

Quebec's Independence Movement



Canadian History Review:

- Canada was originally colonized by French (fur trade)
- British wanted part of the fur trade; fought & won French and Indian War
 - Divided Canada into Upper Canada (British) and Lower Canada (French)
 - Lower Canada = Quebec
- Canada was united in 1867--British North America Act





Quebec -- Early 1900s

- Most French Canadians lived in Quebec for hundreds of years
- Spoke French & had a different culture than English-speaking Canadians
 - Most lived on farms and rarely left their villages
- Most French Canadians Catholic while the majority of British Canadians were Protestant



Quebec -- Early 1900s

- Catholic Church was powerful in these regions
 - Church helped people continue their traditional way of life
- Most French Canadians still thought of themselves as French, not Canadian
 - Didn't like the close ties Canada still held with the British



French Canadians & WWI



- Thought the war would only help the British, not Canada
- Made many feel that the rest of Canada did not care about them
- Some French Canadians began to feel that Quebec should become its own country...

A Separate Quebec...

- Idea of a separate French Canada spread slowly
- At first, most French Canadians did not think that Quebec needed independence just to be French
 - By the 1960s, however, thinking had changed...
- Many French Canadians had become Quebec nationalists & thought of themselves as **Quebecois**, not Canadians



A Separate Quebec



- By this time, Quebec had changed in many ways...
- Growing populations pushed into farmlands & rural people grew poor
 - Many chose to leave farms & move to cities
- Lives were very different now: stopped going to church, didn't lead old traditional lives, English was spoken in most cities

Quebec's Independence

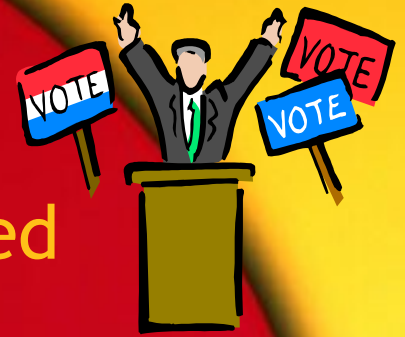
- Many French Canadians felt that their language & culture might disappear
 - French language & culture is overwhelmed by English
 - Tired of feeling like second class citizens in their own country
- Most started to think that Quebec should secede from Canada (be independent)
 - **Separatists**--want Quebec to “separate” from Canada





What is the Quiet Revolution?

- A period of cultural and economic growth in Quebec during the 1960s and 1970s.
 - French influence began to assert itself against English domination, and momentum for Quebec independence grew.
- Separatists began to use government, rather than violence, in an attempt to achieve Quebec independence from Canada



- 1980 & 1995--people of Quebec voted whether or not to secede
 - Both votes were in favor of staying Canadian
 - Last vote--49.4% voted to secede; 50.6% voted to stay Canadian...wow!
- By a razor-thin margin, voters decided that Quebec should remain part of Canada.
- Close results showed that the relationship between Quebec and the rest of Canada would continue to be a controversial issue.

Both Sides...



- Those who opposed Quebec separatism argued that separatism would:
 - result in economic disaster for Quebec
 - called for people to display a spirit of national unity.
- Those who supported Quebec separatism:
 - appealed to pride in their French language and culture
 - played on the resentment many felt toward English Canada for refusing to give Quebec more power to protect its culture.

- Canadian government does not want to allow Quebec to separate from Canada
 - Huge economic help to country
 - Rich in natural resources
 - Access to many waterways (shipping & trade)
- Government has made several reforms in an attempt to keep separatists happy...



Constitution Act

- Was adopted in 1982; an attempt to placate separatists in Quebec
- 1. Set up two official languages in Canada (English AND French)
 - Canada is now Bilingual
- 2. Moved all constitutional power from Great Britain to Canada (finally)

