

# **THE BOSS**

Maurice Duplessis and the province of Quebec

OTTAWA  
**THE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION GROUP**

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THE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION GROUP  
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Maurice Duplessis and the province of Quebec

Maurice Duplessis was Prime Minister of the province of Quebec from 1936 to 1939 and from 1944 to 1959<sup>1</sup>. Born in 1890 and dying in office, he dominated political life in Quebec for most of the twentieth century.

Until his death in September 1959, Duplessis had absolute power over the Union Nationale, the political party he created. The Union Nationale easily won the 1936 provincial election<sup>2</sup> after its narrow defeat in 1935. Its first term in power, together with that of Duplessis as Prime Minister, came to an end in 1939, after a campaign in which the opposing Liberal Party argued that only it could protect the people of Quebec from the federal policy of conscription (to serve Canada in the Second World War). Duplessis's second term began as the result of the Union Nationale's successful campaign on the basis of a program calling for greater autonomy for the province within the Canadian federation. This strong appeal to nationalistic feelings was unique in Canadian and even Quebec politics, and it came to distinguish the party.

Maurice Duplessis was an enigmatic and colourful character. His personality was far more complex and multifaceted than the popular image of « the Boss » (« le Chef » in French) that was propagated by his opponents and which he himself liked to cultivate. He acquired this autocratic image and maintained it throughout much of his career as the result of characteristically strong, and often controversial, leadership. Duplessis became known for dealing forcefully - brutally by most standards - with striking unions and for occasionally violating civil liberties. He was able to do so without compromising the Union Nationale's basis of support, which consisted largely of rural voters, small- and medium-scale businesses and unorganised labour. Anglophone voters naturally distrusted the party because of its French nationalist tendencies. Duplessis's regime and the Union Nationale period as a whole are now generally remembered for unprecedented corruption and dubious electoral practices.

Following Duplessis's death in 1959, the Union Nationale's hold on power was broken by the victory of the Liberal Party in the election of 22 June 1960, with the Liberals' 51 seats and 51.5% of the popular vote against the Union Nationale's 43 seats and 46.6% of the vote. Under the leadership of Jean Lesage, the Liberals had developed a comprehensive and coherent program of reform, well summed up by their official slogan, « It's time for a change ». The ensuing period, from 1960 to 1966, proved to be a time of rapid transformation in Quebec politics and society, and came to be known as the « Quiet Revolution ». The new Liberal government was successful in launching many reforms. Everything came under close scrutiny. The government attacked political patronage and changed the electoral map to provide better representation for urban areas. It limited expenditures during election periods. It also lowered the voting age from 21 to 18. From 1960 to 1967, the budget of the province grew from 745 million dollars to over 2 billion dollars. The period was marked by the dramatic development of government institutions and the vastly increased role of the state in all aspects of the province's life, including its economy and

the general welfare of its citizens. Among the government's many notable accomplishments was the nationalisation of private electricity companies. Another major achievement was the creation in 1965 of a government-controlled fund that administered the assets of the Quebec pension plan ; the fund rapidly grew to several billion dollars and provided a strong tool to support the economy by allowing the state to invest in key sectors. Major reforms were also introduced in education and health care.

For a long time, the Quiet Revolution was seen as a turning point in the political and social development of Quebec, one that marked a sharp break from the Union Nationale period. However, the lengthening perspective of history shows that many fundamental and lasting changes were introduced during this period. Most of Quebec's highways, practically all of its universities, over three thousand schools and most of its hospitals were built during Duplessis's five terms in office<sup>3</sup>. The percentage of Quebec's rural homes with electricity rose from 20 percent to 97 percent between 1944 and 1959<sup>4</sup>. Duplessis also introduced progressive social legislation, including minimum wage and home ownership assistance programs. He presented a number of symbolic nationalist measures, such as the adoption of the Quebec flag. Under Duplessis, Quebec had fifteen consecutive balanced budgets and several tax reductions. Indeed, it was because Duplessis had done so much to provide Quebec with the infrastructure of a modern state, while at the same time considerably reducing the province's debt<sup>5</sup>, that his Liberal successors had a firm financial basis to support their programs<sup>6</sup>. During his time in power the government itself of Quebec changed profoundly<sup>7</sup>. Earlier Prime Ministers and the members of their Cabinets served concurrently as directors of large English-speaking corporations<sup>8</sup> ; the legislature sat for only two months of the year ; the province had virtually no share of direct taxes ; and the Catholic Church had more moral authority and often more political influence on secular matters than the Prime Minister. Under Duplessis, these and other long-entrenched and unsatisfactory conditions changed, and the province prospered. As a result, and contrary to widely held belief, the contributions of the Union Nationale regime to Quebec's development were many and significant, as even some of the party's strongest critics will concede. Nevertheless, this period in the province's history was a difficult one, and further changes remained to be made. The situation can probably be best summed up by saying that while Duplessis developed Quebec into an advanced industrial society, he left it with institutions and ideas that were essentially pre-industrial<sup>9</sup>.

## POLITICS UNDER DUPLESSIS

*Who are the members of the Union Nationale?*

*The Union Nationale is made up of members of the public who, out of a desire to set aside all petty displays of partisan politics, have recognized the urgent need for brisk and constructive political action in order to provide help to all the inhabitants of the province.*

Union Nationale - Catechism of electors - 1935

The Union Nationale was first elected in 1936 after campaigning to eliminate various forms of corruption practised by the incumbent Liberal regime. During his first term of office, from 1936 to 1939, Duplessis did indeed take some measures against the most blatant abuses. For instance, the government enacted a law prohibiting ministers from sitting on boards of business corporations<sup>10</sup> and dismissed many employees holding redundant positions<sup>11</sup>. But this reformist zeal faded during the party's period in opposition, between 1939 and 1944. And upon returning to power, the party took up the state apparatus it had once discredited and began to systematically use it for partisan purposes. Indeed, Duplessis developed it into an extremely powerful political machine.

### FAVOURITISM

The most straightforward abuse of public trust and political power arises from the ability to control the distribution of money and jobs to supporters.

In the case of jobs of all levels in government, Quebec had no tradition of recruitment on the basis of qualifications and competition<sup>12</sup>. To curb political influence in appointments to public positions, the Liberal administration established a three-member Civil Service Commission in 1943, but the Commission did not have time to introduce any changes before the re-election of the Union Nationale in the following year. Attracting competent public employees, providing them with adequate remuneration, and protecting them against partisan interference in their work were certainly not among the main objectives of the new government. Rather, the fundamental principle was one of openly practised favouritism - no effort was made to show that the granting of public positions was not influenced by questions of party loyalty<sup>13</sup>. Duplessis did not abolish the Commission but simply ensured that it remained powerless by replacing its three members with a single individual totally loyal to him<sup>14</sup>. Politicisation extended to the judiciary as well. Duplessis never assigned responsibility for justice to anyone but himself : he always held the offices of Attorney General and Minister of Justice in addition to that of Prime Minister. He alone appointed provincial court judges, who were invariably loyal supporters whose legal qualifications were not necessarily a leading consideration<sup>15</sup>.

As for money, the Duplessis administration allowed itself much discretionary latitude in the use of public funds. Thus, in 1948-1949, public accounts showed an unexpected deficit of 31 million<sup>16</sup>. The situation was the same in 1952-1953, with a deficit of 39 million<sup>17</sup>. In both cases, the shortfall

was mainly due to road-building expenditures<sup>18</sup>. Both deficits occurred in years in which there had been a provincial election, and the connection to be drawn is obvious. These and other breaches of standard budgetary practices were not illegal. The government had arranged for a large portion of the budget to be spent under laws that granted spending powers over several years, thereby preventing any annual control by the Legislative assembly. The sums involved were not insignificant. For example, out of the total budget of 249 million for 1951-1952, 98 million was spent under multi-year authorities, with the result that the Legislative Assembly could exercise control over only 151 million. Even then, the government never felt constrained to limit its expenditures to the amount voted in the budget. Parliamentary control was further eroded by the fact that the government spent 36 million more than the budget approved for that year<sup>19</sup>. The power to freely determine when very large expenditures would be made allowed the Union Nationale to spend extensively in election years.

The Union Nationale exploited the favouritism system at both the individual and the collective levels<sup>20</sup>.

At the individual level, the aim was to ensure the support of those, such as doctors, lawyers, notaries, trade union officials, business owners, mayors and municipal councillors, members of school boards, and the leaders of various associations, who had wide influence within a community and who were thus in a position to convince large groups of voters to support the Union Nationale<sup>21</sup>. In accordance with this strategy, the government made sure that the individuals in these categories received preferential treatment. Lawyers and notaries were provided with some of the legal work of the various government ministries, or were appointed to one of the many public boards and commissions<sup>22</sup>. Alternatively, people wanting to deal with the government were forced to do so through lawyers affiliated with the Union Nationale<sup>23</sup>. Similarly, any mayor, municipal councillor, or school board member who happened to own a business never had any difficulty in obtaining orders or contracts from the government, since the various ministries purchased supplies from small retail merchants in every town<sup>24</sup>. In the case of leaders of unions or other organisations, the granting of government jobs and other favours was generally effective in securing their active or passive support<sup>25</sup>.

In these and other ways, the Union Nationale regularly targeted the influential members of each community between elections. But when an election was called, the party's generosity was extended to the average citizen. Large numbers of voters were induced to form a favourable opinion of the ruling party by being given part-time jobs as part of some public works program. Others were freely given whatever special favours the party could provide. For example, a particular President of the Legislative Assembly who was also the owner of several hotels in his hometown hired all his cleaning ladies to work at the Parliamentary Library during the winter, when business was slow<sup>26</sup>. Individuals might even be placed on the payroll of a government ministry for a short period without having to perform any work. Thus, hundreds of highway workers and « special police » were placed on the province's payrolls a few days before the election of 1948<sup>27</sup>. Another means, widely used during the 1952 and 1956 elections, was to have the Ministry of Health pay the hospital expenses of party supporters through a system that had been created to help only the poorest people<sup>28</sup>. When it came to favours, the Union Nationale was never short of imagination. There was even a system of « small-digit » motor vehicle licence plates numbered 1 to 2000 that were allocated only to key supporters of the party and allowed them to ignore highway traffic rules without fear of being stopped by the police<sup>29</sup>. The Union Nationale was in a position to offer various types of advantages to almost any voter. However, it was essential that Union Nationale organisers be able to verify that those who received favours paid for them with their votes. Accordingly, favouritism at the individual level took place mainly in rural areas and small towns, where it was easier to determine how citizens had voted<sup>30</sup>. Although voting was secret, a large number of people were persuaded that Union Nationale organisers were in a position to know who cast each ballot<sup>31</sup>. Another means to achieve the same end was

to have people swear on the Bible that they would vote for the Union Nationale, a presumably effective tactic in a province that, at the time, was profoundly Catholic<sup>32</sup>.

Nevertheless, the use of favouritism at the collective level was a more effective tool for winning elections.

Municipalities, school boards, and religious institutions had become highly dependent on the provincial government for financial assistance. Previously, Quebec municipalities and school boards had been expected to finance themselves from their own sources of revenue. While this method had once worked well, these sources were no longer sufficient to cover the cost of the numerous services required by a modern industrial society<sup>33</sup>. A similar problem was faced by the many organisations and institutions run by the Catholic Church. In Quebec, the clergy was in charge of many of the institutions of a modern state, such as hospitals, homes for the aged, schools and universities, orphanages and establishments for the care of young delinquents, homeless persons and the handicapped<sup>34</sup>. To keep this immense machinery in motion, the Church was now obliged to rely on public support for, although powerful in appearance, the clergy was in fact dependent on the generosity of the government. Thus, religious communities were forced to be compliant or see their institutions perish for want of funding.

This financial dependence served the interests of the Union Nationale perfectly. In every election campaign, the voters of each district were told that if they wanted a new facility, be it a road, a bridge, a hospital or a school, they had to support the Union Nationale, with the clear implication that their failure to do so would unavoidably incur the withholding of financial assistance from the provincial government<sup>35</sup>. These were not empty threats. In the town of Shawinigan, Duplessis once declared that if the voters re-elected the Liberal Party candidate, a bridge urgently required for the community's development would not be built. The voters refused to give in to such intimidation, they elected a Liberal, and the bridge was not built while Duplessis was alive<sup>36</sup>. Another electoral district, in the Montreal region, also felt firsthand the implications of electing a Liberal. The secondary roads remained in a terrible state : a priest had to ride a tractor for several kilometres to reach the parish church, and a physician was unable to get to a patient because the roads were so bad. Finally, the voters came to realise that the only way to solve the problem was to elect a Union Nationale candidate, which they did<sup>37</sup>.

The Union Nationale found many opportunities to make its power felt. Any grant to a municipality or school commission was always sent to the recipient through party channels. If the amount involved was substantial, the cheque was presented either by a minister or by Duplessis himself<sup>38</sup>. Ministers and civil servants knew well that only the Prime Minister was authorised to release important news. Not only were there no transgressions of this rule, but officials even refused to give out mundane information. A journalist once asked an employee of the Ministry of Game and Fisheries for the opening date of the duck-hunting season and was referred to the Prime Minister<sup>39</sup>. It was also common practice for Union Nationale candidates to publicly release a long list of expenditures made in their district by all ministries during the previous few years. This list even included expenditures for services that no government could avoid providing, such as the removal of snow from roads and the payment of old age pensions<sup>40</sup>. All these tactics were meant to persuade voters that everything they received was the direct result of the generosity of the party and its leader. This approach was carried to an extreme in a propagandistic brochure published in 1947. In that document, entitled *Duplessis Gives To His Province*, virtually every single positive act of the provincial government is credited to Duplessis personally<sup>41</sup>.

Government funding was used to exercise influence and exert control in other ways. Grants to universities were provided only on a year-to-year basis, to be renewed or denied as Duplessis saw fit, evidently to ensure that educators remained quiet. Intellectual freedom in the universities was a special target of the regime. The authorities harassed anyone who challenged them even

slightly<sup>42</sup>. On one occasion at least, the Prime Minister attempted to use his power to have a liberal-minded teaching priest, Father Georges-Henri Lévesque, dismissed from the School of Social Studies at Laval University<sup>43</sup>. The Rector of the University resisted and highly placed clerical authorities appealed to the Prime Minister to reconsider his untenable position. Duplessis dropped the threat, but his original action kept alive a fear of what he might do next. If a college or university seeking financial assistance from the government had professors or students who voiced disapproval of the regime, the Union Nationale did not fail to make it known that the requested support would certainly be approved more promptly if the criticism stopped<sup>44</sup>. Few details in any area escaped the party's attention. Thus, on one occasion, a member of the federal Liberal Party was invited by a small-town cooperative to be the guest of honour at a banquet. The invitation was withdrawn when the local Union Nationale representative informed the cooperative that it would not receive a promised grant if it proceeded with its plan<sup>45</sup>.

But the party also resorted to simpler methods. For example, a scheme used frequently in small communities was to send government workers to pave the grounds surrounding a church<sup>46</sup>. This improvement was of course conditional on the parish priest having the right attitude and his parishioners having voted the right way. In this as in other things, subtlety was not a salient feature of the Union Nationale's control. In the electoral district of Drummond, a parish priest accepted such a favour during the 1956 elections, but told everyone that it should not influence their vote. After the Liberal candidate had been defeated, Union Nationale supporters gathered in front of the priest's home in the middle of the night and burned the candidate's effigy<sup>47</sup>. Anyone defying the Prime Minister could expect immediate and ruthless retaliation, whether directly or indirectly. Such was the case with Father Georges-Henri Lévesque, whom Duplessis tried, unsuccessfully, to have fired from his teaching position. Father Lévesque lived in a retirement home run by his religious congregation. The Prime Minister imposed on the municipality where the home was situated an obligation to tax this building, contrary to the general law that exempted religious communities from property taxes<sup>48</sup>. When necessary, Duplessis thought nothing of manipulating the law to reach his ends, no matter how petty and trifling they were. Thus, he had a retroactive law adopted to deprive a particular union leader of his driver's licence<sup>49</sup>.

Duplessis's system was highly paternalistic and bound the Union Nationale's membership close to him. Agents of the party were allotted a number of jobs they could fill and amounts of money they could distribute in their electoral districts<sup>50</sup>. The local party organisation in each of the electoral districts also had access to the central party treasury for cases that were thought to be particularly worthy<sup>51</sup>. The elections fund was administered and manipulated with the same care as the provincial budget. Each member's ability to obtain benefits for himself and his constituents depended on a number of factors, including his seniority, his usefulness, the strategic importance of his electoral district, and, of course, his standing with Duplessis<sup>52</sup>.

It is an obvious irony that the Union Nationale had always denounced the patronage practised by Prime Minister Alexandre Taschereau and his Liberal Party. All that had changed under the new regime was that the Duplessis administration dispensed its generosity among a different group of people. Taschereau was aware of the importance of distributing jobs and money at election time, but his brand of favouritism was essentially directed at the elite and at his own family<sup>53</sup>. Duplessis shrewdly avoided the pitfall of showing favour only to a few. The main beneficiaries of preferential treatment under the Union Nationale regime were farmers, blue-collar workers and the French Canadian lower middle class<sup>54</sup>.

One biographer suggests that the Duplessis system, in essence, provided a selective supplementary welfare system<sup>55</sup>. The cost of this system to the taxpayer, unlike that of the welfare-state apparatus, was not great, and the benefit to the recipients was considerable. While particularly charitable itself, this interpretation is not entirely false<sup>56</sup>. When the Liberal Party defeated the Union Nationale in 1960, one of its first measures as the new government was to



appoint a commission to inquire into the practices that prevailed under Duplessis. The commission in question, known as the « Salvat Commission » after its president, Judge Élie Salvat, produced two reports. The first thoroughly examined the purchasing operations of the Ministry of Colonization, which was responsible for promoting the development of remote regions in the province. The second report scrutinised the sale of the provincially owned natural gas network. Unexpectedly, the reports of the Commission uncover numerous examples of payments motivated by compassion rather than pure favouritism. Thus, an unemployed tailor received over \$2,000 under the informal system of kickbacks from government contracts. These funds were paid after the tailor had requested the assistance of the Prime Minister. When he asked Duplessis whom he had to thank for this favour, Duplessis replied « You have received it, you are in need of it, that is all. No thanks are necessary. »<sup>57</sup> The Commission enumerated all the individuals who had received commissions from a particular government supplier, the Sicard Company<sup>58</sup>. For the total of 32 beneficiaries, the diversity of the people involved, the wide differences in the sums they received, and the reasons for which money was given are most enlightening. The list of beneficiaries included the following :

- *A machinery salesman* : A member of the Union Nationale central organising committee, he worked part-time, without salary, at its head office in Montréal. He received \$13,876.
- *A school teacher* : He received \$1,115 and commissions from another company for services rendered to the Union Nationale.
- *A restaurant owner and employee of the provincial government* : Working for the Union Nationale, he received \$1,000. He shared this amount with some friends, including several Liberals, who had explained their personal needs to this beneficiary and who were counting on his influence with the political authorities.
- *An insurance agent* : An active member of the Union Nationale until 1956, he had himself placed on the list of « provincial suppliers ». In 1957 and 1958, he received commissions amounting to \$6,946.
- *A civil servant* : He was secretary to Jacques Miquelon, a member of the Legislative Assembly and Minister of State, on whose recommendation this intermediary received \$2,150. The General Purchasing Director of the Ministry of Colonization advised him not to collect this commission in his own name because he was too well known within the provincial civil service. The beneficiary therefore had the cheque issued in the name of an acquaintance, an officer of the Provincial Police, who was unaware of the circumstances involved. Upon receipt of the cheque, the acquaintance endorsed it and delivered it to the beneficiary.
- *A doctor, proprietor of a drug store* : He received \$2,309.
- *A grocer* : He received \$2,190 after having explained his financial difficulties to Émile Lesage, Legislative Councillor and former Member of the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Abitibi-West. While this beneficiary was a supporter of the Union Nationale, he was not an active worker for the party.
- *A railroad employee* : He received \$450.
- *A fireman* : Employed by the City of Quebec, he received \$450.

The Union Nationale operated with less than 20 full-time paid agents in the entire province<sup>59</sup>. Most of its key workers had a regular government position<sup>60</sup>, and, as a consequence, partisanship was present in every aspect of public administration. In the case of the Ministry of Colonization, its employees were used to mail anticommunist literature to every member of the clergy in the province a few days before an election<sup>61</sup>. Before authorising a salary increase for any civil servant, Duplessis would personally scrutinise the individual's background to see if he had belonged to the Union Nationale or to the Liberal Party<sup>62</sup>. In one particular case, the promotion of an official was blocked because, twenty years earlier, he had been a supporter of an opposing party<sup>63</sup>. With such an all-pervasive and effective system in place, it was only natural that all businesses and professions that dealt with the government became highly politicised<sup>64</sup>.

## POLITICAL METHODS

The Union Nationale never had a strictly structured membership system or any internal consultation mechanism<sup>65</sup>. It relied essentially on elected members, defeated candidates and political organisers<sup>66</sup>. Between elections, these people were responsible for distributing favours. At election time, the party became a formidable and fully engaged machine to ensure the victory of its candidates by any means. The real power was entirely concentrated at the summit, in the hands of Duplessis, who used his unchecked domination to oversee every detail of the life of the Union Nationale. Most ministers had little to say on the way in which public affairs were run. The following account by a senior civil servant of the federal government, Gordon Robertson, of a meeting in preparation for a major conference gives a firsthand view of Duplessis's style of leadership :

It was agreed, on the invitation of Premier Duplessis, to hold the second conference in Québec, opening on 25 September [1950]. I was advised that, in order to make arrangements as secretary of the conference, I would have to see the Premier himself. Nothing could or would be decided except by him. I arranged an appointment in May or June through his principal secretary (...).

When I was ushered into a very impressive office, Duplessis's first action was to press four buttons on a board of about twenty on his desk. In a matter of minutes, four men came in, were introduced, and took chairs behind him, all were ministers, and none said a word in the entire interview. They were stage-setting. But it was also a message of power and authority, for them and for me. Duplessis was affable and decisive in dealing with every question I posed and in directing his secretary to arrange for every need I expressed. When I came to accommodation for the federal and provincial delegates, Duplessis asked me how many I thought there would be. I said I thought about seventy-five, not including the Québec delegation (...). Duplessis, a bachelor who lived in the Château Frontenac [hotel], said that that morning he had summoned the manager of the Château, George Jessop, to his suite. He had told him of our meeting and that the question of accommodation would come up - for about seventy-five people.

« I said to him, Robertson, " They will all stay in the Château Frontenac. " » Duplessis's face gleamed with amusement.

« Jessop said : " But Prime Minister, the conference is to be in September, at the height of the tourist season! The Château has been fully booked for months. I will personally arrange the very best rooms possible in Québec for every delegate and some, I hope, can be accommodated in the Château. But all? - It is impossible, Prime Minister. " »

Duplessis stopped and looked at me. I waited, and he resumed :

« So I said to him : " Mr. Jessop, this is a very simple question. The question is this : Does the Château Frontenac wish to continue to sell alcohol beverages or does it not? " »

" You can be sure, Mr. Robertson, that all delegates for the conference will stay in the Château Frontenac. " » He was right. They all did. The rest of the arrangements were handled with equal confidence and all worked out exactly as (...) Duplessis decided.<sup>67</sup>

The vast resources of the Union Nationale enabled it to set in place a highly efficient propaganda system during elections. In the two or three weeks immediately preceding an election, the party placed full-page advertisements almost every day in all of the province's fifteen daily newspapers, as well as in the approximately 175 weekly newspapers published in different regions and in certain parts of larger cities<sup>68</sup>. There were daily broadcasts over the province's thirty-five radio stations<sup>69</sup>. Neon signs and billboards were used to the point of saturation<sup>70</sup>. The party even had an airplane flying low over small villages with a loudspeaker booming « Duplessis! Duplessis! Duplessis! »<sup>71</sup>. During the 1956 election campaign, 45,000 copies of a book outlining the accomplishments of the Union Nationale, costing about \$1 per copy, were handed out for free to important individuals in each community<sup>72</sup>. Every one of the ninety-two Union Nationale candidates sent out at least one letter, and sometimes two or more, to all the voters in his district<sup>73</sup>. Well-known speakers were paid from \$25 to \$100 for extolling the

achievements of the party at hundreds of meetings<sup>74</sup>. The Union Nationale even distributed calendars and match books that carried a picture of Duplessis<sup>75</sup>. Even children were not overlooked : a puzzle representing the Council of Ministers was widely distributed in schools across the province<sup>76</sup>. At times, it was made to appear as if even God was on the side of the Union Nationale. In 1948, in Duplessis's own electoral district of Trois-Rivières, at the precise moment when Duplessis got up to dedicate a new bridge, the bells of the cathedral tolled. Their sound was captured by a battery of microphones and broadcast across the province<sup>77</sup>.

The party's resources also enabled it to use other ploys to attract voters. In many electoral districts, social or sports organisations received monetary gifts from the party<sup>78</sup>. Individuals were given presents such as sacks of potatoes, nylon stockings, hams, bags of flour, and pairs of shoes<sup>79</sup>. Owners of cars were offered up to \$25 to take part in parades held through various towns<sup>80</sup>. In many districts, the party provided a variety of free entertainment. On the days when the Liberal Party planned to assemble large rallies in particular towns, the Union Nationale would often sponsor such popular events as wrestling matches, night club shows, movies, band concerts and bingo games<sup>81</sup>. Alcohol was widely used to ingratiate the Union Nationale with the voters during any election campaign<sup>82</sup>. In rural areas, cases of beer were distributed on a large scale and, in towns and cities, party organisers went from tavern to tavern and provided rounds of drinks. The Union Nationale also thought nothing of using threats to influence voters. In the north-western part of the province, electors were told that if the Liberal candidate was elected, all those who voted for him would lose their disability pension or other income supplement that they might otherwise receive<sup>83</sup>. Another simple but effective technique was for the Union Nationale to buy off the organisers of the opposing party. Liberal organisers were often paid to spy on their own party, to defect to the Union Nationale or, more simply, to be inefficient in their work<sup>84</sup>.

The sums spent by the Union Nationale during Duplessis's last three elections were staggering, with the cost of the 1956 election shocking even Duplessis himself. The party spent about 3 million dollars in the 1948 campaign, more than 5 million in the 1952 campaign and almost 9 million in 1956<sup>85</sup>.

But the Union Nationale was willing to pay any price, no matter how steep, since the resulting dominance of parliament enabled it to shape electoral legislation to its advantage. When the party came to power in 1936 it made a few reforms to the *Quebec Election Act*, but did nothing to correct the over-representation of rural districts. This inaction proved to be in the party's interests, since the rural areas soon began giving the Union Nationale the same solid support they had previously given to the Liberals. The second Union Nationale administration had even fewer reasons to change the electoral map, for the party's victory in the 1944 election was plainly due to the disproportionate weighting of the rural ridings. While the Union Nationale lost the popular vote by 25,000 ballots, it nevertheless won the majority of the electoral districts. This outcome was the result of the fact that although almost half of the population lived in the Montreal area, that area had only 15 of the 92 seats in the Legislative Assembly<sup>86</sup>. In the election of 1952, however, the Liberal Party managed to increase its representation in parliament from eight to twenty-three seats, and this erosion of Union Nationale support was enough to convince the party that some reform was urgently needed. Accordingly, in 1953, the Union Nationale introduced a proposed law, known as Bill 34, that aimed at bringing major changes to the provincial Election Act<sup>87</sup>.

The rules governing voting in Quebec before Bill 34 can be summarised as follows. Every Canadian citizen domiciled in the province and at least twenty-one years of age had the right to vote<sup>88</sup>. Once an election was called, a list of voters was prepared by officials appointed specially for that purpose called « enumerators », who visited all households in each district about one month before voting day<sup>89</sup>. Enumerators worked in teams of two - one designated by the government party and the other by the official opposition<sup>90</sup>. After registering a voter, the enumerators gave him or her a certificate that had to be brought to the voting office on election

day as a proof of identity<sup>91</sup>. Only those people whose names were on the voting list prepared by the enumerators had the right to vote<sup>92</sup>. The electoral process in each district was supervised by an official appointed by the Council of Ministers<sup>93</sup>. For each voting office in the electoral district, that official appointed a representative<sup>94</sup> from a list provided by the government party organisation and a clerk from a list provided by the opposition<sup>95</sup>.

Bill 34 stipulated that there would now be only one enumerator going from door to door in each voting area, and that the enumerator would be named by the head<sup>96</sup> of the electoral process for the district<sup>97</sup>. This change made various electoral abuses possible : since the head of the electoral process was appointed by the government, nearly all enumerators were affiliated with the Union Nationale. The most obvious potential for abuse was that a single enumerator, with no representative of the opposition to maintain a balance, could freely decide who would or would not be placed on the voting lists and could thus eliminate the names of people thought likely to vote against the government. A person whose name had been left off the voting list could appeal to a Board of Revisors in the electoral district<sup>98</sup>. However, few voters knew the details of the electoral process or bothered to verify the voting lists in time. The importance of preventing this manipulation of the electoral process cannot be overstated, since an election can be won or lost on the basis of the voters list. In the absence of a representative of the opposition party, an enumerator could fraudulently add from 1,000 to 4,000 fictitious names to the list, thereby ensuring the victory of the Union Nationale candidate<sup>99</sup>.

Another important modification was the removal of the provision forbidding enumerators from any involvement in the election campaign, even after they had completed the work of compiling the lists. It would now be possible for enumerators, upon completion of their task, to play an active role in the Union Nationale electoral machine<sup>100</sup>. The former enumerators would thus be able to provide valuable firsthand information on the likely voting intentions of the electors they had met while compiling the list of voters<sup>101</sup>. This information would allow the Union Nationale to make it difficult for unsympathetic citizens to exercise their voting right on election day.

Bill 34 also protected election officers from legal proceedings. Until then, whenever a candidate had reason to believe that an election official was guilty of some mischief, the candidate could take immediate legal action to correct the situation. The revised Election Act, however, stipulated that all these individuals, while acting in their official capacity, had immunity before the courts<sup>102</sup>.

The new legislation raised many fears, the worst of which were soon confirmed in 1956 by the abuses that marred the first election to be called after the enactment of Bill 34. Predictably enough, the single enumerators appointed by the Union Nationale used their position to promote the interests of the party. In strongly Liberal areas, dozens of voters were left off the lists in a single voting office<sup>103</sup>. There were apartment buildings and whole streets where people never saw an enumerator<sup>104</sup>. At the same time, fictitious names or the names of dead people were added to the lists. In some cases, even the names of children aged between two months and six years were included. In one electoral district, 217 fictitious names appeared on two voting lists<sup>105</sup>. In several districts, the enumerators turned their lists over to a Union Nationale organiser, who in turn was supposed to deliver them to the head of the electoral process for the district, a procedure that gave the party organisation an opportunity for unofficial revision. In addition to their official work, enumerators often asked questions aimed at determining which way a voter was leaning<sup>106</sup>, suggested how voters should cast their ballot, and distributed party literature.

Even more serious irregularities occurred on voting day. Impersonation was carried out on a large scale, particularly in Montreal. In certain districts where the election was likely to be close, the party organisation offered voters from \$5 to \$10 for their voting certificates<sup>107</sup>, since these documents facilitated impersonation. In some cases, an inspection of the ballot boxes on the

morning of the election revealed that they contained ballots pre-marked for the Union Nationale candidate<sup>108</sup>.

Another widespread practice in districts known to be strongly Liberal was for the election official assigned to each voting office<sup>109</sup> to invalidate many ballots by not initialling them properly<sup>110</sup>. Many voters found on voting day that their names, which had originally been included in the voting list, had now been removed for some technical reason<sup>111</sup>. While apparently strict security measures were set in place to ensure that no one could duplicate ballots, in the 1956 elections some Union Nationale organisers were found in possession of ballots identical to the official ones on which the Union Nationale candidate had been pre-selected<sup>112</sup>. Some ballot boxes simply disappeared after the vote<sup>113</sup>.

The system did not always operate in a refined manner. In one district, 154 individuals were registered on the electoral list for a particular voting office, yet the final results showed 300 people to have voted, and the Union Nationale candidate to have obtained 243 votes - 89 more than the number of electors<sup>114</sup>.

The Union Nationale electoral machine also resorted to more expeditious measures. In the cities, especially in Montreal, elections were conducted differently than in rural districts<sup>115</sup>. The goal in cities was to physically keep known anti-Duplessis voters away from the voting office. Opposition candidates and their supporters would be constantly harassed. Thugs were hired to raid the offices of opponents. There was not much point in calling the police since they, for the most part, were firmly in the Union Nationale camp. Liberal workers were arrested on the slightest pretext. Liberal posters were torn down. When a Liberal candidate was about to make a large mailing of pamphlets, raids on the campaign office were often conducted to destroy all printed material to prevent anti-Union Nationale literature from reaching the public. In a number of constituencies in the east end of Montreal, groups of men drove around in automobiles intimidating voters and smashing up Liberal committee rooms. In one constituency they entered a number of voting offices armed with guns and stuffed the ballot boxes with ballots for the government candidate. Some of these ballots were found to be properly initialled by the election officer for that voting office<sup>116</sup>. To maintain a semblance of honesty, such tactics were not used in middle- and upper-class districts of the city<sup>117</sup>.

Although the representatives of the Liberal candidate in each voting office were sometimes successful in preventing such irregularities, it was almost impossible to exercise a sufficient level of control over the situation. Many of these representatives were people with no prior political experience whose main concern was making a few extra dollars for the day. They had no knowledge of the detailed procedures and technical aspects of an election and were easily neutralised by the election officer in charge of the voting office. Some of these representatives could easily be lured away on the excuse that they were needed immediately at Liberal headquarters<sup>118</sup>. The police could also always be called and informed that the Liberal candidate's representative was interfering with the duties of the person in charge of the voting office. He could then be arrested and taken away, to be released a few hours after the voting offices had closed<sup>119</sup>.

In both their flagrantly open and their more subtle forms, these and other violations of the electoral process did not escape notice or concern. The tactics used during the 1956 provincial elections prompted a scathing denunciation by two reform-minded Roman Catholic priests, Gérard Dion and Louis O'Neill. The pamphlet they drafted - *Political immorality in the Province of Quebec* - was purportedly intended only for the narrow readership of their fellow clergy. But a copy was obtained and published by a newspaper and the text was soon reprinted by an organisation known as The Public Morality Committee of Montreal and widely distributed as a brochure. Coming from two respected priests, the description and accompanying indictment of

such abuses had a far stronger and wider impact than if the same things had been said by a lay person<sup>120</sup>. The priests directed their attack at two targets : corrupt electoral practices in general and the public's acquiescence to these abuses. Yet, since the Duplessis machine had just won more than three-quarters of the seats in the election, there was no doubt that the pamphlet was aimed at the government itself. Since *Political immorality in the Province of Quebec* provides a detailed, contemporary account of the laxity that plagued the electoral process, it deserves to be quoted here at some length :

Such proceedings as vote buying, corruption of the electoral law, threats of reprisals against those who do not support the « right party », false oaths, substitutions of persons, the corruption of election officers, also seem to be becoming normal elements in our social life at election time. Some urban sections saw examples of violence which would make the most fervent anarchists jealous.

Those who now employ or tolerate these proceedings can lay no claim to their invention. We must admit that our Catholic province has for a considerable length of time known what is meant by electoral frauds. But their use is more and more generous at each election. No party has the monopoly. Who will measure the after-effects of a social state where such immorality is commonly admitted?

Here again, that which should cause us the greatest anxiety is the fact that so few people seem to be scandalized by it all. Similar methods, utilized in Communist countries, arouse the indignation of our good people and raise the zeal of our Catholic journalists. In the province of Quebec, they quickly receive popular absolution. People even boast and laugh about it as though they were innocent pranks.

#### Mercenary people

It is, unfortunately, one of the characteristics more and more in evidence among the French-Canadian people. We have slid very low since one of our great theologians said that we were born first of all for great ideas and apostolic undertakings! We were told of several cases where the electors not only did not reject offers to sell their vote but they themselves spontaneously offered their voting privilege for money or generous gifts : roof repairs, hospital bills, confinements, promises of generous contracts - without counting the parade of refrigerators and television sets.

In a county inhabited by poor workmen, practical sense was shown : hundreds of pairs of shoes went to reward political convictions. In a small street in a suburb containing about 15 families, four at least sold their right to vote for a dish of lentils. As may be seen, some candidates are big-hearted!

#### Use of religion

Here we are faced with one of the customary maneuvers of our election technicians. The procedure has simply become more refined and ignoble. They go at it without scruples, denouncing pseudo-enemies of religion everywhere and succeeding in setting in motion the defensive mechanism of believers whose good will greatly excels their critical sense.

The anti-Communist slogan seems to have been employed with considerable success. A low type of literature has penetrated into the presbyteries and convents. (...) Nuns read or heard strange stories about people who, until then, they thought were Catholics. There was talk about the faith being in danger, of enemies on the prowl, of the example of countries in which a handful of Communists succeeded in assuming power, etc. On close examination, it was just trumpery to amaze primitives. And yet the trick went over marvelously!

#### Money carries no odour

There were, unfortunately, some cases in which the voting motive appears to have been less spiritual. There is reason to believe that the laity are not the only ones who are influenced by gifts in money or goods. Gifts to pious or welfare associations, contributions to parish associations know how to get through to some ecclesiastical souls. (...)

### Exploiting credulity

Some investigators are preparing a report on the balloting in places where a considerable number of nuns voted. The first results obtained are revealing. The problem is serious in view of the fact that in several communities the only information that was available on the candidates came either from the presbytery, from an « attentive friend » or from an « anticommunist » source of information. Several cases indicate global votes « for the good cause ». Respect for the electoral mechanism demands that a solution be sought to this problem.

### Clever Advice from Parish Priests

Some priests took part personally in the campaign. In the parish of a Quebec suburb, a rector carried his kindness so far as to preach in his pulpit in favour of his candidate and even solicited votes door to door. Another case : in the same county, a rector advised his parishioners to vote for the candidate whose party would be in power : « without that, we get nothing », he said. Another : « Vote for whomever you like, but when we have a good government, we keep it ». A final case : « Before going to vote, don't forget to look at our nice new school ». <sup>121</sup>

Yet, in spite of the Duplessis regime's firm control of the electoral process, there is no reason to believe that the fate of the Union Nationale as the governing party ever depended on the crude misuse of power. While it is impossible to determine precisely how many seats the Liberals lost in 1956 because of the Union Nationale's tactics, this number is usually estimated to be no more than six or so at the most<sup>122</sup>. At any rate, it seems a certainty that electoral impropriety played no essential role in securing the Union Nationale's landslide victory. Rather, the main point to be drawn from the election of 1956 is that the party had now come to rely almost reflexively on the improper use of its political machinery to retain power.

This machinery and the power that fed it had grown to excessive proportions. Liberal candidates who had unfairly lost the election did not even bother to exercise their legal right to contest the result in courts, since to do so would have been a futile exercise<sup>123</sup>. Bill 34 had transferred the power to settle election disputes from the federally appointed judges of the Superior Court to the Magistrates' Court<sup>124</sup>, whose judges were usually appointed from the ranks of those members of the legal profession who had close links to the Union Nationale. Decisions of the Magistrates' Court were not open to appeal.

## **INFLUENCE OVER THE PRESS**

In a democracy, a vigilant press should be able to help counteract any autocratic tendencies that appear in the political leadership. Such was not the case in Quebec, where Duplessis became adept at ensuring that journalists remained uncritical, if not wholeheartedly supportive. This relationship was achieved through various means. Since all decisions of any significance were taken by Duplessis personally, a particularly powerful tool for the Prime Minister to express his displeasure was the granting or denial of access to himself. At press conferences, Duplessis would sometimes simply ignore a question from a reporter who had irritated him. If the questioning persisted, he would pretend not to have heard<sup>125</sup>. Naturally, and on the other hand, those who were entirely supportive of the regime were extremely well treated. Duplessis would meet privately with them and favour them with prior knowledge of important news before its announcement through the ordinary government channels<sup>126</sup>.

The Union Nationale also used money to effectively secure the active support or at least the neutrality of most of the press across the province. Many publishers could not survive solely on the revenue from the sale of their papers and advertising. Newspapers that supported the Union Nationale regularly received lucrative government printing contracts<sup>127</sup>. They could also obtain a share of the massive sums spent by the party on political publicity during each election campaign

and benefit year-round from the government's ongoing and intensive public-interest advertising<sup>128</sup>. According to some calculations, the Union Nationale spent at least one million dollars - a staggering amount for the time - on publicity in newspapers and on radio during the 1956 electoral campaign<sup>129</sup>. In the case of individual journalists, favourable press coverage was ensured through bribery<sup>130</sup>. Practically all the reporters assigned to Duplessis's electoral campaigns seem to have received money to publish positive accounts<sup>131</sup>. Two months before the 1948 election, members of the group of journalists responsible for covering the activities of the Legislative Assembly were offered an all-expenses-paid trip to New York<sup>132</sup>. Publishers naturally chose to ignore these practices, which allowed them to continue paying low salaries to their staff. Here again, it must be stressed that these methods were no more prevalent than under previous administrations. Before Duplessis, bribes generally took the form of cheques for « research, translation and analysis of documents » - and other similar work that, of course, had never been performed. The Union Nationale did away with even this facade and decided to pay journalists in cash<sup>133</sup>. As a result, to all intents and purposes, Duplessis totally controlled journalists<sup>134</sup>. By the 1950s the daily press was overwhelmingly pro-Union Nationale<sup>135</sup>. When a journalist listed the names of guests attending a banquet but forgot to mention a prominent Union Nationale member in an article for the newspaper *Le Soleil*, he was punished with the loss of one week's salary<sup>136</sup>. A journalist who worked during the later years of the Union Nationale's rule identifies three probable main factors for the docility of the press : it was not at the time conscious of its proper role as the guardian of the democratic process ; it was not eager to challenge a system in which it was in many ways quite comfortable ; and any attempt to contest the regime would have been costly<sup>137</sup>.

## **SOURCES OF FUNDS**

Most of the substantial funds needed to support the Union Nationale and its machinery came from the numerous enterprises that did business - through the party - with the state.

A systematic kickback scheme was soon put in place after the party gained power. In 1939<sup>138</sup>, Duplessis established a Government Purchasing Service that was given total control over all purchases made by the various ministries. This service was managed by a General Purchasing Director who reported to the Prime Minister. Two or three times a year, the Service had to produce a list of everyone who had sold more than \$10,000 worth of goods or services to the government. These lists were forwarded to the party treasurer, in order to determine how steep a contribution each supplier would be encouraged to make to the party fund<sup>139</sup>.

Most of the information on the system's operation was uncovered by two reports of the Salvas Commission, which had been set up by the new Liberal government in 1960 to expose the practices of the Union Nationale. At the Ministry of Colonization, the method was relatively simple<sup>140</sup>. According to the procedures generally followed, sales contracts were concluded between the seller or his representative and the General Purchasing Director of the Ministry, who acted on behalf of the government. These contracts were accompanied by supplementary agreements between the same persons, under which the vendor company undertook to pay commissions to intermediaries chosen by influential members of the Union Nationale, namely ministers, members of the Legislative Assembly and former candidates. The names and addresses of these intermediaries and the amounts payable to them were generally given to the vendor companies by the General Purchasing Director. These intermediaries were in no way connected with the business of the vendor companies and, in the majority of cases, were otherwise unknown to the latter.

One of the many cases examined by the Salvas Commission was that of the Sicard Company, which manufactured snow blowers, trucks for snow removal, transport trucks and similar equipment. From 1955 to 1960, Sicard made sales to the Quebec government for increasing



amounts running from some \$50,000 for the first year to almost \$250,000 for each of the last three years. Upon request, Sicard submitted its prices to the Purchasing Department of the Ministry of Colonization. It then received from the Purchasing Department orders accompanied by a list indicating the names and addresses of the intermediaries, and the amount payable to each. Sometimes the Purchasing Department required the company to divide a commission among several intermediaries. At the time the equipment or merchandise was delivered, the company sent the government an invoice based upon the regular current price and issued a credit note in favour of the intermediaries. Finally, upon receipt of payment, it paid commissions according to the instructions it had received from the Purchasing Department - 10% on sales of snow blowers and machine parts and 15% on sales of heavy road maintenance trucks. Sicard applied this method exclusively to its sales to the government. The Vice-President of the company, who explained the method imposed by the Purchasing Department, added that it was « the only system which existed at that time, I believe, for selling to the Provincial Government »<sup>141</sup>. During the period under consideration, Sicard paid the intermediaries commissions amounting to \$100,565.

A second source of funds for the Union Nationale came from the government's broad discretionary powers in the granting of permits for the sale of alcohol<sup>142</sup>. Every holder of such a permit had to make an annual donation to the party fund, the amount varying according to the ability to pay. Refusal to go along with the scheme automatically resulted in the loss of the permit for one technical reason or another. The purchase of alcohol by the provincial Quebec Liquor Commission was a further source of revenue. According to some reports<sup>143</sup>, the British distiller Whyte and Mackay offered 1,000 cases of Scotch to the Quebec Liquor Commission at 55 shillings a case. The Commission indicated that it was prepared to buy, but at 69 shillings, with the extra 14 shillings to be paid into the Union Nationale fund. The distiller refused to do so, and the Scotch was never bought.

A third source of income involved contributions from large corporations that exploited the province's natural resources - such as mining, power, timber, and pulp and paper companies - or received large public works contracts. Reliable information on this type of contribution is meagre, since the Quebec Election Act did not require candidates or parties to disclose the source of their funds. Nonetheless, it is a certainty that some of these corporations did much to help the Union Nationale maintain its financial superiority<sup>144</sup>. The fact that these enterprises depended upon the government for tax exemptions as well as timber-cutting, mining and water power rights did much to convince them of the practical advantages of cooperation. And Duplessis made sure that everyone's commitment to maintaining a mutually beneficial relationship with his party did not falter. In one case, angry about some alleged remark by the President of the Anglo-Canadian Pulp and Paper Mills Company, he decided to table a law in the Legislative Assembly doubling the company's property taxes. Other corporations, such as the Brompton Pulp and Paper Company, that remained on good terms with the Prime Minister were treated to a small tax exemption<sup>145</sup>.

The Union Nationale was unapologetic about its practices, and Duplessis himself never attempted to disguise the kickback system. In a television address delivered on 6 July 1961 and widely published in the press, party treasurer Gérald Martineau defended the purchasing methods that had been exposed by the Salvas Commission :

Yes, I practiced patronage. I did it openly. I make no secret or denial of it. For as long as there is poverty to be relieved and family problems to be solved, I shall not hesitate to reduce company profits, and have them shared among hundreds and hundreds of people. Those who received these sums need not be ashamed. They are honest people.<sup>146</sup>

The Salvas Commission was much less charitable in its judgment of the system. It stated :

The methods applied in handling purchases from the above-mentioned companies, on behalf of various departments including the Department of Colonization, whatever the variations in terms and conditions, constituted a system aimed at one general purpose. In conformity with such purpose, the system generally served as a means of paying for the most part from public funds, indemnities and compensation to leaders, organizers and other supporters of the Union Nationale for services rendered, or to be rendered, to that political party. (...) It emerges from the inquiry that the purchasing methods used in the Department of Colonization (...) constitute an immoral, scandalous, humiliating and alarming system for the people of this Province. Through its ramifications this system affected various classes of society. (...) The system (...) is repugnant, in all its aspects, to the sense of honesty and justice, which actuate the generality of citizens of this Province. One of the unfortunate effects was that it corrupted the moral sense of a section of the population.<sup>147</sup>

These two statements capture well the growing change in attitude to the proper way of conducting government business.

## THE SYSTEM IN PERSPECTIVE

It is important to consider the Duplessis regime from the proper perspective and to place it in its social context. This historical view has seldom been taken, since those who brought about the Quiet Revolution were highly successful in painting a picture of the Union Nationale system that was starkly sombre and largely indelible.

### A TRADITION OF QUESTIONABLE BEHAVIOUR

A fact frequently overlooked in this connection is that the practices of the Union Nationale were in line with a long tradition of questionable electoral methods and the dubious use of public funds.

Until very recently, the Duplessis regime was almost unanimously presented as hopelessly corrupt and backward. But the reality is not so simple. To judge Duplessis out of historical context is both unhelpful and unfair, especially so in view of the fact that illegal or unethical practices were for the longest time the norm rather than the exception in Quebec<sup>148</sup>. Scandals punctuated the province's political history with an almost clockwork regularity. Duplessis himself came to power as the result of bringing about the demise of a notoriously corrupt government. He became famous by exposing the misdeeds of Louis-Alexandre Taschereau's Liberal government before the Accounts Committee of the Legislative Assembly. When Prime Minister Taschereau's brother, Antoine Taschereau, was put on the stand and forced to admit that he had deposited the interest on funds belonging to the Legislative Assembly in his personal bank account, the Prime Minister had to resign<sup>149</sup>.

As for the rough electoral methods of the Union Nationale, they were far from new in the history of the province. As early as 1858, the Archbishop of Quebec sent a letter encouraging every parish priest in the province to have his parishioners sign a petition for reform addressed to the highest political authorities. The reasons for the petition were as follows :

Whereas your petitioners have learned with great sorrow that the last elections held to choose members of the Legislative Assembly were accompanied, in several constituencies, by fraud, violence, betrayal and assassinations ;

Whereas, for several years now, each new election has witnessed an increase in this spirit of disobedience to divine and human laws ;

Whereas the fraud and violence used during elections for public representatives destroy any hope of a functioning electoral system, and this at the expense of those subjects of Her Majesty who are vested with the right to vote in said elections ;

Whereas the defects of the current voting system, together with the powerlessness of magistrates to quell disorders, are one of the main causes of these problems, and they will demoralize the people and inspire in them a feeling of contempt for the law if the Legislature does not provide prompt, effective and drastic remedies.<sup>150</sup>

Devious electoral methods were by no means the exclusive practice of the Union Nationale, as one example will illustrate<sup>151</sup>. In 1939, the Union Nationale and the Liberal Party were facing each other in a fiercely fought election. Because of the war, gas was severely rationed and could not

be obtained without coupons issued by the federal government. Since the Liberals were in power at the national level, the provincial Liberal Party was able to obtain for its organisers and supporters all the coupons they needed. The Union Nationale reacted by printing copies of these coupons, and their supporters ended up with more gas coupons than their adversaries.

More generally, it is undisputed that the Union Nationale learned practically all its methods from the Liberal Party of Alexandre Taschereau<sup>152</sup>. The abuses of the Taschereau regime as described in the 1935 *Catechism of the Electors*, a political propaganda brochure published by Duplessis's party, prove to be a nearly complete catalogue of the methods that the Union Nationale would later systematically use. It is instructive to quote some of the most salient passages.

#### Concerning the administration of justice

51. Is the justice system immune to all censure under the present government of the province?

Far from being immune to all censure, the justice system in our province is subject to the most glaring abuses : exorbitant fees are charged to litigants ; there is interference by the Department of the Attorney General in certain cases ; purely political appointments are made of persons who are not above and beyond all suspicion ; the grand jury has been abolished ; and there is also a difference in the treatment given to accused persons depending on whether they are the friends or the opponents of the government. This takes place on the basis of prerogatives that the Attorney General has arrogated to himself (...)

#### Concerning freedom in this province

57. Does freedom of opinion exist in this province?

No, freedom of opinion does not exist in this province.

58. Why do you say that freedom of opinion does not exist in this province?

I say that freedom of opinion does not exist in this province, first, because the Taschereau government has assumed control over virtually all of the newspapers by paying them direct and indirect subsidies out of public funds ; second, because it binds the people of the province in the extremely tight shackles of a dictatorship that extends over all areas : the Secretariat for Municipalities, school boards, the corporations governing parish churches, provincial agronomists, health units, large numbers of boards, the provincial police, spies for the Liquor Commission, officials within the justice system, government scholarship holders and their families, farmers who receive subsidies (...) and employees of the public service of all categories ; third, because the government takes its revenge by insulting, persecuting and intimidating all those people who not only are against it but also give it offence in any way.

#### Concerning the dangers of dictatorship

59. What abuses can result from this control, from this veritable dictatorship over public opinion?

The abuses that can result from this control over public opinion are many. Because the press is reduced to silence, the government is able to get away with the most heinous abuses of power without the public ever becoming aware that it has done so, let alone actually being informed about the situation. (...)

61. Does the Taschereau government use other methods to prevent public opinion from being expressed, especially on polling day?

Yes, the Taschereau government uses other methods : (1) by suppressing voters' lists that contain the names of known opponents ; (2) by padding these very same lists with fictitious names ; (3) by openly purchasing the votes of certain voters ; (4) by getting some of the voters drunk ; (5) by using ballot papers that do not have a tear-off stub, which offers the most extensive opportunities for fraud ; (6) by

scheduling the elections on a date on which thousands of loggers are unable to exercise their right to vote ; (7) by undertaking expensive road works, often for no obvious purpose, on the very eve of the elections. (...)

88. Can you give any explanations concerning the intrusion by the government into public assistance and charitable institutions?

Yes. By refusing or granting its benefits on a mere whim, the government controls the finances of these institutions. (...)

89. Are there any other examples of this unwarranted interference?

Yes, they have occurred in the case of construction contracts. Any welfare organisation or hospital that receives a grant from the government must award the contract to a contractor who provides support in the elections. This contractor will usually be indicated by a representative of the government.<sup>153</sup>

It is thus apparent that the improprieties for which the Union Nationale became notorious were not an aberration ascribable to some particular malevolence specific to that party, as the myth created by its opponents would have it, but the prevailing practices of the day.

## **A RELATIVELY INEXPENSIVE SYSTEM**

The particular system put in place by the Union Nationale has always been assumed to have been an immense financial burden to the taxpayer and to have operated principally for the personal benefit of party members. These premises are questionable.

### **Control over the electoral fund**

The management of the Union Nationale's finances was anything but chaotic. The administration of the elections fund was centralised<sup>154</sup>. Each elected member of the party had a local fund of his own to administer, although the central fund drew upon the branches when it so desired<sup>155</sup>. The system was tightly controlled by a very limited number of persons. Apart from Duplessis and his personal secretary, Auréa Cloutier, the two key people were Gérald Martineau and Joseph-Damase Bégin. A Quebec City merchant who sold typewriters and other office equipment, Martineau was a Member of the Legislative Council of the Province from 1946 and Treasurer of the Union Nationale from 1944 to 1961. Bégin represented the electoral district of Dorchester, and was at the same time Minister of Colonization and the chief organiser of the Union Nationale. The ministers and advisers watched Martineau and one another, and Duplessis and his personal secretary watched them all<sup>156</sup>. This organisation bears no resemblance to the opposition's partisan image of a gigantic, closely interconnected web dedicated exclusively to the personal enrichment of the leaders and friends of the Union Nationale. Indeed, a wealthy businessman who used to contribute heavily to the electoral fund recognised Martineau to be a man of absolute personal integrity who kept a strict accounting of contributions<sup>157</sup>. The system of favouritism operated first for the benefit of the constituents, secondarily for the benefit of the party, and only then for the benefit of the members and organisers<sup>158</sup>.

### **Conservative management**

It is well known that the extensive reforms introduced by the Liberal government after its victory of 1960 were made possible only by the very healthy state of the provincial treasury. Duplessis was no spendthrift and was always concerned that his regime would become prodigal. He paid the civil service poorly<sup>159</sup>, was hostile to salary increases<sup>160</sup> and saved on almost everything. He analysed the cost of road construction in various parts of the world<sup>161</sup> and constantly compared government and private sector building costs<sup>162</sup>. In fact, Duplessis was an extremely conservative

manager of public funds<sup>163</sup>. While a percentage of the state budget went to the payment of commissions to party friends, the budget itself was kept within strict limits. Duplessis was always suspicious of bankers who encourage a government to spend excessively and thus acquire much influence over it. In spite of the kickbacks, a remarkable feature of the procurement system under the Duplessis administration is that purchasing prices were in general not artificially inflated. Suppliers simply sold at full market price<sup>164</sup>. Many expenditures were paid with the percentage requested from suppliers on every contract. For example, a secretary to the Minister of Mines, spent two days every week in the minister's electoral district on work of a political nature. The Director of the ministry advised the official that his travel expenses could not be paid by the government, but would be refunded one way or another. The secretary's travel expenses were eventually repaid through the party's false fees system : he received a cheque corresponding to his expenses from a company supplying paint to the province<sup>165</sup>.

### **Personal integrity**

Duplessis was not personally interested in growing rich in office<sup>166</sup>. An indefatigable worker, he almost never took a vacation and seldom left the province for more than two weeks at a time<sup>167</sup>. He never accepted a monetary gift or spent the Union Nationale's money on himself for non-political purposes. His personal integrity in financial matters is beyond question<sup>168</sup>. He never touched government money beyond his salary. His personal bank account, which was almost perpetually in deficit, was handled by his personal secretary<sup>169</sup>. According to one of his close associates, Duplessis's annual income as Deputy and Prime Minister never exceeded \$14,000<sup>170</sup>. When, after many years in power, he was forced by a court to pay close to \$50,000 in damages to a restaurant owner whom he was found to have unlawfully harassed as Attorney General, Duplessis had to borrow from a bank to pay the amount<sup>171</sup>. His estate had a cash deficit of some \$40,000, which the Union Nationale had to cover, and he left his house to his sister and his collection of paintings to the Quebec Museum<sup>172</sup>.

### **Profiteering**

This is not to say that party members received no personal benefits. As a close associate of Duplessis noted, while the leader of the party cared so little about his personal wealth that he was nearly always broke, it does not follow that the people around him had taken a vow of poverty<sup>173</sup>. Some high-ranking party members who officially never earned more than \$10,000 or \$12,000 per year ended up millionaires<sup>174</sup>. On one occasion, when he learned that a superb property belonged to one of his colleagues, Duplessis apparently commented : « I knew that this chap was stealing from me, but I never realised that he was stealing so much. »<sup>175</sup>. But few can believe that a man with such a close grip on his party had no knowledge of the excesses of some of his supporters<sup>176</sup>. Individuals exacted money and property for private gain. Some Montreal night-club owners were forced to sell their business. One owner was compelled to sell at the price offered by a person connected with the party, since he knew that, because he was a Liberal, his alcohol license would not be renewed and his night-club would then be worthless<sup>177</sup>.

Evidence of profiteering is perhaps also to be found in the sale of Hydro-Quebec's natural gas network. There is, however, some doubt on this point, for although the transaction was regarded as the greatest scandal of the Union Nationale period, the evidence is not entirely clear. The circumstances surrounding the sale of the network in question were scrutinised by the Salvas Commission in 1960.

The details are rather complex, but the essential facts can be summarised as follows. The Quebec Hydro Electric Commission - « Hydro-Quebec » in short - had been created by the provincial government in 1944 to generate and distribute gas and electricity in the province. In 1953, Hydro-Quebec became interested in servicing the Montreal region with natural gas

delivered by Trans-Canada Pipe Lines from the province of Alberta, and it mentioned in its annual reports for the next few years that it was seriously considering the possibility. Studies were conducted, and all the experts seemed to agree that natural gas should be made available to the people of Montreal and the surrounding region. Negotiations regarding the sale of gas had been under way for several years when, in December 1954, the President of Hydro-Quebec suddenly announced that he had decided to recommend that the government sell the province's natural gas network outright to Trans-Canada Pipe Lines. The decision, together with Hydro-Quebec's asking price of \$30,000,000, was confirmed in writing to Trans-Canada Pipe Lines. The latter began taking the necessary steps and created a distinct, Quebec-based branch company for the purposes of concluding the transaction : the Quebec Natural Gas Corporation.

To cover the purchase price of the network, and also to perform some necessary conversion work on the latter and generate working capital, the Quebec Natural Gas Corporation had to raise about \$50,000,000. This was done through the sale to the public of « units » consisting of debentures and shares. The Quebec Natural Gas Corporation and the Canadian stockbrokers involved agreed that the units would be offered to the Canadian public at a price of \$140 each. On the date of the public issue, 17 April 1957, there was a very strong demand for units. The brokers continued to offer them at \$140 even when the shares were soon being traded on the open market at a price of \$160 to \$170. On the date of the shares' delivery, 25 April 1957, the price of the units reached about \$180, and it continued to rise over the following weeks, climbing to about \$200 in early June. To ensure their distribution to the greatest possible number of purchasers, the units offered to the public at the issue price of \$140 had to be rationed. The brokers decided to sell from 8 to 12 units to each purchaser. They made an exception, however, in the case of some purchasers, and allowed them to purchase, at the issue price, far more shares than the average allotment. These purchasers included cabinet ministers, other members of the Legislative Assembly, senior government officials and officers of Hydro-Quebec, together with people closely associated with these individuals.

The resulting scandal arose from a series of articles published in *Le Devoir*, a small newspaper staunchly opposed to the Union Nationale regime. The first article of many on the subject was published on 13 June 1958 and claimed in huge characters that there was a scandal at the Quebec Natural Gas Corporation. The article made five specific accusations :

- Hydro-Quebec's sale of the gas network had resulted in a gain of \$20,000,000 for the favoured investors. These profits were outrageous and were only achieved as the result of collusion between Union Nationale politicians and the key owners of the Quebec Natural Gas Corporation.
- The key owners of the Quebec Natural Gas Corporation had realised a non-taxable profit of at least \$9,000,000.
- At least six ministers, including some of the most important, and perhaps even the Prime Minister himself, were involved in this scandal, since they had owned or still possessed shares.
- The people behind the transaction had risked no more than \$50,000 to enter into discussions with Hydro-Quebec and buy assets worth more than \$39,000,000.
- At least three senior officers of Hydro-Quebec had played a double game by representing both Hydro-Quebec and the Quebec Natural Gas Corporation, and had been rewarded by the latter with purchase options on blocks of shares and appointments to management positions.

The charges were particularly serious. *Le Devoir* said that, since the ministers involved had shares in the Quebec Natural Gas Corporation, they had in effect sold to themselves as ministers a public asset at huge profits<sup>178</sup>. The newspaper went on to give the names of those it considered suspect in this transaction. That list included most of the senior people of the Union Nationale, high-level executives of Hydro-Quebec, highly placed civil servants, and members of the personal

staff of several ministers and the Prime Minister. These people, the newspaper alleged, had purchased units at low pre-issue prices, which they had subsequently been able to sell at a significant profit as soon as the public issue came on the market. Invited by journalists to comment on the revelations of *Le Devoir*, Duplessis counterattacked by declaring that he did not own, and had never owned, any shares in the Quebec Natural Gas Corporation. And in fact, when the newspaper subsequently published the final list of those it accused, the name of Duplessis did not appear on it. Neither the newspaper, nor the resulting commission of inquiry which was appointed a few years later by the Liberal government to look into the whole operation, was able to produce any evidence to support the allegation that the Prime Minister had taken part in the deal.

*Le Devoir* seems to have presented the situation in a way that served its own sensationalist and partisan purposes. The shares of the Natural Gas Corporation had been widely sold in the province. By selectively naming Union Nationale supporters, the newspaper created the impression that these people had conspired to defraud the state. In the weeks following the initial articles, it was revealed that almost all classes of Quebec society were represented among the shareholders of the Natural Gas Corporation. In the 21 June issue of *Le Devoir*, its Director countered with the observation that « The fact that X, Y, Z, or that this or that cleric have purchased ten, one hundred or one thousand units of the Natural Gas Corporation is totally irrelevant. These people were not entrusted with the administration of Hydro-Quebec and they did not sell to themselves an asset that belonged to the province ; this is the central issue. Mr. Duplessis will not get away with it. His ministers were involved in a dirty transaction. »<sup>179</sup> According to the Salvat Commission, this privileged group purchased 3,412 units for a total cost of \$477,680, buying the units at the issue price of \$140, whereas the market price was about \$165 on the date of issue and \$180 on the date of delivery. They thus made, the Commission noted, without risk, a total profit of some \$119,420<sup>180</sup> or \$35 per unit on the very day when the shares were delivered. The group targeted by the Commission included most of the key figures of the Union Nationale, but not Duplessis himself. One of the major figures accused of profiting from the operation was the then President of the Legislative Assembly and future leader of the party, Daniel Johnson. It was discovered much later that Johnson had in fact purchased some one hundred shares, on which he made between \$700 and \$800 in profit, for an investment club comprising a group of university friends, and that the profit had been divided between the eight members of the club. As it turned out, Johnson himself had gained approximately \$100 in the transaction<sup>181</sup>.

### **Overall cost**

Considering the indignation that permeated the report, the Salvat Commission's assessment of the overall cost increase attributable to the manner in which the procurement system operated at the Ministry of Colonization was rather anti-climactic. Over the five-year period from 1955 to 1960, the total mark-up on the specific cases examined by the Commission was estimated at slightly less than 1.5 million<sup>182</sup>, which was quite low. The amounts involved remain relatively limited even if one makes projections on the basis of the inquiry's findings. Over the same period that the Salvat Commission examined, the average annual purchases made by the provincial government was \$52,000,000<sup>183</sup>. On the well-established view that suppliers generally had to pay back 10% on contracts, and assuming that this percentage was paid on every contract, the total amount of these kickbacks would have been no more than \$5,200,000 per year.

The conclusions of the Commission in the case of the natural gas network are hardly more spectacular. The total profit realised by Union Nationale members who purchased the Quebec Natural Gas Corporation shares at the issue price was estimated at \$119,420. The profiteering was real but relatively minor and certainly not on a scale to justify the deeply tainted image of the Union Nationale period that prevails to this day.



## **A MISREPRESENTED SYSTEM**

Deceitful information played a significant role in the partisan efforts to discredit the Union Nationale<sup>184</sup>. Many matters presented as facts were pure fabrications.

For example, for many years before the party's defeat in 1960, the Liberals constantly circulated the wildest rumours on the size of the Union Nationale's political fund. All sorts of figures were put forward - according to some reports, the party had as much as \$50,000,000. In reality, the Union Nationale's resources were sizable but not exceptional. Before the 1960 election, the party's coffers held a total of \$11,000,000, comprising the regular \$7,000,000 reserve, and an additional \$4,000,000 raised for the electoral campaign<sup>185</sup>. In line with the party's tradition of cautious management, Martineau did not draw upon the regular fund at election time. When Martineau resigned as party Treasurer in 1961 and transferred control of the funds to the party's new leader, Daniel Johnson, there were \$7,000,000 in reserve. The Liberals also spread a rumour that the Union Nationale had stashed its funds in Switzerland. This story of offshore secret banking was thought to be credible by the press, which enthusiastically propagated it. But there is no reason to believe that it would even have crossed Duplessis's or Martineau's mind to take the Union Nationale's money out of Quebec<sup>186</sup>.

Other rumours spread quickly before they proved to be groundless. A major incident that occurred in 1962, three years after Duplessis's death, deserves re-examination. Known at the time as the « scandal of the false certificates », it involved the head of the Union Nationale organisation, André Lagarde<sup>187</sup>. In the final days of the electoral campaign then under way, Lagarde was claimed to have been caught in an attempt to steal the election for the Union Nationale by printing false electors' certificates. Following the election, the whole affair proved to be an invention concocted by some Liberal Party supporters. Nevertheless, it achieved the intended results of demoralising Union Nationale supporters and paralysing the party during the last week of the campaign. It also had a much wider and more profound effect : the Liberal Party won the election.

In these ways and others, the opponents of the regime succeeded in convincing the public that the Union Nationale was utterly corrupt. The Salvas Commission led to the same result and may even have been predisposed to reaching this conclusion before it began its inquiries. The Commission was instituted by the Liberals immediately after their 1960 victory, and its political independence does not appear above suspicion. One historian has characterised the Commission as vindictive, partisan and quite unnecessary<sup>188</sup>. While patronage had been widespread, the inquiry narrowed its focus to the Ministry of Colonization whose minister, Joseph-Damase Bégin, was also the main organiser of the Union Nationale<sup>189</sup>. A senior Liberal Minister would later recognise that the Salvas inquiry had been launched not so much to discover the truth as to totally destroy the Union Nationale<sup>190</sup>. And the Liberal Prime Minister himself, Jean Lesage, practically admitted that his decision to create the commission of inquiry had probably been a mistake<sup>191</sup>.

## **AN ACCEPTED SYSTEM**

As mentioned earlier, the Union Nationale regime has generally been perceived and described as an aberration in Quebec's political life. We believe, however, that the conventional portrayal of Duplessis as some sort of monster not only is historically inaccurate but also has seriously hindered attempts to reach a proper understanding of this period. The emphasis placed on the Union Nationale's corrupt electoral practices has largely obscured the fact that Duplessis and his party enjoyed broad public support. Even some of the staunchest opponents of the regime

concede that, until Duplessis's death, the Union Nationale was practically unbeatable. A former secretary of Duplessis thus explained the party's power :

People often wonder about Duplessis's strength, since he obviously remained strong until his death in 1959. The first answer that springs to mind is corruption : he bought off everyone and elections were rigged. I believe that this is an oversimplification. One must not be naive. The Union Nationale was remarkably well organised, had reached all social categories, benefited from extensive publicity on radio and television, and had a lot of money. But that in itself cannot explain why the Liberals always lost. At most, it can explain 3 or 4% of the vote. In my view, a large number of people voted freely for Mr. Duplessis.

The fact is that the average French Canadians like very much to vote for those in power. They vote for the one who is in control. (...) The Union Nationale was, for religious people, for the clergy, a party of order, a party that defended the Church. This is a much less relevant factor nowadays, but at the time it was a very important consideration.<sup>192</sup>

In this context, it is probably meaningful that some of the most forceful denunciations of the party's tactics of the Union Nationale came very late<sup>193</sup>.

As for favouritism and kickbacks, the Salvas Commission noted that the practices of the Ministry of Colonization appeared to be generally known, widely tolerated, and even accepted in certain circles as a normal procedure. It further observed that the system would not have worked without the active participation of the companies involved. According to the Commission, some companies only complied with reluctance, and others attempted to confer a semblance of legality on the transactions, but in the end all cooperated with full knowledge of the situation<sup>194</sup>. And indeed, for most companies, the kickbacks were a good investment for the benefits obtained, such as cheap access to natural resources, weak labour unions, and special positions or contracts<sup>195</sup>.

It must always be remembered that the Duplessis era did not constitute a rupture in the overall pattern of Quebec politics, in which domination of the province by an overwhelmingly powerful party was the norm. The Union Nationale succeeded the Liberal Party, which had itself tightly controlled the province for thirty years<sup>196</sup>. And, as previously seen, the political practices of the Union Nationale were directly developed from those of its opponents and cannot by themselves explain the party's ability to stay in power.

The party's success may be due in no small part to the close connection between Duplessis's philosophy and methods and those of the Catholic Church. Certainly, the number of similarities between the beliefs and structure of the Church and those of the Union Nationale is, at the very least, striking. It can even be said that, to a considerable extent, the Union Nationale served as something like a lay version of the Church in the social and political life of Quebec.

The Church is governed by a hierarchy of bishops and priests under the authority of the pope. The doctrine holds that the spiritual authority vested in the apostles by Christ has descended to the present pope, bishops and priests, who possess this authority in varying degrees. All clergy must be male. The Church has numerous religious communities of both sexes ; their members must commit themselves to chastity, as do the priests and bishops. Unlike many other religions, the Catholic Church is structured on a territorial basis, with the parish as the basic unit. Every parish has a church building and at least one priest. Catholicism also relies on a rigid hierarchy. A certain number of parishes constitute a diocese, headed by a bishop, and all bishops are accountable to the pope in Rome. In the days of the Union Nationale, each priest knew every single one of his parishioners, and thus could closely control much of what happened in the territory under his jurisdiction. There was no place for dissent. The views that were to be held on every subject were determined by Church authorities, and all true Catholics were expected to comply blindly with the rules and principles laid out by the clergy. And the Church was in a

position to enforce the rules. Catholicism is based on the belief in an after-life and on the existence of heaven and hell. Depending on their merits, those who die go to heaven and eternal happiness or to hell and perpetual suffering. However, tools that functioned in this world were used to keep everyone in line. The most powerful weapon was excommunication, that is, expulsion from the Catholic Church. Apart from its implications for someone believing in an after-life, excommunication had serious consequences in this life. Catholics were strictly forbidden from having interaction of any kind with an excommunicated person, and the community from which a person was expelled was effectively society as a whole as well as that of the church.

The Church in Quebec dominated education. Although there were lay teachers, the clergy provided most of the educators and controlled school programs. The curriculum emphasised memorisation and rote learning. The ultimate form of rote learning was the Catholic catechism. The catechism, which was imposed on every pupil on a daily basis, reduced every single question on religion or the key aspects of human life to a short answer that had to be memorised<sup>197</sup>. The discipline in schools was strict and backed up by a system of sanctions - warnings, copying a sentence a number of times, physical beatings - that were applied for the slightest act of insubordination. Arbitrariness played an important role and unquestioning obedience was expected. Yet, despite these and other controls, Quebec was not a totalitarian society in the traditional sense of the word. No one was imprisoned or killed for his opinions, and, as long as one did not openly challenge the Church on its own ground, one could lead a fairly normal life. But until the second half of the twentieth century, Quebec society was a stern, occasionally brutal and psychologically oppressive society. The Church was generally conservative, supporting the status quo and uneasy with change.

Within these contemporary realities, the organisation and practices of the Union Nationale were not unfamiliar or particularly offensive to most Quebecers. In terms of its organisation and operations, the Union Nationale was a secular counterpart of the Church : it was structured territorially on the basis of electoral districts, its leadership under the authority of Duplessis was unquestionable and therefore unquestioned, independent thinking was strongly discouraged, submission to authority was rewarded, opposition parties were tolerated for reasons of principle rather than accepted as legitimate alternatives, arbitrariness reigned, and physical violence was justifiable. In terms of ideology, Duplessis knew better than anyone else how to manipulate the reflexes and fears of his fellow citizens. He exploited the weaknesses of his society while at the same time perpetuating them. As Quebec was a predominantly Catholic and French province in a predominantly Protestant and English country, it was inviting and easy for Duplessis to take the position of the protector of his people's language, traditional values, and religion. He capitalised on the fear of communism, regardless of the fact that the communist movement was practically non-existent in the province. Thus, the collapse of a bridge being built in his own district of Trois-Rivières was blamed on a communist conspiracy. There was, of course, no conspiracy beyond that of the contractors substituting poor quality materials. Yet, a significant portion of the populace was convinced that sabotage was involved. Duplessis also used his personal character to win popular support and personal authority. A devout Catholic, he practically became a lay cleric. A heavy drinker and a womaniser in his early years, he mended his ways to become a teetotaler living in strict celibacy. This puritanical lifestyle played well in his public, political life since it was a perfect illustration of the values promoted by the Church. Even Duplessis's anti-intellectualism may be traced directly to his Catholic background. The Church maintained an iron grip on everything said and published in the academic world. Freedom of thought and expression were certainly not encouraged or viewed without suspicion. Furthermore, the Catholicism of that time generated cynicism and distrust of humankind, since it held that man had fallen from grace, sin was inevitable, and the struggle against evil required constant vigilance. For Duplessis, this system translated into a deeply suspicious view of idealists of all sorts, whether union leaders or academics calling for freedom of thought<sup>198</sup>.

The Duplessis regime never required anyone to assert their support but was satisfied with the absence of overt opposition. As a result, spontaneous expressions of approval were especially welcome, particularly when they came from the clergy. Such an expression was the speech delivered by the Reverend Ferdinand Vandry, Rector of Laval University, at the inauguration of the School of Commerce in 1952 :

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Government of the province has done a great deal for this University. The forestry building stands as proof of this. This School for Advanced Commercial Studies will attest to it even more for generations to come ; and other buildings which will be created, which will soon rise up over this campus, will also demonstrate it. We have benefited greatly from the largesse and generosity of the provincial government, and I wish to take advantage of this opportunity, rather it is my duty, one in which I take great pleasure, to thank the Honourable Maurice Duplessis for all that we owe him, for all that he has done for this University. And if anyone knows how much we owe the Honourable Maurice Duplessis, it is I. No one in this University is as close to the Prime Minister as the Rector of Laval, and I thank Divine Providence for this, and I also thank the courtesy and kindness of the Honourable Prime Minister for it.

(...) I know that certain sums of money have been contributed to the University's coffers over the past few years without this being made public, with the matter remaining unknown except to the Rector and his immediate Counsellors, and I know that we owe all this to the graciousness, the generosity and the great amiability, I was going to say and I will say, the sincere friendship that Mr. Duplessis has shown the Rector of Laval University, just as he knows that, in return, he can count on the sincerity and on the tenacity of the deep friendship of the Rector of Laval. I wanted to say this because I believe that the Honourable Maurice Duplessis, as well as his government, but specially he, deserves it ; moreover, I know that you are happy to learn of what the government has done for us, what we should thank the Prime Minister for.<sup>199</sup>

In spite of the Catholic Church's official policy of strict political neutrality<sup>200</sup>, there are reports of members of the clergy crying during Duplessis's speeches at the Legislative Assembly<sup>201</sup>. In one instance, an ecclesiastic even kissed the Prime Minister's hands<sup>202</sup>. In the end, some of the most acerbic criticism of the Union Nationale regime came from members of the clergy. Yet this eventual shift in attitude should not shroud the fact that for over forty years the Catholic Church in this massively Catholic province willingly and actively supported Duplessis<sup>203</sup>. The violence of the hatred later expressed by some owes much to the fact that Duplessis, as a creation of his times, could only reflect what Quebec was rather than what it wanted to be. As the leader of the Liberal Party would recognise many years later, « I will say no more, having said so much. Amidst the tangle of his acts and his words, could it be that Maurice Duplessis, in a long moment of time, by some accident, embodied the unspoken thoughts of a people that has since learned to speak? »<sup>204</sup> It may, indeed, be fairly said that Duplessis's support was so wide and so strong only because so many were unready for change.

## **A RETROGRADE SYSTEM**

There can be no dispute that the Union Nationale kept Quebec in a relative state of social and political underdevelopment.

Economically, the system, like any other plagued by favouritism, was marked by the inefficient use of resources. Public works were often undertaken not on the basis of actual needs but for strictly partisan purposes. For instance, schools were not built to meet a community's requirements but to secure its votes or reward a business for its contribution to the party's electoral fund<sup>205</sup>. For the same reasons, roads were not built according to any definite plan but to political priorities : rural roads were improved while highways and city roads were neglected<sup>206</sup>. Expenditures were determined by a political timetable : road building expenditures reached a peak in the year before an election, then fell sharply during the first three years of the new mandate<sup>207</sup>.

The effects of mismanagement are often insidious. A good example of the hidden consequences of the regime's policy of paying public employees poorly can be found in the long-forgotten report of a little-known commission set up by the Liberal Party after its 1960 victory to inquire into the province's book trade<sup>208</sup>. The commission found that half of the publishers of schoolbooks were religious communities, and that these communities had been able to secure a 35% share of this lucrative market between 1960 and 1962. Since these communities, with a single exception, did not conduct their publishing business through separate corporate entities, they enjoyed the general tax exemption that applied to the activities of all religious groups. This exemption, of course, gave them an enormous competitive advantage over commercial publishers. In response to accusations of unfair competition, the Christian Brothers argued that their privileged status as publishers compensated for the province's use of the religious communities as an inexpensive source of supply for teachers - they estimated that the province saved over 11 million dollars annually by using religious teachers instead of lay instructors - and that the tax-free revenues from the printing and sale of books were essential for the communities' survival<sup>209</sup>. The commission was unimpressed by this reasoning. It stressed that the existing system gave a strong incentive to the preferential hiring of religious teachers for reasons that had nothing to do with their professional qualifications and to the purchase of textbooks because of their artificially low price rather than their intrinsic value. The commission concluded that the prevailing situation distorted the market, and it recommended the removal of the tax-free status of the religious publishing houses.

As the political expert Léon Dion has recently noted<sup>210</sup>, the corruption of the Duplessis government undermined the sense of civic responsibility and the moral conscience of individuals, society and institutions. He well summarises the state of Quebec society at the end of the Duplessis regime :

An impoverished people

A closed society ; credulous people who relinquished the richest part of their artistic heritage in exchange for cheap trinkets dangled before them by the agents of foreign collectors ; a deserted countryside ; sad cities, built without a thought for beauty under pressure from a growing population, without sidewalks, without flowers, without cafés, without summer festivals or winter carnivals, without artistic centres, and with unknown poets, few cabarets or theatres, many second-rate movie theatres and bars where only men were allowed. That was my impression of the province of Quebec in 1952 when I returned from a study tour of Europe (...). Yet, for many decades, artists, writers and scientists had given French Canada a diverse cultural heritage, richer than what the intellectuals themselves believed. But lacking adequate means of communication, the population did not draw from this heritage.

Moral, civic and physical poverty was the dominant characteristic of French Canadians of this era. The population was uneducated, « led » by an elite incompetent in business. There was no large upper class to emulate American philanthropist millionaires or Montreal Anglophones in distributing some of its surplus wealth through charitable works (establishing and funding universities, research foundations, teaching chairs, libraries, museums, concert halls and artistic centres, and contributing to private charities). French Canadians depended on the Catholic Church. The Church was imbued with power and moral authority and had considerable financial resources, consisting of movable and immovable property acquired during the French Regime or at the beginning of the English Regime and of contributions drawn one cent at a time from the population itself. The middle class was not sufficiently well off or disposed to patronage to offset the influence of the Church. As a result, the Church was the main collector and dispenser of donations, and used its riches to fund its own establishments. For example, Laval University was founded in 1852 by the Petit Séminaire de Québec, and was governed by a religious charter until 1971. In contrast, McGill University, founded in 1821 from a legacy left by the fur seller James McGill, started expanding in 1868 under a lay principal, William Dawson, and developed because of the patronage of rich Montreal industrialists, such as Peter Redpath, who funded the Museum of Natural History in 1882. In Toronto, King's College, an Anglican school, received a royal charter in 1827 and became a secular university in 1849. Throughout those years, French Canadians

saw themselves as people lacking the ambition to escape their lot in life, and condemned to remain « hewers of wood and drawers of water ».

The portrait Father Ernest Gagnon draws of the « psychological development of French Canada » in 1951 illustrates his poor opinion of his fellow citizens :

*« We feed an unacknowledged taste for morbid obedience (...). Standardized thinking, pre-set ideas. From one end of the country to the other, and even among our intellectuals, once the shell of empty words is broken, it seems that the ideal is that everyone think and say the same thing, and, as much as possible, that they say it the same way. Passiveness that ignores problems, that does not face obstacles but avoids them or reinforces them. People who borrow. Nothing belongs to them, neither their ideas, nor decisions, nor passions, nor even their faith (...). In some respects we are a group of excellent assistants, dull and obsequious (...). This internal obsequiousness is suppressed hostility, the hostility of the weak. This hostility, behind which lies fear, sometimes gives us the attitude of eternal protestors. Achieving, creating, doing something despite difficulties, that is a higher attitude. We prefer to complain about other people, especially when they are far away or anonymous. »*

An excessive indictment? No doubt. However, that was the perception many French Canadians had of themselves during the decade of 1950 -1959 (...).<sup>211</sup>

## **REFLECTIONS ON THE DEMISE OF THE SYSTEM**

It is remarkable that, to this day, there is no impartial account of the Duplessis era. Those who write about the man are either fervent admirers or staunch opponents, and very few academics have been able to take an objectively analytical view of the period<sup>212</sup>. For our purposes, we will try to identify the factors that led to the demise of a regime whose methods were in keeping with the political practices of the day, and to understand why what had always been widely tolerated suddenly became unacceptable.

It can be argued that the downfall of the Union Nationale regime was brought about by the combined effect of outside forces and internal weaknesses.

### **Outside forces**

Four external factors can be seen to have conspired against the regime : industrialisation, the growth in population, the emergence of television, and the defection of the clergy.

The Union Nationale was essentially a rural party<sup>213</sup>. Its priorities and style had always appealed to the non-urban electorate. However, the Second World War and the following period were a time of profound transformation for all Quebec. By the late 1950s the vast majority of Quebecers held jobs related directly or indirectly to the industrial, and no longer the agricultural, economy. The gap between the new values and outlook of the majority and the old vision of the world embodied by the Union Nationale was rapidly widening. The rural ideal had been replaced by the urban way of life, and farming had become simply a business. As people aspired to higher standards of living, the status of farmers deteriorated considerably in the postwar years. Consequently, the urban professional and business leaders eventually displaced the rural establishment as the major force within social and political institutions<sup>214</sup>. Rapid urbanisation put pressure on traditional institutions to transform themselves into large-scale, modernised organisations. In 1850, only 15% of the Quebec population lived in cities. During the First World War, that proportion rose to 50%. In 1931, it reached 60%. On the eve of the Quiet Revolution, 75% of the population was urban<sup>215</sup>. This fundamental demographic change resulted in the emergence of a new middle class that played an active and central role in the modernisation of health, education and social services. The self-interest of this class naturally led it to support the development of large public institutions that could better serve it<sup>216</sup>. A central feature of this reform movement is its equation of progress in practically any field of activity with state

intervention. Bureaucratic centralisation led to the rapid collapse of the small territorial units on which the Church and its operations and influence were based. Services organised around the parish gave way to large institutions staffed by independent and independently-minded professionals. Traditional values, even religious ones, were challenged by people wanting an expansion of community values and an increased lay role in the church. Some groups, such as the Faculté des sciences sociales of Laval University, made a new reading of the church's social doctrine and proposed modern solutions to social problems. They were in the forefront of opposition to the Duplessis government during the 1949 Asbestos strike and inspired a collective pastoral letter in 1950 that expressed a new sensitivity to labour and to the concerns of women. Until 1959, however, Catholicism in Quebec remained a triumphalist, conservative institution. But although largely unnoticed, the tension between the old ways and the new continued to build. Finally, the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s forced the church to begin facing its weaknesses. In just a few years, a wind of change produced both the declericalisation of society, as welfare, health and education passed from church to state control, and trade unions, associations, social clubs, universities and the state all adopted religious neutrality. At the same time, there was a steep decline in church attendance, a major exodus of members of the clergy, a sharp drop in those joining religious orders, and a general break with traditional morality, especially in sexual matters. The church's hierarchy and its individual clergy seemed overwhelmed by the changes that swept around them.

The population of Quebec had increased rapidly. Between 1931 and 1961, it had grown by 83% - from 2,874,662 to 5,259,211<sup>217</sup>. The existing structures could no longer cope with the consequences of this growth. Schools were overflowing with students, and religious communities, with their declining membership, recognised that their monopoly on education was eroding because of the large influx of lay teachers. The public began to demand free secondary education, easier access to university and a reform of the curriculum and teaching methods. The situation was similar in the health and social services sectors. Rendered vulnerable by a sharp decline in the number of people joining the clergy, the Catholic establishment was no longer in a position to fulfill the responsibilities of the state<sup>218</sup>.

The social impact of the distinctively modern medium of television cannot be underestimated. It has been said that the Quiet Revolution could not have happened so rapidly without the help of the media<sup>219</sup>. Television changed the rules of social, intellectual, and political discourse, and enabled information and ideas to circulate rapidly and freely. In those early days, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, a federal government institution, controlled the only television channel in Quebec. The new medium provided a new forum for the opponents of the regime<sup>220</sup>. Critics who had previously been unknown beyond the circle of the Montreal cultural elite suddenly became familiar figures throughout the province<sup>221</sup>, and acquired a powerful tool to propagate their reformist ideas<sup>222</sup>. They did so without any opposition, since the leaders of the established political parties and the clergy generally ignored television<sup>223</sup>. Duplessis always refused to appear on television<sup>224</sup>.

By the late fifties, Duplessis's opponents were starting to express their dissent more openly. Even the clergy was rebelling. In 1959, one bishop, Gérard-Marie Coderre, published a letter to his constituents on morality in politics<sup>225</sup>. In pointed detail, the letter outlined the moral requirements for holders of public office and stressed that government leaders were directly responsible for the proper administration of the state, elected officials should not be influenced by self-interest, public servants should be incorruptible, and that bribery should be condemned.

The same two priests who had denounced unethical electoral practices after the 1956 election, Gérard Dion and Louis O'Neill, published in 1960 a book entitled *The Christian and Elections* in which they discussed the various aspects of political morality. They challenged the very nature of

the Duplessis regime by stressing that the services provided by elected officials were part of their official duties and not favours to be dispensed arbitrarily :

Those who talk endlessly about gratitude have an antiquated concept of power. There was a time when the king, in granting favours, drew from his treasury, which was not distinct from the public purse. The person governing was difficult to distinguish from his function. And for every favour received, there was a tendency to express gratitude.

In the democratic system, this approach is not valid. Members of Parliament are the managers of public property. They administer the property of the voters. *They are not the owners. They are servants of the public interest.* When the value of the work accomplished is examined, they must be regarded as public officials. And if in this respect they are considered incompetent or dishonest, democracy and concern for the public interest requires that we get rid of them, regardless of the kindness they may have shown at certain moments. (...)

If citizens viewed politics from a less narrow perspective and a less greedy approach, public property would no doubt be better managed and we would have more competent and conscientious politicians in power.<sup>226</sup>

They also raised the question of the funding of political parties :

#### Ethics and election funds

We attach great importance to freedom of expression. Ideas are spread through speech, printed material, radio and television. It is normal for political parties to spend money to promote their ideology and program. We do not see any harm in individuals giving money to promote a political program that they believe will benefit the common interest.

#### Large corporations

However, a moral issue arises when large corporations or even small businesses donate considerable funds to party election funds. First, one wonders whether these corporations and businesses have the right to act in this way, since these *donations* represent either an additional burden on consumers or dividends taken from shareholders.

A more serious issue seems to lie elsewhere. Are these *donations* given to support a political program or particular interests? If - as we are told - large corporations give twice as much money to the party in power as to the opposition parties, it is obvious that this process does not stem from serious political convictions and that the donations are actually *investments*. This means that corporations are protecting their interests as effectively as possible and at the least cost ; in other words, they are buying privileges and influencing the direction of legislation in a way that serves their particular interests.

Where in that process is concern for the public interest or promotion of a political ideology? We are not talking here about a citizen donating a few dollars to finance a party's propaganda. Are these the same companies that receive tax breaks? The process we studied seems to be the twin brother of the *kickback system* with the slight difference that in this case the gift is given to the party coffers.

#### Influence on legislators

It is quite probable that these donations will end up binding legislators. And once we start in this direction why would it not be permissible to buy public servants, police or judges? It is not surprising that our bishops wrote in 1941 that if we took the time to review, one by one, the laws passed by Parliament or the provincial legislatures in the past 50 years, we would clearly see the influence of high finance and the desire to protect particular interests. Many people are opposed to class-based parties, for example, a party that owes its allegiance to the working class or agricultural class. Why then do they accept a party that is under the predominant influence of a small but powerful economic group?

Ideas spread through speech and writing. That is very true. However, we have difficulty seeing how the distribution of gifts, drinks or bank notes helps to make the advantages of an electoral program or the



value of the candidates better known. It is much easier for us to understand how these actions are indirectly used to buy votes . . . and consciences.

It is always the public who pays

We also have to consider the influence of electoral fundraising on policy development. In particular, we must look at the system this fundraising tends to create, the resultant misappropriation of public funds, and the increase in taxes caused by it. The abuse becomes even worse if politicians demand donations to election funds prior to awarding public contracts.

Politicians do not administer their own money but public money. Consequently, they must award contracts to those who provide the best guarantees and conditions and not to those who fill the party's coffers. To award a contract at an inflated cost on the condition that a percentage be given to the election fund, is, in reality, imposing a tax on behalf of the party in power. When all is said and done, it is always the public who pays. What is even more curious is that these people are against government funding for parties' electoral expenses. We do not necessarily approve of this approach either, but we do see a contradiction.

Solutions

What solution is there for this situation? Should parties be obliged to declare the source and use of their electoral funds? Should there be a limit on election campaign expenses? Christian ethics cannot determine the most effective legal provisions, they remind everyone - those governing and those governed - that there are definite boundaries for honest people. Christian ethics guides good men in the search for laws that will stop waste and the corruption of consciences. Based on what we hear said and even advocated in public, many people need a good shaking. A serious reform of customs and institutions would help public figures better resist some temptations.<sup>227</sup>

The book included a summary of the basic principles that should guide electors. Among other things, it condemned voting for a particular party because of personal advantages and called for limits on election expenses.

### **Internal weaknesses**

Yet, although these outside factors clearly were significant, it seems improbable that they, by themselves, would have resulted in the rapid demise of the Union Nationale. The party was elected because its conservatism appealed to large and prominent segments of the population. It did not lose this support overnight<sup>228</sup>. Rather, it seems that Duplessis himself was key to the party's survival, and that the Liberal Party's rapid rise to power would not have been possible without his death<sup>229</sup>. With Duplessis alive, the Union Nationale was widely considered unbeatable. But even with him gone, the days of the regime may already have been numbered, although for reasons that were far from inevitable or beyond remedy, namely, its inability to attract the younger generation, its use of political methods that had become at odds with the new values, and its strong anti-intellectual bent.

At the end, the Union Nationale was dominated by an ageing leadership lacking in imagination<sup>230</sup>. It seemed unable to attract the younger generation. As the instant success of Duplessis's immediate successor, Paul Sauvé, shows, the Union Nationale would probably have been able to survive much longer if it had managed to renew itself. In the few months of power before his sudden death, Sauvé sensed and responded to the need for change<sup>231</sup>. However, there is no reason to believe that any shift in the party's course could have occurred under Duplessis<sup>232</sup>. Duplessis was horrified at the thought of change in the provincial administration<sup>233</sup>. Born in the last quarter of the 19th century, he had lived through the tremendous changes brought by the industrialisation of the province without being in any way influenced by them<sup>234</sup>. His social and political philosophy was that the prosperity of the province was based on agriculture. In his view,

the rural family was the cornerstone of French Canada, and it was essential to discourage people from moving to cities<sup>235</sup>. As one of his biographers has observed, Duplessis adapted the political technology of the twentieth century to a highly successful crusade to perpetuate the nineteenth<sup>236</sup>.

The Union Nationale's image as a totally corrupt organisation made it highly vulnerable to attacks on its moral integrity, and the party's opponents did not fail to make the most of this weakness. The regime also made a major strategic mistake in alienating most of the cultured elite. The opposition of intellectuals was becoming increasingly fierce. The new generation realised that Quebec society was behind the times, that it must at all costs be brought up to date without delay, and that the process begun during war-time had to be accelerated. But Duplessis and his supporters used their considerable weight to prevent any change<sup>237</sup>. No compromise appeared possible between the rising intellectual elite of the time and the Duplessis regime<sup>238</sup>. In 1948, a group of artists, mainly painters, published a manifesto that reflected the desperation of the creative elite. Called *Total Refusal*, this document soon reached almost mythical status. Duplessis's overt and nearly pathological contempt for everything intellectual<sup>239</sup> arguably appealed to the strong anti-intellectual sentiment that existed in Quebec. For Duplessis, intellectuals were vaguely ridiculous and rather useless people<sup>240</sup>. With this view, the regime alienated itself from a class that, although with little economic power, possessed a strong capacity to influence opinion and shape public debate. By pitting itself against the most articulate elements of Quebec society, the regime only strengthened its reputation as an arch-conservative government that was ill-equipped to deal with a changing world. Such a reputation automatically gave the party's opponents a gloss of intelligence, imagination and creativity that they would use effectively against the Union Nationale. It also prevented the party from articulating in a more sophisticated way concepts that were not necessarily always indefensible. Many ideas of fiscal conservatism, economic liberalism and moderate cultural nationalism that seemed so unpalatable under Duplessis would re-emerge as enlightened and progressive in the late 1990s<sup>241</sup>. In its successful drive to oust the Union Nationale in the 1960 election, the Quebec Liberal Party managed to harness the discontent of the time by developing a political program that reflected these changes in the electorate's attitude. Among other things, the program called for measures to increase integrity in the administration of public affairs :

#### A Royal Commission

Article 46 - A Royal Commission will be established at once to investigate the conduct of public affairs by the government of the Union Nationale Party.

*Commentary* - The need for such an inquiry has been made abundantly clear by the revelation of scandals, such as the Begin scandal, the Pouliot scandal, the natural gas scandal, and endless others.

#### Reforms

Article 47 - Reform of the civil service

*Commentary* - Democratic government requires a loyal and competent civil service. The government administration needs able men and women who wish to make a career in government service knowing that employment and promotion may be secured without political patronage. The Liberal government will establish an independent Civil Service Commission.

Article 48 - Electoral reform

*Commentary* - The democratic form of government requires a fair and equitable election procedure. All political parties must be treated as equals, electoral officers should be subject to the jurisdiction of the courts for their actions, election expenses should be limited, the freedom to vote and the secret ballot should replace dishonesty and fraud in elections. Redistribution of electoral ridings should be carried

out in order to give fair and proper representation to all our people. The state should assume all essential election expenses of candidates.

#### Public monies

Article 50 - The institution of rigid control of the spending of public monies, to end nepotism, patronage and waste.

Article 51 - The awarding of government contracts only after competitive bidding.

Article 52 - The abolition of the system of discretionary funds.

*Commentary* - The control of public monies by the electoral representatives of the people is a fundamental requirement of democracy. This control must be exercised by all members of the Legislature.<sup>242</sup>

## THE ERA AFTER DUPLESSIS

The Quiet Revolution brought major progress regarding integrity. The reforms introduced during that period were truly revolutionary in both their intent and their ongoing effects, and they are worth examining in closer detail.

### **Electoral process**

In their 1960 election program, the Liberals promised to revise the electoral map, place election officials under the authority of the courts, limit election spending, and create a system of public subsidies to cover the essential expenses of candidates<sup>243</sup>. Lesage also embraced two further measures not included in the formal program : to lower the voting age from twenty-one to eighteen years and to establish a permanent list of voters<sup>244</sup>.

As a first step in revising the electoral map<sup>245</sup>, the Policy Committee of the Quebec Liberal Federation undertook a special study of this complex matter and invited submissions from academic specialists and other experts. The redrawing of the electoral boundaries became a theme of the federation's annual convention in November 1961. While there was general agreement in principle that the electoral map should be redrawn to more closely reflect differences in the demographic size of the constituencies, a number of important practical considerations emerged. For instance, the duties in representing a rural constituency were greater than those for an urban one because of distances to be travelled, the wider range of problems, and the relative lack of local governmental services. A more fundamental and purely legal obstacle arose from a provision in the 1867 Constitution that aimed at protecting the province's English-speaking minority. The twelve constituencies that had been created for that purpose could not be altered without the agreement of a majority of their representatives in the Legislative Assembly. It so happened that, over the years, the population in most of these constituencies had become predominantly French speaking. Nevertheless, the constitutional provision remained in effect, and the representatives of the English speakers withheld their consent to alter the electoral map despite the fact that the constituencies were predominantly French speaking.

In December 1961, the government created a committee of five professors under Fernand Grenier, a geographer, to establish the general norms for a new electoral map. The committee moved quickly and, in the following month, suggested a maximum of one hundred constituencies, none of which was to deviate more than twenty-five percent from the average number of people in each constituency. For the question of boundaries, an independent body was to be constituted to determine this matter. Other practical issues, such as the modification of the protected constituencies, were not directly addressed but were turned over to a committee of the Legislative Assembly that was created to deal with them. This committee had made little progress by the time the November 1962 election was called, and so the old map was used again. The committee was reconstituted in 1963 and again in 1964, but still failed to reach an agreement. It finally passed on the task to a subcommittee, chaired by the geographer François Drouin, which proposed in July 1964 that the protected constituencies be left unaltered and that ten new urban constituencies be created. Finally, in April 1965, the Legislative Assembly's committee agreed to leave the protected constituencies intact and to create eleven new constituencies in the Montréal area and two in the Chicoutimi–Lac Saint-Jean region. Although this development would still

leave Montrealers underrepresented, the committee's formulation as a whole was accepted by the government as the best that could be attained, and it became law on 6 August 1965.

This result was an unsatisfying compromise for which the Liberals soon paid. In the 1966 elections, they won six fewer seats than the Union Nationale. It is not until the early 1970s that the protected constituencies would be abolished, and the discrepancy between urban and rural representation significantly reduced.

Nevertheless, the Liberal Party was successful in introducing many other significant and fundamental reforms to the electoral process. In 1963, a new *Election Act* was passed that contained measures putting an end to the excesses of the previous regime<sup>246</sup>. Among other things, the Act :

- Gave the Director General of Elections wide powers to supervise the implementation of electoral legislation
- Deprived the right to be paid for his or her services if any officer deliberately omitted to enter on the electoral list any person entitled to be entered thereon<sup>247</sup>
- Provided that voting stations be, as far as possible, grouped in a public hall or school and that a police officer be present during voting hours to ensure order<sup>248</sup>
- Required that every ballot box be made of durable material, with lock and key, and have a narrow opening at the top so ballots could be deposited in the box, but not be withdrawn unless the box was unlocked<sup>249</sup>
- Prescribed that the paper used to make the ballots contain a secret thread or mark known only to the official in charge of the whole electoral process<sup>250</sup>
- Strictly regulated the printing of ballots<sup>251</sup>
- Enacted measures to ensure the secrecy of the vote<sup>252</sup>
- Made the official responsible for each voting office responsible for facilitating the admittance of all electors to the office and ensuring that no elector was impeded or molested in or around the office<sup>253</sup>
- Prohibited the presence in a voting office of more than one voter in each polling booth<sup>254</sup>
- Set in place strict measures against personation<sup>255</sup>
- Stated that the votes must be given by secret ballot and introduced detailed provisions on the voting process<sup>256</sup>
- Forbade the sale of alcohol on voting day<sup>257</sup>
- Limited election expenses<sup>258</sup> and provided for the limited reimbursement of the expenses of any candidate who had obtained twenty percent of the votes in his or her electoral district<sup>259</sup>

Reforms to the system of party financing did not prove to be controversial. The law established a ceiling of \$0.25 per eligible voter on each party's expenditures and \$0.50 per elector on each candidate's expenses<sup>260</sup>. Candidates were also allowed to spend two thousand dollars to meet personal campaign costs<sup>261</sup>. All expenditures were to be made through official agents, who would

be legally responsible for reporting them to the Director General of Elections<sup>262</sup>. In turn, the Director General was authorised to reimburse the expenditures, up to \$0.15 per voter, of candidates who had obtained twenty percent of the vote in their constituencies<sup>263</sup>. Some election day costs were also to be borne by the public treasury, and free public services, including broadcast time on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's radio and television networks, were to be increased<sup>264</sup>. Only parties with at least ten candidates were eligible for reimbursement<sup>265</sup>. This legislation, however, had two major shortcomings : the sources of non-public funds did not have to be identified, and no controls were instituted over expenditures made outside of the period between dissolution of the legislature and election day. Nevertheless, the legislation was among the most progressive in the field of party financing in the Western world<sup>266</sup>. Among other things, it broke new ground in Canada by identifying on the ballots the political party that each candidate represented<sup>267</sup>. This provision was designed to prevent the tactic, which had been commonly employed in Quebec, of listing candidates with identical names on the same ballot in order to confuse voters<sup>268</sup>.

The new legislation was in place for the 1966 provincial election, and the Québec government paid about forty percent, or around \$3,000,000, of the expenses reported by parties and candidates. The Liberal government extended the legislation in 1975 to provide annual subsidies to parties that had won twelve seats in the most recent election or had received twenty percent of the total vote<sup>269</sup>. In 1977, a related law restricted the right of individuals to make political contributions, and limited the amount of these contributions to three thousand dollars per year<sup>270</sup>. Parties also became required to submit semi-annual financial reports to the Director General of Elections who, in turn, was to make them public<sup>271</sup>.

### **Financial matters**

A major step in the reform of the management of financial matters was the adoption of *An Act Respecting the Control of Finances*<sup>272</sup>. To ensure tighter government control of its operations, the Act established a Treasury Board<sup>273</sup> and the new position of Comptroller of the Treasury<sup>274</sup>. Composed of five ministers and two officials, the Treasury Board was responsible for examining departmental estimates on behalf of Cabinet, approving individual expenditures, and overseeing hiring practices and conditions of employment, and other subjects within the public service. The Treasury Board had to approve any proposed expenditure over \$25,000<sup>275</sup>. Expenditures of \$1,000,000 or more had to be approved by the Cabinet<sup>276</sup>.

To reflect the government's commitment to change, the highest-ranking public servant in the Ministry of Public Works was soon replaced, on 17 August 1960<sup>277</sup>. Other fresh initiatives were introduced. In accordance with the electoral program on which the Liberal Party had been elected<sup>278</sup>, together with a regulation on the granting of contracts adopted by the new government in December 1960<sup>279</sup>, the Minister of Public Works and the Minister of Roads were asked to initiate immediately a system of public tenders for government construction contracts and to renegotiate as many existing ones as possible. Before the summer was over, the first call for tenders had been opened<sup>280</sup>. Similarly, with a view to cutting back several million dollars from existing arrangements, the provincial Auditor also started reviewing contracts worth more than \$75,000,000 that the previous government had granted without competition. In the 1961 Budget Speech, Jean Lesage, the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, gave an example of the savings realised<sup>281</sup>. While the previous government had granted provisional contracts for the construction of 39 bridges at a total cost of \$4,351,412, the new government had been able to reduce this amount to \$2,912,487 for a saving of \$1,438,935 by cancelling the provisional contracts and resubmitting the bids to public tender.

### **Public Service**

One of the most striking aspects of the Quiet Revolution was the change in public attitude toward the provincial administration. Traditionally low in public esteem, poorly paid, under-qualified, and viewed as a vehicle used by the governing political party for its own ends, the public service now came to be seen as an instrument of modernisation. A measure of the public service's increased effectiveness and value can be seen in its rapid expansion. Largely as the result of the creation of new ministries, it grew from about 25,000 employees in 1953 to some 40,000 in 1963<sup>282</sup>.

One of Lesage's first moves was to restore the Civil Service Commission. Created in 1943 by a previous Liberal government, the Commission was composed of three commissioners and a secretary, and performed examinations, inspections, and classification services, but was not empowered to make appointments without the approval of the Cabinet. The Commission had initially been in operation for less than a year and had only adopted a set of temporary regulations when the Liberals were defeated. Although the new Prime Minister, Maurice Duplessis, had publicly vowed to abolish it, he used the Commission, as we have seen earlier, as one of the devices through which he controlled the government. He fired the three members of the Commission and replaced them with a single commissioner, J. Ernest Laforce. Like a number of other senior officials, Laforce took his orders directly from the Prime Minister, even in matters concerning appointments to low-level positions.

Duplessis's successor, Paul Sauvé, had taken preliminary steps to change this situation, but it remained essentially the same in June 1960, by which time Laforce was eighty years old. Virtually the only progress toward reform was made by a young graduate in public administration from an American university, Roch Bolduc. In 1955, Bolduc persuaded Laforce to hire him to classify the civil service positions, and by 1960 he had dealt with about one-third of them. Entrance examinations had also been instituted, but there were no open competitions or firm criteria for admission to the civil service. With the election of the Lesage government, Laforce's departure was inevitable, and his resignation was accepted immediately. The Commission was given instructions to establish a system of competitions for civil service positions and also to complete the work of classification. Salaries were also increased to attract better candidates. And on 13 July 1960, at the first meeting of deputies and defeated candidates, the newly elected Prime Minister Lesage clearly expressed his party's support for the selection of public servants by open competition. He stated that the government would not tolerate the practice, which prevailed under the previous regime, of requiring applicants to supply a letter of recommendation from a deputy or defeated candidate from the ruling party. After the meeting, Lesage handed out the following declaration to the press :

At today's caucus, a number of government members and candidates defeated in the last election reported that provincial government employees at various levels were suggesting to persons seeking a job or wishing to do business with the government that they obtain a letter of recommendation from their government member or the defeated Liberal candidate. This policy flies completely in the face of the public warnings we have issued repeatedly concerning patronage.

The government that I head is committed to redefining the role of a member of the Legislative Assembly, which is to legislate and not to dispense favours. This is a change in our political life that we wish to make in this province and we are firmly committed to ridding Quebec politics of the shameful system of patronage and favouritism that was the trademark of the previous Union Nationale government. We have begun to act, and we will not rest until our campaign to clean up politics has been successfully concluded.

I have instructed that every provincial employee be sent the following notice :

Notice to Provincial Government Employees :

Under a reprehensible practice that has spread within the provincial civil service, some provincial government employees at various levels are suggesting to persons seeking a job or wishing to do

business with the government that they obtain and present to them a letter of recommendation from their government member or defeated Liberal candidate.

This practice is completely contrary to the policy of the government I head and the sound administration of the province.

Government employees must cease this unacceptable practice immediately, or face dismissal.

The Prime Minister<sup>283</sup>

It should be noted that the new government faced much internal resistance to this sweeping change in practice, since many Liberal party supporters had come to expect as a matter of course that they and members of their families would personally benefit from favouritism in hiring and contracts<sup>284</sup>. The Prime Minister also ordered an inquiry into charges that civil servants had engaged in political activities and forbade such activities in future. Of 23,455 civil servants, 174 had been accused of political activities. Their cases were investigated, and three were found guilty and dismissed<sup>285</sup>. From September 1960 to the end of March 1961, over 13,000 candidates took examinations. The classification of positions and the re-evaluation of salaries proceeded at the same rapid pace.

## Police

The provincial police force had a sorry reputation. The least that could be said is that it was not in a position to perform the role expected of police services in a modern society. The issues regarding the provincial force at the time fall into two broad categories : structure and management, and independence<sup>286</sup>.

*Structure and management* - Quebec's provincial police was poorly educated, insufficiently trained, ill equipped, and notoriously corrupt. The report of a commission inquiring in 1944 on the Montréal division of the provincial police identified all the main problems that plagued this service. The major shortcomings included :

- the existence of two separate police forces : the provincial police and the liquor police
- the division of the province into two districts for police purposes, which generated duplications in responsibilities ; higher than necessary administrative expenses ; an abnormally large number of command positions, which itself resulted in conflicts of authority ; low efficiency ; an absence of team spirit and weak discipline ; inconsistencies in approaches to law enforcement ; and a weakening of the control of the Attorney General<sup>287</sup>
- the low level of education of police officers<sup>288</sup>
- the unduly low level of remuneration<sup>289</sup>
- rundown facilities<sup>290</sup>
- political influence over the recruitment, training, and promotion of officers<sup>291</sup>.  
(The Commission noted in its report that on 4 September 1936, when the Union Nationale took power, practically all the members of the provincial police in the district of Montréal were summarily dismissed as the result of a telephone call from the Ministry of the Attorney General. The next day there was only one police officer and a few clerical workers left, and for several months afterwards there was no police force in the district<sup>292</sup>.)

The situation was essentially the same twenty years later. Some police officers were over 80 years old, others were illiterate<sup>293</sup>. The law governing the provincial police in 1960 was virtually unchanged from that which had created it in 1940. The police were under the authority of the Attorney General of the province<sup>294</sup>. The senior management of the force comprised two people, the Director and the Deputy Director, both appointed by the Cabinet<sup>295</sup>. The other members were appointed directly by the Attorney General. The conditions of admission to the force were



minimal. The candidates had to be British subjects, of good reputation, free from any criminal convictions, sufficiently educated for the performance of their duties, fairly fluent in French and English, and medically fit<sup>296</sup>. It is rather telling about the quality of the recruits and the trust that the government had in them that the law felt compelled to provide that no officer of the provincial police was permitted to be in a tavern other than for reasons related to the performance of his duties<sup>297</sup>.

*Independence* - The other major problem was that of the politicisation of the police. Duplessis had used the force for purposes other than the control of crime, such as the repression of communism or the crushing of strikes and demonstrations. A 1937 statute commonly known as the *Padlock Law*<sup>298</sup> empowered the Attorney General to order the closing of any place used for communist propaganda and to seize any communist publication. Since the law did not define communism, Duplessis was able to use it politically against anyone he disliked. Similarly, the police regularly intervened, often brutally and always to protect the interest of the employer, in major strikes that marked the history of the labour movement in Quebec<sup>299</sup>.

Accordingly, the establishment of a police force worthy of the name was seen as a top priority by the new Liberal government. The Prime Minister stated in his first press conference, on 6 July 1960<sup>300</sup>, that the initial set of reforms would focus on economic issues, the management of the province's finances, and the police<sup>301</sup>. These objectives were not abstract intentions. A few days later, on 9 July, the Attorney General announced that the police would be reorganised<sup>302</sup>, and on 6 August a new Director of the provincial police was appointed<sup>303</sup>.

A number of measures were taken to reform the structure and management of the police force<sup>304</sup>. Under the old system, the Quebec Provincial Police was divided into four different services that operated almost in isolation from one another : the Judiciary Police (general investigation work) ; the Gendarmerie (routine functions such as guard duty, transfer of prisoners, strikes, riots) ; the Traffic Police (highway traffic matters exclusively) ; and the Liquor Police (enforcement of Quebec liquor legislation). For administrative purposes, the province was divided into two regions - Eastern Quebec and Western Quebec - that operated independently of each other, even though both were under the authority of the Attorney General. As a result, there were in effect eight provincial police forces, each operating within its own sphere so that, for example, a traffic officer would not normally deal with a liquor infraction. An officer would more often than not spend his whole career in the same service. He would also generally work all his life in the same district, which was frequently his place of birth, among friends and relatives and under the pressure of local political influences. In addition, each of the four services had a different rank structure and pay scale. These discrepancies led to dissatisfaction and imbalance among the services, since better educated officers would occasionally manage to transfer to a service with a higher pay scale, leaving the lowest paying services with a higher proportion of less educated personnel. The reorganisation introduced fundamental and far-reaching changes. It abolished the Liquor Police, merged the remaining three services, and established a unified command structure with a Director General at its head<sup>305</sup>. It further established a single rank structure, obtained salary increases, established a Personnel Office responsible for hiring officers, set in place higher recruiting standards, and set up an adequate training system for recruits. The changes also meant that new officers rotated duties to broaden their experience and receive progressively wider responsibilities. Finally, a police code of conduct<sup>306</sup> was adopted. The personnel already in place were also reviewed, leading to the departure of some 390 of the force's 1,530 officers during the period from 23 June 1960 to 31 December 1961<sup>307</sup>. In 1962, an additional 144 officers were fired or quit<sup>308</sup>. At the same time, to stabilise the system, the government enacted a new *Provincial Police Force Act*<sup>309</sup>. Among other things, this Act prohibited members of the Provincial Police Force from holding any other employment or engaging in any commercial activity<sup>310</sup>.

The will to professionalise the police force was strong, and the force actively sought people who wanted to make a career in policing. The recruitment standards<sup>311</sup> were as follows :

1. *Age limit.* 20 to 30 years, married or single. We have arguments that 20 is too young and 35 or 40 not too old ; however, we believe otherwise. While the young man may lack a little in maturity, he is easier to mould into a policeman. Over 30, if he is not yet settled in life, this is not a good sign and his habits are hard to change ; at 40, he is on the physical decline for active police investigation work.
2. *Education.* We require grade ten or equivalent, which seems to be a good mean average. He must qualify in our education examination, which confirms his academic level. He must also have a fluent knowledge of French, the necessity for which is quite obvious in this province.
3. *Stature.* We require a minimum of 5'8" of height, without shoes. Normal and sound constitution, normal vision without glasses, and able to pass a medical examination. Stature has some importance, admitted that the quality of a policeman is not measured by his height or strength. But what will happen if a man 5'5" has to arrest a 6'4" man? (...)
4. *Must be of a good character and reputation.* We conduct an investigation into the man's background to satisfy ourselves, also check his fingerprints for any possible criminal record. We want to have men of unimpeachable reputation, to gain and hold the confidence of the public.
5. *Aptitude.* Last but not least, he must undergo an I.Q. test and be interviewed by a Personnel Officer, subsequent to which a decision is taken as to his suitability for our service and his acceptance.

Each applicant had to undergo an interview lasting from one and a half to two hours conducted by an experienced officer who specialised in personnel. According to the man who was at the time Deputy Director General of the provincial police, the interview focused on the following main factors<sup>312</sup> :

1. *Physical appearance.* We like a man of average physique without any abnormal characteristics. We look for a reasonable degree of neatness and smartness, which improves with training.
2. *Probable appearance in uniform.* A man's appearance in uniform should be such that he is able to command respect.
3. *Ability to express himself.* This inspires a knowledge of his duties and gains the confidence of the public.
4. *Speech and vocabulary.* This reflects his education, and shows his attitude and approach.
5. *Quality and maturity of voice.* An immature or weak voice can reflect a weak personality, or display a lack of self-confidence.
6. *General impression he gives.* You have to picture how he would impress you generally as a policeman.
7. *Self-confidence.* This is necessary up to a point and in line with good judgement.
8. *Probable relations with public.* He should understand the necessity for and be able to maintain good public relations.
9. *Mental alertness.* The quality and astuteness of his future police work depends on this. This factor shows up in questioning and reflects in the Perceptive Ability portion in the I.Q. Test.
10. *Ability to assimilate training.* His academic record and standing will confirm this up to a point. He must be able to assimilate new ideas.

11. *Amenability to discipline.* Will the man react favourably to strong discipline? Is he pliable or is he headstrong with a tendency to follow his own tangent instead of regulations? We must work as a team under one command.

12. *Sense of responsibility.* He must have a sense of duty or obligation towards his function, and be a law-abider himself, without being a crusader.

13. *Initiative and energy.* A man should apply himself to his work with energy, develop initiative with experience, so that we can depend on his assuming his responsibilities.

14. *Social adjustment.* A man must think and act along socially acceptable lines. He must be an example to the public.

15. *Maturity in judgment.* A man is expected to show a reasoning ability in line with his background, age and experience.

16. *Stability.* A man who changes jobs every few months does not interest us, because he will probably keep on changing. It takes two to three years in police work before a man starts to produce good work, so an unstable man is wasting our time as well as his own.

17. *Temperament.* A policeman should be reasonably even-tempered. This is very important in police work, and in fact the criminal element is prone to take advantage of this weakness in a man.

18. *Motivation.* This is very important. I touched on this before, and a policeman cannot do good work unless he is able to adapt himself to it, and maintain a constant interest in it.

19. *Physical maturity.* This also has a certain importance, in that particularly for certain types of work it would not do to send a man who is too youthful looking.

20. *Emotional maturity.* Our men are subject to long hours, strain and fatigue, and sometimes lack of comfort, repulsive sights, deceit, and emotional stress. A man has to be emotionally stable to take these situations in his stride. A man weak in this respect is prone to nervous breakdowns.

The applicant was rated on these factors on a point system from 1 to 10, with a score of 5 or less on any factor resulting in failure.

As a further measure in the drive toward professionalisation, the new *Provincial Police Force Act* provided for the creation of the Quebec Police School for the training of the Quebec Provincial Police force<sup>313</sup>. Later, in 1968, another major step in this direction took place in the establishment of the Quebec Police Commission under a new *Police Act*<sup>314</sup> that modernised the 1961 Act. The Police Commission is given a wide mandate under this Act. Among other things, it is authorised to conduct, on its own motion or further to a request by a citizen, inquiries on the Quebec Police Force or any of its members<sup>315</sup>. Whenever it makes such an inquiry, the Commission is required to submit a written report on its findings to the Attorney General<sup>316</sup>. The 1968 *Police Act* also replaced the Quebec Police School with a Quebec Police Institute with an expanded mandate<sup>317</sup>. Resources and facilities were improved, and new police stations were built across the province. In 1960, the force only had a few patrol cars and motorcycles. By 1962, it had 582 cars, and by 1968, 928. To mark a conspicuous break with the past, the members of the force received new uniforms and the colour of the patrol cars was changed. Further, the force's vehicles were equipped with a state-of-the-art radio telephone system.

The chief measure to further independence was to protect the Director of the force from arbitrary dismissal. Under the new *Provincial Police Force Act*, the government could only dismiss the Director for misbehaviour or incompetence, and could only do so on a recommendation from a superior court judge after an inquiry conducted at the request of the Attorney General<sup>318</sup>. More generally, the police force benefited from the broader trend towards professionalism in public

service, which could not accept the type of overt political interference that had prevailed in the past, and also from unionisation in 1966, which made the force less vulnerable to political influence.

### **Some complications**

In the light of the real progress that was made in such fundamental areas as the electoral process, provincial finances, the public service, and the police force, it is inviting to end this study on a high note and to leave the impression that, following the reforms introduced after the demise of the Union Nationale, the province of Quebec enjoyed unqualified success in the management of public affairs. This conclusion, however, would be misleading and unrealistic. For, as is so often the case in abrupt political and social transitions, the results of the Quiet Revolution were a good deal more complex, both in themselves and in their ramifications, than they initially appeared. To be sure, there can be no question that the Quiet Revolution introduced major advances in integrity in politics and public life. The outrageous practices that marred elections under the Union Nationale had all but disappeared, and strict rules were set in place for the funding of political parties. As a result of the introduction of a more transparent procurement system, favouritism in the purchase of goods and services was significantly reduced. Because of the strengthening of the legal framework within which government employees operated, petty corruption became non-existent and citizens no longer had to bribe public servants. To support these advances, the necessary control mechanisms had been introduced. Judges came to be regarded as totally independent and scrupulously honest, and the police, now well paid and well trained, generally operated according to high professional standards. In short, a poorly qualified and over-politicised administration had been replaced by a professional and largely apolitical bureaucracy, and the electoral process had become strictly regulated. But these achievements, as substantial as they were, were not attained without difficulty.

Reform came at a high cost. In the case of the Office of the Director General of Elections alone, the budget would end up reaching \$13,000,000 in 2000<sup>319</sup>. Another practical example of the price of reform is the cost of the provincial police force. In the first year of the new Liberal administration, this increased by \$1,615,000<sup>320</sup>; by 1964-1965 the budget of the force went from close to \$8,000,000 in 1959-1960 to over \$15,000,000<sup>321</sup>; and by 1970, the provincial police force of 3,402 police officers and 797 civilians required a budget of \$45,553,500<sup>322</sup>. With these and other large-scale public expenditures, Quebec would become one of the most indebted and most highly taxed jurisdictions in North America in the thirty years after the defeat of the Union Nationale.

Although the reforms introduced in the 1960s helped curb the worst excesses of the past, the drive for greater integrity that came to be the hallmark of those who replaced the Union Nationale seems to have been greatly exaggerated<sup>323</sup>. What disappeared was an entrenched form of populist favouritism that had become intolerable. Favouritism in Quebec is a complex subject with a long and varied history that has yet to receive thorough study. The forms that it took from 1960 on were sophisticated and discrete. To a large extent, favouritism was diverted from the working classes to the new professional elite of entrepreneurs, engineers and lawyers, and took place as part of normal business practice at every level. The proper system of conducting business without influence or favour was regularly subverted through the invocation of ostensible urgencies for certain construction work or the manipulation of calls for tenders or of the list of contractors who were invited to bid on them<sup>324</sup>. There was also much latitude regarding the purchase of land and the contracting of construction work by public sector agencies that have a certain degree of independence from regular government constraints<sup>325</sup>. Similarly, there was apparently much room for partisan considerations in the contracting of the services of lawyers, notaries, engineers, and others whose professional code of conduct prohibits them from competing among themselves through an open bidding process<sup>326</sup>.

The Quiet Revolution also signalled the emergence of extremely powerful unions that would often tend to put the interests of their members ahead of those of society<sup>327</sup>. Prior to 1960, the working conditions of regular civil servants were not open to negotiation but unilaterally determined by Cabinet, subject to approval by the Legislative Assembly. In its first brief to the Lesage Cabinet in November 1960, the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CNTU) raised not only routine concerns, such as wages, but also the prospect of the unionisation of all government employees. In general, the attitude of Lesage and his colleagues toward organised labour was very positive. They saw it as a constructive force in the transformation of Quebec society and, indeed, the Liberal election program committed the party to a labour code, labour tribunals, and other progressive reforms. Accordingly, at the presentation of the brief, Lesage endorsed most of the proposals, including equal pay for equal work and the abolition of work on Sunday. He also gave his assurance that he would consult the unions whenever serious problems affecting them were brought to the attention of the government. But he refused to take seriously the possibility of unionisation, commenting that the Queen could not negotiate with her subjects. He was soon to be proven wrong in this belief.

Work on a labour code began almost at once within the Labour Relations Board, which represented management, labour, and government. At the end of 1961, three different groups of civil servants asked permission to incorporate as bargaining agents, of which the Syndicat de Fonctionnaires Provinciaux du Québec won the support of the CNTU. Lesage continued to resist all attempts at unionisation on principle and openly objected to meetings being held on government time to recruit members for the rival unions. A first public service labour bill tabled in the legislature by the government in June 1963 fell short of according civil servants the right to affiliate with a union. The bill also limited the categories of people who could act as organisers, called for secret balloting, and imposed a number of restrictions including the prohibition of strikes during the life of a collective agreement.

The CNTU rejected the entire package. In a growing atmosphere of confrontation, the bill was withdrawn and a joint committee was set up to work out a new format. By October 1963, the government was prepared to admit the right to strike for some groups, but insisted on a provision to ensure that essential services were not disrupted. A second version of the bill, tabled in January 1964, was also withdrawn after the CNTU organised a mass rally in protest against it and the Quebec Federation of Labour threatened a general strike. The Union Nationale joined the protesters and demanded that all unionised employees have the right to strike. A third version of the bill, presented in April 1964, contained further concessions by the government, but it, too, was rejected.

By now, the situation was seriously affecting the whole social climate, since the Quiet Revolution had been based on the premise that the government and representative bodies, such as unions, would work hand in hand. The plan to establish a fully professional public service was also being jeopardised by the continuing dissension and uncertainty. In mid-May 1964, a Cabinet committee met with the leaders of the CNTU to try to find a solution. Lesage had by now conceded the principle of unionisation but was still trying to exclude certain categories or workers, including hospital and municipal employees. The government's limited concessions were not enough. Negotiations continued throughout the spring and into the summer. Ministers complained that work within their departments was suffering because of the tension and illegal work stoppages were becoming frequent. The labour negotiators stuck tenaciously to their positions and progressively gained ground. On 8 July, the government agreed to consider employees of the Liquor Commission, Hydro-Quebec, and the Highway Authority as industrial employees and to treat them accordingly. Late that night, a special Cabinet meeting approved a new version of the bill that granted the right to strike to hospital, school, and municipal workers, and other public service employees. The new bill excluded public servants, teachers, fire fighters, and the police,

whose rights were to be defined in separate legislation. In addition, the government reserved the right to request a temporary court injunction if it considered any union action endangered public welfare or security.

After resisting for nearly four years, the Lesage government accepted the new reality. On 6 August 1964, a law was passed recognising the right of association, collective negotiation, and the right to strike under the new labour code. Before a strike could occur, management and labour were to agree on categories of essential services and the ways in which they were to be maintained. In the case of disagreement, the Labour Relations Board was empowered to determine those conditions. Public servants, for their part, were to abstain from political activity, one of the few points that Lesage had been able to win. In November 1964, in a referendum on the bargaining agent of the public servants, the Syndicat des Fonctionnaires Provinciaux du Québec was chosen and affiliated with the CNTU. In large part because of that victory, the union's membership soared from 94,114 members in 1960 to 204,361 in 1966.

Jean Lesage's hopes that the agreement would restore harmony between the government and the unions were doomed to disappointment. The personnel of the Liquor Commission soon became the first to test the new power of unionisation and went on strike in December 1964. When no early settlement could be reached, Lesage ordered them back to work, threatening to transfer the sale of liquor to the private sector. With the CNTU solidly behind them, the strikers ignored him. In the end, the government gave in to the workers' demands. Other union actions soon followed. A few months later, Hydro-Quebec's engineers went on strike. Although a settlement was reached after a month, other Hydro-Quebec employees followed suit, with the result that large portions of the Crown Corporation's operations were closed down during the summer and autumn of 1965. That period was further marked with strikes by the Montréal Transportation Commission and twenty-three Quebec hospitals, and the Société des Professeurs de l'État du Québec closed down a good part of the education system for a brief time. Lesage warned that the public was largely hostile to such disruptions, but the trend could not be halted. Trade unionism henceforth became an essential part of government employer–employee relations, and CNTU representatives now examined every detail of working conditions, including recruitment, classifications, promotions, and pay scales.

The public servant's union obtained its first strike vote on 29 February 1966. Among its demands were a revision of the labour code to give the union a more direct role in the work of the Public Service Commission, formerly the Civil Service Commission ; a \$40,000,000 increase in salaries ; and an extension of the scope of union representation, which was now to include some eight thousand manual labourers. The Cabinet was shaken, especially so since it was contemplating elections in a matter of weeks. Once again, intensive negotiations were undertaken and the government gave way on most of the issues. The teachers soon announced that they, too, were going on strike, and the government imposed an injunction to keep schools open pending further negotiations. Then, in the middle of the election campaign, the police association called an unauthorised strike. Up to the present day, the association of the members of the provincial police and the Montréal police union wield extraordinary power.

## **CONTRIBUTION TO A THEORY OF INTEGRITY IN GOVERNMENT**

On the topic of integrity in public life, any study of the Duplessis era will leave us with more questions than answers. It is extremely difficult even to identify with reasonable certainty the crucial factors that, from the 1960s on, led to the progressive and substantial increase in the level of integrity in the conduct of government business. At best, we can propose possible explanations in the hope of encouraging further reflection and discussion.

Our study of this period in Quebec political history suggests that at least four factors must simultaneously be present to raise a public outcry for probity in public affairs : dissatisfaction with the existing system must reach a sufficient level ; an intellectual climate supportive of discontent must be in place ; the incumbent regime must lose its grip on society long enough for opponents to consolidate their position ; and there must exist a sufficient number of people able to lead the movement for change.

### **DISCONTENT**

It is no less true than obvious that change is only possible when there is widespread discontent with the existing order. Pervasive corruption in the management of public affairs is not enough to bring about change if the public is unaware or indifferent.

There is evidence that, for the longest time, Quebec society was not particularly offended by the lack of integrity in political and administrative matters. For instance, the conspicuous abuses of the electoral process were evidently judged by most as little more than amusing<sup>328</sup>. Awareness and concern with the problem developed only because of repeated condemnation by credible critics - in this case, respected members of the clergy. By the late 1950s, the crude political tactics of the regime became the object of increasing disapproval<sup>329</sup>. And the use that the Union Nationale made of its power did nothing to alleviate the resentment generated by the means employed to obtain it. Another factor that must have contributed to the growing intolerance to the lack of integrity was the increasing level of education among most people, which, ironically, was the result of the Union Nationale's massive investments in schools and universities. The basic moral fabric of French-Canadian society may also have facilitated a change in attitude. It should be noted in this regard that the Catholic religion staunchly condemns all the acts - stealing, lying, bribing - that characterised Quebec politics. Finally, as we have already noted, the advent of television contributed greatly to the dissemination of reformist ideas.

More generally, Quebec society had changed imperceptibly but significantly since the early days of the Duplessis regime. It had now evolved too far to retain its earlier monolithic structure and uniformity of thinking. Everything started to be questioned long before the demise of the Union Nationale in the 1960s. But it was only by this time that the number of people who could no longer give their unconditional support to the existing order had become large enough to constitute a meaningful force<sup>330</sup>.

### **APPROPRIATE INTELLECTUAL CLIMATE**

We believe that radical change cannot happen without a favourable intellectual climate. Unlike revolts, revolutions - even quiet ones - do not occur spontaneously. They are always preceded by recognition of problems and reflection on effective remedies.

The Quebec intellectual class, including the dissenting members of the clergy, had been in turmoil for at least ten years before the Union Nationale's defeat in 1960. It constantly exposed the details of the corruption in which the administration was involved. The writings of Gérard Dion and Louis O'Neill offered a coherent analysis of all the problems plaguing the political process at the time. The 1959 circular letter of Bishop Coderre went even further and, for all intents and purposes, laid out all the principles on which a modern state apparatus is based, including the accountability of elected officials and public servants, and the creation of a qualified, competent, professional bureaucracy. Their ideas were entirely consistent with those being promoted by lay reformist thinkers. This vocal elite was sharply critical of the regime's social and economic conservatism. It believed that education should be freed from the control of the clergy and modernised. It criticised what it saw as the overly generous treatment of foreign corporations exploiting the province's natural resources. The changes called for by this group covered all aspects of the system and included a reformed civil service comprising people hired on the basis of competence rather than political allegiance. Taken together, these and other ideas began to form a loose yet sufficiently clear and detailed plan for reform, and they largely influenced the political program that brought the Liberal Party to power in 1960.

## **DECLINE OF POWER**

The process of reform absolutely requires that the corrupt government suffer a weakening in its power or at least show hesitation or indecision in the use of the means at its disposal.

Both factors were arguably present in Quebec. The enlightened attitude of Duplessis's successors - Paul Sauvé and, later, Daniel Johnson - suggests that at least some key people in the Union Nationale no longer believed that their party's views were in tune with the times or consistent with the best interests of the province. By the end of the 1950s, Duplessis seemed out of touch with the changing times, firmly entrenched in positions that no longer made sense to those around him<sup>331</sup>. The gap between existing institutions and the changed aspirations of society had become too wide for the party to bridge. Fear, one of the key instruments used by both the Union Nationale and the Catholic Church to control the populace, had progressively vanished. People were starting to speak out openly against the regime, which was no longer in a position to vigorously repress criticism and crush dissent. As early as 1945, a well-known journalist gave a public speech denouncing the atmosphere of terror maintained by the province's religious authorities<sup>332</sup>. Three years later, the manifesto *Total Refusal*, signed by a group of artists, would also openly rebel against the climate of fear that permeated the province<sup>333</sup>. Some members of the clergy spoke out against the regime. The press slowly shed its servility. In the late 1950s, when the Quebec Natural Gas scandal erupted as a result of a series of articles in *Le Devoir*, Duplessis ejected a representative of that newspaper from his office. For that action, the other dailies, even those close to the Union Nationale, openly criticised him. This marked a turning point in the Prime Minister's relations with the press. A few months later, the Parliamentary Press Corps established itself as a corporation under provincial legislation. It drafted a constitution and decided that, while Duplessis was still alive, its members would henceforward refuse to participate in any function unless all of them were treated equally<sup>334</sup>.

## **LEADERSHIP**

Finally, and no less importantly, there must be a class of reform-minded people that has the numerical strength and the motivation to channel the energy created by the three previous factors.



At the end of the 1950s in Quebec, the necessary leadership for change was taken up by the newly urbanised and better-educated middle class that had grown up with the industrialisation of the province. This group was well fitted for the task and, as was seen earlier, promoted all-encompassing state intervention as the basis for the efficient organisation and effective operation of society. It included highly articulate individuals who were in a position to design reform proposals that contrasted sharply with the values embodied by the Union Nationale. In a province grown weary of the old regime, the vision of a welfare state would come to exercise a strong appeal. The new system of belief rapidly gained acceptance and would eventually become as solidly entrenched as Catholicism once had been. In a way, it was relatively easy for the reformers to advance their ideas, since these were inherently attractive and largely untested. Whether conscious of it or not, Duplessis's opponents also had a vested interest in promoting this particular course of reform, since they would necessarily dominate the technocracy that their theories required. That said, there is no doubt that, as far as integrity is concerned, the new regime that emerged from these same theories established a more efficient form of government by openly condemning corruption and taking the steps to make it unnecessary as well as undesirable.



22.08.2001

### **POLITICS AND CONSCIENCE**

#### **Circular letter from Bishop Coderre to all his constituents**

**2 February 1959**<sup>335</sup>

Excerpts

*Note - While much less known than other writings critical of the Union Nationale regime, Politics and conscience is a particularly important document. It shows that the regime had lost the support of part of the clergy. But perhaps more importantly, it provides evidence of a major shift in the conception of politics and the organisation of the state. As such, it deserves to be read in spite of its very heavy style.*

#### **Introduction**

(...) Government leaders are directly responsible for the proper administration of the State. To maintain social justice, they have an obligation to promote and maintain the prosperity of the society they govern. (...) For their part, public employees work together under the direction of government leaders to ensure the proper administration of society. Their actions can considerably influence all aspects of public life, and the fate of society depends largely on how well or how poorly they fulfil their obligations. (...)

Given the current human condition, many people depend largely on the temporal environment in which they live for the salvation of their souls. We have only to open our eyes to see that their ability to lead Christian lives is frequently hindered by an environment that promotes materialism, paganism, immorality, sensuality and drinking, and is frequently compromised by inadequate housing, extreme poverty and long-term unemployment.

Since the solution to these problems rests to a great extent with the development and application of public policy, we can say that government leaders and public employees are to varying degrees indirectly responsible for the salvation of souls, and that they comprise a ministry with a universal, or eternal, impact. They could not turn their back on that ministry without serious repercussions on the innumerable souls who could have been brought back to the fold, and they will have to account for their actions before the Lord Jesus Christ (...).

After refreshing our memories about these truths, we should not find it surprising that the Holy Church has a profound interest in ensuring that government leaders and public employees remain honest. It has both the right and the duty to take that interest. (...)

Within the limitations of the rights and duties of the Holy Church, and in the light of pontifical teachings, we wish today to discuss, with openness and frankness, the obligations of conscience incumbent upon government leaders and public employees.

Government leaders and public employees, though closely associated and both servants of society, have quite distinct moral obligations. Since we believe that the delicate issue of bribery

requires detailed study in itself, we have divided this Pastoral Letter into three parts, the first outlining some obligations of government leaders, the second certain obligations of public employees, and the third basic moral considerations relating to bribery.

To make the text less cumbersome, we have used the term « government leaders » in a general sense to include federal and provincial ministers, members of Parliament and legislative assemblies, municipal mayors and councillors, and school board chairs and members. The term « public employees » includes government employees in administrative departments, office employees, secretaries, treasurers, managers, accountants, inspectors, comptrollers, customs personnel, tax collectors and others.

## **Thesis**

### **I - SOME OBLIGATIONS OF GOVERNMENT LEADERS**

(...) First of all, government leaders must clearly understand the huge moral weight of their mandate in the light of their faith. Those elected by their peers enjoy a confidence that brings with it great responsibility. (...)

Government leaders are both men of God and men among men : the power they hold cannot be seen as a personal benefit to be exploited for self-interest. They do not enjoy a privilege through which they can derive benefit for themselves, but are under a social obligation to serve others. (...)

Every government must remember that its authority comes from God, that it must give account to God, and that its purpose is to serve society.

Government leaders would be unable to exercise their obligations as God wishes without knowledge in many disciplines. As Cardinal Feltin declared, « Governing and administering society today has become a highly technical enterprise. Will alone - albeit for the good - is no longer sufficient to lead the people to their temporal destiny, a normal condition of spiritual advancement. Monetary and administrative problems cannot be surmounted with good intentions alone. » If a government were to remain content with inadequate, outdated knowledge, it would, in essence, incautiously become « the blind leading the blind ».

Occupying a government position means having the responsibility, in all conscience, to promote legal justice, approve new legislation, protect the rights of citizens and societies, distribute responsibility, duties and monies fairly and equitably and eliminate abuse wherever possible, without causing greater harm. Can we accept and retain such responsibility without ensuring that we know the essential prescriptions of Christian morality? In order to properly fulfil our charge, should we not have a clear understanding of the role of the State in the indissolubility of marriage, censure of public entertainment and periodicals, modest dress, and the indisputable rights of the individual and the family?

Could we in all conscience accept and retain a government position without ever asking ourselves whether we know enough about the social doctrines that the Catholic Church in all its authority supports? Could we properly legislate on social issues without taking the trouble to discover what is commonly taught by Catholic social morality over and above the isolated interpretations and opinions discussed in specific schools? Should we not have clear ideas and principles on unionism, equitable pay, arbitration, strikes, picketing and social security, so that we can properly ensure economic stability for the most disadvantaged members of our society?

What sincere Christian would wish to assume the moral responsibility of governing a group of human beings without being sufficiently informed of the legislation applying to his country, province or municipality? Such knowledge is an elementary prerequisite if he is to wisely apply the legislation and improve it as best he can.

Catholic moralists write that those who govern have the inherently grave duty of working positively towards the temporal prosperity of society ; they must make every effort to eliminate such temporal ills as famine, unemployment, lack of industrial and agricultural resources, and other ills, and see to it that the wealth of the people is not distributed inequitably. In a collective pastoral letter, the United States Episcopate declared : « When economic conditions are such that employed people find it very difficult, even discouraging, to raise a family, those responsible for such conditions are guilty of violating the laws of God, and are accomplices in the sins which have resulted in such injustice ». In order to fulfil their obligations conscientiously, government leaders must absorb the human knowledge which informs the value of money, supply and demand, inflation, currency exchange controls, stock exchange operations, and monopolies.

One important aspect of governing is the formulation of laws and decrees for a given group of human beings, in a specific environment at a given time. Therefore, government leaders must, through serious application, remain continuously informed on social facts and actual conditions of existence, such as fluctuations in the economy, poverty, lack of affordable housing for large families, inadequate pay, the current cost of family life, drinking rates, juvenile delinquency, commercialized vice, Sunday observance, and overt or covert subversive propaganda. Though the interaction among some of the social factors noted above may be interpreted subjectively, it remains that many of them can be objectively examined, to great effect.

In brief, in order to properly govern and administer human society, any government leader must seek elucidation in these five areas of human knowledge : general Christian morality, Catholic social doctrine, current positive law, political economics, and specific information on social facts. (...)

Self-interest must be renounced by those who govern other people. Those who are weak and fallen from grace and those who have not always succeeded in fulfilling their obligations must be guided towards more elevated goals. At some point they will encounter opposition, lack of understanding and individualism, even severe criticism, from others. But it may be that abnegation - Christian detachment and courageous disinterest - are even more necessary in a public figure today, an era of widespread egoism and egocentric authority with an increasingly centralized and complex administration which is failing to eliminate the promotion of personal interest, questionable popularity and enrichment of the individual at the expense of the public good. (...)

A government leader fulfils his responsibilities far better when he is incorruptible, and able to purify public mores without turning a guilty blind eye to abuses by someone like the owner of a club, tavern, hotel, restaurant, cinema, nightclub or even house of ill repute, the sort of person with whom he should sever all relations on account of his position.

Incorruptible and upright government leaders award public contracts (for such things as bridges, schools and roads) only to honest, experienced contractors and never, without exception, to incompetents whose principal merit is to belong to the party in power and contribute generously to election coffers.

Furthermore, government leaders need to be incorruptible when imposing an equitable share of the tax burden on the rich, on financiers and on industry magnates, instead of letting it be carried

by poorer, weaker, isolated and working members of society, who are humble and defenceless people.

Members of Parliament need to be morally incorruptible whenever they vote for social and labour laws that will effectively protect manual workers against shameful exploitation by monopolies, and that will impose the proper working conditions and free unions discussed by recent pontiffs in their social encyclicals, instead of postponing legislation that may cause discomfort to some powerful members of society or drafting social legislation that may appear effective but is intentionally impossible to implement.

Public figures need to be incorruptible, so that they do not allow free rein to those who traffic in human passions and respect no spiritual values in pursuing their material interests.

Unfortunately, too many Christians have laid to rest their concerns in such matters of moral law by telling themselves regularly that in public life these days « everybody's doing it » and that « no one can remain in power with such scruples ». In so doing, they are burdening their immortal souls with a multitude of sins for which they will have to account in full before a perfectly incorruptible God, where partisanship will confer no advantage and they will have no political protection. (...)

Those who hold power for a long time often become indifferent and slothful, and their distribution of posts, contracts and burdens frequently becomes markedly inequitable. Political duties may thus hinder instead of promote personal sanctification, and even compromise eternal salvation.

## II - SOME OBLIGATIONS OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

As we noted at the beginning of this Pastoral Letter, the convenient term « public employees » includes all those who are employed by federal and provincial government leaders, municipalities and school boards to perform administrative tasks. We would like to remind the numerous public employees in our midst that they have serious obligations of conscience.

### *A) Virtues and obligations analogous to those of government leaders*

The moral obligations of public employees are closely associated with those of government leaders. Each cooperates, in his own way and to the extent of his abilities, in the sound administration of public programs and measures, and each is required to allot part of the common good to the groups that he serves.

Thus, with appropriate modifications, most of the duties of ministers, members of Parliament, mayors, counsellors and school board commissioners can be transposed to public employees. We do not intend to repeat in detail all the obligations we have listed above. It seems clear enough, for example, that a public employee, insofar as he has direct influence on the prosperity and well-being of a society and indirect influence on the eternal salvation of souls, should take the time to reflect upon the weight of his responsibilities. He should remember that his role is to promote the public good and not his own interest, and that he will have to account for his actions not only before his immediate superiors but also before the most Holy and Incorruptible God, by Whom he shall be judged.

A public servant must take the time to reflect upon all the theoretical knowledge required to fulfil certain duties. In many positions, particularly senior administrative positions, the incumbent is assumed to have specific knowledge of Christian morality, the social doctrine of the Church, applicable legislation, and the conditions of the social environment he is required to serve. If we do not require that a subordinate have as much scientific knowledge as those who have senior

responsibilities in the administration, that does not mean the subordinate can set aside his conscience and remain in general ignorance.

In spite of the gradually increasing government involvement and centralization of power which characterizes the present era, a public employee should always remember that he is there to serve human beings, who must not be treated as standardized reports or anonymous numbers. If he considers those who work for him as « users », then he quickly transforms them into numbers, mere objects, and treats them as such. (...)

Like government leaders, public employees have a moral obligation to abnegate self-interest and remain incorruptible. Their positions often require that they renounce personal benefit and gain public confidence. The public employee who has a duty to serve society but sacrifices the public good to his own personal interest undermines the very fabric of human society. (...)

In some cases, the public servant needs to be even more incorruptible than the government leader, because hypothetically he may be pressed by his superiors to engage in unfair practices in return for tempting rewards, or pressed by inferiors who seek unlawful administrative action in exchange for financial compensation. (...)

#### *B) Two problems for the Christian conscience of public employees*

Because they are subordinates, public employees must reflect upon the nature of their duties as employees. It may be useful for them to know what to do in the event that a legitimate superior orders them to carry out a measure which they personally consider unjust.

Being more or less at the immediate service of society under the terms of an individual or collective work contract, public employees incur the obligations of salaried employees in general. Frequently, they have more obligations than the employees of a small business.

Therefore, as a general rule, public employees must be content with a salary commensurate in quantity and nature with the labour they provide. Their conscience could not rest if they required, or even without requesting received, substantial amounts for work they had not performed.

They must do their utmost conscientiously to perform the work for which they have been hired. It is of course easier for them than for other employees to waste time, work slowly, pad their time sheets, travel on paid vacations by claiming that the trips are essential to their duties, and claim the need to attend a conference, then either fail to attend it at all or put in a token appearance.

Moralists always ask those who administer the property of others to take care of it as would a good *paterfamilias*. Since that is what public employees must do, it would be wrong for them to appropriate part of the materials provided to them by the State, waste it, allow it to deteriorate, or pass it under the table to their friends. This is where profound soul-searching might be of great benefit to society ; surely, we cannot invoke legitimate customs or lawful authority to justify the waste and appropriation practised within some public service agencies. (...)

In some cases, it is difficult for public employees to know what to do. What is a public employee to do when his superior orders him to cooperate in an illicit or immoral act, such as an injustice,

- either through positive action (by forging an invoice, signature, nomination, vote or procedure) that the employee's conscience tells him is wrong ; or

- through omission (by remaining silent, failing to act, intentionally forgetting a fact, or intentionally delaying action).

(...) When a public employee is tempted to cooperate in an unjust activity in the course of his duties, either through positive action or omission, he can often resolve the difficulty by openly asking his confessor or a knowledgeable moralist for advice. An employee who is loyal enough to take this course at the risk of losing temporal benefits or a promotion of some kind will often avoid becoming embroiled in an increasingly complicated situation, and also avoid putting himself in a position where he is obliged to make restitution. (...)

### III - THE BASIC MORALITY OF BRIBERY

We considered it preferable to examine the delicate but important issue of the moral considerations involved in receiving bribes while administering the public good in a different, albeit brief section. This is because it involves ministers, members of Parliament, mayors, counsellors, school board commissioners and public employees at all levels. (...)

#### A) *Concepts*

We would not wish to cause confusion between bribes and small unpretentious gifts, such as a small sum of money or a dozen cigars. In many cases, such gifts may represent simple donations, lawful tokens of gratitude and legitimate generosity which do not necessarily hinder the conscientious administration of the public good, including the honest award of contracts, objective distribution of contributions and work, appointments to paying positions, comprehensive collection of taxes due, and appropriate justice. Obviously, a government leader or public employee who receives or even requests such gifts is not necessarily undertaking to give preferential treatment to certain persons in the performance of his duties, nor to violate various forms of justice in his future activities.

Furthermore, we would not wish to confuse reprehensible bribes with recognized, acceptable bonuses ; the electorate, as well as the employers of public employees, are deemed to be aware that members of Parliament, ministers, mayors, counsellors, school board commissioners and public employees occasionally receive individual sums in addition to their official pay, sums that may be small in themselves but add up to substantial amounts.

What we mean by a bribe is the attribution of a considerable sum of money or a significant personal benefit, such as the continuous use of a car or apartment, the award of a substantial scholarship or a similar consideration, to an employee without notification to his superiors and as a clandestine reward for an inequitable administrative act committed in the past or future. It may take the form of a covert commission, which the public employee attributes to himself from public funds, without notifying his civil superiors or electors, as unlawful compensation for a duty for which he already receives regular pay. It may take be a reward for an unjust administrative act, such as an inequitable appointment to a position, the undeserved award of a contract, the unlawful issue of a tavern permit, culpable negligence in collecting taxes or customs duty, the allocation of a grant that could have been of greater use to society elsewhere, or - for a police officer - failure to take appropriate action and thereby becoming an accomplice. (...)

#### B) *Applications*

Ministers, members of Parliament, mayors, councillors and school board commissioners do not have the right to dip into public funds to award themselves substantial clandestine commissions for their administrative duties - duties for which, in this country, they are already reasonably well remunerated - when those commissions have been voted neither by Parliament, nor the city council nor the school board, and when the taxpayers bearing their cost are unaware of them.

Government leaders have no right to demand that some taxpayers, such as suppliers, public works contractors, candidates for certain paying positions, and recipients of substantial grants, pay covert commissions and percentages for the administrative actions involved. Since their remuneration is generally adequate, we do not see how such practices can be justified, even though the administrative actions involved may be legitimate in themselves.

They have no right to demand covert commissions as a condition of or payment for the signature of a hotel or restaurant permit, or other document.

These same government leaders also have no right to accept bribes, within the meaning described above, as direct payment for selecting candidates for public duty, regardless of whether there is a competition to fill the vacancy. As holders of public office, their duty is simply to fill those positions with the most worthy candidates who can be most useful to society.

They are never permitted to receive bribes, even those freely proffered by taxpayers, as payment for unjustified preferential treatment or tolerance of errors detrimental to society.

Public employees, such as police officers, inspectors, tax collectors, customs officials and postal employees, do not have the right to arbitrarily award themselves clandestine commissions, without notifying government leaders and in violation of federal, provincial, municipal and school board statutes and regulations.

In general, public employees would be violating the principles of justice by demanding commissions or percentages from those upon whom they confer favour, in breach of civil law and in violation of their superiors' consent.

Thus, a police officer who demanded a bribe as a price for his silence, his abstention from action or his connivance, in breach of his public duty (for example, by failing to arrest a delinquent under his jurisdiction), would be in violation of justice and could not even keep his commission after the event.

A judge may not demand a bribe as payment for his judicial verdict, regardless of whether his verdict is just, because he is already paid by society to hand down verdicts. Obviously, he cannot accept a bribe to reach an unjust verdict : he would then be required to make reparation after the fact for prejudice to the losing party.

Tax collectors and customs officials cannot accept bribes as payment for conniving with smugglers or taxpayers who wish to avoid paying proper duties to the State.

Furthermore, it is immoral to offer bribes to public employees for unjustified preferential treatment, or to ignore faults prejudicial to society which they are required to denounce or punish in the course of their duties.

Public employees will have failed in performing their duty when, without appropriate authority and for a tempting consideration, they have failed to carry out or have amended the legitimate orders of government leaders regarding such things as positions to be allocated, grants to be determined and scholarships to be awarded.

#### C) *Legitimate retribution*

There are special cases we should point out in order to prevent public employees from having scruples where scruples are not required.



In cases where a public employee performs an act not included in his public duties in order to benefit a citizen, he may accept or even request reasonable remuneration, provided of course that the act in question is legitimate.

In addition, a public employee may receive a commission from a government or municipality supplier simply for pointing out, without breaching professional confidence, that he himself has no means to influence the award of a given contract. (...)

### **Conclusions**

We repeat the statements made by Pius XI, already quoted at the beginning of this Letter : « The Church recognizes that the State has its own sphere of action. However, it cannot allow politics to take the place of morals, no more than it can forget the precepts of our divine Founder, who ordered the Church to retain its authority over morals, wherever morals were and ought to be involved. »

We are aware that we have a duty to be shepherds for souls saved by the Lord Jesus Christ, and as such must declare that the faults of government leaders and public employees committed in the course of their public duties can frequently have very serious repercussions, undermining the very foundations of our society by seriously disrupting the scale of values without which no community of human beings can remain viable.

If we made no effort to eradicate such faults, we would find that individual and conjugal morality, respect for one's given word, general confidence in public employees and political authority, and the assurance that the administration works for the public good are sacrificed to self-interest and ambition. Honesty would be quickly replaced by circumlocution and deceit, national unity would be seriously threatened by partisanship, and the very concepts of justice and good could become perverted.

Such faults might quickly lead to hate, generalized defiance and gradual insubordination by citizens, cooperation among the venal and dishonest, shameful exploitation of popular passions, universal hypocrisy, innumerable lies disseminated through calculated propaganda, and a general undermining of human dignity. (...)

We ask citizens that they obey the law, that they remain incorruptible, that they do not try to corrupt others, and that they do not seek to benefit themselves at the expense of the common good. We ask these free people not to sacrifice their own convictions to partisanship, which blindly generates hostility, contempt and hate towards those who do not share the same political convictions. It is of course legitimate to have one's own opinion and to belong to political parties, but it is also important to ensure that justice and Christian charity do not suffer as a result. (...)

*Given to the Bishop of Saint-Jean, signed by Our Hand and our Seal affixed, and countersigned by the Chancellor of the Diocese, on this 2nd day of February, nineteen hundred and fifty nine, the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

**CHECKLIST FOR THE CONSCIENTIOUS VOTER**  
**G rard Dion and Louis O'Neill, The Christian and Elections**  
**1960**  
Excerpts<sup>336</sup>

**SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLES**

1. Exercising the *right to vote* is of the utmost importance, since its purpose is to form the government responsible for making laws to benefit the common interest of citizens. In principle, all citizens should vote. To fulfil this duty, one must try, as much as possible, *to have a clear idea of the political problems* in question, and the value of the parties and programs.

2. Every citizen will vote *according to his or her conscience* in accordance with the rules of justice. This justice obliges electors to choose the *most worthy*, competent and honest *candidate*. The most competent person is the one who is most aware of the needs of the common interest and seems to have the most practical sense.

Given our current political system, voters, in general, largely take into consideration the value of the *party leaders*, their *competence* and the *program* they intend to carry out. It is forbidden to vote for a party whose program contains points against natural or divine law. Normally, the hierarchy (the bishops) is responsible for indicating which parties have programs contrary to Christian morals.

3. Voting for a party because it promises more personal advantages, or it gives more money, gifts or personal grants, is a serious offence against justice. It is a *serious disorder* to subordinate the common interest of one's country or province to *private interests* or *individual ambitions*.

4. It should be remembered that lies, *perjury*, *slander*, and alcohol abuse are even less permissible at election time than during ordinary times. These actions should be condemned and exposed. Remember that *vote selling* is an absolute injustice, forbidden by Christian and natural morals. Neither candidates, organizers nor voters may commit this injustice.

5. Citizens should remain calm during elections, rationally study the programs, and be on their guard against exaggerated claims of some politicians, misleading and unfair propaganda, and paid promotional literature. They should also be wary of the *partisan spirit*, of which one may become a victim in some way.

6. It is hoped that *election expenses* will be strictly limited, that laws will positively reinforce honesty and justice in elections, that voters will require their candidates to provide clearly established programs with respect to important political problems.

7. Remember that honesty and a sense of civic responsibility in voters promote the same qualities in the people's representatives. The saying « we get the government we deserve » is

true in general. Voters' selfishness, pettiness and venality contribute largely to the election of bad members.

8. To be a competent and judicious voter, one must *become informed, ask questions*, and remember that democracy is the form of government that requires the most civic-mindedness to work well.

9. Remember that each person's sense of civic responsibility is the best way to contribute to a choice of representatives with which we can be satisfied. A generous practice of civic-mindedness promotes the *common interest* and in return is profitable to every citizen.

10. Remember that as *Christians* our example as honest and effective citizens is very important. Christians live with an eye to another world, but while waiting for it, live in a world in which they must work with people of good will so that there will be more justice, order and brotherhood.

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## NOTES AND REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> From 26 August 1936 to 8 November 1939, and from 30 August 1944 to his death on 7 September 1959.

<sup>2</sup> A provincial election had to be held as early as 1936 since the governing Liberal Party had lost all credibility as a result of Duplessis's exposition of its nepotism and mismanagement at the Public Accounts Committee of the Legislative Assembly.

<sup>3</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> In 1944, 19% of provincial revenues went to debt repayment. In 1958, only 6.6 %. - Robert Rumilly, *Maurice Duplessis et son temps* (Volume 2), p. 623.

<sup>6</sup> According to Jean Deschamps, who became Deputy Minister of Industry and Commerce under the Liberal government in 1963 « With the funds left by Duplessis, everything was possible. There were no debts. We could launch any program, undertake anything - there were always funds. » (Translation from the French) - as quoted in Pierre Duchesne, *Parizeau* (volume 1), p. 208-209.

<sup>7</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 6.

<sup>8</sup> Léon Dion, *Québec 1945-2000*, Volume 2, p. 117.

<sup>9</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 189 : « The magnitude of the task facing the Liberal Party when it came to power lay in the fact that the Duplessis era had left Quebec in the contradictory position of being an advanced industrial society with largely pre-industrial institutions, ideologies, and attitudes. This contradiction was to be found in the educational system, the government's attitude toward the economy, the administrative and electoral systems, labour legislation, and social welfare services. »

Similarly, Léon Dion, *Québec 1945-2000*, Volume 2, p. 122 : « The Union Nationale, despite its conservative and reactionary nature, contributed to Quebec's development. But the backward economic, social and cultural policies of Duplessis distanced French Canadians from the historical movement. »

<sup>10</sup> *An Act respecting company or corporation directorships*, Statutes of the Province of Quebec, 1936, chapter 32, section 1 :

« Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, no member of the Executive Council of the Province of Quebec may be a director or administrator of any corporation of a commercial, industrial or financial nature, if the said corporation does business with the Government of the Province of Quebec, directly or indirectly (...). »

<sup>11</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 78-79.

<sup>12</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 132.

<sup>13</sup> Gérard Pelletier, *Years of impatience*, p. 61.

<sup>14</sup> Duplessis appointed Ernest Laforce, who had been a senior official at the Ministry of Colonization during the first Union Nationale administration. A former leader of the Liberal Party, Georges-Émile Lapalme, held that (Translation from the French) « Ernest Laforce was not much more than a clown. Once, when testifying under oath, he affirmed that he did not know his own age. He was the head of the Civil Service Commission, which was required by law to comprise three members. But there was only one member. Everything was illegal. » - Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 88 (Interview with Georges-Émile Lapalme).

Lapalme's view of the illegality of the Commission's composition is technically incorrect. The 1936 Civil Service Act (Statutes of the Province of Quebec, 1943, chapter 9, section 4) only provided for a maximum of three members. The fact that Duplessis had only appointed one person on the Commission was therefore perfectly legal.

<sup>15</sup> Gérard Pelletier, *Years of impatience*, p. 63.

<sup>16</sup> Roland Parenteau, *Finances provinciales 1953*, p. 343.

<sup>17</sup> Roland Parenteau, *Finances provinciales 1953*, p. 343.

<sup>18</sup> Roland Parenteau, *Finances provinciales 1953*, p. 343.

<sup>19</sup> Roland Parenteau, *Finances provinciales 1953*, p. 344.

<sup>20</sup> The following description of the system is taken from historian Herbert Quinn's 1963 book *The Union Nationale*. It is extremely helpful to explain how the scheme worked. The distinction between two types of favouritism had been proposed some years before by J. R. Mallory in a 1956 article entitled « How corrupt is Quebec politics? » and is also drawn by Léon Dion in his book *Québec 1945-2000* (volume 2, p. 115). Quinn's book contains the best overview of unethical practices under the Duplessis administration, and our description of these practices is based to a large extent on his work.

<sup>21</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 134.

<sup>22</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 134.

<sup>23</sup> Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 196 (interview with Georges-Émile Lapalme).

<sup>24</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 134.

<sup>25</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 134-135.

<sup>26</sup> Alfred Hardy, *Patronage et patroneux*, p. 21-22.

<sup>27</sup> Stuart Keate, « Maurice the Magnificent », *Maclean's Magazine*, 1 September 1948, p. 7, 71.

The same thing happened in the 1952 election :

« In 1954, I revealed in the Assembly that during the 1952 general elections, the Highways minister had delivered cheques in payment of highways projects to children aged 5, 6, 7 and 8.

In December 1953, we obtained an order from the Assembly for the production of the documents in relation to this scandalous affair.

When I raised the issue, the government had not yet complied with this order, but I could nevertheless proceed because I had some specific information : names of the children, their age, the amount of the cheques, etc.

Maurice Duplessis, with all the seriousness in the world, put a spin on the debate by starting from the following premises :

" He (the Opposition leader) cited the names of persons between the ages of 7 and 12 to whom the Highways minister had allegedly delivered some cheques. What's wrong with that? The Province is helping some poor children to continue studying in some educational institutions. There's nothing in it, it's very appropriate. "

I told him that a 5 year old is a strange student, and coming back to the production of documents ordered by the House, I insisted that this order be obeyed. They replied to me - without rescinding the order - that it was not in the public interest to reveal the names of these children! » (Translation from the French) Georges-Émile Lapalme, *Le vent de l'oubli*, p. 197-198.

<sup>28</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 29, *Le Devoir*, 3 November 1956 ; article 30, *Le Devoir*, 5 November 1956 ; article 31, *Le Devoir*, 6 November 1956 ; article 32, *Le Devoir*, 7 November 1956 ; article 33, *Le Devoir*, 8 November 1956 ; article 34, *Le Devoir*, 9 November 1956.

Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 193 (interview with former Liberal Deputy Émilien Lafrance).

<sup>29</sup> Léon Dion, *Québec 1945-2000*, Volume 2, p. 115. ; Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 51-52. ; Georges-Émile Lapalme, *Le vent de l'oubli*, p. 16.

<sup>30</sup> Léon Dion, *Québec 1945-2000*, Volume 2, p. 118.

- <sup>31</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 21, *Le Devoir*, 24 October 1956.
- <sup>32</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 16, *Le Devoir*, 18 October 1956. ; article 21, *Le Devoir*, 24 October 1956.
- <sup>33</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 136.
- <sup>34</sup> Gérard Pelletier, *Years of impatience*, p. 49. ; Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 136.
- <sup>35</sup> Gérard Pelletier, *Years of impatience*, p. 52.
- <sup>36</sup> Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 86-87. ; Georges-Émile Lapalme, *Le vent de l'oubli*, p. 207.
- <sup>37</sup> Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 87.
- <sup>38</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 137-138. ; Robert Rumilly, *Maurice Duplessis et son temps* (Volume 2), p. 591.
- <sup>39</sup> Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 99.
- <sup>40</sup> Pierre Laporte, *Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières* - article 15, *Le Devoir*, 17 October 1956.
- <sup>41</sup> Organisation de l'Union Nationale. - *Duplessis donne à sa province*. - [undated, but evidently published around 1947.]
- <sup>42</sup> Gérard Pelletier, *Years of impatience*, p. 46.
- <sup>43</sup> Leslie Roberts, *The Chief*, p. 91.
- <sup>44</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 138.
- <sup>45</sup> Georges-Émile Lapalme, *Le vent de l'oubli*, p. 17.
- <sup>46</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 9, *Le Devoir*, 10 October 1956, p. 3. ; Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 138.
- <sup>47</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 9, *Le Devoir*, 10 October 1956, p. 3.
- <sup>48</sup> Georges-Émile Lapalme, *Le vent de l'oubli*, p. 261.
- <sup>49</sup> « When the law blocked his way and deprived him of any way to manoeuvre around it, Maurice Duplessis made it retroactive through new legislation and the non-existent crime originated in the past. An honest man acting in accordance with the law could retroactively become a criminal. The Prime Minister made something permissible today a crime committed yesterday.  
Gérard Picard, an eminent personage in the Catholic trade unions, was once deprived of his driver's licence by a court for an offence that everyone committed on the highway in the north end of Montréal : following a long line of cars driving in single file at an excessive speed. He was singled out and charged, with the result that Picard ended up on the street, a pedestrian. He had just lost his *driver's* licence. So he applied for and obtained a *chauffeur's* licence. Seeing him once again behind the wheel, the police arrested him but had to let him go. Duplessis got a law enacted and Gérard Picard was once and for all deprived of his right. Under Maurice Duplessis, legislation spoke in the past tense. » (Translation from the French)  
Georges-Émile Lapalme, *Le vent de l'oubli*, p. 261-262.
- <sup>50</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 233.
- <sup>51</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 233.
- <sup>52</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 233.
- <sup>53</sup> « Catechism of the electors - 1935

107. How long have there been members of the Taschereau family who have benefited from the public purse?

Since 1736.

108. Can you give the names of those relatives and allies of the Prime Minister who have derived their bread as well as their livelihood from being members of the public service,

the judiciary or situations in which they were more or less dependent on the favour of governments?

I do not believe that it is necessary to refer to all of them ; I shall, however, give the following few names and figures :

Louis-Alexandre Taschereau, Prime Minister and President of the Council of ministers : \$16,500 per year, of which \$14,000 was for the office of Prime Minister and \$2,500 for his position as the member of the Legislature for Montmorency (not to mention all the money he obtained as the representative of the trusts) ;

Antoine Taschereau, a brother of the Prime Minister, an accountant in the Legislative Assembly and Secretary to the Quebec City School Board : \$6,500 per year ;

Robert Taschereau, a son of the Prime Minister : \$2,500 per year as the Member of the Legislature for Bellechasse and some \$10,000 per year as the lawyer for companies that need favours and privileges from the government ;

Paul Taschereau, a son of the Prime Minister : some \$10,000 as the lawyer for several companies that are friends of the government, and in particular Quebec Power and the Canadian Bank of Commerce ;

Charles-Edmond Taschereau, a brother of the Prime Minister, a notary public and a notary representing various government departments : some \$10,000 per year from companies that need favours from the government. He obtained contracts for Eastern Canada Steel, of which he is one of the main directors, to build the bridge to Île d'Orléans, as well as other contracts. He is the « financier » in the family. He was formerly secretary of the Corporation des obligations municipales [municipal bonds corporation], which ended in bankruptcy and financial disaster ;

Claude Taschereau: a nephew of the Prime Minister and a notary : some \$10,000 per year as a notary representing the government in contracts for the purchase of lands and other property, this sum being paid to him by the government and the companies involved.

Robert Taschereau, Q.C., formerly of Montreal, a cousin of the Prime Minister, and Chairman of the Workmen's Compensation Board : \$10,000 per year ;

André Taschereau, a nephew of the Prime Minister, with the firm St.-Laurent, Devlin, Gagné, Barristers ; he receives many fees for professional services and he constantly receives payments out of public funds ;

R.-H. Taschereau, an engineer with the Department of Mines of the province of Quebec : \$3,000 per year ;

Louis Gélinas, a son-in-law of Mr. Taschereau and a partner in the firm Savard et Gélinas, who negotiates most of the loans made by institutions subsidised by the government ;

Louis Taschereau, a general clerk in the provincial Department of Revenue : 1,200 \$ per year ;

Christophe Taschereau, Supernumerary General Clerk to the Legislative Assembly : \$66.50 ;

J. Cyrille Taschereau, Department of Highways : \$223.79 ;

Rémi Taschereau, Department of Lands and Forests : \$550 per year ;

Gustave Taschereau, an employee of the Ordinance Department in Ottawa : some 3,000 \$ per year ;

F.-G. de Montarville Taschereau, in receipt of a government pension : some \$3,000 per year ;

C.-E. de Montarville Taschereau, a cousin of the Prime Minister and an employee of the Department of National Defence : some \$3,000 per year ;

Auguste Taschereau, who works in the Post Office Department : some \$2,500 per year ;

J.-L. Taschereau, who works in the Post Office Department : some \$21,000 per year ;

Cortland Fages, a son-in-law of the Prime Minister and an insurance agent for the government : not less than \$10,000 in commissions on premiums received from the government and from the various insurance companies ;

R.-A. Benoît, a nephew of the Prime Minister and Clerk of the Legislative Council : \$6,000 per year ;

Frédéric-H. Hecker, a nephew of the Prime Minister and Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, paid by the province : \$3,250 per year ;

Louis-Eugène Des Rivières, a nephew of the Prime Minister and Recorder for the City of Quebec, appointed by the provincial government : \$5,000 per year ;

Arthur Fitzpatrick, a cousin of the Prime Minister, a judge of the Court of Sessions of the Peace and a police magistrate : \$6,000 per year ;

J.-O. Fitzpatrick, the brother of an uncle of the Prime Minister and a clerk in the Library of the Provincial Legislature : \$1,500 per year ;

Sir Charles Fitzpatrick, an uncle of the Prime Minister, a former Chief Justice and a former Lieutenant- Governor, in receipt of a government pension : some \$10,000 per year ;

J.-Hughes Fortier, a cousin of the Prime Minister, the Chief Judge of the Court of Sessions of the Peace and a police magistrate : \$6,000 per year ;

Dr. Massue Fortier, a cousin of the Prime Minister and the Clerk responsible for private bills : \$2,600 per year ;

Philippe Anger, a cousin of the Prime Minister and the Returning Officer for the riding of Beauce : \$245.69 ;

L.-Arthur Cannon, a cousin of the Prime Minister ; as Commissioner for the revision of the General Statutes of the province of Quebec : \$21,000 ; and as justice of the Supreme Court of Canada : \$121,000 per year ;

Lucien Cannon, one of the lawyers for the provincial government, and specifically counsel for the provincial government in the Beauharnois inquiry, as well as being a member of the Legislature : some \$15,000 per year ;

Jacques Dumoulin, a court interpreter : \$840 ;

Sir Eugène Fiset, a cousin of the Prime Minister, a recipient of a government pension and a Member of Parliament : not less than \$4,000 per year ;

Leatare Roy, the brother-in-law of Lucien Cannon and a judge of the Court of Sessions receiving a salary of \$6,000 per year ;

Dr. J.-D. Brousseau, the brother-in-law of Edmond Taschereau, a prison doctor in Quebec : \$2,000 per year in salary ;



Paul Lemieux, a nephew of Edmond Taschereau, who is with the Quebec Liquor Commission : some \$1,500 per year ;

Léon Taschereau Des Rivières, a nephew of the Prime Minister and a government broker who received commissions on sales of debentures in the amount of \$1,156.30 \$ ;

Henri Des Rivières, a nephew of the Prime Minister and a manager with the Banque Canadienne Nationale, to which the provincial government has loaned \$15 million out of public funds so that the Bank could reorganize itself ;

E. W. Pope, a cousin of the Prime Minister and an employee of the Department of National Defence : some \$2,000 per year ;

Charles Burroughs, a cousin of the Prime Minister and an employee at Pied-du-Courant : \$2,000 per year ;

M. A. Pope, a cousin of the Prime Minister and an employee of the Department of National Defence : some \$2,000 per year ;

H. W. D. Pope, a cousin of the Prime Minister and an employee of the Department of Pensions and Civil Resettlement : some \$2,500 per year ;

L.-P. Pacaud, the brother-in-law of Lucien Cannon, a messenger in the Office of the Lieutenant- Governor : \$1,000 per year ;

L. Pacaud, a special officer with the Department of the Attorney General : \$2,400 per year ;

Jos. Pacaud, a middle-level clerk in the Department of the Attorney General : \$1,400 per year ;

Edouard Taschereau, a lawyer with the Liquor Commission : not less than \$3,000 per year.

Moreover, this list is not complete because we have included only the male relatives and allies of the Premier. »

*Le catéchisme des électeurs*, p. 14-15. (translated from the French.)

<sup>54</sup> Léon Dion, *Québec 1945-2000*, Volume 2, p. 117. ; Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 26 (interview with Jean-Charles Bonenfant), p. 150-151 (interview with Jean-Noël Tremblay), and p. 152 (interview with Vincent Lemieux).

<sup>55</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 235.

<sup>56</sup> Robert Rumilly, *Maurice Duplessis et son temps* (Tome 2), p. 564.

<sup>57</sup> Salvus Commission, *Report of the Commissioners concerning the purchasing methods used in the Department of Colonization*, p. 105.

<sup>58</sup> Salvus Commission, *Report of the Commissioners concerning the purchasing methods used in the Department of Colonization*, p. 83-91.

<sup>59</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 235.

<sup>60</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 235.

<sup>61</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 7, *Le Devoir*, 8 October 1956, p. 1.

<sup>62</sup> Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 41.

<sup>63</sup> Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 41.

<sup>64</sup> Leslie Roberts, *The Chief*, p. 92. ; Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 236.

<sup>65</sup> Duplessis was elected as Head of the Conservative Party, which then became the Union Nationale, at a political convention held in 1933. Afterwards, from 1933 until Duplessis' death in 1959, there never was any party convention. The program of the party was determined without any consultation with the members.

Georges-Émile Lapalme, *Le vent de l'oubli*, p. 23.

- <sup>66</sup> Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher, Jean-Claude Robert, François Ricard, *Histoire du Québec contemporain*, Volume 2, p. 362.
- <sup>67</sup> Gordon Robertson, *Memoirs of a very civil servant*, p. 86-87.
- <sup>68</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 143. ; Pierre Laporte, *Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières* - article 1, *Le Devoir*, 1 October 1956.
- <sup>69</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 143. ; Pierre Laporte, *Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières* - article 5, *Le Devoir*, 5 October 1956.
- <sup>70</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 143.
- <sup>71</sup> Stuart Keate, *Maurice the Magnificent*, *Maclean's Magazine*, 1 September 1948, p. 71.
- <sup>72</sup> This book, by Robert Rumilly, was entitled *Quinze années de réalisations* (Fifteen years of achievements). No one knows for sure how many copies of the book were distributed. The figure of 45,000 is the most conservative one. According to other estimates, as many as 100,000 copies were distributed.
- Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 6, *Le Devoir*, 6 October 1956.
- <sup>73</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 143.
- <sup>74</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 143.
- <sup>75</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 6, *Le Devoir*, 6 October 1956.
- <sup>76</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 6, *Le Devoir*, 6 October 1956. ; Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 77. (« In 1956 the Union Nationale's publicity men distributed by the tens of thousands a jig-saw puzzle that represented the Cabinet. Hundreds of little pieces were to be inserted in the right place in order to reconstruct the picture of the Cabinet. I was struck by the puzzle's symbolism. It seemed only too true that, for Duplessis, his ministers were but little pieces to be fitted arbitrarily into the larger picture. »)
- <sup>77</sup> Stuart Keate, « Maurice the Magnificent », *Maclean's Magazine*, 1 September 1948, p. 71.
- <sup>78</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 144.
- <sup>79</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 25, *Le Devoir*, 29 October 1956.
- <sup>80</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 144.
- <sup>81</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 26, *Le Devoir*, 30 October 1956. ; Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 144.
- <sup>82</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 24, *Le Devoir*, 27 October 1956. ; Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 144.
- <sup>83</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 13, *Le Devoir*, 15 October 1956, p. 3.
- <sup>84</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 17, *Le Devoir*, 19 October 1956. ; Salvas Commission, *Report of the Commissioners concerning the purchasing methods used in the Department of Colonization*, p. 47-48.
- <sup>85</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 235.
- <sup>86</sup> Stuart Keate, « Maurice the Magnificent », *Maclean's Magazine*, 1 September 1948, p. 75.
- <sup>87</sup> *An Act to amend the Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of the Province of Quebec, 1952-1953, Chapter 32.
- <sup>88</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of the Province of Quebec, 1945, Chapter 15, Section 47.
- <sup>89</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of the Province of Quebec, 1945, Chapter 15, Sections 49-130.
- <sup>90</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of the Province of Quebec, 1945, Chapter 15, Section 49.
- <sup>91</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of the Province of Quebec, 1945, Chapter 15, Section 63, 66-67. (The requirement applied only in cities, and no certificates were issued in rural areas.)
- <sup>92</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of the Province of Quebec, 1945, Chapter 15, Section 133.
- <sup>93</sup> (Called a « returning officer ») *Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of the Province of Quebec, 1945, Chapter 15, Section 17.
- <sup>94</sup> Called a « deputy returning officer ».

- <sup>95</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of the Province of Quebec, 1945, Chapter 15, Sections 168-184.
- <sup>96</sup> That is, the « returning officer ».
- <sup>97</sup> *An Act to amend the Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of the Province of Quebec, 1952-1953, Chapter 32, Section 12.
- <sup>98</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of the Province of Quebec, 1945, Chapter 15, Sections 81-104, 121-124.
- <sup>99</sup> Pierre Laporte, « La machine électorale », Cité Libre, p. 43.
- <sup>100</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 12, *Le Devoir*, 13 October 1956, p. 1. ; Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 148.
- <sup>101</sup> Lorenzo Paré, « La réforme électorale : qu'est devenu l'idéal d'il y a vingt ans ? », *L'Action Catholique*, 20 décembre 1956, p. 4.
- <sup>102</sup> Quebec, *An Act to amend the Quebec Election Act*, Section 7.
- <sup>103</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 148.
- <sup>104</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 148.
- <sup>105</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 11, *Le Devoir*, 12 October 1956, p. 1.
- <sup>106</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 12, *Le Devoir*, 13 October 1956, p. 1.
- <sup>107</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 149.
- <sup>108</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 35, *Le Devoir*, 13 November 1956 ; article 41, *Le Devoir*, 20 November 1956.
- <sup>109</sup> The « deputy returning officer ».
- <sup>110</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 149-150.
- <sup>111</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 150.
- <sup>112</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 35, *Le Devoir*, 13 November 1956 ; article 36, *Le Devoir*, 14 November 1956.
- <sup>113</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 38, *Le Devoir*, 16 November 1956 ; article 39, *Le Devoir*, 17 November 1956 ; article 40, *Le Devoir*, 19 November 1956 ; article 41, *Le Devoir*, 20 November 1956.
- <sup>114</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 44, *Le Devoir*, 24 November 1956.
- <sup>115</sup> Leslie Roberts, *The Chief*, p. 124-125.
- <sup>116</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 38, *Le Devoir*, 16 November 1956 ; article 39, *Le Devoir*, 17 November 1956 ; article 40, *Le Devoir*, 19 November 1956 ; article 41, *Le Devoir*, 20 November 1956.
- <sup>117</sup> Leslie Roberts, *The Chief*, p. 125.
- <sup>118</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 44, *Le Devoir*, 24 November 1956.
- <sup>119</sup> Leslie Roberts, *The Chief*, p. 125.
- <sup>120</sup> As was later recognised by Gérard Dion, one of the co-authors of the pamphlet *Political immorality in the Province of Quebec* : (Translation from the French) « At that time, the same thing said by lay persons would not have had the same consequences. People started thinking " It is possible to speak out! One can say such things! " This emboldened some people and sparked a movement. » - Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 230 (interview with Gérard Dion and Louis O'Neill).
- <sup>121</sup> Gérard Dion and Louis O'Neill, *Political immorality in the Province of Quebec*, p. 10-12, 14-16.
- <sup>122</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 150-151.
- <sup>123</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières » - article 46, *Le Devoir*, 7 December 1956.
- <sup>124</sup> *An Act to amend the Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of the Province of Quebec, 1952-1953, Sections 81-89.
- <sup>125</sup> Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 126.

<sup>126</sup> Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 129.

<sup>127</sup> Alfred Hardy, *Patronage et patroneux*, p. 19-20.

<sup>128</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 139.

<sup>129</sup> This estimate was arrived at by journalist Pierre Laporte in a series of six articles on this particular subject (part of a broader series entitled *Les élections ne se font pas avec des prières*) published in the newspaper *Le Devoir* from 1 October to 6 October 1956.

<sup>130</sup> Alfred Hardy, *Patronage et patroneux*, p. 72.

<sup>131</sup> Jacques Hébert, *Duplessis, non merci!*, p. 73.

A firsthand account is given by Georges-Émile Lapalme, leader of the provincial Liberal Party, in *Le vent de l'oubli*, p. 35 :

« Since we were leaving on a trip, we wanted the press to travel with us as it did in force whenever it was a trip by Duplessis, whose speeches, always the same, were plastered on the front pages under thrilling headlines, but we were not prepared for the venality. The big newspapers informed us that they would send no one at their expense and that if we wished to be given some space in their columns we would have to make some arrangements with the reporters themselves. This was serving the public on the backs of others.

What were these arrangements?

« You are to speak in l'Islet district? Take us with you or pay our transportation costs from Quebec City, Montréal, Sherbrooke or Trois-Rivières, as the case may be, pay our hotel bill and in addition pay us a certain sum of money.

Since I was to visit several electoral districts per week and would speak night after night, it is very obvious that with the system imposed by the press and the reporters, the party's poverty would become destitution. So we had to do without the press other than in a few cases. Like a developer in photography, this attitude on the part of an institution and its individuals revealed the cornerstone of the regime : money. Money followed by fear. » (Translation from French)

<sup>132</sup> Stuart Keate, « Maurice the Magnificent », *Maclean's Magazine*, 1 September 1948, p. 71.

<sup>133</sup> Alfred Hardy, *Patronage et patroneux*, p. 72-73.

<sup>134</sup> Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 136. (« In general, Duplessis had been harsh with newspapermen. He had reduced them to slavery. They were watched, spied upon, and always exposed to the possibility that their employers might be informed of some complaint he had against them. »)

<sup>135</sup> Stuart Keate, « Maurice the Magnificent », *Maclean's Magazine*, 1 September 1948, p. 71.

<sup>136</sup> Georges-Émile Lapalme, *Le vent de l'oubli*, p. 36-37.

<sup>137</sup> Guy Lamarche, *Duplessis : entre la grande noirceur et la société libérale*, p. 88.

<sup>138</sup> The Government Purchasing Service was created by the *Act to establish a general purchasing service for the Government*, Statutes of Quebec, 1939, chapter 14. Another law, adopted in 1941, the *Act respecting the Executive Power* (Statutes of Quebec, 1941, chapter 22 section 19), made the Purchasing Service report to the Prime Minister. Again, it must be observed that the Liberal government that was in power from 1939 to 1944 did not abolish the Purchasing Service and that it was the Liberals who, in 1941, placed the Service under the authority of the Prime Minister.

<sup>139</sup> Alfred Hardy, *Patronage et patroneux*, p. 33-34.

Alfred Hardy worked closely with Duplessis from 1937 to 1959, first as a member, and then as the Director, of the provincial procurement agency.

<sup>140</sup> Salvias Commission, *Report of the Commissioners concerning the purchasing methods used in the Department of Colonization*, p. 193-194.

<sup>141</sup> Salvias Commission, *Report of the Commissioners concerning the purchasing methods used in the Department of Colonization*, p. 82.

<sup>142</sup> On the use of this power, see : Blair Fraser, « Shakedown », *Maclean's Magazine*, 15 November 1945, p. 5-6, 59-60, 62 and Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 141.

The issuance of permits for the sale of alcohol could also be used as a means of retaliation. This was so in the famous Roncarelli case. Roncarelli, a restaurant owner, thwarted the regime by

providing bail to the members of a religious sect that the government was harassing. Duplessis ruined him by revoking his license.

<sup>143</sup> Blair Fraser, « Shakedown », *Maclean's Magazine*, 15 November 1945, p. 60.

<sup>144</sup> Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 142.

<sup>145</sup> Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 34.

<sup>146</sup> Salvos Commission, *Report of the Commissioners concerning the purchasing methods used in the Department of Colonization*, p. 200.

<sup>147</sup> Salvos Commission, *Report of the Commissioners concerning the purchasing methods used in the Department of Colonization*, p. 194-195, 199-200.

<sup>148</sup> In his report on the causes of the political troubles of 1837, Lord Durham, the representative of the British Government, already noted that the use of public works to secure political docility - a technique which would later constitute a key element in the Union Nationale system - was a major issue in North America :

« I know, indeed, of no difference in the machinery of government in the old and new world that strikes an European more forcibly than the apparently undue importance which the business of constructing public works appears to occupy in American legislation. In speaking of the character of a government, its merits appear to be estimated by the public works which it has carried into effect. If an individual is asked how his own legislature has acted, he will generally say what roads or bridges it has made, or neglected to make, in his own district ; and if he is consulted about changes in a constitution, he seems to try their soundness by calculating whether his neighbourhood would get more and better roads and bridges under the existing or the proposed system. On examining the proceedings of a legislature, we find that a great proportion of its discussions turns on such questions ; and if we look to the budget, we find that a still greater proportion of the public money is applied to these purposes. (...)

(...) in the British Colonies, in none of which is there any effectual system of municipal government, the evil has been carried to the greatest height, and exercises the most noxious influence. The great business of the assemblies is literally parish business ; the making of parish roads and parish bridges. There are in none of these Provinces any local bodies possessing authority to impose local assessments, for the management of local affairs. To do these things is the business of the Assembly ; and to induce the Assembly to attend to the particular interests of each county, is the especial business of its county member. The surplus revenue of the Province is swelled to as large an amount as possible, by cutting down the payment of public services to as low a scale as possible, and the real duties of government are, sometimes, insufficiently provided for, in order that more may be left to be divided among the constituent bodies. (...)

This fund is voted by the Assembly on the motion of its members ; the necessity of obtaining the previous consent of the Crown to money votes never having been adopted by the Colonial Legislature from the practice of the British House of Commons. There is a perfect scramble among the whole body to get as much as possible of this fund for their respective constituents ; cabals are formed, by which the different members mutually play into each other's hands ; general politics are made to bear on private business, and private business on general politics ; and at the close of the parliament, the member who has succeeded in securing the largest portion of the prize for his constituents, renders an easy account of his stewardship, with confident assurance of re-election.

The Provincial Assemblies being, as I have previously stated, in a state of permanent collision with the Government, have never been in the habit of entrusting the executive with any control over these funds ; and they have been wholly dispensed by commissioners named by the legislature. The Assemblies do not appear to have been at all insensible to the possibility of turning this patronage to their own account. (...)

Not only did the leaders of the Lower Canadian Assembly avail themselves of the patronage thus afforded, by the large surplus revenue of the Province, but they turned this system to much greater account, by using it to obtain influence over the constituencies. In a furious political struggle, like that which subsisted in Lower Canada, it was natural that a body, wielding, with

hardly any responsibility, this direct power of promoting the immediate interests of each constituency, should show some favour to that which concurred in its political views, and should exhibit its displeasure towards that which obstinately resisted the majority. But the majority of the Assembly of Lower Canada is accused by its opponents of having, in the most systematic and persevering manner, employed this means of corrupting the electoral bodies. The adherents of Mr. Papineau are said to have been lavish in their promises of the benefits which they could obtain from the Assembly for the county whose suffrages they solicited. By such representations, the return of members of opposition politics is asserted, in many instances, to have been secured ; and obstinate counties are alleged to have been sometimes starved into submission, by an entire withdrawal of grants until they returned members favourable to the majority. Some of the English members who voted with Mr. Papineau, excused themselves to their countrymen by alleging, that they were compelled to do so, in order to get a road or a bridge, which their constituents desired. »

Durham Report, 1839, p. 63-66.

<sup>149</sup> Robert Rumilly, *Maurice Duplessis et son temps* (Volume 1), p. 231-232, 235-236.

<sup>150</sup> Circular of Quebec Archbishop Charles-François Baillargeon regarding elections, 8 March 1858. - *Mandements, lettres pastorales et circulaires des évêques de Québec*, Volume 4, p. 321-323. (The excerpt is a translation from the French.)

<sup>151</sup> Alfred Hardy, *Patronage et patroneux*, p. 77-79.

<sup>152</sup> Bernard Saint-Aubin, *Duplessis et son époque*, p. 256-257. ; Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 193 (interview with former Liberal Deputy Émilien Lafrance).

<sup>153</sup> *Le catéchisme des électeurs*, p. 7, 9, 10, 11. (The excerpts quoted are a translation from the French.)

<sup>154</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 232.

<sup>155</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 232.

<sup>156</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 232.

<sup>157</sup> Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 184.

<sup>158</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 232-233.

<sup>159</sup> Alfred Hardy, *Patronage et patroneux*, p. 82. ; Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 43 (« Instead of giving people a reasonable wage, he gave them meager salaries and distributed gifts at Christmas or Easter. He played at the generous man with his employees. ») ; Roland Parenteau, *Finances provinciales 1953*, p. 351.

<sup>160</sup> Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 43.

Georges-Émile Lapalme, *Le vent de l'oubli*, p. 251, describes a particular instance :

« It took a long time to get to where we could talk about the session, as he held forth again.

I began by telling him about the Opposition employees, their starvation wages, the need to increase their pay, etc. I opened the door to another century :

" You know, Lapalme, all you have to do is give one of them an increase and all the others will jump on you. What are they complaining about? They don't work hard, they have vacations, a guaranteed position, the right to a pension. There are thousands who would like to work for the government ; that's a sign that civil servants have an enviable fate. They think only about their rights, never their obligations. We're keeping a lot of them out of charity. In my day I had no employees working for me. You have how many, three? That's a lot. If I give them a raise, you see that from here? Increasing the employees of the Opposition! "

Still, I did manage to get a few dollars.

Maurice Duplessis let me out by the small antechamber ; a minister and the mayor of a large town had been waiting there for more than an hour. He had wanted them as witnesses without eyes or ears of our lengthy interview.

The next day, I read the text of a press conference in the newspapers: the premier was saying he had received me the day before and, emphasizing the generosity of the Union Nationale

government, added that at my request he had granted a substantial wage increase to the Opposition employees! » (Translation from the French)

<sup>161</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 236.

<sup>162</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 236.

<sup>163</sup> Bernard Saint-Aubin, *Duplessis et son époque*, p. 257.

<sup>164</sup> Salvias Commission, *Report of the Commissioners concerning the purchasing methods used in the Department of Colonization*, p. 28, 98.

<sup>165</sup> Salvias Commission, *Report of the Commissioners concerning the purchasing methods used in the Department of Colonization*, p. 150-151.

<sup>166</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 236. ; Leslie Roberts, *The Chief*, p. 10 (« Duplessis' closest followers became millionaires (...). He himself, however, gave little thought to money and left no great estate when he died. »).

<sup>167</sup> Bernard Saint-Aubin, *Duplessis et son époque*, p. 259. ; Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 23-24.

<sup>168</sup> Léon Dion, *Québec 1945-2000*, Volume 2, p. 119. ; Leslie Roberts, *The Chief*, p. 182.

<sup>169</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 236.

<sup>170</sup> Alfred Hardy, *Patronage et patroneux*, p. 56.

<sup>171</sup> Alfred Hardy, *Patronage et patroneux*, p. 55.

<sup>172</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 498. ; Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 42.

<sup>173</sup> Alfred Hardy, *Patronage et patroneux*, p. 147.

<sup>174</sup> Alfred Hardy, *Patronage et patroneux*, p. 45.

<sup>175</sup> Alfred Hardy, *Patronage et patroneux*, p. 45.

<sup>176</sup> Georges-Émile Lapalme, *Le vent de l'oubli*, p. 257 :

« Impressed by wealth, he openly admired and protected it even against the unionized proletariat. He liked to be received among the wealthy English or the Americans. He was particularly fond of hands-on distributions of large sums of money. He himself did not need it. The money was for others, provided he could make it fall where he wanted. Money was for his policy.

In the distribution of the wealth at his command, even the smallest printing contract did not go by without either his veto or his agreement, because he wanted to know where his power extended and with what it came in contact.

Without a word of criticism, he let his entourage enrich itself to a prodigious degree. The enrichment spread from him to the most remote places as if through capillaries. He knew all this and could have cited almost all the names of those who formed this immense prestigious assembly of wealth. A telephone call and the contracts moved like pieces on a chess board. » (Translation from the French)

<sup>177</sup> Blair Fraser, « Shakedown », *Maclean's Magazine*, 15 November 1945, p. 60.

<sup>178</sup> Robert Rumilly, *Maurice Duplessis et son temps* (Volume 2), p. 649.

<sup>179</sup> *Le Devoir*, 21 June 1958 (Gérard Filion). (The excerpt quoted is a translation from the French.)

<sup>180</sup> Salvias Commission, *Report concerning the sale of the gas network of Hydro-Quebec*, p. 98.

<sup>181</sup> Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 49 (Interview with Mario Beaulieu).

<sup>182</sup> To be precise, \$1,454,000.

<sup>183</sup> Salvias Commission, *Report of the Commissioners concerning the purchasing methods used in the Department of Colonization*, p. 19.

<sup>184</sup> Even after they had been elected, the Liberals were so concerned about the popularity of the Union Nationale that they tried hard to maintain its image as a corrupt party. On this, see the testimony of Claude Morin, a senior civil servant who was then working for Liberal Prime Minister Jean Lesage : « To say the truth, at that time [1961], the Liberals were using every available means to etch into the minds of citizens the equation : corruption + patronage + nepotism = Union Nationale. »

Claude Morin, *Mes premiers ministres*, p. 162.

<sup>185</sup> Pierre Godin, *La fin de la grande noirceur*, p. 318.

<sup>186</sup> Pierre Godin, *La fin de la grande noirceur*, p. 318. ; Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 181 (Interview with Joseph-Damase Bégin).

<sup>187</sup> On the scandal of the false certificates, see the following sources :

Articles published in *Le Devoir* :

- *Le Devoir*, Friday, 13 June 1958, p. 1. - « *Le Devoir accuse : Scandale à la Corporation de gaz naturel de Québec* ».

- *Le Devoir*, Saturday, 14 June 1958, p. 1. - « *Le scandale de la Corporation de gaz naturel : Les noms de six ministres de Duplessis impliqués dans l'affaire* ».

- *Le Devoir*, Monday, 16 June 1958, p. 1, 10. - « *Le scandale de la Corporation de gaz naturel : Risques : \$50,000 ; profits : \$20,000,000* ».

- *Le Devoir*, Tuesday, 17 June 1958, p. 1. - « *Le scandale de la Corporation de gaz naturel : Les trois fonctionnaires de l'Hydro-Québec qui sont passés à la Corporation avant la cession* ».

- *Le Devoir*, Wednesday, 18 June 1958, p. 1. - « *Le scandale de la Corporation de gaz naturel : Brasseurs d'affaires politiciens et politiciens brasseurs d'affaires* ».

- André Laurendeau, « *L'affaire des faux certificats* », *Le Devoir*, Tuesday, 19 February 1963.

(2) Books :

- Pierre Godin, *La fin de la grande noirceur*, p. 362-368, 394-406.

- André Lagarde, *La clé du casier 5T7*. (This is an account of the matter by one of its central characters.)

- Claude Morin, *Mes premiers ministres*, p. 51-52.

<sup>188</sup> Conrad Black, *Render unto Caesar*, p. 502.

<sup>189</sup> Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 49 (interview with Mario Beaulieu).

<sup>190</sup> Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 202 (Interview with Bona Arseneault, former Minister of Lands and Forests).

<sup>191</sup> Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 202-203 (interview with Jean Lesage).

<sup>192</sup> This excerpt of an interview with Jean-Charles Bonenfant is translated from the French.

Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 43.

<sup>193</sup> The leader of the Liberal Party, Georges-Émile Lapalme, points out that the denunciation of the Union Nationale's electoral practices by people such as Dion and O'Neill occurred quite late (*Pour une politique*, p. 29-30) :

« Since the Union nationale's last election victory in 1956, there have been endless articles, speeches and investigations dealing with this colossal scandal. It would seem that the electoral corruption has been revealed for the first time to the people from all walks of life who were expressing their disgust. They suddenly found out something!

Obviously, faced with this angry outcry, those of us on the front line have found the indignation expressed by the latecomers to be rather timid and belated. How, I ask you, was the 1956 campaign more corrupt than the 1952 campaign? Because of the amount spent? Because the personal payments were higher? The 1956 election simply reflected 1956: a few more electors and a little more money. The methods themselves were the same.

The victims have known this since 1948. However, what the victims were most aware of was that the system was operating hour after hour, day after day, month after month, year after year. The election was simply the result of permanent and universal corruption that was visible to all those who wanted to see it or who were close enough to see it nonetheless. » (Translation from the French)

<sup>194</sup> Salvas Commission, *Report of the Commissioners concerning the purchasing methods used in the Department of Colonization*, p. 208.

A future Prime Minister of Canada, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, had already expressed the same point of view (« *Some obstacles to democracy in Quebec* », *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, August 1958, p. 309) : « But the real money comes from huge corporations and



wealthy enterprises that give willingly to parties which, apart from being an insurance against socialism, promise (and deliver) favourable labour laws, exemptions from property taxes, special franchises, valuable contracts without tender, mining or hydro rights of inestimable value in exchange for a row of pins (...). Those powerful financial interests are not to any extent directed or owned by French Canadians. Thus it is somewhat paradoxical to observe that wealthy, upper-class, English-speaking Quebecers often return an Opposition member in their riding, thereby rejecting as individuals the undemocratic practices of the Duplessis Government ; but as directors and managers of wealthy concerns what a part they must play in making his elections a success!

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<sup>195</sup> Léon Dion, *Québec 1945-2000*, Volume 2, p. 117.

<sup>196</sup> In this regard, it is useful to quote Georges-Émile Lapalme, former leader of the Liberal Party : « The present generation remembers Maurice Duplessis and his times as being like no other in our political history, with characteristics never before encountered. This general view of our past is distorted by our tendency to forget. The times that preceded and followed Duplessis have much more in common than is generally thought. In many cases, there is continuity of events. What was, for sixteen years, one party's iron grip on power was merely the continuation of a situation from which another party had benefited for thirty years. The same was true of the token opposition which was, from the beginning of the century until the defeat of the Union Nationale in 1960, election after election, merely an intellectual expression of the electorate's view of power. The principle of an official opposition was preserved by electing a handful of deputies whose job was to remind the perennial victors that there was at least a silent opposition in the populace. » Georges-Émile Lapalme, *Le bruit des choses réveillées* (mémoires, tome I), p. 207. (Translation from the French)

<sup>197</sup> A point made about Richard Daley's Catholic education by Adam Cohen and Elizabeth Taylor in *American Pharaoh*, p. 24.

<sup>198</sup> This particular aspect of the influence of catholicism was identified by Adam Cohen and Elizabeth Taylor in their remarkable study of Richard Daley, the Irish-Catholic Mayor of Chicago who totally controlled this city from 1955 to 1976. (*American Pharaoh*, p. 25).

<sup>199</sup> The Rector's speech was taped, and then printed in the magazine Cité Libre (Gérard Pelletier, « Les amitiés particulières », Cité Libre, volume 2, numbers 1-2, June-July 1962, p. 64-65.) This English translation comes from the following book : Cameron Nish, *Québec in the Duplessis era*, p. 145.

<sup>200</sup> *Discipline diocésaine*, 1937, p. 451-452.

<sup>201</sup> Georges-Émile Lapalme, *Le vent de l'oubli*, p. 41.

<sup>202</sup> Georges-Émile Lapalme, *Le vent de l'oubli*, p. 41.

<sup>203</sup> Jean Chrétien, *Straight from the heart*, p.13 : « His authority was backed by the Roman Catholic Church, which used its position as an arbiter of what was right or wrong for the people to become an instrument of Duplessis. They shared an interest in keeping Quebecers poor, rural, uneducated, and bound to the church teaching that life on earth is just a grim passage to Heaven. Society was based on privileges, not rights ; obedience and gratitude were essential parts of the people's mentality. Even as late as 1960 I had a fight with my parish priest, who suggested in his weekly newsletter that we owed our allegiance to the Union Nationale because it had given us a tennis court. »

<sup>204</sup> Georges-Émile Lapalme, *Le vent de l'oubli* (mémoires, tome II), p. 276. (Translation from the French)

<sup>205</sup> Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 197 (Interview with Émilien Lafrance).

<sup>206</sup> Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher, Jean-Claude Robert, François Ricard, *Histoire du Québec contemporain*, Volume 2, p. 275.

<sup>207</sup> Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher, Jean-Claude Robert, François Ricard, *Histoire du Québec contemporain*, Volume 2, p. 275.

<sup>208</sup> Commission d'enquête sur le commerce du livre dans la province de Québec.

<sup>209</sup> *Rapport de la Commission d'enquête sur le commerce du livre dans la province de Québec*, p. 96-98.

<sup>210</sup> Léon Dion, *Québec 1945-2000*, Volume 2, p. 119.

<sup>211</sup> Léon Dion, *Québec 1945-2000*, Volume 2, p. 120-122. (The excerpts quoted are a translation from the French).

Along the same lines, Liberal Party leader Georges-Émile Lapalme stated (*Le vent de l'oubli*, p. 238-239) : « Politics, where turbulence is the norm, produced nothing but hot air when it came to issues that really mattered. The language had become a hodgepodge, teachers lacked the proper qualifications, legislation was cobbled together in a factory-style mixture of French and English, and not a word could be uttered against these situations, on pain of being termed a malcontent. To deflect criticism, the authorities awarded themselves certificates of good behaviour and showered our institutions with American-style praise : they were the greatest in the world, the most beautiful in the world, the most perfect in the world, the most advanced in the world. The populace, dulled into acquiescence, mindlessly repeated the same idle boasts. Do insular societies lose the ability to dream? » (Translation from the French)

<sup>212</sup> In our view, the most useful reflection on Duplessis is that of political scientist Léon Dion (*Québec 1945-2000*).

<sup>213</sup> « To the French-speaking rural electorate Duplessis was almost a god. To them, he was the saviour of his people, their language, their institutions and traditions (...). » Leslie Roberts, *The Chief*, p. 5.

<sup>214</sup> Michael Behiels, *Prelude to Quebec's Quiet Revolution*, p. 12-13.

<sup>215</sup> Paul-André Linteau, *Un débat historiographique*, *La révolution tranquille : 40 ans plus tard : un bilan*, p. 26.

<sup>216</sup> Hubert Guindon, *Societal changes and their impact*, *Canadian Public Administration review*, Fall 1978, volume 21, number 3, p. 444-445.

<sup>217</sup> Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher, Jean-Claude Robert, François Ricard, *Histoire du Québec contemporain*, Volume 2, p. 211.

<sup>218</sup> Lucia Ferretti, « Pour l'Église, une révolution pas tranquille du tout ». - *Le Devoir*, 29 March 2000. - ([www.ledevoir.com](http://www.ledevoir.com)).

<sup>219</sup> Gérard Pelletier, *Years of impatience*, p. 191.

<sup>220</sup> « We were not the only ones in Quebec to realize the importance of the phenomenon. The media were jostling too many old habits, opening too many doors on the future, to leave cold any observer of their irruption into our community life. True to our North American temperament, our first reaction was action itself. Instinctively we rushed toward the audiovisual experience and thought about it later, if at all. But our instinct was sound. The awakening of Quebec, the Quiet Revolution, the process of catching up that took place in the following twenty years - all that, I believe, could not have happened so rapidly without the help of the media. » - Gérard Pelletier, *Years of impatience*, p. 191.

<sup>221</sup> Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher, Jean-Claude Robert, François Ricard, *Histoire du Québec contemporain*, Volume 2, p. 392.

<sup>222</sup> Robert Rumilly, *Maurice Duplessis et son temps* (Volume 2), p. 523

<sup>223</sup> Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher, Jean-Claude Robert, François Ricard, *Histoire du Québec contemporain*, Volume 2, p. 392.

<sup>224</sup> Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 173 (interview with Fernand Lizotte).

<sup>225</sup> Gérard-Marie Coderre, *Politique et conscience*, 1959.

<sup>226</sup> Gérard Dion and Louis O'Neill, *Le chrétien et les élections*, p. 26-27.

<sup>227</sup> Gérard Dion and Louis O'Neill, *Le chrétien et les élections*, p. 44-47. (The excerpts are a translation from the French.)

<sup>228</sup> In 1960, the Liberal Party obtained only eight more seats than the Union Nationale. The leader of the Liberal Party, Jean Lesage, would later recognise that he probably would not have won against Duplessis' successor, Paul Sauvé, if the latter had not died.

Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 45-46 (interview with Jean Lesage).

<sup>229</sup> « The Union Nationale was finally defeated simply because of the means it used to attain what most French-Canadians regard as legitimate ends, and because it had lost Maurice Duplessis. » - Leslie Roberts, *The Chief*, p. 7.

<sup>230</sup> Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 42-43 (interview with Jean-Charles Bonenfant).

<sup>231</sup> About the Sauvé period : « Yet, it is under a Union Nationale government that our generation had its first taste of political freedom. » - Léon Dion, *De l'ancien au nouveau régime*, Cité Libre, juin-juillet 1961, p. 3 (Translation from the French).

<sup>232</sup> « But there was not a single swallow to herald the most timid political springtime. On the contrary, the Duplessis government was defending its positions more obstinately. It took refuge in a fierce rejection of all change, backed by a constant appeal to our traditions, the worst and the best of them, but mainly the worst. We heard it sung in every key, with the regime's characteristic emphasis, that we had the best educational system in the world, that social peace reigned in Quebec as nowhere else in the world, that we were free of the evils from which France and the United States were perishing (...). » - Gérard Pelletier, *Years of impatience*, p. 133-136.

<sup>233</sup> Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 119.

<sup>234</sup> Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 119.

<sup>235</sup> Robert Rumilly, *Maurice Duplessis et son temps* (Volume 1), p. 277.

<sup>236</sup> Leslie Roberts, *The Chief*, p. viii.

<sup>237</sup> Gérard Pelletier, *Years of impatience*, p. 35.

<sup>238</sup> « Duplessis inflicted upon us a twenty-year reign of lies, injustice and corruption, the systematic misuse of power, the sway of small minds and the triumph of stupidity. We must remember that this man and his regime held back for a quarter of a century Quebec's entry into the modern world. » - Gérard Pelletier, *Years of impatience*, p. 65.

<sup>239</sup> « After the union leaders, who were the great aversion of the regime, the next targets were the intellectuals, or, as the Chef called them, the " piano players ". (...) The term " intellectual ", already in disrepute, became the favourite insult employed by our rulers. Any opponent of Mr. Duplessis, unless he was an illiterate or a travelling salesman, became by the very fact of his opposition an intellectual and a communist. » - Gérard Pelletier, *Years of impatience*, p. 43-44.

<sup>240</sup> Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 28.

<sup>241</sup> An article published in 1999 forcefully highlights the shift in economic thinking :

« Paradoxically, the current promoters of deconstruction, the economists, promoted the welfare state at the time of Maurice Duplessis. They harshly criticised the economic policy of Duplessis, who refused to finance the creation of the education and health systems by borrowing money. François-Albert Angers, the only economist to oppose the state's intervention into parental responsibility by providing family allowances, was regarded as a reactionary dinosaur. They were virulently opposed to the Duplessis government because, unlike other governments, it refused to borrow. When the economists took power, they began borrowing large amounts on the stock markets to make up for insufficient tax revenues. Now they are not ashamed to denounce just as virulently the system they themselves built over twenty years and the means they established to finance it. » (Translation from the French).

Hubert Guindon, *La Révolution tranquille et ses effets pervers*, Société, numéros 20-21, p. 1-2.

<sup>242</sup> Excerpts from the 1960 political manifesto of the Quebec Liberal Party, as reproduced in Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 313-323, at. p. 322.

<sup>243</sup> Excerpts from the 1960 political manifesto of the Quebec Liberal Party, as reproduced in Herbert Quinn, *The Union Nationale*, p. 313-323, at p. 322.

<sup>244</sup> Dale Thomson, *Jean Lesage and the Quiet Revolution*, p. 172.

<sup>245</sup> This description of the steps taken to revise the electoral map is essentially based on Dale Thomson, *Jean Lesage and the Quiet Revolution*, p. 172-174.

<sup>246</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of the Province of Quebec, 1963, Chapter 13.

- <sup>247</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, 1963, section 71.
- <sup>248</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, 1963, section 186.
- <sup>249</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, 1963, section 190.
- <sup>250</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, 1963, section 200.
- <sup>251</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, 1963, sections 203-207.
- <sup>252</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, 1963, sections 212, 213, 349-357.
- <sup>253</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, 1963, section 230.
- <sup>254</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, 1963, section 232.
- <sup>255</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, 1963, section 243.
- <sup>256</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, 1963, sections 244-254.
- <sup>257</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, 1963, sections 368-371.
- <sup>258</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, 1963, section 379.
- <sup>259</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, 1963, section 380.
- <sup>260</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of Quebec 1963, chapter 13, section 379.
- <sup>261</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of Quebec 1963, chapter 13, section 373(5).
- <sup>262</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of Quebec 1963, chapter 13, sections 373, 375(1), 382, 383.
- <sup>263</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of Quebec 1963, chapter 13, section 380.
- <sup>264</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of Quebec 1963, chapter 13, section 372(2)b).
- <sup>265</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of Quebec 1963, chapter 13, section 375(3).
- <sup>266</sup> Dale Thomson, *Jean Lesage and the quiet revolution*, (Toronto, Macmillan of Canada, 1984), p. 175.
- <sup>267</sup> *Quebec Election Act*, Statutes of Quebec 1963, chapter 13, section 193(2).
- <sup>268</sup> Dale Thomson, *Jean Lesage and the quiet revolution*, (Toronto, Macmillan of Canada, 1984), p. 175.
- <sup>269</sup> *An Act respecting the financing of political parties and to again amend the Election Act*, Statutes of Quebec 1975, chapter 9, section 36.
- <sup>270</sup> *An Act to govern the financing of political parties and to amend the Election Act*, Statutes of Quebec 1977, chapter 11, sections 62-64.
- <sup>271</sup> *An Act to govern the financing of political parties and to amend the Election Act*, Statutes of Quebec 1977, chapter 11, sections 85, 91.
- <sup>272</sup> *An Act respecting the Control of Finances*, Statute of the Province of Quebec 1960-1961, chapter 38.
- <sup>273</sup> The Treasury Board was not an entirely new institution, since it replaced the less powerful Treasury Bureau.
- <sup>274</sup> *An Act respecting the Control of Finances*, Statute of the Province of Quebec 1960-1961, chapter 38, section 3.
- The Comptroller monitors the spending of all government ministries, ensures that funds are available for every proposed expenditure, and can question the appropriateness of any expenditure. The Comptroller is the main agent of the Treasury Board. The existence of the Comptroller prevents Ministers from spending more than their budget, which was a common practice under the Union Nationale.
- <sup>275</sup> Jean Lesage, Discours sur le budget, 14 avril 1961, p. 71.
- <sup>276</sup> Quebec. - Executive Council Chamber. - Order in Council number 1556 du 11 août 1965 concernant le règlement touchant les conditions de contrats faits au nom de Sa Majesté.
- <sup>277</sup> Quebec. - Chambre du Conseil Exécutif. - Arrêté en Conseil numéro 1248 du 17 août 1960 concernant le sous-ministre des travaux publics.
- <sup>278</sup> Article 51 of the program of the Liberal Party.
- <sup>279</sup> Quebec. - Executive Council Chamber. - Order in Council number 2372 of 20 December 1960 concerning the by-laws relating to the preparation of plans and specifications of public works, or requests for tenders, and to the adjudication of contracts. Another government decree adopted in 1961 - Order in Council number 2380 of 7 December 1961 concerning by-laws relative to

subsidies for purposes of construction - required public tenders for any construction work of more than \$50,000 subsidised by the state.

<sup>280</sup> A call for public tenders regarding road construction work was published on 14 July 1960. It was the first time in some sixteen years that an open bidding process was used. (Pierre Laporte, *Le Devoir*, 15 July 1960, p. 1,6.)

<sup>281</sup> Jean Lesage, *Discours sur le budget*, 14 avril 1961, p. 10.

<sup>282</sup> Roch Bolduc, *Le recrutement et la sélection dans la Fonction Publique du Québec*, p. 205, 208.

<sup>283</sup> Pierre Laporte, « Deuxième assaut contre le patronage et les prébendes », *Le Devoir*, 14 July 1960, p. 2.

<sup>284</sup> Pierre Laporte, « La guerre au patronage en fait souffrir plusieurs », *Le Devoir*, 16 July 1960, p. 1-2.

<sup>285</sup> Dale Thomson, *Jean Lesage and the Quiet Revolution*, p. 166.

<sup>286</sup> James Iain Gow, *Histoire de l'administration publique québécoise*, p. 180-182.

<sup>287</sup> Rapport de la Commission Royale Cannon, p. 12-13.

<sup>288</sup> Rapport de la Commission Royale Cannon, p. 16.

<sup>289</sup> Rapport de la Commission Royale Cannon, p. 16.

<sup>290</sup> Rapport de la Commission Royale Cannon, p. 15.

<sup>291</sup> Rapport de la Commission Royale Cannon, p. 16.

<sup>292</sup> Rapport de la Commission Royale Cannon, p. 18.

<sup>293</sup> Jean-Paul Dessureau, *Reorganization problems and selection of personnel : Quebec Provincial Police*, p. 181.

<sup>294</sup> *An Act respecting the Provincial Police Force and the Liquor Police Force*, Statutes of Quebec, 1940, chapter 56, section 9.

<sup>295</sup> *An Act respecting the Provincial Police Force and the Liquor Police Force*, Statutes of Quebec, 1940, chapter 56, sections 10, 11.

<sup>296</sup> *An Act respecting the Provincial Police Force and the Liquor Police Force*, Statutes of Quebec, 1940, chapter 56, section 15.

<sup>297</sup> *An Act respecting the Provincial Police Force and the Liquor Police Force*, Statutes of Quebec, 1940, chapter 56, section 27. A tavern keeper who allowed an officer to remain in his establishment was liable to a fine.

<sup>298</sup> In fact, the *Act Respecting Communistic Propaganda*, Statutes of Quebec 1937, chapter 11.

<sup>299</sup> These major strikes occurred in the following towns : Sorel (metal industry, 1937), Noranda (textile industry, 1946), Lachute (textile industry, 1947), Montreal (meat industry, 1947), Asbestos (asbestos industry, 1949), Louiseville (textile industry, 1952), Murdochville (copper mine, 1957).

<sup>300</sup> The new government had officially been formed the previous day, 5 July 1960.

<sup>301</sup> *Le Devoir*, 6 July 1960, p. 1. ; *La Presse*, 6 July 1960, p. 1.

<sup>302</sup> *Le Devoir*, 9 July 1960, p. 1-2.

<sup>303</sup> « Les trente jours qui ébranlèrent la province », *Le Devoir*, 5 August 1960, p. 1.

The new Director was Josaphat Brunet, a former high level officer of the federal police force, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

<sup>304</sup> This description of the old system and of the reforms introduced is largely based on the account of the Assistant Director of the Quebec Provincial Police at the time, Jean-Paul Dessureau (« Reorganization problems and selection of personnel : Quebec Provincial Police », published in *Canadian Public Administration*).

<sup>305</sup> *Provincial Police Force Act*, Statute of the Province of Quebec 1960-1961, chapter 18, section 9. Vesting all authority over the Force in a single Director had been recommended as early as 1944 by the Cannon Commission of Inquiry.

<sup>306</sup> The first Code of conduct for the provincial police was approved by the Minister of Justice on 7 December 1966.

<sup>307</sup> Jean-Guy Fortin, *La police au Québec*, p. 81.

<sup>308</sup> Jean-Guy Fortin, *La police au Québec*, p. 81.

<sup>309</sup> Statute of the Province of Quebec 1960-1961, chapter 18.

The new Quebec Act was largely modelled on the federal *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act* and the province of Ontario's *Provincial Police Act*.

<sup>310</sup> *Provincial Police Force Act*, Statute of the Province of Quebec 1960-1961, chapter 18, section 30.

<sup>311</sup> Jean-Paul Dessureau, « Reorganization problems and selection of personnel : Quebec Provincial Police », p. 182-183. Note - The references to « men » in the standards quoted here, as well as in the subsequent list of issues covered during the recruitment interview, reflect the values of the 1960s. Some criteria may have since become inconsistent with the rights and freedoms legislation enacted in the 1980s, and all police forces now include female as well as male officers.

<sup>312</sup> Jean-Paul Dessureau, « Reorganization problems and selection of personnel : Quebec Provincial Police », p. 184.

<sup>313</sup> *Provincial Police Force Act*, Statute of the Province of Quebec 1960-1961, chapter 18, section 26.

<sup>314</sup> Statute of the Province of Quebec, 1968, chapter 17.

<sup>315</sup> *Police Act*, Statute of the Province of Quebec, 1968, chapter 17, section 20.

<sup>316</sup> *Police Act*, Statute of the Province of Quebec, 1968, chapter 17, section 25.

<sup>317</sup> *Police Act*, Statute of the Province of Quebec, 1968, chapter 17, sections 74-78.

<sup>318</sup> *Provincial Police Force Act*, Statute of the Province of Quebec 1960-1961, chapter 18, section 10.

<sup>319</sup> \$13,029,657 according to information provided in May 2001 by the Office itself.

<sup>320</sup> Jean Lesage, Discours sur le budget, 14 avril 1961, p. 71.

<sup>321</sup> More precisely : \$7,983,450 in 1959-1960 and \$15,023,052 in 1964-1965. See Raymond Proulx, *La Sûreté du Québec depuis 1870*, p. 50.

<sup>322</sup> Quebec Police Commission, Annual Report for 1970, p. 105, 111. The budget of the force does not include the cost of police training, which is covered by the Department of Justice, nor the cost of buildings, which is included in the budget of the Department of Public Works.

<sup>323</sup> See in this regard Vincent Lemieux, Raymond Hudon, *Patronage et politique au Québec : 1944-1972*, p. 47-54 and Mario Cardinal, Vincent Lemieux, Florian Sauvageau, *Si l'Union Nationale m'était contée*, p. 199-200 (Interview with Jean Lesage).

<sup>324</sup> James Iain Gow, *Histoire de l'administration publique québécoise*, p. 325.

<sup>325</sup> James Iain Gow, *Histoire de l'administration publique québécoise*, p. 325.

<sup>326</sup> James Iain Gow, *Histoire de l'administration publique québécoise*, p. 325.

<sup>327</sup> This overview of unionisation in the public service is essentially based on Dale Thomson, *Jean Lesage and the Quiet Revolution*, p. 168-172, which offers the best summary of this complex aspect of the transformation of Quebec's public service.

<sup>328</sup> « Such proceedings as vote buying, corruption of the electoral law, threats of reprisals against those who do not support the " right party ", false oaths, substitutions of persons, the corruption of election officers, also seem to be becoming normal elements in our social life at election time. Some urban sections saw examples of violence, which would make the most fervent anarchists jealous. (...)

Here again, that which should cause us the greatest anxiety is the fact that so few people seem to be scandalized by it all. Similar methods, utilized in Communist countries, arouse the indignation of our good people and raise the zeal of our Catholic journalists. In the province of Quebec, they quickly receive popular absolution. People even boast and laugh about it as though they were innocent pranks. »

Gérard Dion and Louis O'Neill, *Political immorality in the Province of Quebec*, p. 10-12.

<sup>329</sup> Actually, the first expression of dissent by a mainstream organisation goes as far back as 1950, when the Montreal Chamber of Commerce dared condemn the prevailing electoral practices.

Georges-Émile Lapalme, *Le vent de l'oubli*, p. 132-133 :

« On 26 December 1950, the newspaper L'Action Catholique had published some thoughts from the Montréal Chamber of Commerce :

The Union Nationale's  
electoral customs

The Montréal Chamber of Commerce made a laudable effort to clean up some election customs. The results fell short of its expectations, and with reason. Here are its thoughts, which have some general implications.

Read this litany : corruption, annulment, money, gifts, promises, weapons, drinks, wardheelers, challenges, coercion, corrupt practices, refusal to act, negligence, perjury, culpable ignorance, intimidation, ballot spoiling, bribes, impersonation, transportation of voters, violence, ineligible votes, floating voters.

Don't jump, those are the pearls we encounter in every election, the jewels adorning the supposedly democratic vote. Those are the apostasies, crimes, injustices and frauds that make our appeals to the people, from a certain standpoint, ridiculous farces, a disgusting dirty trick. Those are the faults that will cost us our liberty as a people and as individuals.

Some individuals who are in all other respects honest persons will tell you in no uncertain terms that honesty and politics cannot go together, that some electoral customs are indispensable in an election and that without them it is useless to try to get elected. » (Translation from the French)

<sup>330</sup> « And it was becoming obvious in the early fifties that every social sphere in Québec was ready for a change, except the political milieu itself.

The employers, for example, were beginning to evolve. Though small businesses and the industrial sectors that were in difficulty still sought shelter under the wings of religious arch-conservatism and other reactionary groups, the big employers feared an explosion and were trying to forestall it. No doubt they would exploit to the full the benefits a retrograde regime still offered them, but they now understood that this situation could not last forever.

They could foresee the end of certain privileges. They were getting ready to negotiate with the unions in Quebec, which were becoming ever more assertive. There were still to be tough strikes and many attempts to deny the right of association ; nothing had yet been won, but the change was beginning.

Also, despite its antiquated structures, the educational system was starting to stir. Compulsory schooling and a sudden rise in the birth-rate just after the war were having their effect. The schools were literally overflowing with students, and the religious communities, with their decreasing membership, felt their monopoly slipping because of the mass influx of lay teachers. In the colleges and universities there were signs of a demand for free secondary education, easier access to university, and a reform of teaching methods. To be sure, the old structures were resisting. It would be another ten years before the reforms came into effect. But the movement was already under way. Not only secular voices were raised in its favour : many open minds within the old clerical system were ready for the change.

The clergy as a whole were questioning their own positions : their role, their usurped power, their traditional omnipotence, which they felt was growing weaker. The ferment of action by laymen within the Church had challenged the clergy's confiscation of responsibilities that were not their own.

The change at first took the form of Byzantine controversies which it's hard to believe engaged the passions of reasonable men halfway through the twentieth century. These disputes were not over theological questions. The argument was not over the addition of *filioque* to the Apostle's creed in A.D. 589, but over problems that had long been solved in the majority of Western societies.

There was wrangling, for example, about the religious affiliation of cooperatives and trade unions. The traditionalists violently denounced the neutrality of these institutions (meaning their

freedom from direct control by the clergy) as treason to the Christian faith. They also maintained that the Church had established for believers a social doctrine as obligatory as the most sacred religious principles, which dictated in advance certain political choices. In the domain of education, should girls be given access to (...) the classical humanities, or should all female students be confined within an apprenticeship for maternity or "household science"? Could the bishops accept that Quebec, like other states, should acquire a minister of education? Was it conceivable that our pontifical universities (which they all were) would ever be under the direction of a lay rector?

These questions were not only asked, they were the subject of endless disputes among the bishops. And the great religious orders joined noisily in the strife : Jesuits on the right, Dominicans on the left. As a rule the discussion never reached the general public. It was rarely that one found any reference to it in the daily press, except in some oblique editorial allusion.

But at times a more irritable bishop would indulge in open warfare. Archbishop Philippe Desranleau of Sherbrooke once published a pastoral letter in which he denounced non-denominational service clubs and forbade his diocesans to join them. Apparently his episcopal city was infested with Lions, Moose and Elk. It was not Christian, the prelate remarked in passing, to endow human beings with such animals' names. That belonged, he said, to a pagan mentality. There was no lack of mischievous priests to dig out of the Bible the Lion of Judah, the Lamb of God, etc.

But that did not settle another aspect of the question : Should the Richelieu Clubs, of Christian origin, ask their bishops to appoint chaplains, or should they not? How was one to react to these controversies? Watch them and sneer? Brush them aside contemptuously? Have a good laugh at the expense of the protagonists? That would have been a mistake. We had little desire to get mixed up in them. But the scope of the phenomenon seemed to us significant. This threshing in the underbrush had to be stilled before the real problems could be faced. What was more, these debates were shaking the pillars of the clerical temple. Its monolithic nature was our enemy, and as soon as people stopped thinking in unison, freedom began to have a chance. The slightest crack in the solid block of the dominant ideology brought a ray of hope. As it turned out, this effervescence, grotesque as it may have appeared to some, was the forerunner of developments with extraordinary implications. »

G rard Pelletier, *Years of impatience*, p. 133-136.

<sup>331</sup> Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 29.

<sup>332</sup> « The only power which, in this part of Canada, terrifies everyone is the clerical power. » - Jean-Charles Harvey, *La peur*, p. 35. (Excerpt from an address delivered in Montreal on 9 May 1945 - translated from the French.)

<sup>333</sup> *Total Refusal*, 1948 : « As early as 1760, this colony was cast behind slick walls of fear (the normal refuge of defeated peoples) and abandoned there, for the first time. Our leaders sailed away, or sold themselves to the highest bidder, as they have done ever since, whenever they had the chance. (...)

The bounds of our dreams were changed forever. And fear in its many forms no longer ruled the land. Enough brutal assassination of the present and future under repeated clubbings from the past.

<sup>334</sup> Pierre Laporte, *The true face of Duplessis*, p. 135.

<sup>335</sup> G rard-Marie Coderre, *Politique et conscience*, 1959. (The excerpts quoted are a translation from the French.)

<sup>336</sup> G rard Dion and Louis O'Neill, *Le chr tien et les  lections*, p. 58-60. (The excerpts quoted are a translation from the French.)