This point is made by Murray, Le Parti québécois, pp.120-121.
36. In the aftermath of the "La Presse Affair," Robert Burns stated that "Le parti a fort à faire pour se rapprocher des travailleurs et de leurs préoccupations réelles. Pour moi, le Parti québécois doit être du bord des exploités clairement, et ne pas essayer de prendre le pouvoir sous de fausses représentations," cited in *ibid.*, p.207.
37. For Guy Bisaillon's comments, see *ibid.*, p.210. For the relevant passages in the PQ programs concerning the creation of a permanent link with the trade union federations and an active support for their cause, see Parti Québécois, Programme...Edition 1971, pp.34-35. In his 1973 survey of the PQ hierarchy (presidents of the riding associations, MNAs, members of the executive council), Réjean Pelletier concluded that only 20.7% of those surveyed desired constant PQ-trade union collaboration; 73.2% desired PQ-trade union collaboration on only certain well-defined political issues (e.g. revision of the Labour Code); 4.9% wanted no PQ-trade union links. Pelletier quite rightly concluded that "les dirigeants [du PQ] estiment que leur parti ne doit pas être dévoué aux intérêts d'une seule classe au Québec, fût-elle la classe des travailleurs, mais qu'il doit chercher à représenter toutes les classes de la société québécoise, ce qui écarte le parti d'un mariage trop étroit avec les syndicats et ce qui est d'ailleurs conforme à sa 'vision' du Québec qui s'exprime par une opposition à toute lutte de classes." See "Les rapports entre le PQ et les syndicats," Le Devoir, 26 March 1974.
38. Parti Québécois, Programme...Edition 1971, pp.48-49. Cf. André Larocque, Défis au Parti québécois (Montréal: Editions du Jour, 1971), p.73, for a description of the innovative aspects of this dual structure.
39. Murray, Le Parti québécois, p.153. Relying on interviews with members of the participationist section of the PQ, Murray argues that the documentation committee has been abandoned as an instrument of popular education, and that the animation committee is virtually non-existent outside of election periods.
40. *Ibid.*, pp.153-156. Cf. André Larocque, "Après l'assurance du PQ, le temps des inquiétudes?" Le Devoir, 15 November 1973.

41. Political Parties, trans. Barbara and Robert North (London: Methuen, 1954), pp.62-71. Duverger locates the fundamental difference between cadre and mass parties in their approaches to membership recruitment and party financing. Cadre parties recruit a limited number of notables, and are largely financed through a few big private donors (financiers, industrialists, merchants, etc.). For the mass parties, membership recruitment is the essence of their political activity; these parties are almost entirely financed through the voluntary contributions of their members. (p.63). For a modified version of Duverger's typology, which takes account of the democratic policy-making structures of the PQ, see Richard Van Loon and Michael Whittington, The Canadian Political System (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1971), p.238; cf. Frederick Engelmann and Mildred Schwartz, Political Parties and the Canadian Social Structure (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1967), pp.2-14.
42. Parti Québécois, Programme...Edition 1971, p.47.
43. The similarities between the PQ and the British Labour Party are striking, at least with regard to the institutional cleavage bedevilling each party. For a lucid examination of the distribution of power within the U.K. Labour Party, see R.T. McKenzie, British Political Parties, 2nd ed. (London: Heinemann, 1973; first published 1965), pp.1-18, 594-649. According to McKenzie, external control of any political party's parliamentary representation would spell the demise of Cabinet government. This the labour leaders have realized, and from "Keir Hardie to Gaitskell [they] have repeatedly refused to accept external direction." (p.640)
44. For an excellent account of this controversy, see Murray, Le Parti québécois, pp.70-73, 191-195; Murray and Murray, De Bourassa à Lévesque, pp.203-211. Cf. Morin's interview with Gilbert Athot, "Vendre l'idée de l'interdépendance," Le Soleil, 20 September 1975.
45. Richard Hamilton and Maurice Pinard, "The Parti Québécois Comes to Power: An Analysis of the 1976 Quebec Election," Canadian Journal of Political Science XI:4 (Dec. 1978), pp.739-775.
46. See the articles by Michel Roy, Pierre O'Neill, and Bernard Descôteaux in Le Devoir, 30 May 1977.
47. Lévesque, La passion du Québec, p.196. Cf. Michel Roy, "Le gouvernement n'est pas lié par le PQ," Le Devoir, 30 May 1977.
48. de Wilde, "The Parti Québécois in Power," p.23.
49. Regarding the "Commission permanente du programme," see Pierre O'Neill "Le Parti presse Québec de respecter son programme," Le Devoir, 30 May 1977 and Réjean Pelletier, "Les relations entre le Parti québécois et le nouveau gouvernement," in Daniel Latouche, ed., Premier Mandat: une prospective à court terme du gouvernement péquiste, Tome II (Montréal: Aurora, 1977), pp.121-139. For the significance of Louise

Harel's election as party vice-president, see Bernard-Descôteaux, "Pour vider un abcès entre le gouvernement et le parti," Le Devoir, 31 May 1979. Finally, concerning Lévesque's (almost) undisputed dominance within the party, see Lise Bissonnette's perceptive editorial, "Le triomphe de l'étapisme," Le Devoir, 4 June 1979. Bissonnette writes that "La maturité du [PQ] est désormais évidente à l'oeil nu: c'est une formation qui représente les classes moyennes, qui allie une certaine générosité sociale à une bonne dose de conservatisme dans son programme...le signe ultime de cet équilibre tranquille au sein du parti reste l'ascendant indéniable que M. René Lévesque, chef incontesté, exerce sur ses troupes qui ont toutefois trouvé le moyen de lui rappeler, en élisant à l'exécutif du parti, une candidate qu'il contestait, que l'exercice du pouvoir mérite toujours d'être surveillé par les fantassins."

50. Parti Québécois, Prochaine étape... pp.36-37.
51. Hence the almost mythical status assigned to Sweden in the pronouncements of some party notables, particularly Lévesque. See his La Passion du Québec, pp.48, 187-188; *idem.*, "Nous n'attendrons pas l'indépendance," interview given to Le Nouvel Observateur, no.632 (20 December 1976), pp.32-34.
52. Parti Québécois, Prochaine étape... p.123.
53. *Ibid.*, p.126.
54. *Ibid.*, p.102. Note Schmitter's distinction between corporatism and pluralism in "Still the Century of Corporatism?" p.97: "...both pluralists and corporatists recognize, accept and attempt to cope with the growing structural differentiation and interest diversity of the modern polity, but they offer opposing political remedies and divergent images of the institutional form that such a modern system of interest representation will take. The former suggest spontaneous formation, numerical proliferation, horizontal extension and competitive interaction; the latter advocate controlled emergence, quantitative limitation, vertical stratification and complementary interdependence. Pluralists place their faith in the shifting balance of mechanically intersecting forces; corporatists appeal to the functional adjustment of an organically interdependent whole."
55. Parti Québécois, Programme...Edition 1971, pp.16-17, emphasis added.
56. *Ibid.*, pp.15-16; cf. *idem.*, Official Program...1978 Edition, p.34.

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57. Especially as regards the compulsory unionization of all workers in Quebec. The 1978 program merely mentions an easing of certification procedures in order to "facilitate the organization of all employees into unions of their choice." *Ibid.* The change, though slight, is an important one.
58. *Ibid.*, pp.20, 33-34. Again, and this is a reflection of the changing balance of forces within the PQ over the past decade, the present program does not specify the degree of formality that this permanent consultative machinery would possess. The program states only that tripartite discussions will take place during sectoral negotiations and at the time of The Plan's elaboration, and that these discussions will occur in a variety of organisms. In contrast, the program of the PQ's predecessor, the MSA, envisaged the creation of a tripartite Conseil économique et social, attached to the new "superministry" of the National Economy and charged with "l'élaboration publique et... la synthèse des futurs plans de développement..." Mouvement Souveraineté-Association, Ce pays qu'on peut bâtir (1968), p.24.
59. Parti Québécois, Programme...Edition 1971, p.16, emphasis added.
60. Lehmbruch, "Corporatism, Labour and Public Policy," p.9.
61. Parti Québécois, Prochaine étape... p.103, emphasis added.
62. Schmitter, "Still the Century of Corporatism," pp.96-97.
63. Jean Meynaud, "Le programme économique du P.Q." Maintenant, no.94 (March 1970), p.99. Cf. Miliband, The State in Capitalist Society. ch.4.
64. Watson, "Planning Practice in the Liberal Democratic State," p.470.
65. Parti Québécois, Official Program...1978 Edition, p.34. The program calls for the creation of workers' councils to act as "consultants for the management and direction of the company's operations."
66. See in particular, Prochaine étape... p.102; La Souveraineté et l'Economie, p.154.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PECULIARITIES OF CONCERTED ACTION IN QUEBEC

A Note on the 1976 Election and the New Regime

If any doubts about the balance of forces within the PQ existed prior to November 15, 1976, they were quickly dispelled by the party's actions after assuming office. The more radical provisions in the party program were discarded; fiscal and legislative prudence was the order of the day, but, in keeping with its self-styled social democratic orientation, the new government designated as one of its urgent priorities the restructuring of relationships among social groups in Quebec. In place of the tension and narrow preoccupation with sectional interests which had characterized social relations during the Bourassa years, the PQ would cultivate group harmony and an enlightened regard for the common good. The institution through which these new attitudes would develop was to be the multipartite¹ economic summit meeting:

Above all, our intention is to work for a healthier social climate, especially in respect to labour relations. Our major economic organizations, both labour and management, have already expressed some confidence in us and offered their cooperation. Only two months after our coming to power, there seems to be good reason to hope for less turmoil in Quebec. Through joint appraisal with our social partners, we want to attempt to consolidate this new atmosphere, with a consensus on the objectives of development, on a desirable growth rate, and a better allocation of our resources. Along these lines, the Government has already agreed in principle to an economic summit conference to be held this coming spring.²

Before proceeding to an examination of the salient features of this form of concerted action in Quebec and an analysis of its operation, I shall briefly describe a number of factors which have combined to put liberal corporatism on the agenda, no matter how tentatively, in present-day Quebec.

The first factor accounting for liberal corporatism's current prominence in Quebec is an ideological one, and was briefly sketched in the second chapter: in typically corporatist fashion, the dominant tendency within the PQ believes that industrial strife and other manifestations of group conflict are largely attributable to the attitudes of those involved. Change those attitudes, the argument goes, and social peace and economic progress are certain to follow. This position is highly reminiscent of that of Mackenzie King who, in Industry and Humanity, argued that:

...no form of organization is sufficient of itself to guarantee the co-operation and co-ordination of effort which will serve to unite the parties to Industry in a perfect harmony and in the furtherance of their common aim. ...A new spirit alone will suffice. This spirit must substitute Faith for Fear. It must breathe mutual confidence and constructive good-will. It must be founded on a belief in an underlying order which presupposes between individuals, not conflict, but community of interest... Once such a spirit is imparted to the parties to Industry... Industry itself will follow in the wake of industrial enterprise.³

In the case of the PQ government, this belief has led to the attempt to inculcate in the economic partners a national consciousness and a greater attention to collective economic goals.⁴

The purpose of the socio-economic conferences, therefore, is above all didactic: they are designed to educate society's partners and school them in the rights and responsibilities that pertain to each of them. Moreover, by meeting together in a non-conflictual environment, it is hoped that both labour and management will finally come to realize the legitimacy of each other's cause. Perhaps the frankest expression of this liberal corporatist vision of society has been uttered by Camille Laurin, that most voluble, if somewhat pompous, Minister of State for Cultural Development in the PQ government. The following is an excerpt from Laurin's opening address to the assembled economic agents at the 8th mini-summit (that is, an economic conference dealing with a specific sector of the economy, in this case tourism) and though overlong, it merits being quoted at length:

C'est notre neuvième sommet [one "grand sommet" and eight "mini-sommets"] et je pense qu'il est devenu maintenant évident que le gouvernement privilégie cette façon d'aborder...les problèmes. On peut se demander pourquoi le gouvernement a choisi cette approche d'une façon systématique. C'est parce que le gouvernement veut être moderne. Il se rend compte que le produit, quel qu'il soit, que fabriquent nos entreprises ou nos services, dans une société moderne, est le fruit de l'action conjuguée de plusieurs agents...un peu...comme la santé d'un individu est le produit de l'action silencieuse, mais harmonieuse de plusieurs organes, de plusieurs membres. ...dans notre société, il faut amener les parties à se connaître d'abord, à travailler d'une façon harmonieuse et unitaire, si on veut que le produit fini corresponde aux objectifs qui ont été fixés.

Donc, je considère que c'est déjà un progrès que de vous avoir amenés tous ensemble...vous opposiez peut-être les uns aux autres justement parce que vous ne vous connaissiez pas assez...⁵

Though it might be more indicative of his professional background than of any latent corporatist tendencies, Laurin's use of the medical analogy (society=corpus) in the above quotation is at the very least suggestive of the affinity between corporatist thought and certain strands of péquiste ideology.

The second factor underlying the PQ government's pursuit of a policy of concerted action is a structural, or pragmatic one. In the first chapter, I argued that the emergence of liberal corporatism in the advanced capitalist countries of Western Europe has been associated with the need to lessen industrial strife and check wage inflation in order to ensure orderly economic growth in a situation of often ruthless international economic competition. I also contended that a liberal corporatist approach to economic development becomes attractive to the state and its economic partners only when other options--greater reliance on the untrammelled operation of the market, for instance, or the use of coercive measures to discipline society's productive forces--are for some reason either ignored or deemed impracticable. These same factors came into play in 1976 in Quebec. In the first place, the new PQ government was faced with a deteriorating economic situation--in the month preceding the November election a chronic unemployment problem had worsened to the point where over 10% of the labour force was out of work; this at a time when the annual rate of inflation approached 7%.⁶ In the view of the PQ, Quebec's poor economic performance was due in no small measure to the Bourassa government's desultory approach to economic development. Rather than relying on the

disjointed efforts of a multiplicity of economic actors, as the Liberals had done, the PQ would coordinate and rationalize the activities of the major industrial partners, and elaborate a global economic plan. The planning process, the PQ was careful to point out, would not take place without prior consultations between the government and its partners. In this, the PQ hoped to emulate the economic success stories of a number of Western European countries--West Germany and the Scandinavian countries, for example--which had achieved significant rates of economic growth while managing to dampen inflation and hold down the number of strikes and lockouts.⁷ The stage was thus set for some form of functional representation in the state's economic decision-making structures.

A second deep-seated problem confronted the newly elected PQ government in 1976: the need to appease a militant labour movement and lessen industrial strife. Industrial relations in Quebec had been severely strained in 1976, especially in the parapublic and construction sectors; during this year almost 6.5 million man-days were lost in the province due to strikes or lock-outs, a figure which (taking account of the differences in the sizes of the labour force) rivalled that of Italy (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2). Indeed, industrial relations were one of the two main issues on which Robert Bourassa had chosen to fight the election (the other being Quebec's constitutional future). Claiming that certain trade union leaders were flouting the "social contract" reached in 1964 (the year the Labour Code was adopted), Bourassa announced in early November 1976 that the upcoming election would, in effect, constitute a plebiscite

on the question of the union's proper role in society: "ils vont voir que la population va décider qui mène, les syndicats ou le gouvernement."⁸

Moreover, as Hamilton's and Pinard's study points out, Bourassa attempted to play on the electorate's growing exasperation at organized labour's recalcitrance by promising to restrict the right to strike in the public sector, and to allow for state supervision of strike votes and union finances if re-elected (the PQ, on the other hand, simply promised measures to guarantee union democracy).⁹ Bourassa's confrontationist attitude toward the unions earned his government the implacable opposition of the three major trade union federations in Quebec. Both the Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec (CEQ, 85,000 members in 1978) and the Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN, 177,755 members in 1978) urged their membership to vote to defeat the Liberals--the "world champions of anti-unionism" in Yvon Charbonneau's words--although they stopped short of coming out in support of any particular party in the election. The third trade union central, the Fédération des travailleurs du Québec (FTQ, approximately 284,000 members in 1978) officially endorsed the PQ.¹⁰ Although it is impossible to assess precisely the impact that this unified labour opposition had on the electoral outcome, it no doubt played a significant role in defeating the Bourassa government.¹¹

In contrast to Bourassa's "big stick" approach to labour relations, the PQ, at least in the initial years of its mandate, adopted a soft line, appealing to the inherent rationality of the economic partners and placing its faith in the powers of discussion:

TABLE 3.1: Strikes and Lock-outs, 1976-1979

YEAR	QUEBEC	ONTARIO	CANADA
	Duration/Man-Days	Duration/Man-Days	Duration/Man-Days
1976	6,465,650	1,671,090	11,609,890
1977	1,274,980	1,111,270	3,307,880
1978	1,785,730	2,970,560	7,392,820
1979	3,273,510	2,529,050	7,834,230

Source: Labour Canada, Strikes and Lockouts in Canada.

TABLE 3.2: Strike Volume* for Selected Countries, 1976-1978

YEAR	SWEDEN	ITALY	CANADA	QUEBEC	WEST GERMANY
1976	6	1341	1213	2608	22
1977	21	835	339	509	1
1978	9	511	741	703	173

Sources: (1) ILO, Year Book of Labour Statistics.

(2) Statistics Canada, The Labour Force.

*Strike volume is here defined as number of man-days lost per thousand persons employed (in Civilian Labour Force).

Au moment d'assumer l'administration provinciale, le PQ se retrouvait avec des relations de travail parmi les plus tendues au monde: le Québec était seulement comparable à l'Italie quant aux journées perdues en grève. Pour 'discipliner' ces relations-là, le P.Q. abandonna la manière forte, celle des injonctions, des briseurs de grève et de la police, et proposa des 'institutions comme moyen, non pas de supprimer les deux extrêmes, le capital et le salariat, mais d'atténuer leur antagonisme et de le transformer en harmonie' (Marx, le 18 Brumaire) ...Ce qui caractérise la politique des relations de travail du gouvernement péquiste est la tentative d'humaniser ces rapports, d'atténuer les conflits, d'amener les classes opposées à se comprendre.¹²

One of the several functions of the economic conference is to aid in this "humanizing" of industrial relations. In exchange for being given some input into the planning process, the trade unions are expected to behave "responsibly," in a manner consonant with the requirements of a healthy economy. It is hoped that after a brief period of initiation into collaboration--in this sense the first economic summits can be viewed as a sort of apprenticeship in the techniques of concerted action--the traditional tension in capitalist society involving Labour, Capital and the State will give way to a mentality of shared responsibilities. The resultant climate of social peace will help to restore the dynamic character to Quebec's economy, or so the PQ argues.¹³

As a number of observers have pointed out,¹⁴ the PQ government's efforts at consensus-building in Quebec are not unrelated to its need to rally a majority of Québécois--from all social classes--to the cause of sovereignty-association, though this is by no means their sole, or even dominant purpose. To a certain extent, though, the economic summits

and other tripartite consultative bodies created since 1976 (especially the Institut national de productivité) prefigure the power relations that will exist (it is hoped) in an independent Quebec. On the one hand, the PQ is attempting to illustrate in concrete terms its alleged "favourable bias" towards the working class and demonstrate that it is a progressive administration in social, cultural and economic matters (after all, what government aside from theirs has felt the need to consult the trade unions on a broad range of policy initiatives?). On the other hand, the PQ hopes to assuage business's fears and show that it contemplates no radical changes in the existing structure of authority within capitalist society. Thus, at the second major economic summit meeting held at Montebello March 14-16, 1979, Premier Lévesque assured the representatives of business that his government recognized the necessity and legitimacy of profit, and agreed that the key role in Quebec's economic development would have to be played by the private sector.¹⁵ This attempt on the part of the government to appease labour and capital simultaneously merely confirms one of the fundamental characteristics of liberal corporatism described in the first chapter: it holds out the possibility that a number of relatively minor ideological and structural reforms in the capitalist economy will suffice to shore up the basic elements of that system (profit, private enterprise).

It should also be noted that the PQ's liberal corporatism, with its emphasis on consensus, harmony, and class collaboration, is in part intended to create as favourable a climate as possible for the passage of the

referendum on Quebec's constitutional future. This point has been trenchantly made by Yvon Charbonneau, former president of the CEQ, the union that has proven the least susceptible to the PQ's corporatist blandishments:

M. Charbonneau estime que le gouvernement, avec l'opération 'sommet économique' a voulu s'assurer des appuis dans le cadre du référendum. 'Le gouvernement veut à tout prix éviter les accrochages spectaculaires. Il veut créer une apparence d'ordre économique puisqu'il est évidemment intéressé au succès du référendum.'¹⁶

Thus far, I have concentrated on listing the factors which have led the PQ to attempt to integrate the organized producer groups into the province's economic decision-making centres. But what have been the responses of the government's "interlocutors?" Why should the organizations of labour and capital and, to a lesser extent, those of the cooperative movement and consumers, want to participate in such an arrangement, given the risks that liberal corporatism entails for each (See Chapter One)?

In the case of business, the reasons for its participation in the PQ's economic summits are fairly straightforward. To a large extent, the concerns that impelled the business leaders to attend the conferences were the same concerns that led the government to convene the summits. Both government and business were highly conscious of Quebec's poor economic performance over the preceding several years, especially in the areas of labour relations and productivity growth.¹⁷ Quebec was pricing itself out of many foreign markets, in the view of the business leaders; its unit labour costs were increasing more rapidly than those of its

major trading partners, and the costs incurred by frequent and bitter labour disputes were an added burden. Some of the less hidebound among the business establishment realized that the path of concerted action (whereby organized labour is accepted as a "partner," although, as we shall see, a distinctly junior one, and state intervention in the economy is tolerated up to a point) might be more profitable than the path of confrontation. In particular, the Centre des dirigeants d'entreprise (CDE)--"unquestionably the most progressive business association in Quebec"¹⁸--had, for some time prior to 1976, been advocating the adoption of a "moderate form of economic and social planning based on a flexible concerted action among the State, Labour, and Capital."¹⁹ The CDE's efforts had contributed in no small measure to the creation in 1968 of the Conseil consultatif du travail et de la main-d'oeuvre, a tripartite advisory board, and the establishment, in 1971, of the Conseil de planification et de développement du Québec (CPDQ), another (multipartite) advisory board in Quebec. Thus, the CDE welcomed the PQ's efforts to extend concerted action to the national level and to give it greater permanence. The more influential business associations like the Conseil du Patronat du Québec and the provincial Chamber of Commerce by no means balked at the government's initiative; indeed, the CPQ President saw the institution of a "new social contract" as a necessary step in Quebec's future socio-economic development.²⁰

An added consideration lay behind the business leaders' eager participation in the economic summits: they wished to reassure themselves as to the intentions of the new administration. Many in the business world were, prior to Pointe-au-Pic, openly worried by the new government's putative "favourable bias" towards labour and by its self-proclaimed social democratic leanings. Certain pieces of legislation, either enacted or being considered by the PQ (the raising of the minimum wage, the proposed revision of the Labour Code which included the acceptance of a compulsory dues check-off) were considered to be grave threats to the institution of private property. A strong business presence at the economic summits was therefore necessary in order to communicate to the new government management's fears and desires, and to point out the dangers that lay in what business felt was an incestuous government-labour alliance.²¹

The case of labour is somewhat more involved. In the euphoria following the victory of "their party"²² in 1976, the major trade union federations displayed a willingness to temper their traditional strategy of confrontation and to cooperate with the new government in framing social and economic policy:

...dans l'esprit des dirigeants syndicaux interrogés... 'le mouvement syndical pourrait devenir autre chose qu'une machine à revendications si le projet collectif mis de l'avant par le PQ donnait lieu prochainement à des réalisations concrètes.' ... 'il est important qu[e le mouvement syndical] participe à la mise en place de réformes importantes comme l'assurance automobile, puisqu'il a lui-même fait campagne pour ces objectifs sociaux. Il en est ainsi pour les améliorations au code du travail. S'il obtient une législation valable qui va dans le sens des souhaits exprimés depuis plusieurs années, il est sûr qu'il ne sera pas intéressé à couler le PQ sur des questions secondaires et ses revendications pourraient demeurer insatisfaites à cause de contraintes budgétaires.'²³

The labour movement's ideological uncertainty in the face of the independence question, and its confusion over the role that the PQ might play in any future national revolution, were two important factors which, in 1976, permitted this cautious opening to the new government.

One tendency within the trade union ranks had, by 1976, adopted an "étapiste" (in an entirely different sense of the term than that connoted by Claude Morin's referendum strategy) or two-stage interpretation of the independence question. According to this theory, the struggle for national liberation must precede the socialist revolution in Quebec, and since the Parti Québécois is the sole embodiment of the independence movement in Quebec, the working class ought to support it at the ballot box. The proponents of this theory do not argue that the PQ is a working-class party, merely that it is a *petit-bourgeois* political formation, of more or less progressive stripe, and quite unlike traditional parties in Quebec (since it is not financed by the corporate elite). The hope for the future implicit in this view is that the PQ, in the crucible of the national struggle, will be radicalized--it will realize that the success of its independence project rests to a large extent on the support of the working class--and will ultimately contribute to the victory of the proletariat.

The most prominent advocate of this theory among Quebec's labour organizations is the Conseil central des syndicats nationaux de Montréal (CCSNM, a regional council of the CSN; President from 1968 to 1978: Michel Chartrand.) whose 14th Congress in 1972 passed a resolution affirming the impossibility of socialism within federalism and committing the union

to an active role in the struggle for political independence. This same union officially endorsed the PQ in the 1973 election. Among intellectuals, a similar view, with the same practical consequences--tactical support for the PQ--has been enunciated by Pierre Vallières.²⁴

The other major trade unions in Quebec, with the exception of the FTQ, have been more circumspect on the question of tactical support for the PQ, and less willing than the CCSNM to espouse the cause of independence. The CEQ, for example, while acknowledging the importance of the national question, has in its public pronouncements accorded greater attention to the class struggle (in such manifestos as L'école au service de la classe dominante, 1972), and the same can be said of the CSN. Each of these federations, well before 1976, had promised to hold a referendum among their membership in order to settle the independence question and determine the correct stance to adopt with respect to the PQ, but had not done so by the time of the election.²⁵ Nevertheless, the leaders of both the CEQ and the CSN were probably well aware in 1976 that their membership included a significant number of firmly committed péquistes and indépendantistes;²⁶ this fact alone disposed the union leadership to adopt a more open attitude toward the PQ than they otherwise might have done. The initial response among the CSN and CEQ leadership to the PQ victory was therefore one of critical support for the new government; their radical critiques of the bourgeois state were muted, and a willingness to cooperate with the government replaced their traditional "confrontationist" attitude.²⁷

Thus, in the period immediately following the PQ victory, the time seemed opportune for a state-producer group collaboration in economic policy-making. In particular, if the new government had acted swiftly to implement some of the measures contained in its program that were championed by the labour movement (public automobile insurance plan, sectoral bargaining, legislation to increase access to unionization, economic planning based on the criterion of social justice, etc.) it might have been in a position to extract a voluntary commitment from the unions to tone down their industrial militancy. But, as the media have delighted in remarking, the "honeymoon" between the PQ and the labour movement was an extraordinarily short-lived one. After Finance Minister Jacques Parizeau's first austerity budget, then Labour Minister Jacques Couture's tergiversations on the reform of the Labour Code, and Minister of Consumers, Cooperatives and Financial Institutions Lise Payette's timid reform of automobile insurance (leaving to the private sector the profitable area of material damages), Michel Chartrand of the CCSNM began to talk of a "betrayal of the working class." His union's policy of tactical support for the PQ was therefore abandoned in favour of an openly conflictual position: there would be no collaboration between the CCSNM and the PQ government on the drafting of a new social contract.²⁸ As for the other unions in Quebec, their cautious opening to the new government was shaken; they therefore greeted with considerable scepticism Levesque's call in early 1977 for cooperation among the classes in an effort to restore social peace in Quebec.

The FTQ, alone among the trade union federations, immediately accepted the PQ's invitation to attend the Pointe-au-Pic conference, although it did express its dissatisfaction with the PQ's "foot-dragging" on a number of reforms promised in its program (especially the revision of the Labour Code).²⁹ It might at first glance appear paradoxical for a trade union federation which had denounced the Canadian Labour Congress's (CLC) May 1976 Manifesto calling for the establishment of "social corporatism" in Canada to participate, one year later, in a similar arrangement in Quebec. But Louis Laberge explained away this apparent contradiction: the FTQ had balked at the CLC's corporatist proposals because the federal government, in its view, toadied to the big financial and industrial interests in Canada. The PQ government, unlike its federal counterpart, was not beholden to big capital; moreover, it intended the Pointe-au-Pic conference to be a time for joint reflection and consultation, not blackmail.³⁰

The CSN and the CEQ, however, were internally divided over the question of whether or not to attend the summit conference and involve themselves in what they saw as a gigantic public relations exercise orchestrated by a cynical government. Their suspicion of the PQ's motives in convening the economic conference was graphically illustrated in Norbert Rodrigue's introductory speech to the social partners at Pointe-au-Pic:

On a beaucoup hésité dans notre centrale à participer à VOTRE Sommet économique. Nous n'ignorons pas que ce sommet économique précède de peu le congrès de votre parti et qu'il vise avant tout, de ce fait, une opération interne en vue de rassurer tous vos membres et une opération externe en vue d'augmenter votre crédibilité populaire...³¹

Both federations ultimately decided to attend the summit, though they denounced the PQ's corporatist intentions. Neither the CEQ nor the CSN wanted any part of a scheme which was primarily designed to secure labour's acquiescence in the "belt-tightening" necessary for a healthy capitalist economy. The CSN seemed particularly aware that the government might use the occasion of a tripartite conference to cajole the unions into accepting some sort of voluntary incomes policy.³² Thus, Norbert Rodrigue and Yvon Charbonneau rejected out of hand the government's talk of "dialogue," an eventual "social contract," and "economic partnership;" in their view there could be no social peace in a society based on the exploitation of one class by another:

...il n'est pas question de concertation tripartite puisqu'il n'y a guère, en l'occurrence, convergence des intérêts des classes sociales. La CEQ veut éviter en effet de souscrire à cette politique largement répandue dans les Etats libéraux de l'Occident de recourir à une concertation de type corporatiste en temps de crise, afin de faire payer aux travailleurs les échecs retentissants du système capitaliste...les intérêts du patronat et des travailleurs...sont divergents et irreconciliables et deux participants sur trois au sommet à venir se rangent d'emblée du côté patronal.³³

According to the terms of the CEQ's analysis, since the PQ government was obviously in the employ of big business, and since it had made no effort to ameliorate the condition of the working class within capitalist society, there was no question of labour's forsaking its traditional defensive

position for a more collaborative relationship with the state and business. Both the CEQ and the CSN would attend the Pointe-au-Pic conference, but only in order not to lose an opportunity to pressure the government to pursue the reforms contained in the PQ program.

As for the other social groups--consumers, academics, and the Union des producteurs agricoles (UPA, an association of farm owners)--that attended the economic summits, it would not be unreasonable to assert that the government's chief purpose in inviting them was to give the socio-economic conferences an artificially pluralist image and thus to block the possible charge of corporatism. A cursory inspection of Table 3.3 will show that the representation of the consumers' groups at the various conferences has been insignificant (with the exception of the Montebello conference when the government extended financial aid to these groups)³⁴ and the same is true of university groups and of the UPA. More importantly, these groups have not had the financial resources necessary to contribute significantly to the discussions at the summit meetings. The cooperatives--the Mouvement Desjardins, for example--are present at the conferences primarily as the representatives of indigenous capital in Quebec. It is upon the cooperative movement, and in particular the \$10 billion in funds administered by the caisses populaires that the PQ's hopes for a financially solvent independent Quebec largely rest:

TABLE 3.3 ECONOMIC SUMMITS IN QUEBEC, 1977-1980

SUMMITS	PARTICIPANTS (a)															
	Sector Place Date	Labour		Capital		Government		Cooperatives		Consumers		U.P.A.		Other (b)		Total (N) % (c)
GRAND SUMMIT Pointe-au-Pic 24-26 May/77		45	34.9	46	35.7	18	14.0	8	6.2	0	0	4	3.1	8	6.2	129 100.1
TEXTILES Drummondville 6 Sep 1977		11	42.3	11	42.3	4	15.4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	26 100.0
CLOTHING Montréal 8 Sep 1977		9	31.8	16	55.2	4	13.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29 100.0
FOOTWEAR Québec 9 Sep 1977		9	40.9	9	40.9	4	18.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	22 100.0
FURNITURE Victoriaville 12 Sep. 1977		10	40.0	11	44.0	4	16.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25 100.0
AGRICULTURE Québec 10-12 Apr./78		20	13.6	77	52.4	12	8.2	14	9.5	4	2.7	10	6.8	10	6.8	147 100.0
MARITIME FISHERIES Gaspé 28-29 Apr /78		21	33.3	24	38.1	3	4.8	11	17.5	2	3.2	0	0	2	3.2	63 100.1
MUNICIPALITIES Québec 9-11 June 1978		0	0	0	0	455	100.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	455 100.0
TOURISM Sherbrooke 30 Oct.-1 Nov 1978		2	3.8	21	40.4	6	11.5	2	3.8	4	7.7	0	0	17	32.7	52 99.9
CULTURAL INDUSTRIES Québec 1-5 Dec. 1978		18	36.8	24	49.0	3	6.2	1	2.0	1	2.0	0	0	2	4.0	49 100.0
GRAND SUMMIT Montebello 14-16 Mar./79		30	30.0	35	35.0	14	14.0	8	8.0	6	6.0	2	2.0	5	5.0	100 (d) 100.0
CEREALS St.-Hyacinthe 8-9 Nov. 1979								NO	DATA							
SHEEP Sherbrooke 22-23 Nov./79								NO	DATA							
POULTRY Lévis 13-14 Dec./79								NO	DATA							
PRODUCE Trois-Rivières 13-15 Feb./80								NO	DATA							
DAIRY GOODS Rimouski 13-14 Mar /80								NO	DATA							
COOPERATIVES Montréal 4-7 Feb /80		4	3.8	5	4.7	9	8.5	83	78.3	2	1.9	0	0	1	2.8	106 100.0

Sources: Gouvernement du Québec, Bilan des conférences sociales économiques, Montebello, Rapport, L'entreprise coopératives dans le développement économique.

(a) participants = those with the right to speak at plenary sessions of the conferences

(b) "Other" includes academics & representatives of the public sector (Hydro-Québec, SIdbec, etc.)

(c) % may not total 100.0 due to rounding off of numbers

(d) Total excludes 34 advisory personnel

The PQ sees the caisses populaires playing an integral role in financing and guiding economic development. Such a development would provide the state with the means of influencing a more complete use of Quebec savings in the running of a national economy...it would be the means of pooling and mobilizing risk capital on behalf of small and large business, the party's economic priority.³⁵

Thus, as in the case of Mackenzie King's Industrial Parliaments, capital comes to the round table discussions with two representatives to labour's one.

In summary, then, the initial responses of the social partners to the government's attempts to institute a form of concerted action in Quebec did not augur well for the ~~long~~ term, or even immediate, success of liberal corporatism in the province. The major business associations, although receptive to the idea of concerted action, especially if it secured from labour a commitment to raise productivity and lessen industrial strife, were clearly less willing to make any substantive concessions to their "partner." The trade unions were at most unwilling, and in some cases confused participant, torn between an initial sympathy for the moderately progressive PQ program and a growing realization that the government was something less than "labour's friend." Contrary to the experience of a number of Western European countries which have successfully pursued policies of concerted action, the trade unions in Quebec (or at least two of them--the CSN and the CEQ) did not see concerted action as a trade-off between lessened institutional autonomy and greater access to decision-making, nor did they view the PQ as a social democratic government capable of reinforcing the position of labour within the corporatist system. These

attitudes of the social partners towards the desirability of concerted action in Quebec go a long way toward explaining its almost complete lack of success thus far.

Economic Summits I: Structure

Seventeen socio-economic conferences were convened by the PQ government between May 1977 and March 1980 (see Table 3.3) and all indications are that the PQ will continue to emphasize this mode of policy-formation if it succeeds in getting itself re-elected. Of these seventeen conferences two were "grand summits" which addressed themselves to a number of global economic trends and national concerns. The remaining fifteen conferences were "mini-summits," which dealt with the problems specific to one sector of the economy. Both types of conference operate according to the principles of the round table: one participant will advance his or her own analysis of the problem under discussion, the next will respond to these views and in turn put forward his or her own proposals, and so on. A certain amount of bargaining and moderating of initial positions is supposed to take place, with the ultimate objective being the securing of an agreement on Quebec's social and economic priorities for an unspecified period of time:

Le dialogue ne supprime pas les divergences mais les reconnaît. À cause de la pression qu'elle exerce sur les participants, la conférence peut inciter des ajustements bénéfiques et dégager des accords qui n'avaient pas nécessairement été envisagés au départ...une conférence socio-économique reconnaît au départ qu'entre les agents, il existe des intérêts divergents, voire opposés. Une conférence n'a pas pour but de supprimer ces divergences, mais de rechercher les points de convergences possibles sur un ensemble de solutions où tous pourraient y trouver des avantages.

La perspective à plus ou moins long terme est d'en arriver à une acceptation du partage des responsabilités dans le développement social et économique du Québec, et à des actions multipartites définies entre les différents partenaires.³⁶

It is customary for the government, represented by either the Prime Minister or a top-level Cabinet Minister, to lead off the discussions and to sum up the conference's activities. The only difference between the grand and mini-summits in terms of their structure consists in the latter's reliance on workshops (*travaux en ateliers*) for the discussion of certain topics; at the grand summits, all deliberations take place at a plenary session. No joint communiqué is issued by the conference's participants,³⁷ but the government representative, in his closing remarks, usually calls attention to the various "points of convergence"--no matter how banal--reached by the social partners. A report of the proceedings, along with the background documents presented to the conference, is then published by the Permanent Secretariat for the Socio-economic Conferences in Quebec.

Concerted action in Quebec is comparatively informal and unstructured; using Lehmbruch's terminology, it can be said to have a very low degree of institutionalization (see Chapter One). The economic summits, for instance, have no life of their own; rather they are called into existence when the government deems the moment propitious. No binding decisions are made at the conferences, nor are the participants--with the occasional exception of the government--formally committed to a future course of action. Gilles Châtillon, director of the Secrétariat permanent des conférences socio-économiques sees this lack of formal organization of concerted action in Quebec as a virtue, given the province's peculiar situation:

A mon avis, et me basant sur la réalité québécoise actuelle, institutionnaliser la concertation, par exemple, par la création d'un organisme quelconque, c'est risquer de brûler les étapes importantes qui restent à franchir. J'appréhende personnellement qu'un organisme très officiel, qu'une procédure très formelle à ce stade-ci, conduisent à une culture des conflits en vase clos.³⁸

As long as the attitudes of the social partners remain undisciplined, then, the PQ will preserve the informal character of concerted action in Quebec, but it very clearly expects to move to a statutory, permanent form of interest group collaboration in economic policy-making in the near future (once a "national consciousness" has been instilled in the economic agents). Thus, in Bâtir le Québec, published in September 1979, the government proposed to create, after consultations with its partners, a Conseil économique et social, though it did not specify the powers that this body would have or the criteria according to which its members would be chosen.³⁹ The PQ here has resurrected one of the major planks in the MSA's 1968 program.

A second characteristic of concerted action in Quebec is the fact that the government has been the prime mover in this arrangement. As Châtillon again points out with admirable forthrightness, "C'est le gouvernement qui est le moteur; c'est lui qui convoque, qui prépare et qui organise. Il ne s'agit pas d'une concertation dans laquelle le gouvernement ne serait qu'un des partenaires, mais plutôt d'une consultation-décision dans laquelle le gouvernement est l'hôte et le principal acteur..."⁴⁰ As befits its technocratic orientation, the PQ has made certain that the government and its corps of experts retain ultimate

control over every phase of the consultative process, from the selection of the participants to the determination of the topics for discussion. The bureaucratic organ through which the PQ exerts this control is the Secrétariat permanent des conférences socio-économiques. Created by order-in-council on November 23, 1977, the Secrétariat is composed of four members of the civil service and is attached to the Executive Council. Its mandate is to provide the leadership and expertise necessary for the smooth functioning of concerted action in Quebec. The Secrétariat may draw upon the resources and personnel of other departments in the bureaucracy in order to edit and distribute background documents for the summits; draw up the agenda for each conference and decide upon its major themes; publish the reports of the proceedings of the conferences and make these available to the media and the public and provide the necessary logistical support for the Summits (lodgings, catering, transportation).⁴¹

The responsibilities assigned to the Secrétariat tend to place the other participants at the conferences in a reactive, defensive position. In the first place, the Secrétariat, with the vast research facilities of the government and the academic world at its disposal, produces exhaustively documented background papers which are the focus of all discussions at the conference. The social partners, especially the trade union representatives, are compelled to react to the proposal contained in the government documents, and have little opportunity to put forward their own detailed analyses, if such exist, of the problem under discussion or to deflect the talks to other areas of concern. Such a situation parallels

the operation of concerted action in West Germany, where the trade unions, confronted with the government's thoroughly researched position papers, "found themselves continually on the defensive, bound largely by the framework set by the government and with no influence on the formulation of the subjects under discussion."⁴² The Secrétariat and certain Cabinet ministers (notably Bernard Landry) claim, however, that the agenda for each conference is drawn up only after consultations between the government and its partners, so that the government is aware of the concerns and demands of the economic agents (and presumably incorporates these into its studies). But this preliminary consultation is far removed from actually allowing the labour organizations or business associations (though, as we shall see, the latter need not be overly concerned by this fact) to participate in drafting the conference's agenda. As one trade union leader remarked at Pointe-au-Pic:

...nous n'avons pas pu nous empêcher de constater que nous n'étions pas conviés à préparer ce sommet, que nous n'avons été consultés ni sur les thèmes qui y seront abordés, ni même sur toutes les procédures qui en fixaient le déroulement. Nous décelons dans cette façon de faire les traits constants de la politique du Parti québécois à l'égard des centrales. Vous vous placez théoriquement au-dessus de ceux que vous appelez les acteurs sociaux alors que les forces qui vous dominent sont les mêmes qui dominent l'économie et qui nous dominent.⁴³

Though there was undeniably greater consultation between the government and its interlocutors prior to the Montebello conference--the Secrétariat (which had not existed at the time of the Pointe-au-Pic Summit) met with some 30 representatives of 16 different organizations in the fall of 1978 to discuss the agenda and distributed the major background document,

L'Etat de la situation socio-économique, to the participants a month before the Summit opened⁴⁴--this summit too was very much a government show. Interestingly, the government chose not to allow any discussion of the issue of worker health and safety at Montebello, on the grounds that a Bill dealing with this matter was in parliamentary committee (a line of reasoning the CSN dismissed as an "unconvincing pretext").⁴⁵

In this instance, on an important aspect of social and economic policy, the government preferred to follow traditional avenues of policy-making and interest group consultation--the parliamentary committee--to using the corporatist subsystem for its discussion.

Another factor which limits the effectiveness of the economic summits as consensus-building devices is labour's refusal to accept the notion that the government experts working out of the Secrétariat are neutral or that the studies they produce are totally objective. According to the CSN, for instance, the bewildering welter of statistics, charts and graphs contained in the government's "objective" background document for the Montebello conference, L'Etat de la situation socio-économique, is not free from a certain ideological *parti pris*. Some subjects are completely passed over by the experts, and it just so happens that these are the subjects which most concern the labour movement in Quebec--the need for a redistribution of wealth in society, the necessity of controlling excessive profits, and the desire for greater access to unionization in the province. At the same time, the CSN argues, the subjects treated in the background document are done so from a distinctly

"managerialist" perspective: for the authors of L'Etat de la situation socio-économique, the assurance of a good quality of work life is simply one tool at management's disposal to raise production and profits, while "industrial democracy" is a means of retaining the workers' interest in their jobs and thus of keeping private industry dynamic and profitable.

In the CSN's view, profit is always the overriding concern of these experts:

...les auteurs du texte commencent avec un nombre limité de préoccupations qu'ils disent communes à tous les 'partenaires sociaux consultés.' Ensuite, les points de vue syndicaux sont écartés tout au long du document, pour faire place aux points de vues patronaux, que ce soit au niveau de l'analyse des problèmes, de l'orientation du développement économique, des changements dans le milieu de travail... Bien que les auteurs du document et Monsieur Châtillon prétendent le contraire, le document va bien au-delà d'une présentation de renseignements purement factuels. Il met de l'avant des analyses et des propositions d'orientation économique qui soutiennent la stratégie générale de la classe capitaliste de rentabiliser les entreprises en s'attaquant au pouvoir d'achat des travailleurs, en faisant dégrader encore davantage la vie au travail et en mettant l'économie québécoise au service du grand marché nord américain.⁴⁶

In distributing documents such as L'Etat de la situation socio-économique to its social partners, the PQ government has one principal objective in mind: to provoke in the producer groups a realization of the limits to their independence. It is hoped that the organizations of labour and business will, in light of the data contained in these studies, adopt more realistic positions during the collective bargaining process. From there, it should be a relatively easy step to reaching a consensus on national economic priorities and a division of responsibilities for future action. However, labour's categorical rejection of the analytical framework used by the government's experts casts serious doubts on the viability of the

PQ's project. The social partners have yet to arrive at a common analysis of the most pressing problems facing Quebec's economy, let alone agree to any future course of action.

The third distinguishing characteristic of concerted action in Quebec, in addition to its relative informality and the dominant role played by the state in this structure, is the broad range and great number of social and economic interests represented at the intermittent summits. Over 100 representatives of government, business, labour, consumers, the cooperative movement, and the academic world, have taken part in each of the two grand summits, and this figure excludes those who attended simply as observers, without the right to speak. It is the Secrétariat's responsibility to determine the criteria for selecting the participants (total number invited, the number of representatives from each social partner, the organizations within each interest area that will be invited) and the actual choice is made by the Secrétariat after consultations with the organization in question.⁴⁷ The following is a brief list of the major organizations invited to attend the two grand summits:⁴⁸

I - Business

- (1) Le Conseil du Patronat du Québec (CPQ): a federation of some 125 business associations and 275 individual companies--the only one of its kind in North America--formed in 1969. The Conseil is represented on a number of governmental advisory boards (the CCTMO, and the CPDQ, for example) and is generally regarded as the "most effective spokesman for management vis-à-vis the Quebec government and Quebec society as a whole."⁴⁹

- (ii) La Chambre de Commerce de la Province du Québec: a federation of 200 local chambers which maintains formal and informal contacts with the provincial government in order to promote the concerns of business.
- (iii) La Chambre de Commerce du district de Montréal and the Montreal Board of Trade: French and English members of the provincial Chamber representing the Montreal region.
- (iv) Le Centre des dirigeants d'entreprise (CDE): an association of approximately 1000 businessmen, representing 400 firms (mostly small and medium industry). Created in 1943, and originally animated by the Social Catholic doctrine, the CDE has been, as I noted above, one of the most vocal advocates of concerted action in Quebec.
- (v) The Canadian Manufacturers' Association (Quebec Division): represents 1800 manufacturing firms in Quebec.
- (vi) Le Conseil des hommes d'affaires Québécois (CHAQ): created in 1973, this association of 600 *indépendantiste* businessmen has as its primary objectives the promotion of Quebec's political sovereignty and the defense of the French language.
- (vii) The Presidents of a number of large corporations in Quebec including Bombardier, Alcan, Campeau Corporation, Steinberg's etc.

II - Labour

- (i) The four provincial trade union federations: FTQ, CSN, CEQ and CSD (the last is a breakaway faction of the CSN, established in 1972).
- (ii) Independent unions such as the Syndicat des fonctionnaires provinciaux du Québec (35,000 members; President: Jean-Louis Harguindeguy).

- (iii) The major affiliate unions of the provincial federations: le Syndicat des métallos (FTQ - Président: Jean Gérin-Lajoie); le Syndicat canadien de la fonction publique (FTQ - Président: Roger Laramée); and la Fédération nationale des syndicats du bâtiment et du bois (CSN - Président: Michel Bourdon).

III - Cooperatives

- (i) La Fédération des caisses populaires Desjardins
(Président: Alfred Rouleau)
- (ii) L'Assurance-vie Desjardins
- (iii) La Fédération des magasins Coop
- (iv) Les Pêcheurs unis du Québec
- (v) La Fédération des caisses d'économie du Québec
- (vi) La Fédération des caisses d'entraide économique du Québec
- (vii) La Coopérative fédérée du Québec

IV - Consumers

- (i) La Fédération nationale des associations de consommateurs
- (ii) L'Association pour la protection des automobilistes
- (iii) L'Association des consommateurs du Québec Inc.

V - Public Sector

- (i) President of Hydro-Quebec, Robert Boyd
- (ii) President of la Société générale de financement (SGF)
Guy Coulombe
- (iii) President of Sidbec, Jean-Paul Gignac
- (iv) President of La Société de développement industriel (SDI)
Jean Labonté
- (v) President of La Société de développement coopératif (SDC)
Léopold Marquis.

VI - Agriculture

(i) L'Union des producteurs agricoles

The overriding concern manifested by the Secrétariat in its choice of participants has been to bring to the conference table the major "decision-makers" (les "décideurs") from the key sectors of the economy. Thus, the government is always represented by a Cabinet minister (in order that he/she might hear at first hand the concerns and demands of the state's interlocutors and formulate policy accordingly), while the other organizations are represented by elected officials (in the case of the trade unions, business associations and other interest groups) or presidents (in the case of individual corporations). The reasoning behind this choice of participants is quite simple: if the economic conferences are to be something more than an exercise in public relations, if there is to be an actual sharing of responsibilities for Quebec's future development, then the government must meet with representatives who can effectively speak for their constituencies and commit them to a specific course of action. Though the Secrétariat's choice of participants might, on the surface, appear to give the conferences some chance of being an effective policy-making body, the structure of trade union federations and business associations in Quebec is such as to render illusory the PQ's hopes for a tripartite approach to economic planning. Moreover, the sheer number of "decision-makers" involved makes the economic summits a rather unwieldy planning mechanism.

In summary, the inchoate concerned action set in motion by the PQ government appears to be a feeble imitation of the "new social contract" achieved in some of the Western European countries. Unlike the latter, where a social democratic party, either as the government or as part of a governing coalition, is in a position--and what is more important, is willing--to grant organized labour substantial concessions (whether in the form of co-determination, participation in investment planning, labour market planning, etc.) in exchange for labour's "realism" in collective bargaining, the PQ government has little to offer apart from its good intentions. As one trade unionist at the mini-summit on tourism remarked, organized labour in Quebec cannot be placated by the mere expression of a "favourable bias" towards the working class.⁵⁰ Until such time as the PQ makes a determined effort to satisfy some of the labour movement's most pressing demands--sectoral bargaining and greater financial accountability of the corporations--one of the social partners is likely to be an increasingly unwilling participant in the government-led economic summits. Labour's deep-seated scepticism of the motives behind the government's policy of concerted action has had one principal result: it has rendered the economic summits extremely ineffective as policy-making bodies. In the next section, then, I shall consider the immediate results of these conferences, both concrete (what policies have issued directly from these talks?) and symbolic (has the PQ at least succeeded in altering the attitudes of the social partners and in instilling in them a greater regard for the national interest?).

Economic Summits II: Themes and Results

Many observers of the socio-economic conferences--and some of the participants in these affairs as well--agree that the summits are most often a showcase for long, arid, monologues rather than the seed of a true dialogue. At the two grand summits in particular, the "points of convergence" spontaneously arrived at by the social partners were few in number and relatively insignificant. Each side (and I am here referring to labour and business--the contributions of the other partners have been infrequent and lacking in substance) has tended to address the government directly, fustigating its alleged partner for any number of sins (inflexibility, self-centredness, etc.), and thus forcing the government to search desperately for the common ground between the two. The results, as we shall see below, have ranged from the banal to the farcical.

At the Pointe-au-Pic summit, the government directed the discussions to two major areas of concern:

- (i) Quebec's economy--the need to improve productivity growth and to agree on an economic development strategy; and
- (ii) Industrial Relations--the need to lessen industrial strife in the province by ensuring worker health and safety, improving the status of working women, creating tripartite consultative organisms, disseminating economic data to the social partners and revising the Labour Code.⁵¹

On each of these topics, the amount of agreement the government was able to secure from its social partners was negligible at best.

On the matter of productivity, labour and management (as might be expected) pointed to different reasons for Quebec's poor performance, the former citing poor managerial skills, low levels of investment, antiquated machinery and a restricted market, the latter laying the blame on outrageous labour costs. The government promised to study the possibility of creating a national productivity institute (and indeed did so: the Institut national de productivité was established in June 1978), a proposal which elicited a certain amount of interest from the business representatives but left labour indifferent. No headway whatsoever was made on the issue of an economic development strategy: certain labour leaders (notably Michel Bourdon)⁵² asserted that economic progress would be possible only after socialism had superseded capitalism, whereas the spokesmen for business claimed that all that was necessary for economic development was a healthy political climate (implying that the PQ should get its house in order and exercise some legislative prudence, especially on the language question). For its part, the government announced its intention to proceed with sectoral consultations with its partners in order to elaborate a coherent, global, economic development strategy (hence the nine mini-summits held between May 1977 and March 1979). About the only commitment undertaken by any of the participants was the government's pledge to adopt a "Buy-Quebec" plan for state-owned corporations in order to stimulate the local manufacturing sector.

The discussions on industrial relations were somewhat more fruitful than those on the economy, at least in terms of actual policy commitments on the part of the government. On worker health and safety, Lévesque

was pleased to note that there was a "consensus" among the participants on the need to improve working conditions and lessen industrial accidents (but who, seriously, would have been reluctant to express a nebulous desire to improve the situation?); however, there was considerable disagreement as to who ought to oversee the more stringent application of safety norms in industry and how quickly the government should proceed in this area. Government and business agreed that industrial safety ought to be the joint responsibility of workers and management, but labour seemed a bit leery of this formula (according to the CSN, workers alone should decide when conditions are unsafe). "Further study of the matter was thus the order of the day."⁵³

The discussions on industrial relations resulted in two additional government undertakings: first, to revitalize the Conseil consultatif du travail et de la main-d'oeuvre (CCTMO) in order to facilitate a dialogue between the state and the organizations of business and labour. According to Lévesque, the CCTMO would become a "privileged interlocutor," advising the government on proposed labour legislation and other matters pertaining to industrial relations.⁵⁴ Secondly, the government promised to create an information bureau within the Ministry of Labour which would gather statistics on labour relations and the labour market and disseminate these to the trade unions and employers' associations. Such a bureau was created by order-in-council on November 8, 1978. This data bank is further proof that the PQ government believes greater access to information compiled by neutral experts will lead to more realistic behaviour on the part

of labour and management, and ultimately to a more harmonious system of industrial relations in Quebec.⁵⁵ Since the information bureau does not have the powers to compel the corporations to release financial and investment information, however, it is highly doubtful that the hoped for harmony in industrial relations will appear in the near future.

On the crucial issue of revising the Labour Code, little was said apart from the government's assurance that legislation would soon be introduced into the National Assembly. Lévesque rejected the CPQ's plea for a one-year moratorium on all revisions to the Labour Code (the delay would have permitted a detailed study of the impact such changes as the Rand formula and anti-scab provisions would have on the various sectors). At the same time, the Premier informed the trade unions that the government was forced to work within the confines of the parliamentary system, and that it might therefore be some time before the legislation was piloted through the Assembly.

Bill 45, ratified on December 23, 1977, went some distance in meeting the demands put forward by labour at the Pointe-au-Pic conference. It provided for a compulsory dues check-off, a liberalization of certification procedures, the compulsory arbitration of first collective agreements in the event of a dispute, the right of striking workers to regain their jobs; and it prohibited companies from hiring workers to replace those on strike unless such action was necessary to prevent the destruction or serious deterioration of their property. This last qualification (which the CSN and the CEQ considered an escape clause for the capitalists),

combined with the provisions for state surveillance of the internal functioning of unions contained in Bill 45 (especially as regards their financial affairs, holding of strike votes, etc.) succeeded in dissipating the enthusiasm labour initially had for the legislation without at the same time securing business's support for the measures. Indeed, the CPQ denounced the final version of the Bill as a threat to individual liberties and a potentially lethal blow to the institution of private property.⁵⁶ Perhaps no better illustration can be found of the PQ's determination to play the role of neutral arbiter among a number of competing interests and guarantor of the common good; judging from their reactions to Bill 45, however, this role is satisfying neither of the state's interlocutors.

In summary, the conference at Pointe-au-Pic was an inauspicious beginning to the government's proposed dialogue on Quebec's future economic development. No new equilibrium in industrial relations was reached, no common analysis of the economy's major weaknesses was arrived at, and certainly no agreement on a sharing of responsibilities for future action was extracted from the social partners. Indeed, little of substance resulted from the first summit, aside from the government's promises to multiply consultative bodies in the province, to study a number of matters of concern to both business and labour, and to continue to set up the institutional machinery required for a successful policy of concerted action. But what of the subsequent conferences? Has the PQ succeeded in moving from the first stage of initiating the social partners into collaboration to a "true" concerted action (whereby the economic agents

agree to modify their behaviours in order to promote the "common good," however the latter is defined)? Here again, the PQ's hopes have proven largely chimerical.

The first four tripartite sectoral conferences (on textiles, clothing, footwear, and furniture) were held in September 1977 in the hope that some plan could be drawn up for the economic recovery of the traditional manufacturing industries in Quebec.⁵⁷ However, these mini-summits served more to illuminate the major difficulties facing the province's traditional sector--declining sales, rising unemployment, an antiquated infrastructure, and stiff competition from foreign products--than to give the social partners an active part in economic planning. Both labour and management agreed that something had to be done to protect employment in these four industries (which together account for 23.8% of the labour force in Quebec's manufacturing sector)⁵⁸ and to increase sales. They therefore urged the provincial government to pressure Ottawa to maintain tariff barriers at existing levels (and thus to fight any attempt to reduce tariffs that might occur as a result of the Tokyo Round of negotiations of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) and to set quotas on imports of textiles, clothing, and footwear at 1975 levels for a five-year period (in late 1978 and early 1979, the federal government did indeed impose quotas on these products, though not at the levels desired by the Quebec government).⁵⁹ For its part, the provincial government promised increased financial and technical assistance to these troubled industries, primarily through a relaxing of the terms on which the

Société de développement industriel (SDI) can extend credit to industries in the province.⁶⁰

The "soft sectors" in Quebec did experience a mild upturn in 1978, but to affirm, as has Bernard Landry, that this improved performance had anything to do with the holding of the mini-summits would require a complete suspension of disbelief.⁶¹ The stabilization or growth of employment and the increases in production and retail sales experienced by these four industries in 1978 were almost certainly attributable to a number of factors entirely unrelated to "dialogue" among the social partners. Chief among these were the devaluation of the Canadian dollar, the selective removal, on April 13, 1978, of the provincial sales tax in Quebec on clothing, textiles, footwear and furniture, and the implementation of the federal quotas. The last two measures, though briefly discussed at the sectoral conferences, were government initiatives; there is no evidence to suggest that the mini-summits hastened their adoption. Indeed, in the case of the abolition of the provincial sales tax on certain items, Finance Minister Parizeau may have been more concerned with upstaging his federal counterpart than he was with fulfilling the government's obligations to its social partners.⁶²

The other five mini-summits held before the Montebello conference resulted in few substantive policy initiatives. The conference on agriculture and the food industries committed the partners to a development strategy which would rely on Quebec's comparative advantages and called for the creation of an export agency to promote the sale of Quebec's

products. The maritime fisheries summit called for the establishment of a multipartite (comprising fishermen, cooperatives, business, labour, consumers, and government) fisheries advisory board which would oversee the development of this industry in Quebec. Such a board, composed of twelve members, was created by order-in-council on 16 August 1978. The conference on Quebec's municipalities (which was strictly a government affair; neither labour nor business was invited to attend) was the occasion for the government's unveiling of its plans for administrative decentralization. The tourism summit led to an agreement on the necessity of rationalizing road signs and signals in Quebec in order to attract foreign visitors, while the conference on the cultural industries announced the creation of a new crown corporation, La Société de développement des industries culturelles (SDIC) which would invest in a variety of cultural endeavours in the province (theatre, recording industry, publishing) in an attempt to safeguard and promote Quebec's unique culture.⁶³

From the obvious lack of actual policies issuing from the mini-summits it is reasonable to infer that the principal objective of this particular institution is to give credence to the myth of participation, to convince organized labour and the other, lesser, social partners (consumers, for example) that they have an important role to play in formulating economic policy. A brief examination of the subjects for discussion at these sectoral conferences should dispel any illusions that the summits afford the trade unions an effective voice in determining economic policy. What Michael Watson said about consensus-building in general (see Chapter One) holds for the PQ's version of concerted action:

it is an inherently biased undertaking. At the mini-summits, for example, it is tacitly assumed that what is good for business (expansion, concentration and high profits) is good for the nation as a whole (everyone, it is assumed, shares equally in the benefits of economic progress). The "sectional interests" of the labour movement--the desire to increase wages and access to unionization in the traditional manufacturing sector and in the service industries (especially tourism, and the hotel and restaurant industry), a concern with the working conditions in these industries, a demand for greater job security, and a desire for re-investment of "excessive" profits--were made to appear incompatible with the short-term competitiveness of these industrial sectors. Thus, although the unions undoubtedly benefited indirectly from some of the measures adopted by the government after the mini-summits were held (keeping in mind what I said earlier: the mini-summits may have had no influence on the eventual implementation of these measures) especially the selective removal of the sales tax, their most pressing demands were fobbed off onto a variety of commissions of inquiry, study groups and task forces.⁶⁴

The fundamental limitations of the type of concerted action proposed by the PQ were thrown into sharp relief at the second grand summit at Montebello in March 1979. The three major themes drawn up for this conference by the Secretariat--access to markets, investments, and human resources--were generally considered by the trade union delegation to ignore the real concerns of Quebec's workers. The background documents

and the conference agenda, it was felt, were drawn up from a "managerialist" perspective, and the government's specific commitments reflected this bias. A brief analysis of the results of the Montebello conference will bear out labour's assertion.

The "perspectives for future action" and the "sharing of responsibilities" agreed to, or at least acquiesced in, at the Montebello conference are summarized below:

I - Access to Markets

The government

- (i) committed itself to a "Buy-Quebec" policy in state-owned enterprises, promised to revise the pamphlet, Les milles façon d'acheter québécois and urged the private sector to increase its use of local products in the manufacture of goods;
- (ii) promised to revise its policy of financial aid to industry in order to promote the marketing and sale of Quebec-made goods;
- (iii) pledged to extend greater financial and technical assistance to industry in order to boost Quebec's exports.

II - Investments

The government

- (i) promised to increase public sector investments in the stagnating sectors of the economy, and pressed the private sector to "assume its responsibilities" in order to bring per capita investment up to the same level as that in Ontario;
- (ii) promised to create a public-private corporation which would act as "une sorte de table de concertation pour les interventions dans le secteur industriel;"⁶⁵

- (iii) promised to establish an assistance program for small and medium industry to help improve the quality of entrepreneurship in this sector;
- (iv) rejected the union's demand that savings (i.e. public and private pension funds plus insurance funds) be nationalized in Quebec. Both the CSN and the FTQ urged the creation of a state-owned corporation which would administer these funds and invest them in the sectors necessary for a planned, socially just, economic development. This new corporation would exist alongside a revamped Caisse de dépôt et de placement; both would be operated according to the criteria of social justice and not profitability. The government felt this proposal was inopportune (it would scare off investors) and unnecessary.⁶⁶

III - Human Resources

The government

- (i) called on business and labour to hold voluntary bilateral talks (without the government present as "midwife")⁶⁷ on manpower policy and related subjects;
- (ii) undertook to study the unions' proposal for an employment stabilization fund (financed by contributions from all employers in the province) which would compensate those workers involved in massive layoffs;
- (iii) urged its partners to take measures to improve the status of women in industry;
- (iv) expressed an interest in the idea of an "educational holiday" for workers;
- (v) promised to abandon gradually the use of the injunction as a normal tool of industrial relations policy;

- (vi) promised to study various proposals for increasing worker participation in the operation of the individual firm (whether through profit-sharing, co-determination, experiments in self-management, or worker acquisition of share capital);
- (vii) committed itself to studying the means of increasing the rates of unionization in Quebec (particularly in the private sector) including the unions' demand for sectoral bargaining or sectoral certification.

Montebello, then, produced two principal types of commitments on the part of the government to its social partners: first, the government promised to increase state largesse to industry, and secondly, it undertook to study a number of proposals which would significantly increase the organizational strength of the labour movement in Quebec. This proliferation of studies enabled the government to forge a "consensus" out of what would have been an intractable opposition between the social partners; labour and management may have been in fundamental disagreement over the indexing of the minimum wage, or the need for sectoral bargaining in Quebec, but they could at least agree to study these matters. Such was the case in regard to the most contentious issue raised at Montebello--sectoral bargaining. The trade unions demanded that the government take some effective action to guarantee the right to freedom of association in Quebec; the provisions contained in Bill 45 for more flexible certification procedures were considered to be only a faltering step in the desired direction.⁶⁸ According to the unions, a new form of collective bargaining, based not on the individual plant but on some larger unit (a variously defined sector), was the only effective means of allowing the majority of

workers (especially in small and medium industry) to exercise their freedom to join unions, since small bargaining units are subject to the paternalistic influence of the employer. At Montebello, however, it was apparent that the representatives of capital (especially the CPQ and the CDE) would have no truck with the notion of sectoral bargaining. To small- and medium-sized firms, sectoral bargaining is anathema, since it would lead to an increase in unionization, which in turn would lead to higher wages, which would place an intolerable burden on profit margins. Ghislain Dufour of the CPQ informed the government that there could be no consensus on this issue, and Bertin Nadeau of the CDE, in a statement which underscored the futility of the government's search for points of convergence, affirmed that "on est prêt à dialoguer, on est prêt à faire les études qui s'imposent mais, s'il vous plaît, ne nous imposer pas d'en haut certains comportements."⁶⁹ This formula for inaction comes from the president of an organization that has been one of the most persistent champions of concerted action in Quebec! Labour's fear that business views it as a "partner" only when there is talk of increasing labour productivity, dampening wage claims, or other forms of belt-tightening, would thus seem to be substantiated.

In Quebec, as in West Germany, then, concerted action has had "more symbolic than substantive significance."⁷⁰ A voluntary agreement among the social partners to curb wage claims (and ostensibly prices as well) and a lessening of industrial strife--two key features of those countries which have successfully pursued a liberal corporatist approach to economic

policy-making (Sweden, the Netherlands, Austria; though in the former two countries, as Panitch points out, the corporatist structures have proven singularly unstable)⁷¹--have not accompanied the PQ government's efforts at tripartite consensus-building. Even in West Germany, whose relatively unstructured, informal program of concerted action most closely resembled (before its demise in 1977) the PQ's version of liberal corporatism, "orientation data" were established by the government which the trade unions were supposed to incorporate into their negotiations with the employers. In Quebec, the socio-economic conferences have had little impact on the collective bargaining strategies of the province's unions. Although the representatives of business and the government at the summits have sought to impress upon labour the importance of holding down unit labour costs in the province, no criteria for what might constitute a "realistic" wage have been agreed to by the social partners. The growth in average weekly earnings in Quebec has indeed moderated somewhat since the PQ victory in 1976--in fact, for 1978 and 1979, weekly earnings did not keep pace with inflation--but this is probably due more to an unemployment rate that hovers at or near 10% than to any "dialogue" among the social partners.⁷²

It is in the area of industrial relations that the limitations of the PQ government's concerted action are most apparent. For in spite of the PQ's rhetoric about labour's new-found status as an industrial partner, the government has not hesitated to resort to the big stick (back-to-work laws, injunctions) brandished so frequently by the Bourassa regime,

once its appeals to labour's "common sense," "civic responsibility," and "awareness of the common good" have proven nugatory. A telling example of the PQ's substitution of state coercion for a consensual approach to industrial relations occurred during the Common Front negotiations between the government and public employees in 1979.

The Common Front--a coordinating committee for the three major union centrals in Quebec, (FTQ, CSN, CEQ) representing approximately 190,000 workers in the parapublic sector (education and social services) involved in centralized bargaining with the government⁷³--had taken part in two previous rounds of negotiations with the Bourassa government in 1972 and 1976. In each case, the negotiations had culminated in a province-wide strike of public employees, the enactment of special legislation to force them back to work and the fining (and in 1972 the jailing) of recalcitrant union leaders. The third round of negotiations was to be the acid test for the PQ's vaunted "favourable bias" towards labour: it would demonstrate whether the PQ's new approach to industrial relations, one which relied on consensus and not coercion, could be translated into a peaceful and mutually agreeable public sector settlement.

The history of the Common Front talks of 1979 need not be exhaustively detailed here. Only two events are germane to this study--the passage of Bill 62 on November 12, which averted a general strike of hospital workers and teachers, and the subsequent disintegration of the Common Front. Bill 62 added a new wrinkle to back-to-work legislation: rather than compelling workers to return to their jobs after a legal strike, it imposed

a two-week moratorium on strike activity in the public sector. During this period, the government would table its final offers to the unions in the National Assembly, and these were to be submitted by the union leaders to their membership for a secret vote.

Bill 62 was unusual for a number of reasons. In the first place, the PQ chose to bypass existing legislation (Bill 59, passed 23 June 1978) which would have enabled it to suspend any strike which it deemed harmful to the health or safety of the public:

En pratique, le gouvernement s'est gaussé de tous les mécanismes qu'il s'était donnée pour jouer à fond, et uniquement sur la conjoncture...il a ignoré...sa propre règle qui lui permettait de suspendre le droit de grève dans les institutions où la <santé et la sécurité publique> est en danger, pour préférer le suspendre indistinctement dans toutes les institutions ...On ne saurait trouver meilleur exemple d'un Etat juge et partie, ce dilemme fondamental des relations de travail dans le secteur public. On avait cru ce gouvernement plus apte qu'un autre à le résoudre, mais il a préféré à son tour la rentabilité et l'éclat d'un coup de force.⁷⁴

This decision to rely on a "show of force" was no doubt facilitated by the political juncture: the PQ was facing three critical by-elections on November 14, which it stood an excellent chance of losing. Bill 62 may have been a last-ditch attempt to avert electoral disaster by appeasing a public already fed up with union "bloody-mindedness."

In the second place, Bill 62 constituted an extraordinary governmental incursion into the internal functioning of the trade unions in Quebec. Bill 62 implicitly questioned the representativeness of the trade union leadership in the province; as one editorialist for Le Devoir noted, the PQ, by enacting the special legislation, was presuming that the Common

Front employees were "mal informés, malgré le déluge de publicité qui déferle, ou encore qu'ils sont menés à la grève par des dirigeants qui refusent de les consulter."⁷⁵ This is, to say the least, a curious attitude for a government wishing to integrate the trade union leadership into the state's economic decision-making structures to adopt, but it is in keeping with the PQ's view, expressed by Lévesque himself,⁷⁶ that the present government is quite often more in tune with the union rank-and-file than are its leaders.

Bill 62 did not entirely succeed in averting strike action by the Common Front; a number of unions in the hospital sector affiliated to the CSN staged illegal strikes after the passage of the Bill. This in spite of Claude Morin's cynical intervention in the negotiations, urging the workers to obey the special law out of a sense of duty to the cause of *étapisme*:

We believe it is our responsibility to point out that people who will soon be asked to decide on their sovereignty should possess good sense, civic responsibility, the will for justice and awareness of the common good...If we all come out of the present test winners, it will be an encouraging sign that we can face up to the great challenge that awaits us at the moment of the referendum.⁷⁷

The government's special law did manage to exacerbate the internal divisions in the labour-movement and to dissipate what momentum the Common Front had had prior to November 12. At the same time, the PQ skillfully exploited the union membership's ambivalence towards the government--the conflict between their immediate material demands and their sympathy for a party which was "closest to them."⁷⁸ By November 26, then, the Common

Front was in disarray (the CEQ voted not to defy Bill 62, in spite of their president's urgings to the contrary; the attitude among the unions by this time was one of everyone for himself), and the PQ was able to escape from the negotiations relatively unscathed. The damage done to the government's plan for a harmonious concerted action in Quebec, however, was quite possibly irreparable.

In summary, then, the substantive results of Quebec's policy of concerted action have been virtually nil. But what results has this institutionalized "dialogue" brought at the symbolic level? Has the PQ succeeded in changing the attitudes or mental habits of the organized producer groups in society? Has it, as one critic affirms,⁷⁹ succeeded in instilling into the trade union leadership a collaborationist attitude and a "*bonne-ententiste*" vision of society? The available evidence would seem to suggest that this is hardly the case.

The PQ government's efforts to integrate the trade union leadership into the decision-making structures of the capitalist state have not been the unqualified success that Laliberté makes them out to be. At most the PQ has succeeded in dividing and confusing an important section of the trade union movement in Quebec. This is particularly evident in the case of the CEQ. In February 1979, the members of the CEQ's general council voted by a slim majority (95 to 69) not to lend themselves to the "game of tripartism" and thus not to attend the Montebello conference. The advocates of non-participation within the federation contended that the PQ was attempting to put not-so-subtle pressures on the CEQ and

other public sector unions while the Common Front negotiations were getting underway. Moreover, they argued, the PQ was chiefly interested in securing the support of the business community; from the unions it expected responsibility and moderation. Finally, they claimed that the Pointe-au-Pic summit had demonstrated that concerted action was incapable of satisfying the labour movement's legitimate demands. If the CEQ wanted to consult with either business or the government in the future, it would do so strictly on a bilateral basis, thus avoiding the PQ's "tiresome" search for meaningless points of convergence among the social partners.⁸⁰

This analysis of the pros and cons of concerted action in Quebec by no means met with the unanimous approval of the CEQ membership. Indeed, the general council's decision not to attend the Montebello summit led a significant minority within the federation (L'Alliance des professeurs de Montréal, for example, the CEQ's largest affiliate union) to question the representativeness of the CEQ leadership. According to the Alliance des professeurs de Montréal, the general council's "Marxist-Leninist" rhetoric was as ineffective as it was strident; in the Alliance's view, the leadership's dogged search for a pristine ideological purity served only to isolate the CEQ and render it ineffective as an articulator of working-class demands. The Alliance argued that a "critical participation" in the economic summits (similar to the position adopted by the CSN) would best suit the needs of the CEQ and of the labour movement as a whole.⁸¹

The PQ has not had greater success with the CSN's leaders; the latter have not substituted a class collaborationist stance for their "*syndicalisme de combat*" as a result of their participation in the numerous economic conferences.⁸² In his opening speech to the plenary assembly at Montebello, CSN president Norbert Rodrigue assailed the PQ government for having kow-towed to the wishes of business with the same servility as previous governments.⁸³ Since the PQ had proven so weak in the face of the capitalists, he said, the CSN was beginning to doubt the effectiveness of its position of critical participation in the economic conferences. Rodrigue therefore set a number of minimal conditions which would have to be met by the government if the CSN was to attend future summits: the cessation of police surveillance of trade union activities ("*Opération Public*"), the re-indexing of the minimum wage, the implementation of sectoral bargaining, and increased financial accountability of corporations.⁸⁴ This last demand, sometimes referred to as an "open books" policy or "economic transparency" (*la transparence économique*) is correctly seen by the CSN to be a precondition of any tripartite sharing of responsibilities for Quebec's economic development. If the PQ is really serious about giving labour an effective voice in economic planning, the CSN argues, then it will compel the corporations to divulge information on profits, sales, and investments which they have always kept a closely guarded secret. All indications are, however, that the PQ would regard this open books policy as too high a price to pay for the CSN's continued cooperation in concerted action. Such a move would risk alienating the business community (according to business spokesmen, any firm--particularly the small and medium-sized

corporations--divulging its financial status would leave itself in a very vulnerable market position), whose support the government is assiduously trying to court.

The CSN may ultimately decide that a policy of critical participation in the government-dominated concerted action is more politic than one of unconditional opposition. But it is certain that the CSN will use any future summits it decides to attend as opportunities to present a global critique of the capitalist economic system and to denounce the government for shoring up the status quo. In other words, the socio-economic conferences will constitute for the CSN an "educative battleground to elevate the political and class consciousness of the workers."⁸⁵

As for the remaining two trade union federations, the CSD and the FTQ, both are reasonably pleased with the results of concerted action thus far. The CSD has not in any way altered its business unionism during the PQ's tenure in office; its leaders have regarded the summits as excellent opportunities for communicating their members' immediate economic concerns (wages, vacations, working conditions) to the government. The question of whether or not to participate in the PQ's version of concerted action thus poses no problem for the CSD; it is not concerned with the ideological debates over the desirability or feasibility of concerted action in a capitalist society which have racked the CSN and the CEQ.⁸⁶

For its part, the FTQ maintains that the government kept most of the promises it made at the conferences, and it considers the results in a number of areas to be both "obvious and impressive." There have been a

few glaring omissions on the government's part, however: there has been no attempt to redistribute income in society, sectoral bargaining is still no more than a plank in the PQ program, unemployment remains at intolerable levels, and the standard of living of the working class is being eroded.⁸⁷ Nevertheless, the FTQ will continue to adopt a "pragmatic attitude" with regard to the government's efforts at concerted action. No matter what form the latter takes (continued summits or a more formal Conseil économique et social), the FTQ will be present in order to attempt to carve out a better position for labour within the existing social and economic order. Significantly, however, the FTQ warns the government not to expect too much from this collaboration:

A cet égard, le type de participation qu'a eue la FTQ au Sommet économique est un exemple de l'autonomie de pensée et d'action conservée sans entraver la poursuite de discussions franches et constructives. La structure et la tradition mêmes de notre mouvement nous empêchent d'ailleurs même d'envisager que ce genre de dialogue évolue vers la négociation d'un quelconque contrat social. Toute notre histoire est marquée par un attachement profond à l'autonomie d'action de la section locale.⁸⁸

The FTQ has here alluded to a variable that the PQ's planners have left out of their equation for concerted action--the absence in Quebec of powerful peak associations of business and labour which can discipline their membership and enforce responsible behaviours. Thus, even if all the social partners were willing to collaborate in the PQ government's concerted action scheme, this very important structural factor would severely limit its effectiveness. This point will be further explored in the next chapter.

Finally, the various associations of business appear to be satisfied with the present functioning of concerted action in the province. They are particularly pleased with the government's repeated professions of faith in the primacy of private enterprise in capitalist society and with its recognition of the legitimacy of profit. However, the statements of the leaders of the CPQ, the Chamber of Commerce and the CDE make it clear that the government has not altered in the least business's traditional suspicion of the labour movement. Far from being an accepted interlocutor, the trade unions are often viewed by the business community in Quebec as a dangerous and intemperate pressure group whose demands, if met, would shake the social order to its foundations.

To recapitulate: some essential ingredients would seem to be missing from the PQ government's recipe for social harmony and economic progress based on functional representation in the decision-making structures of the economy. In the first place, two of the three largest trade union federations reject the ideology of social partnership articulated by the PQ: in Quebec, there has been no "muting of ideologies which deny common purpose,"⁸⁹ at least not officially (one must keep in mind that these two federations, the CSN and the CEQ--particularly the latter--are internally divided over the issue of participation in concerted action). Secondly, business in Quebec is reluctant to accept organized labour as even a junior partner; it wants concerted action, but at no cost to itself. To this point in time, business appears unwilling to grant the minimal concessions (sectoral bargaining, for example) to labour which would make the latter's

cooperation in economic policy-making more likely. Before proceeding, in the next chapter, to a discussion of the institutional barriers which, when combined with the attitudinal impediments described above, make liberal corporatism an extremely unlikely occurrence in Quebec, I shall examine one further attempt on the part of the PQ to foster "dialogue" in the province.

Institutionalized Consultation in Quebec

In addition to the socio-economic conference, concerted action in Quebec under the PQ has taken another form: that of the tripartite or multipartite consultative body. The most important of these is the Institut national de productivité (INP), a tripartite advisory board attached to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce which was created on June 13, 1978. The INP is similar in structure and purpose to the short-lived National Productivity Council established by the Diefenbaker government in 1961 (and the Council was itself inspired by the tripartite planning boards in a number of OECD countries).⁹⁰ Like the economic summits, the INP's overriding objective is to act as an educator of the social partners and ultimately to modify existing attitudes which are judged harmful to the growth of productivity in Quebec:

Le dialogue est au coeur de la mission de l'Institut national de productivité, qui consiste essentiellement à favoriser, par ses recherches et ses initiatives, des échanges positifs et éclairés entre les agents de tous les milieux et contribuer ainsi à la recherche de solutions originales en vue de la construction d'une économie dynamique et d'une société vigoureuse... L'Institut... cherchera... à favoriser la prise de conscience commune des problèmes et des voies de solutions possibles...⁹¹

The powers given to the INP, however, make it doubtful that it will be any more successful than the economic summits have been in cultivating this "dialogue."

Ten members sit on the INP's board of directors: four (including the Director and the President) are named directly by the government and six after consultations with the representative organizations of labour and business (three from each). The first President of the INP, nominated in December 1978, is Alfred Rouleau, President of the Fédération des Caisses Populaires Desjardins (and this is perhaps an indication of the privileged links between the PQ government and the cooperative movement). Although intended to be a tripartite advisory board, the government has included among the directors a representative of consumers groups in Quebec (Pauline Boileau, President of the Association des consommateurs de la Province du Québec) and an academic (Robert Lacroix, an economist at the Université de Montréal).⁹² This method of choosing the board members--government selection after consultations with the organizations involved--combined with the fact that the business contingent is composed of individual business leaders and not delegates from the major business associations in Quebec, tends to make the functional representation on the INP derisory. In this, the Quebec government has chosen to imitate American practice and not that in Western Europe. Not surprisingly, the trade union federations would like to see a different method of selecting board members, one which would give the INP greater independence from the government. In the past, the FTQ has stated that the trade union federations should have the power to nominate their own delegates to the various

governmental consultative bodies and to revoke their mandate if necessary.⁹³

The PQ has shown no sign of acceding to this demand.

Another factor militating against the success of the INP's efforts to foster a social consensus is the limited nature of the powers given to it. The INP is very much a creature of the government, with no independent policy-making authority; at best it can fulfil an advisory role, but even in this case there is no guarantee that the government will implement or even consider its recommendations. Bill 37 (1978), the legislation which led to the establishment of the INP, stated that the Institute's task was threefold: to inform the population and the economic agents of the concept of productivity; to make known the importance of productivity and the role of the various factors that affect it; and to foster the collaboration and concerted action of the economic agents in order to raise productivity. To fulfil these functions, the Institute is empowered to carry out studies and conduct research on productivity, especially in the industrial sector; to disseminate the results of these studies to the economic agents; to suggest to the government and the social partners sources of action which would help to raise productivity; and to organize study sessions, round table conferences, colloquiums and courses in order to explore issues relating to productivity. In addition, the INP is to carry out any specific task conferred on it by the Minister of Industry and Trade. An annual report is to be presented to the responsible Minister and tabled in the National Assembly.

Business, although a strong supporter of the idea of a National productivity institute, would like to see a more powerful body, one which could actively intervene in the day-to-day operation "des entreprises privées qui le désirerait ou des institutions publiques, pour les aider à entreprendre de véritables programmes visant l'accroissement de l'efficacité."⁹⁴ Management would also like to see the INP's mandate extended to cover the investigation of the public sector. As for the labour movement, the creation of the INP does not seem to have aroused much more than indifference or scepticism.⁹⁵

In establishing the Institut national de productivité, the PQ government has simply duplicated the weaknesses inherent in the economic summits --a tenuous link to functional representation, the absolute primacy of government in this arrangement, and limited policy-making powers on the part of the agency. Once again, the PQ appears to be unwilling--or more likely, given the attitudes of business associations in the province, not able--to pay the necessary price for a moderately stable and effective concerted action in Quebec. At the time of writing, the INP's first annual report has not yet been released, but it will be interesting to see what types of problems it investigates and the importance the government assigns to its recommendations. It is a bit too early yet to determine whether the INP will go the way of its earlier Canadian counterpart, the National Productivity Council, "pass[ing] into oblivion, without accomplishing a great deal".⁹⁶

The PQ also intends to revive two existing advisory boards in Quebec, the CCTMO and the Conseil de planification et de développement du Québec (CPDQ) in order to lend greater permanency and formality to the dialogue among the social partners in Quebec.⁹⁷ The CCTMO, created in 1968, is composed of five trade union members chosen after consultation with the three major federations (the CEQ withdrew its one member in 1972 in the wake of the Common Front strikes of that year),⁹⁸ five representatives of the CPQ, again chosen after consultations with this organization, a President and Secretary appointed by the Government, and the Deputy Minister of Labour and Manpower. Its primary task is to conduct research on any subject that comes within the purview of the Ministry of Labour and Manpower, and to make recommendations to the Minister on any question it has been requested to study. The CCTMO seemingly fell into disuse after the Common Front strikes of 1972, and the intention of the PQ government, announced by Lévesque at Pointe-au-Pic, is to restore it to its previous role of "interlocutor:" it is to be frequently consulted on the impact that the government's labour relations legislation might have on the social partners.⁹⁹ Nevertheless, it is doubtful that this revitalization of the CCTMO will result in any significant role for the "social partners" in determining labour policy--the same factors which limit the effectiveness of the INP apply to the Conseil consultatif du travail et de la main-d'oeuvre.

The CPDQ would seem to be even a less likely candidate for the formalization of concerted action in Quebec than the CCTMO. Established by

the UN government in 1968, the CPDQ only started to operate in 1971 as a result of an order-in-council passed by the Bourassa Cabinet. Composed of 35 members (of whom three are chosen by the government after consulting representative trade unions in the province, three from the CPQ, and the remainder from a variety of municipal, regional, social and planning organizations) the CPDQ was intended by the Bourassa government to foster the dialogue and consensus necessary for economic growth (the language used by Bourassa to describe the CPDQ and its objectives is identical to that employed by Lévesque when describing the function of the economic summits!).¹⁰⁰ The jurisdiction of the CPDQ was never clearly delimited (many of its functions seemed to duplicate those of the government's Office de planification et de développement du Québec) and it never received the financial resources necessary to fulfil its advisory role.¹⁰¹ The PQ government, in Bâtir le Québec, has stated that the CPDQ would serve as an excellent device for furthering the dialogue among the social partners in Quebec, but as is the case with the CCTMO, the government's intentions remain nebulous.

In this chapter, I have examined a number of structural and ideological factors which have led the PQ government to attempt to draw up a "new social contract" in Quebec. I have also looked at the motivations of the social partners, attempting to account for their initial participation in the PQ's brand of concerted action. Finally, I have described the specifically corporatist initiatives undertaken by the PQ--tripartite and multipartite socio-economic conferences, a reinforcement of various

advisory boards in the province, an attempt to involve the organized producer groups in economic planning--whose chief purpose has been to replace the competition, class conflict, and social "anarchy" which are concomitants of the unregulated capitalist economy with harmony and class collaboration. An examination of the immediate results of these initiatives has underscored the fragility of the PQ's hopes for a consensus among the social partners on national economic priorities. I have argued that the PQ's efforts to cultivate dialogue and consensus are doomed to failure so long as it emphasizes form over substance. Stephen Cohen's critique of the French model of economic planning is highly instructive in this regard:

Serious redistribution of power is out. Instead, vertical assemblies and councils will be formed at various levels of organization--perhaps the firm, probably the region, and possibly the nation. Their purpose will be to give workers the illusion of participating in the common endeavour (which will remain economic expansion) and to convince them of the paramount importance of that task and of the necessity of preserving the present distribution of economic power. Communitarian rhetoric will flow. Everyone will be encouraged to 'belong, co-operate and participate'. But the new structure will have little real power. The councils and assemblies will produce advisory recommendations...But the substance of decision-making power will not be affected.¹⁰²

In the final chapter, then, I shall briefly investigate the prospects for liberal corporatism in Quebec. Will it become more than the meaningless "participation" described above, or are the institutional and ideological barriers to its development in Quebec insuperable?

REFERENCES

1. Multipartite in form because a variety of "economic agents" are invited to attend--representatives of business, labour, agriculture, the cooperative movement, consumers, and the academic world. The problems these conferences are designed to palliate, however--labour strife, inflation, declining productivity--clearly indicate that the two major "partners" in society, business and labour, are the focus of this institution.
2. René Lévesque, "Speech to the Economic Club in New York," Globe and Mail, 26 January 1977.
3. W.L.M. King, Industry and Humanity, 2nd ed., pp.103-104.
4. Gouvernement du Québec, Bâtir le Québec, énoncé de politique économique (Québec: Editeur officiel du Québec, 1979), p.72.
5. Gouvernement du Québec, Le tourisme, perspectives de relance, Rapport (Sherbrooke, 30 October - 1 November 1978), p.4; emphasis added.
6. See Gouvernement du Québec, L'Etat de la situation socio-économique (Montebello, March 1979), Table 1, pp.8-9. See also Hamilton and Pinard, "The PQ Comes to Power," p.755.
7. This is the leitmotiv interwoven into the pages of Bâtir le Québec. On page 3: "...peu de gouvernements occidentaux, à l'exception de certains gouvernements européens, ont élaboré une approche économique multi-sectorielle. Peu de gouvernements ont entrepris ce genre d'exercice qui consiste à traiter de développement économique au sens large en tentant de faire cette jonction difficile mais pourtant essentielle entre les différents facteurs de la croissance." Cf. Lévesque's unveiling in the National Assembly of a national economic recovery plan (focussing on aid to small and medium firms and local works programs), later baptized Opération Solidarité Economique (OSE) in Québec, Assemblée nationale, Journal des Débats 21 October 1977, pp.3615-3623.
8. Cited in Julien Bauer, "L'Attitude des syndicats," Etudes internationales 8:2 (June 1977; entire issue deals with the Parti Québécois and the prospect of Quebec's independence), p.309.
9. See André Bernard, Québec: élections 1976 (Montréal: Hurtubise HMH, 1976), pp.93-94; Hamilton and Pinard, "The PQ Comes to Power," pp.753-754. Hamilton and Pinard carried out a pre-election poll which indicated that 55% of a total sample of 1,097 voters favoured the repeal of the right to strike in the public sector. In addition, according to a Gallup Poll (1975-1976 cited in *ibid.*) a majority of Québécois considered "Big Labour" to be the gravest threat to Canada; in English Canada, "Big Government" was the most feared threat.

10. For the attitudes of the trade unions towards the Liberal government, see Bernard Morrier, "La FTQ fustige l'irresponsabilité de Bourassa," Le Devoir, 4 November 1976; Gilles Lesage, "Craignant des coupures de salaires, la CEQ réclame des engagements précis," Le Devoir, 5 November 1976. For data on the membership of each federation, see Labour Canada, Labour Organizations in Canada (1978), pp.53, 158, 160, and for a brief history of each, see Gouvernement du Québec, Travail Québec 14:2 (September 1978). A fourth union central, the Centrale des syndicats démocratiques (CSD, 38,083 members in 1978), affects an apolitical stance.
11. To my knowledge, no studies have been published indicating the extent of support for the PQ among unionized workers. Maurice Pinard's and Richard Hamilton's pre-election study, published in Le Devoir, 10 November 1976, showed that among skilled workers, 49% intended to vote PQ, 26% Liberal. Among unskilled workers the figures were 51% for the PQ and 22% for the Liberals. As is consistent with the new middle class interpretations of the PQ, however, the latter received its strongest support from the Professional/Semi-Professional (64% for PQ vs. 16% for Liberals) and Office Worker (51% for PQ vs. 30% for Liberals) categories. Total sample of committed voters was 653.
12. Niosi, "Le gouvernement du P.Q. deux ans après," pp.52,56; emphasis added.
13. See, for example, Gilles Châtillon's comments (Châtillon is Director of the Permanent Secretariat for Socioeconomic Conferences in Quebec), cited in Michelle La Santé, "Les sommets et les conditions du dialogue entre les agents socio-économiques du Québec (Peut-on parler de concertation?)," OSE 1:5 (January 1979), pp.6-7. This magazine is intended to publicize the government's economic recovery program, OSE, as well as the concrete results of concerted action in Quebec.
14. Notably David Cubberly, "Montebello: the economy and the referendum," Canadian Dimension 14:1 (July-August 1979), pp.7-9; Halar, "The New Quebec State," pp.12-13; Clinton Archibald, "Les tendances néo-corporatistes du Parti Québécois," Perception 2:2 (November-December 1978), pp.14-18.
15. Gouvernement du Québec, Conférence au sommet de Montebello, Rapport (1979), p.214. This is, moreover, one of the central themes of Bâtir le Québec.

16. Cited in Fernand Roy, "Un consensus social est-il possible au Québec?" Marketing Social 2:6 (November 1977), p.30.
17. The average rate of growth in productivity (defined as GNP/# of people employed) in Quebec during the four-year period 1974-1978 was 1.5%. For the U.S.A. this figure was 0.8%, for West Germany, 3.2%, for France 3.0%, for the U.K. 0.8%. See Table 2, L'Etat de la situation socio-économique, pp.15-16. Table 3 in *ibid.*, p.18, indicates that real earnings in Quebec for the period 1964-1978 outstripped productivity growth, leading to a decline in Quebec's competitive position. The average annual increase in real earnings per employee was 3.9%, while productivity grew at a rate of 1.9% for the same period.
18. Pierre Fournier, The Quebec Establishment, 2nd ed. (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1978), p.61.
19. Gouvernement du Québec, Travail Québec 14:2 (September 1978), p.44; my translation.
20. For the CDE's comments, see Gouvernement du Québec, Rapport, le sommet économique (Pointe-au-Pic, May 1977), p.35; for those of then CPQ President, Pierre Desmarais II, see *ibid.*, p.25.
21. For business's attitude toward the new government, see Ghislain Dufour (executive vice-president of the CPQ), "The PQ and Quebec Business," Labour Gazette 77:4 (April 1977), pp.180-181; Pierré Desmarais II, cited in Roy, "Un consensus social," p.29.
22. Despite the formal distance between the CSN and the CEQ on the one hand, and the PQ on the other, both federations were unofficially overjoyed by the PQ victory. Norbert Rodrigue, president of the CSN, "parlait de 'victoire du monde ordinaire sur les forces obscures du capitaliste anglo-saxon,'..." cited in Bauer, "L'Attitude des syndicats," p.307. Hubert Sacy, press attaché for the CEQ, in a document circulated to the federation's national bureau, claimed that "le Parti québécois est le parti pour lequel les travailleurs du Québec et les membres de la CEQ en particulier ont massivement voté le 15 novembre dernier...en termes de composantes de classes: le Parti québécois, c'est le parti des membres de la CEQ, c'est le nôtre, celui de notre classe sociale." Hubert Sacy, "Le PQ, parti des membres de la CEQ," La Presse, 11 January 1977.
23. Louis-Gilles Francoeur, "Suite à l'avènement d'un régime PQ, la CSN pourra changer sa stratégie," Le Devoir, 19 November 1976.
24. Much of the information contained in this section has been culled from Louis Le Borgne, La CSN et la question nationale depuis 1960 (Montréal: Editions Albert St.-Martin, 1976), ch.3 and Annexe II. See also Louis Fournier, "Le PQ et les syndicats," Le Jour, 29 April 1977, pp.41-43. For Pierre Vallières's views, see Choose!, trans. Penelope Williams (Toronto: New Press, 1972).

25. These consultations were held in April and June 1979. I shall discuss their outcomes and their significance in chapter four.
26. Hubert Sacy, "Le PQ, parti des membres de la CEQ," cites a 1973-74 survey of CEQ members which indicated that "la majorité des adhérents de la centrale sont en faveur de l'indépendance nationale." As for the CSN, Le Borgne refers to a survey of 100 delegates to the 1974 congress which indicated that 78% had voted PQ in the last election. La CSN et la question nationale, pp.184-185. The statistical validity of these surveys might be suspect, but the essential point is that the PQ in 1976 gained a good deal of sympathy from the CEQ and the CSN rank-and-file, an attitude which was not always apparent at the leadership level of these unions.
27. I shall examine the problem of union attitudes towards the PQ and its independence--or "souverainiste"--project in greater detail in the fourth chapter. An indication of the labour movement's inability to come to terms, ideologically, with the question of political sovereignty can be found in the attitude of FTQ president, Louis Laberge, towards the PQ. The least chary of all the provincial trade union leaders of his support for the péquiste government, Laberge nevertheless affirmed in October 1976, "qu'il n'est pas personnellement indépendantiste et que l'indépendance n'est pas la seule solution, [mais] il estime que 'le PQ représente la seule chance d'avoir un gouvernement fort devant Ottawa et conscient des intérêts du peuple'. Selon Laberge, le PQ est 'le seul parti qui puisse vraiment représenter les intérêts des travailleurs'..." Cited in Bauer, "L'Attitude des syndicats," p.310.
28. Louis-Gilles Francoeur, "La CSN au sommet économique: la décision sera prise par le congrès," Le Devoir, 23 April 1977. It is clear that the long-term aim of the economic summits is to draw up a new social contract, although government spokesmen have felt it would be premature to speak of anything more than "dialogue" at this time. See Lévesque's comments in Rapport, le sommet économique, pp.14-20.
29. Louis-Gilles Francoeur, "Sommet: la FTQ entend se limiter aux séances publiques," Le Devoir, 13 May 1977.
30. Louis Laberge, cited in Rapport, le sommet économique, p.23. For excerpts from the CLC's manifesto, see "CLC Manifesto for Canada," Globe and Mail, May 18, 1976; for a critique of the latter, see Leo Panitch, "Labour's Manifesto," This Magazine 10:5-6 (November-December 1976), pp.9-11 and Cy Gonick, "Labour's New Manifesto," Canadian Dimension 11:5 (June 1976), pp.23-31.

31. Cited in Rapport, le sommet économique, p.27.
32. Louis-Gilles Francoeur, "Rodrigue: la CSN doit être présente au sommet économique," Le Devoir, 22 April 1977.
33. Yvon Charbonneau, cited in Rodolphe Morrisette, "Un tremplin pour l'expression de ses positions," Le Devoir, 25 March 1977; for Rodrigue's comments, see Francoeur, "Rodrigue: la CSN doit être présente," Le Devoir, 22 April, 1977.
34. Marie-Agnès Thellier, "Les syndicats, iront-ils au sommet?" Le Devoir, 23 November 1978.
35. Cubberly, "Montebello," p.8.
36. Gouvernement du Québec, Le bilan des conférences socio-économiques du Québec, (1979), pp.6-7, emphasis added.
37. In West Germany--and the PQ's brand of concerted action most closely resembles the West German Konzertierte Aktion--each meeting of the KA issued a joint communiqué, a sort of "morally binding policy commitment, from all participatory organizations." See Jon Clark, "Concerted Action in the Federal Republic of Germany," British Journal of Industrial Relations XVII:2 (July 1979), p.246.
38. La Santé, "Les sommets et les conditions du dialogue," p.7.
39. Gouvernement du Québec, Bâtir le Québec, p.86.
40. La Santé, "Les sommets et les conditions du dialogue," pp.6-7.
41. Gouvernement du Québec, Le bilan des conférences, pp.9-11.
42. Clark, "Concerted Action," p.47.
43. Norbert Rodrigue, cited in Gouvernement du Québec, Rapport, le sommet économique, p.27. Louis Laberge complained of not receiving the necessary documentation and not being informed of the conference's themes until just prior to the opening of the summit. See Louis-Gilles Francoeur, "Sommet: la FTQ entend se limiter aux séances publiques," Le Devoir, 13 May 1977.
44. Marie-Agnès Thellier, "Les syndicats iront-ils au sommet?" Le Devoir, 23 November 1978; *idem.*, "Les 'décideurs' négocieront notre capacité d'initiative?" Le Devoir, 23 February 1979; Bernard Landry, "Le sommet de Montebello," OSE 1:5 (January 1979), p.5.

45. CSN, Positions de la CSN au sommet économique de Montebello (14-15 March 1979), pp.20-21.
46. *Ibid.*, pp.21-22.
47. Gouvernement du Québec, Le bilan des conférences, p.8. For the Montebello conference, "La tâche de choisir les invités avait été laissée aux délégations, avec quelques consignes plus ou moins respectées." Marie-Agnès Thellier, "Une table ronde entre le gouvernement et ses partenaires," Le Devoir, 8 March 1979.
48. The descriptions of these organizations are drawn from a number of sources: Fournier, The Quebec Establishment, ch.4, Gouvernement du Québec, Travail Québec 14:2 (September 1976); Labour Canada, Labour Organizations in Canada (1978).
49. Fournier, The Quebec Establishment, p.63.
50. Gouvernement du Québec, Le tourisme, Rapport, p.50.
51. Gouvernement du Québec, Bilan des conférences, pp.15-24; *idem.*, Rapport le sommet économique, passim.
52. *Ibid.*, p.100.
53. In October 1978; the Minister of State for Social Development, Pierre Marois, released a White Paper on Industrial health and safety--Santé et sécurité au travail.
54. Gouvernement du Québec, Rapport, le sommet économique, p.72.
55. See Government du Québec, L'état de la situation socio-économique, p.91.
56. For a brief discussion of Bill 45 and the reactions it aroused from labour and business, see Niosi, "Le gouvernement du PQ deux ans après," pp.52-54; Pauline Vaillancourt, "Quebec Labour and the PQ," Canadian Dimension 12:6, pp.3-6; Ghislain Dufour, "Le point sur les relations de travail en 1977 et 1978," Revue Commerce, February 1978 (annual issue on the economy), p.106; Raymond Laliberté, "Critique du nationalisme populiste" in Jean-François Léonard, ed., La chance au coureur (Montréal: Nouvelle Optique, 1978), p.90. Laliberté brands Bill 45 "[un] échange du précompte syndical et de la non-utilisation voyante de scabs, pour une américanisation de la démocratie syndicale ce qui remarquons-le n'est jamais exigé des partis politiques eux-mêmes..."
57. Gouvernement du Québec, La chaussure: pour des politiques et des mesures de stabilisation de l'industrie (Québec: 9 May 1977), p.6.
58. *Ibid.*, p.4. In 1976, 7,500 workers were employed in the footwear industry, 33,839 in textiles, 82,550 in clothing, and 18,275 in furniture.

59. See Gouvernement du Québec, Bilan des conférences, pp.29, 36, 43; Claude Déry, "Conférences sectorielles," OSE 1:5 (January 1979), pp.8-13.
60. Gouvernement du Québec, Bilan des conférences, pp.31, 38, 45. For an analysis of the SDI's structure and purpose, see Pierre Fournier, Les sociétés d'état et les objectifs économiques du Québec: une évaluation préliminaire (Québec: Editeur officiel du Québec, 1979), pp.65-77.
61. At the Montebello conference, Landry stated: "souvenez-vous que c'est au grand sommet qu'on a décidé qu'on ferait les <<mini>> et on les a fait et on a eu des résultats spectaculaires dans les secteurs traditionnels." Montebello, Rapport, p.55; cf. Landry's comments in Le tourisme, Rapport, p.18.
62. Parizeau's selective tax cut was an alternative to the 3% across-the-board sales tax reduction proposed by the federal government (at the instance of then Ontario Treasurer Darcy McKeough) and inevitably became fodder for the constitutional warfare between Ottawa and Quebec. See Orland French "Was Parizeau Right on Sales Tax?" The Citizen, 6, October 1978. For the effects of the tax cut on sales, production and employment in the traditional sector, see Gouvernement du Québec, Budget 1979-1980, Appendix I, pp.23-26.
63. The major themes of each of the mini-summits are summarized in Gouvernement du Québec, Bilan des conférences, pp.15-87. For a complete list of the various reports and background documents connected with the summits, consult the bibliography.
64. The demand most persistently voiced by labour's representatives at these conferences, one which would have entailed a significant increase in the organizational strength of the trade unions, was for some form of sectoral bargaining. At the conference on tourism, the government agreed to appoint a commission of inquiry to look into the implications of sectoral bargaining for Quebec. See Gouvernement du Québec, Le tourisme, Rapport, p.232. I shall deal with the notion of sectoral bargaining in greater detail in the fourth chapter.
65. Gouvernement du Québec, Montebello, Rapport, p.246.
66. *Ibid.*, pp.44, 246; see also CSN, Positions de la CSN au sommet économique de Montebello, (14-15 March 1979), pp.33-34.
67. In Gouvernement du Québec, Montebello, Rapport, p.132, Rodrigue Tremblay stated that "Il y a des pays comme l'Allemagne et l'Autriche où...les organisations patronales et les organisations de travailleurs se parlent, se rencontrent et discutent de question de main-d'oeuvre et non pas simplement de question de relations de travail. Est-ce que le principe... est défendable au Québec? Si c'était le cas, est-ce que les organisations et les chefs syndicaux seraient prêts à avoir des contacts bilatéraux

sans avoir toujours le gouvernement pour leur servir de sage-femme? Est-ce qu'il y aurait possibilité d'avoir au Québec une concertation bilatérale pour discuter de questions de main-d'oeuvre, et non pas discuter simplement de questions de conflits?"

68. FTQ, Sommet économique: nos positions (14-16 March 1979), p.16; "Même s'il y a eu une légère amélioration apportée par les amendements au Code de travail sur l'arbitrage de la première convention collective, nous sommes encore loin de la liberté d'accès au syndicalisme...l'actuel code du travail, tel qu'amendé par la loi 45 ne s'attaque aucunement à ces problèmes des petites unités; seule une réforme à l'accès à la syndicalisation peut y pallier." Cf. CSN, Positions de la CSN, pp.57-60.
69. Gouvernement du Québec, Montebello, Rapport, pp.230, 234. For the CPQ's attitude towards sectoral bargaining, see CPQ, Colloque sur la négociation sectorielle (unpublished, Montreal: May 26, 1978), pp.1-10.
70. Clark, "Concerted Action," p.253.
71. On the importance of voluntary incomes policies to liberal corporatism, see Panitch, "Corporatism in Canada," pp.84-85 and Lehbruch, "Corporatism, Labour and Public Policy," p.12. For the periodic breakdown and re-establishment of liberal corporatist structures in a number of Western European countries, see Panitch, "Development of Corporatism in Liberal Democracies," pp.83-84.
72. Gouvernement du Québec, Budget 1980-1981 (March 1980), Annexe II, pp.19-21.
73. Jean-Roch Boivin, The Evolution of Bargaining Power in the Province of Quebec Public Sector (1964-1972) (Laval University: Department of Industrial Relations, 1975), p.251; Jean-Marc Pionte, "La lutte des travailleurs de l'Etat," Cahiers du socialisme no.3 (Spring 1979), pp.24-36.
74. Lise Bissonnette, "Après le spectacle," Le Devoir, 26 November 1979.
75. Jean-Claude Leclerc, "Un constat d'échec," Le Devoir, 13 November 1979.
76. Lévesque, La passion du Québec, pp.75-76.
77. Quoted in The Citizen, 17 November 1979.
78. William Johnson, "Pigeons get a bitter lesson from the PQ," Globe and Mail, 26 November 1979.
79. Laliberté, "Critique du nationalisme populiste," p.90.

80. Paule des Rivières, "La CEQ refuse d'aller à Montebello," Le Devoir, 24 February 1979.
81. François Roberge, "La CEQ dit non, l'Alliance dit oui," Le Devoir, 21 February 1979; Paule des Rivières, "La CEQ s'emploie à convaincre ses membres du bien-fondé de son refus," Le Devoir, 3 March 1979; cf. Sacy's article, "Le PQ, parti des membres de la CEQ," La Presse, 11 January 1977.
82. For a brief discussion of the notion of "un syndicalisme de combat," see Bauer, "Attitude des syndicats," pp.316-318.
83. Gouvernement du Québec, Montebello, Rapport, p.17: "Tout cela nous fait donc dire, Monsieur le Premier Ministre, que depuis deux ans et demi vous avez fait un certain choix de courber l'échine devant les patrons, comme l'ont toujours fait avec beaucoup de complaisance, les gouvernements qui vous ont précédé."
84. *Ibid.*, 234. For information on what was known as "Opération Public," see Louis-Gilles Francoeur, "La SQ confirme qu'elle surveille les syndicats de diverses façons," Le Devoir, 7 March 1979.
85. Stephen Cohen, Modern Capitalist Planning: The French Model (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969), p.213. Cohen here is referring to one strategy (he calls it "contestative participation") adopted by some "new left" trade unions in France for participation in the indicative planning operation. Cohen's description of the planning process in France, and his analysis of the trade union responses to the political economy symbolized by the plan, form useful comparisons for the study of concerted action in Quebec.
86. See Paul-Emile Dalpé's (he is president of the CSD) comments in Gouvernement du Québec, Montebello, Rapport, pp.19-20; on the question of its business unionism, see Gouvernement du Québec, Travail Québec 14:2 (September 1978), p.13: "...les travailleurs fondateurs de la CSD refusaient et refusent toujours de subordonner l'action syndicale à l'action politique. Pour les travailleurs membres, la CSD doit s'occuper d'abord des problèmes économiques; revendications salariales, bien-être dans l'entreprise (vacances, congés, etc.) et autres points contenus dans une convention collective..."
87. FTQ, Sommet économique: nos positions p.1.
88. FTQ, Un programme pour maintenant (15th biennial congress, 28 November-2 December 1977), p.20.
89. Barbash, Trade Unions and National Economic Policy, p.2. According to Barbash, "The trade union's ability to participate in national economic policy depends on the extent to which the trade union shares a core of common values with other elements in society and on the availability of mechanisms through which these common values can be converted into mutually acceptable policies and programs. This is called integration. Primarily it means the muting of ideologies which deny common purpose."

90. For a discussion of the National Productivity Council, see Panitch, "Corporatism in Canada," p.67. See also André Raynauld's comments on the INP and its similarity to the Diefenbaker government's experiment in Québec, Assemblée nationale, Journal des Débats, 1 June 1978, p.1832.
91. Les orientations INP (no date), pp.5-6.
92. *Ibid.*, p.II. Other persons appointed to the INP's board of directors include, from labour, Jean-Paul Hétu (CSD), Jean-Guy Morin (CSN), and Louis Laberge (FTQ); from business, William Gauvin (Director of Research Noranda Mines), Yves Mailhot (Director-General, Pavages Maska Inc.) and François Sénécal-Tremblay (Vice-President of General Planning, Alcan). The Director-General of the INP is Fernand Gauthier.
93. For the FTQ's proposals, see Un programme pour maintenant, p.20. For the very important differences between Canada's tripartite/planning boards and those of a number of Western European countries, see Panitch, "Corporatism in Canada," pp.66-68.
94. Geoffroy Tiberghien, "L'Institut de productivité: un correctif à nos malaises économiques," Revue Commerce 80:5 (May 1978), p.148.
95. The CCTMO carried out a study of the proposed National Productivity Institute in 1977-1978; the trade union contingent within the CCTMO "doute de l'utilité et de l'efficacité de l'organisme proposé et s'interroge sur la validité de la contribution qu'il pourrait apporter. Selon le groupe syndical, il vaudrait mieux écarter ce projet de même que celui de créer un Institut de recherche et d'information sur les conditions de travail et étudier plutôt la possibilité de constituer un seul organisme dont le mandat serait susceptible de correspondre davantage aux attentes des parties." Gouvernement du Québec, Neuvième rapport annuel du Conseil consultatif du travail et de la main d'oeuvre, 1977-1978, p.20.
96. John Porter, The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), p.529, cited in Panitch, "Corporatism in Canada," p.67.
97. Gouvernement du Québec, Bâtir le Québec, pp.85-86.
98. Gouvernement du Québec, Neuvième rapport annuel du CCTMO, pp.29-30.
99. Gouvernement du Québec, Rapport, le sommet économique, pp.45-47.

100. Gouvernement du Québec, Rapport des activités du Conseil de planification et de développement du Québec du 1er Avril 1974 au 31 mars 1976 (Québec, 1976), pp.44-45, 171-172, 181.
101. See André Raynauld's comments in Gouvernement du Québec, Rapport, le sommet économique, pp.73-74 and in Québec, Assemblée nationale, Journal des Débats, 1 June 1978, p.1833.
102. Cohen, Modern Capitalist Planning, pp.254-255.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROSPECTS FOR LIBERAL CORPORATISM IN QUEBEC

Peak Associations and Collective Bargaining in Quebec

The Parti Québécois' hopes for an effective concerted action in Quebec have foundered on the intransigence of its major "interlocutors," organized business and labour. Neither of these social partners has thus far exhibited any willingness to temper the pursuit of its sectional concerns in order to promote some nebulous "national interest." In this regard, the PQ government's socio-economic conferences have proven an egregious failure: they have not succeeded in instilling in the organized producer groups a national consciousness; indeed, as I pointed out in the preceding chapter, these "confabulations" have had virtually no substantive impact on the behaviours of either business or labour.

If the attitudes of the social partners constitute the major obstacle to the PQ's search for a new social contract, there are other institutional barriers to the establishment of an effective concerted action in Quebec of which the present government is seemingly unaware. Most important among these are the structure of the peak associations of business and labour and the nature of collective bargaining in Quebec. As I noted in the first chapter, those countries which have managed to check wage militancy and diminish industrial conflict (at least temporarily) by means of such liberal corporatist mechanisms as tripartite national planning boards and voluntary incomes policies, have been characterized by strongly

centralized trade union federations and employers' associations and by a system of national- or industry-level bargaining.¹ Unfortunately for the PQ's corporatist designs, neither of these requisites is present in Quebec. Together with the attitudinal impediments described above, these structural barriers tend to make the prospects for liberal corporatism in the province very dim indeed.

The structure of the trade union federations and the employers' associations in Quebec is such that the PQ's hopes for a sharing of responsibilities in the development of the national economy are doomed to disappointment unless certain legislative reforms are carried out, (of which more below). In its 1966 study of the feasibility of incomes policy in Canada, the Economic Council contended that:

The Canadian labour movement['s]...pattern of organization is marked by a high degree of autonomy for individual unions. The two major central bodies, the Canadian Labour Congress and the Confederation of National Trade Unions are in the nature of federations joined together to promote common interests ...the structure of the Canadian labour movement is far from being such that the Canadian central bodies could enter into meaningful undertakings that would bind member unions to the observance of a set of guidelines.²

These observations apply not only to the CLC (and its provincial wing, the FTQ) and the CSN, but to the other two union centrals in Quebec, the CEQ and the CSD. Admittedly, these federations fulfil certain crucial functions and have considerable authority, both legal and moral, over their affiliates. The CSN, for example, provides its affiliates with some strike support funds, and educational services; it assists in the organizing of new workers, conducts research on a variety of labour-

related issues, and undertakes "non-partisan" political activity in order to promote the concerns of its membership.³ Power within the FTQ is somewhat more diffuse than in the case of the CSN; like its parent organization, the CLC, the FTQ resembles more a loosely-knit federation of independent union locals than a highly centralized peak association. According to Gérard Hébert, the power of the FTQ (or the CLC) over the internal affairs of its affiliates is "virtually non-existent," whereas the CSN, "as a result of the numerous services it provides to its affiliate unions; either directly or through its federations, maintains significant authority and considerable prestige over them."⁴

Most important for the PQ's policy of concerted action, however, is the fact that the trade union federations in Quebec do not play an important role in collective bargaining. Quebec in this regard follows the North American (and British) tradition of plant-level bargaining, and none of the union centrals plays more than an advisory role in this process, supplying the locals with economic data and undertaking studies related to the negotiations. There are exceptions to this rule, the result of a number of special laws passed by successive governments in Quebec. Bill 290 (1968), for example, instituted a type of industry-wide bargaining in the construction sector in Quebec and gave to the union federations a preponderant role in this process. Bill 25 (1967) made the CEQ the sole bargaining agent for the teachers' unions in the province and the PQ's own Bill 55 (1978), regulating collective bargaining in the educational sector, the social services (primarily hospitals) and governmental

organizations, confirmed the trend toward centralized negotiations in Quebec's public and parapublic sectors.⁵ For the most part, however, collective agreements in Quebec, as in the rest of Canada, are negotiated between the union local and the individual employer, a situation which makes the institutionalization of concerted action in the province a highly improbable occurrence, inasmuch as the trade union federations lack the power to extract from their affiliates the responsibility and moderation in collective bargaining that such a policy is designed to obtain.

Business organization in Quebec poses another problem for the PQ's nascent concerted action. Those employers' associations that do exist in the province are primarily lobbying groups whose chief purposes are to keep government apprised of the concerns and demands of the business world and to urge the legislators to adopt those policies which are compatible with a healthy business climate. Individual employers, especially those in the small- and medium-sized industries, have been extremely reluctant to delegate any decision-making authority to employers' organizations:

Comme le faisait remarquer J. Bauer, dans son étude sur les associations patronales au Québec, les petites et moyennes entreprises ont beaucoup de mal à accepter la moindre délégation de pouvoir à une association patronale, et il faut que les entreprises soient soumises à une pression syndicale qu'elles peuvent difficilement supporter pour qu'une politique commune voit le jour.⁶

Thus, concerted action as it is presently constituted in Quebec lacks a powerful business federation which can influence and control the

behaviours of its constituent members; certainly the CMA (Quebec), the CDE and the Chambre de Commerce do not wield this sort of authority. As for the CPQ, which is clearly the most influential business association in the province, it has no control whatsoever over the bargaining strategies or the pricing policies of its member firms. This contrasts with the situation in Sweden, for example, where the employers' federation, the SAF, is "represented at all key negotiations" and where "...[e]very labour contract must have SAF's approval, and members are liable to penalties if they ignore this rule or break the employer front in an open conflict by making a separate agreement contrary to the SAF line'."7

The existing institutional and legislative environment in Quebec, therefore--the Labour Code, the structure and functions of the major business and labour federations, and the system of collective bargaining--does not exactly enhance the chances for the success, or even the short-term survival, of concerted action in the province. Nevertheless, there is one article in the PQ program which, if implemented, could radically alter organized labour's position on the desirability of concerted action in Quebec. I am here referring to the PQ's call for the establishment of tripartite sectoral bargaining in Quebec, an issue which was one of the principal points of contention between the economic agents at the various socio-economic conferences convened by the government.

As early as 1970, then Deputy Minister of Labour Robert Sauvé was calling for the replacement of plant-level collective bargaining with a more rational and efficient approach. According to Sauvé, collective

agreements which applied only to the individual firm were "too isolated, in economic and social terms, to foster the participation and concerted action necessary for the development of our society." Sectoral bargaining, on the other hand, "renders the trade unions more responsible and more aware of the economic context, and creates a link between the social partners and manpower policy..."⁸ It is interesting to note here the similarities between the rhetoric of Sauvé and that adopted by the PQ government: both refer to the "social partners," the "concerted economy," and to the need for "responsibility" on the part of Quebec's trade unions. Moreover, both Sauvé and the PQ (at least in the party programs) view sectoral bargaining as the cornerstone of a planned economy as well as the most rational solution to the plight of the unorganized workers in the province.

In each instance, however--the Bourassa administration in the early 1970's, and the current PQ regime--nothing came of the brief period of popularity which the notion of sectoral bargaining enjoyed. In the case of the Bourassa government, Cabinet (including Premier Bourassa and then Labour Minister Jean Cournoyer) did not share Robert Sauvé's enthusiasm for the concept of industry-wide negotiations involving the state, labour, and business.⁹ As for the Lévesque administration, notwithstanding its self-proclaimed social democratic bent, it has eschewed any reforms of the industrial relations system in the province which would dramatically augment the organizational strength of the trade union federations. Despite its repeated promises to study the question of

sectoral bargaining in the province, the government has preferred instead to implement a number of reforms which help to protect Quebec's unorganized workers without at the same time requiring them to join a union.

Such is the thrust of Pierre Marois' legislation on labour norms. Bill 126 (1979), which was originally described by the Minister of State for Social Development as "une sorte de 'contrat collectif' de base" for Quebec's unorganized workers.¹⁰ This particular piece of legislation abolished the Commission of the Minimum Wage in Quebec and replaced it with a Commission of Labour Norms. The latter body regulates and enforces certain minimal conditions of work--among them the minimum wage, paid annual vacations, statutory holidays, maternity leave--and establishes the judicial procedures which an employee can follow in the case of non-observance of the norms by his employer. In spite of the manifest improvement that this legislation brings to the condition of many of the unorganized workers in Quebec, it is not without its drawbacks, particularly for the voluntary associations of labour in the province.

Bill 126 was quite clearly inspired by the Castonguay Report (March 1975), whose major proposals were described by a "highly placed source" as calling for the establishment "'d'une sorte de convention collective minimale de 1,700,000 travailleurs non-syndiqués...dont un des effets sera peut-être indirectement de rendre de moins en moins nécessaire la présence des syndicats dans de nombreux secteurs'".¹¹ As for the inference that the implementation of the Castonguay Report's major proposals would, in effect, establish a sort of basic collective agreement for all non-

unionized workers in Quebec, Roback dismissed the analogy as "grotesque,"

...car les éléments essentiels d'une convention collective-- la présence d'un syndicat, la modification, en faveur des travailleurs, des rapports de force, un processus décisionnel bipartite, et un système autonome de recours pour assurer l'application de la convention collective--sont absents d'une telle réglementation des conditions de travail...la formule proposée par le rapport Castonguay n'apporte aucune réponse à la question fondamentale de la dépendance des travailleurs non syndiqués à l'endroit de l'employeur (ou de l'Etat)... il faut dire que l'acceptation d'une réglementation par l'Etat des conditions de travail, comme formule de rechange à l'organisation syndicale et à l'action syndicale, équivaudrait à condamner les travailleurs actuellement non syndiqués à rester en marge des forces organisées et de leur action collective...¹²

Thus, one of the side-effects of Bill 126 (and not necessarily an unintended one) has been to render even more difficult the task of the union federations in organizing those sectors of the economy which have, to this point in time, resisted unionization (restaurants and hotels, wholesale and retail trade, financial institutions, and small manufacturing).¹³

As one observer has aptly pointed out:

...le désormais célèbre <<préjugé>> pour les travailleurs prend ici tout son sens: le gouvernement cherche à rejoindre les travailleurs inorganisés, moins susceptibles de subir l'influence des syndicats. D'où les lois sur les normes minimales de travail, le supplément de revenu, la santé-sécurité. Malgré leur prétention progressiste, elles ont aussi pour effet de neutraliser l'action syndicale.¹⁴

Dugas has overstated his case somewhat--I would argue that legislation such as Bill 126 is designed not so much to neutralize trade union action in Quebec, as to circumscribe it--but his central contention, that the PQ government views the state as a sort of substitute union for the unorganized, merits consideration.

The PQ government's apparent unwillingness to revise the Labour Code and give to the labour federations a more prominent role in collective bargaining belies the "social democratic" designation which many péquiste notables have claimed for the party. As well, it raises some fundamental doubts as to the viability of concerted action in Quebec. The PQ obviously would like to integrate the trade union leadership into the state's decision-making structures in order to attenuate class conflict, yet it paradoxically fears and mistrusts this same union leadership (as was evident in the public debate over passage of Bill 62 in November 1979). Thus, the government has shied away from any initiatives --such as sectoral bargaining--which would strengthen this leadership with respect to the rank and file and which would facilitate the establishment of a rational tripartite approach to economic development in Quebec. So it is that the immediate prospects for the PQ's version of liberal corporatism are not at all good.

There is yet another flaw in the PQ's corporatist vision which merits brief discussion here, namely the dependent nature of the Quebec economy, a situation which vitiates any attempts on the part of the state to engage in effective economic planning. As I noted in the second chapter, the technocratic faction within the PQ contends that once Quebec has acceded to political sovereignty, the major economic "decision-making centres" will be repatriated, the wasteful duplication of services spawned by the federal system will be eliminated, and a péquiste government would finally be in a position to plan economic development in the

new state. However, given the PQ government's steady retreat from the controls on foreign ownership proposed in the party program (witness Lévesque's assurance to the U.S. business community in January 1977 that there would be no nationalizations during the PQ's first mandate, apart from the special case of the asbestos industry), it is doubtful whether the minimum of planning required by a successful policy of concerted action could be carried out. As Leo Panitch has noted, in a slightly different context, the extent of foreign ownership of the Canadian manufacturing and resource sectors places in doubt "the prospects and the worth of economic planning [in Canada], even of an indicative nature;" in the absence of stringent controls on the operations of multinational firms in Canada, "a planning exercise would be purely symbolic..."¹⁵ These observations would apply equally well in the case of a sovereign Quebec.

Is liberal corporatism, then, a non-starter in Québec? Not entirely. A number of factors combine to guarantee that liberal corporatism will for some time continue to exercise a hold on the imaginations of Québec's politicians and party ideologues. In the first place, liberal corporatism constitutes one of the few available alternatives to muddling through the present economic juncture in Québec. Interestingly enough, Claude Ryan (who at the time was editor of Le Devoir) hailed the PQ government's efforts to establish a form of concerted action in Québec at the time of the Pointe-au-Pic summit, arguing that it was the only practicable alternative to, on the one hand, coercive *étatisme*, with the artificial

swelling of the public sector, bureaucratization of economic life and stifling of individual initiative that it would entail, and on the other hand, pure *laissez-faire*, which leads ineluctably to economic anarchy, or at best, the domination of a few powerful groups in society.¹⁶ According to Ryan, this "middle path" (shades of the romantic corporatists of an earlier era!) is the ideal one for the highly industrialized liberal democracies, since it recognizes the intrinsic interdependence of the social partners without, at the same time, attempting to submerge the various interests under one authority.

Now that he is leader of a revived provincial Liberal Party, whose chances of unseating the PQ in the next election must be considered excellent, (especially if the Union Nationale continues its present decline), do Ryan's views on concerted action presage an attempt by a future Liberal government to draw up a new social contract? Quite possibly, for a Liberal government would certainly be faced with the problems of organized labour's militancy, high levels of industrial conflict and sluggish economic performance. Concerted action might seem just the solution to these ills. But if the present PQ government's efforts to institutionalize dialogue and foster consensus among the social partners have not exactly been crowned with success, then the chances that a Liberal government under Claude Ryan could succeed where the PQ has failed are very remote indeed. It is extremely unlikely that any of the major union federations in Quebec would want to collaborate with a Liberal government, particularly since the Liberal's policy

committee is already talking "about possibly abolishing the right to strike in parts of the public service such as hospitals."¹⁷ The Liberals will discover, as the PQ already has, that it is almost impossible to obtain labour's cooperation in policy-making while simultaneously applying state restrictions on its freedom of action.

In the immediate future, it seems likely that corporatism will continue to be an important weapon in the PQ's ideological arsenal. If the PQ can manage to hold on to power--a rather unlikely prospect, though not quite as inconceivable as it might have appeared in the immediate aftermath of the government's resounding defeat in the May 1980 referendum on sovereignty-association¹⁸--it would continue to appeal to class solidarity in the name of national prosperity, just as it has throughout its first mandate. Lévesque and his colleagues would go on urging the social partners to subordinate their parochial concerns to the good of the nation, particularly during the transitional period before the accession to sovereignty.¹⁹ Presumably--or so the pronouncements of various party luminaries would seem to imply--class differences will not only be acknowledged to exist once Québécois have collectively decided in favour of the PQ's constitutional option, but these disparities in wealth and status will be reduced by a socially conscious and activist government.²⁰ According to the PQ's priorities, however, such socio-economic questions as the distribution of income among classes cannot be fully addressed while the national question remains unresolved. This subordination of the social to the national is characteristic of corporatist ideology,

as Gaétan Pirou pointed out in his trenchant study of corporatism:

La vérité est que l'on ne comprend le corporatisme que si l'on y voit une doctrine qui délibérément subordonne le point de vue social au point de vue national, et qui accorde au souci de l'équité entre les classes moins de poids qu'à celui de la prospérité et de la puissance de la nation...Il est donc fatal qu[e le corporatisme] se heurte à la défiance de ceux...qui accordent autant d'importance aux problèmes de répartition qu'aux problèmes de production, de ceux...qui ne veulent pas retirer aux masses ouvrières l'espoir d'une transformation de régime dans les relations entre le capital et le travail.²¹

Certainly not all members of the PQ regard the solution of the social and economic problems described above--the distribution of wealth in society, the relationship between capital and labour--as being necessarily dependent upon the prior resolution of the national question. But, as I have argued throughout this paper, the most influential members of the party--Lévesque and Morin for example--do adhere to this legislative timetable.

If the PQ is defeated in the next provincial election, a shift in the party ideology might take place. Once freed of the necessity of cultivating the image of an efficient and moderate administrator (a "good government"), it might be argued, the PQ will undergo a transformation similar to that experienced by the British Labour Party during its periods in opposition. The PQ may come more under the influence of its mass organization; there may be a substantial radicalization of its rhetoric and program; and the party may attempt to strengthen its very tenuous links with the labour movement in Québec. There would be a concomitant downplaying of the party's corporatist vision in favour of a class approach to politics and political action.

It would seem to me that this belief in a possible shift to the left by the PQ in the future is more the product of wishful thinking than serious analysis. As Lise Bissonnette noted at the time of the last PQ national congress, Lévesque and his close associates are, at present, in greater control of the party organization than at any time previously.²² It seems likely, then, that Lévesque's vision of a *bonne entente* between the classes in Quebec will continue to inform party literature and, if it remains in power, government policies.

The major trade union federations in Quebec will remain vulnerable to the PQ's corporatist allurements as long as the latter is the unrivalled representative of the nationalist forces in the province and the only palatable electoral alternative to Claude Ryan's Liberals. As the special congresses held by the various union centrals prior to the May 1980 referendum on sovereignty-association demonstrated, a large body of the province's trade unionists desire a fundamental redefinition of the existing political relationship between Quebec and Canada. The FTQ, sounding very much like the PQ in L'Economie et la souveraineté, called for a "yes" vote in the referendum as the only effective means of eliminating the squandering of resources engendered by the federal system (a situation which victimizes workers more than any other social group).²³ The CEQ remained officially neutral throughout the referendum campaign but, significantly, the union rank and file rebuffed the leadership in their attempt to link the debate on national independence to a Marxist interpretation of Quebec society. Rodrigue Dubé, president of the

Alliance des professeurs de Montréal, affirmed that his union would not "allow the debate to be conducted in such a fashion that a yes to national independence is automatically associated with an unconscious yes to a Marxist vision of Quebec society."²⁴ A questionnaire circulated by the CEQ leadership among the members, in which it was proposed that the federation "'...come out in favour of the independence of Quebec and... consider that the struggle for independence is inseparable from the struggle for a society which the Québécois workers must define and build, corresponding to their economic, social, cultural and political interests',"²⁵ drew a highly negative response. Apparently--and this does not seem to be an unwarranted inference from the results of this questionnaire--the CEQ membership regards the PQ's constitutional proposals with a great deal more sympathy than do its leaders.

Finally, the CSN supported the Quebec-as-oppressed-nation thesis in the working paper on the national question it released in April 1980, but it also expressed a great deal of scepticism with regard to the PQ's constitutional option. According to the CSN, sovereignty-association would merely attempt to satisfy Québécois's cultural and political demands without at the same time offering any protection against the increasing domination of "North American" values and ideology in Quebec society. The document did not pronounce categorically either way on the national question, affirming that all the data were not yet in and that it was therefore impossible to determine which strategy on the national question would best serve the interests of the working class.²⁶

We see then that the ambivalence and confusion within the trade union federations in Quebec vis-à-vis the national question has not really dissipated during the four years of PQ government. It was this ambivalence that was so skillfully exploited by certain péquiste Cabinet ministers at the time of the last round of Common Front negotiations--witness Morin's reference to the "civic responsibility" required from Quebec's workers in the period preceding the referendum--and the PQ will quite probably continue to play on the genuine, if unofficial, support for its constitutional proposals to be found in the union leadership and rank and file. To this extent, the PQ's appeals for class solidarity in the name of national prosperity may enjoy some success, even among those unions whose leaders are--officially--virulent in their denunciations of the PQ's social and economic policies.

Summary and Conclusions

In this thesis, I have been primarily concerned with elucidating the structural and ideological factors which can lead a government--in this case that of the Parti Québécois--to attempt to involve the organized producer groups in economic decision-making. I have argued that corporatism in its various manifestations is founded on the belief that it is possible to bring capital and labour together in a cooperative, mutually beneficial relationship without radically altering the cornerstones of a capitalist economy, namely the profit motive and the institution of private property. As I pointed out in the first chapter, corporatist thinkers from the mid-nineteenth century onwards have argued that a

number of relatively limited structural reforms in the capitalist economic order, giving workers a "voice" in the management of the economy, would suffice to eradicate the class conflict which seemingly was the ineluctable concomitant of the capitalist system. However, my analysis of the classical period of corporatist ideology--spanning the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries--underscored the singular lack of success these theorists had in implementing their ideas. The early experiments in corporatist forms of organization, particularly those undertaken by a variety of authoritarian regimes in Europe in the 1930's, cast grave doubts on a central article in the corporatist faith: the belief that a new "spirit" could be instilled in the industrial partners, thereby ushering in a new economic order founded on the harmonious cooperation of classes.

Corporatism did not die with the defeat of fascism in 1945. Today, a number of governments in the highly industrialized countries in the West, many of them social democratic, are experimenting with a form of liberal corporatism in an effort to cope with the structural problems posed by modern capitalism. In Sweden, the Netherlands, Austria, and West Germany, a type of social contract has been concluded--for varying lengths of time and with differing degrees of success--between the government and the organized producer groups. This *modus vivendi* involves a trade-off between increased access for the organizations of business and labour to the decision-making centres of the national economy and a commitment on their part to maintain industrial peace. This business-labour rapprochement

takes place in the context of a political system based to a significant degree on the protection of fundamental civil liberties and on parliamentary democracy; it develops alongside of a pluralist system of state-interest group relations (wherein the groups interact one-on-one with the state). It is for this reason that one speaks of a "liberal" corporatism.

The major portion of this thesis has been given over to an exploration of the peculiarities of liberal corporatism in present-day Quebec. The policy of concerted action somewhat haltingly set in motion by the Parti Québécois during its first mandate can be viewed as an inchoate corporatism. Confronted with a particularly strained labour relations scene, a militant labour movement, and a deteriorating economic situation, the PQ has sought to inculcate in the social partners a national consciousness which would ensure that a concern for the good of the nation took precedence over narrow self-interest. For a number of reasons--the attitudes of the Quebec government's major interlocutors, the nature of trade union and business organizations in the province, the collective bargaining system--liberal corporatism in Quebec has remained comparatively undeveloped and ineffectual.

Certain technocratic and statist elements in the PQ ideology have seemingly deflected the péquiste leaders from a consideration of the limitations inherent in their corporatist initiatives. An inordinate faith in the powers of the state, particularly in its ability to reveal to labour and capital the precise nature of their interdependent interests,

and a belief that many social problems are technical in nature and can be solved if the social partners "sit down and reason together,"²⁷ partially account for the unshakable faith that some Cabinet ministers have in the viability of the corporatist option. The PQ would do well to consider one of the more discerning quotes from their old antagonist, Pierre Trudeau:

Objective political economy and sociology have certainly not yet shown how a legal superstructure, which makes no essential changes in capitalist institutions, could reconcile the opposed interests of capital and labour, except in limited areas and for limited periods of time.²⁸

The PQ's efforts to institutionalize dialogue among the social partners in Quebec, its attempts to replace the traditional adversarial relationship between capital and labour with one of harmony and cooperation, have done nothing to disprove Trudeau's contention.

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2. Economic Council of Canada, Third Annual Review, "Prices, Productivity, and Employment," (Ottawa, 1966), pp.160-161.
3. See CSN, La CSN: structures et organisation (Service de l'éducation, 1971), pp.47-65.
4. Gérard Hébert, "Pouvoir et 'pouvoirs' dans les syndicats," in Pouvoir et 'pouvoirs' en relations de travail, 25e congrès 1970, pp.94-95; my translation.
5. *Ibid.*, p.100: "Dans la négociation des conventions collectives, les centrales syndicales n'ont que très rarement un pouvoir direct. Ces cas d'exception résultent habituellement de lois spéciales." For a brief discussion of Bill 55 (1978), see Jean-Roch Boivin, "Règles du jeu et rapport de force dans les secteurs public et para-public québécois," Relations industrielles 34:1 (1979), pp.14-15.
6. Léo Roback, La syndicalisation sectorielle (Montréal: Institut de recherche appliquée sur le travail, Bulletin no.10, 1977), p.29. The study of employers' associations referred to by Roback is Julien Bauer's Ph.D. thesis (unpublished), "Les employeurs et leurs associations face aux syndicats et aux pouvoirs publics au Québec," Université de Paris I, 1974.
7. Barbash, Trade Unions and National Economic Policy, p.25.
8. Robert Sauvé, "La négociation sectorielle," Québec-Travail 6:4 (September 1970), p.28; my translation. See also *idem* "La négociation collective sectorielle," Relations industrielles 26:1 (January 1971), pp.3-23. For a full discussion of the meaning of sectoral bargaining, of its advantages and disadvantages, see Roback, La syndicalisation sectorielle.
9. Roback, La syndicalisation sectorielle, pp.22-24.

10. Cited in Jean-Claude Picard, "Québec songe à imposer à tout employeur une sorte de 'contrat collectif' de base," Le Devoir, 14 February 1977. This article points up Marois' corporatist proclivities: "...ardent défenseur de la social-démocratie au point qu'il est identifié aux rares 'gauchistes' du Cabinet, M. Marois estime que toute l'activité de son ministère doit tourner autour du double pôle de la justice sociale et de la confection, étapes par étapes, d'un nouveau contrat liant collectivement tous les groupes de la société."
11. Cited in Roback, La syndicalisation sectorielle, p.23.
12. *Ibid.*, p.31.
13. *Ibid.*, pp.11-19.
14. Normand Dugas, "Et si, en plus d'un pays, le gouvernement réservait un syndicat aux travailleurs du Québec," Ligne directe (Official publication of the CEQ) 8:5 (April 1980), p.14.
15. Panitch, "Corporatism in Canada," p.82.
16. Claude Ryan, "Le Sommet du Pointe-au-Pic," Le Devoir, 21 May 1977.
17. Margot Gibb-Clark "Fall or Spring? Small Talk in Quebec Centres on the Election," Globe and Mail, 14 August, 1980.
18. For a brief analysis of the results of the May referendum, see McRoberts and Posgate, Quebec: Social Change and Political Crisis, 2nd ed., pp.277-286. Regarding the PQ's chances of winning the next election, see the results of Maurice Pinard's recent public opinion poll, published in The Gazette, 6 September 1980. According to Pinard, the Liberals would have received 42% of the provincial vote had an election been held in August, to the PQ's 37% (N=787). This in spite of the fact that Lévesque far outdistanced Ryan in terms of personal popularity and the PQ government earned high rates of satisfaction among the voters.
19. I am here assuming that the sovereignty-association option is not yet dead, that it will be resurrected (perhaps in even more diluted form) some time in the future.
20. See Government of Quebec, Quebec - Canada: A New Deal (Quebec: 1979), p.91: "In social affairs, once the costly and often contradictory government action we now know is eliminated, Quebec, controlling all its taxes, will be able to apportion more equitably the fruits of its economic growth so as to improve the lot of its most deprived citizens in particular."

21. Pirou, Essais sur le corporatisme, pp.59-66.
22. Lise Bissonnette, "Le triomphe de l'étapisme," Le Devoir, 4 June 1979. For an early example of the "wishful thinking" on the subject of the possible radicalization of the PQ, see Daniel Latouche, "Le Parti Québécois à la recherche du pouvoir," in Réjean Pelletier, ed., Partis politiques au Québec (Montréal: Hurtubise HMH, 1976), pp.119-120.
23. The Citizen, 21 April 1980; FTQ, Le monde ouvrier (Official organ of the FTQ), February 1980, p.4; May 1980, p.2; June 1980, p.8.
24. Cited in Paule des Rivières, "Trois syndicats d'enseignants contestent l'analyse marxiste de la CEQ," Le Devoir, 12 April 1979. Cf. William Johnson, "Wham! went the teachers--lovely!" Globe and Mail, 11 July 1979.
25. *Ibid.*
26. Lise Bissonnette, "Syndicats et <<question nationale>>," Le Devoir, 17 April 1979.
27. Roszak, The Making of a Counter Culture, p.10: "...wherever social friction appears in the technocracy, [it is assumed that] it must be due to what is called a 'breakdown in communication'. For where human happiness has been so precisely calibrated and the powers that be are so utterly well intentioned, controversy could not possibly derive from a substantive issue, but only from misunderstanding. Thus we need only sit down and reason together and all will be well."
28. Pierre Elliott Trudeau, "The Province of Quebec at the Time of the Strike," in Pierre Elliott Trudeau, ed. The Asbestos Strike, trans. James Boake (Toronto: James Lewis and Samuel, 1974), p.25.

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