

Inside Canada by Pierre Beaudry

The hidden power of the Crown

The return to Canada of the right to amend its Constitution is nothing like full independence from Britain.

For the fifth time since Canada was conquered in 1760, the British Crown has graciously approved a constitutional regime for Canada without the country's consent, and against the will of the people of Quebec, following the path of the Quebec Act of 1774, the Constitutional Act of 1791, the Act of Union of 1840, and the Act of Confederation of 1867. The present reform, known as the Canada Act, has the advantage of having convinced most Canadians in 9 out of the 10 provinces that they are now fully independent.

The opposite is the case. As the publication at the end of March of the biography of former Governor General Jules Leger makes clear, the constitutional changes are meant to reinforce Canada's role in the service of the Crown—under the guidance of the Queen's official representative, the Governor General.

The Canada Act, which was approved by the Queen on March 29, "patriates" to Canada the power to amend its own Constitution. The Constitution itself remains the same, but included in the Act is a "bill of rights" that greatly increases the federal government's power over provincial resources and cultural policies. It was because of this that the province of Quebec refused to agree to the package.

In the British House of Lords on March 25, as the Canada bill passed, Foreign Minister Lord

Carrington pronounced that the approval of nine provinces had been enough of a general consent for the repatriation to be accepted by Britain. Carrington was telling Quebec: "*Va te faire foutre.*" He emphasized that "the Supreme Court of Canada considered that the consent of all the Canadian provinces was not required, by law or constitutional convention, to the making of the request to Britain by the Canadian Parliament to bring about this historic change in Canada's constitution." Quebec's objections "did not provide grounds for declining to act," he declared, and Quebec's pending court case claiming that "by constitutional convention" it has a right of veto over constitutional change, is not an "impediment to Parliament proceeding."

The Queen will hand the Canada Bill to Premier Pierre Trudeau when she comes to Ottawa on April 17.

While private receptions are prepared in the nation's capital for the event, the Parti Québécois is organizing a massive protest demonstration in Montreal which Premier René Levesque is expected to lead.

Forces in western Canada, especially among independent entrepreneurs, are also hopping mad. Western Canada Concept leader Gordon Kesler, recently elected to the Alberta Provincial Assembly, has joined his voice to Levesque's in

proposing that on April 17, flags should be flown at half mast. Praising Levesque's boycott of the Queen's visit, Kesler said, "I think René Levesque has shown a lot of courage."

The real fraud of the Trudeau constitution is quite evident in statements from Jules Leger, Governor General from 1974 to 1979. In his biography, the late Leger is quoted as saying that "Whatever the issue of the discussion on constitutional revision, the position of a Canadian head of state will remain. The name might change, so might the role and mandate. But the office itself will continue to be essential. And the more reinforcement it will have received, the better will the Crown be served."

What Leger was proposing with the full assent of the Queen is that the Governor General become a full-fledged head of state, while the role of the Queen is made less visible. Political decision-making in Canada has been "a continuous personal exchange of views between Her Majesty, the Prime Minister, and the Governor General, which made consensus rather easy whenever a decision had to be taken on any matter of common interest. It is this practice which, I believe, allowed Her Majesty to play a real part in the government of Canada."

Indicating that Pierre Trudeau has been the most ardent monarchist of all Prime Ministers, Leger concluded, "I wonder whether any sovereign was ever so directly informed and consulted by a Canadian Prime Minister."

In future columns, I will, among other things, outline the alternative constitutional approach for Canada presented by EIR founder Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.