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BUILDING A NEW
QUÉBEC SOCIETY

Our hearts in our work



THE COALITION FOR CHANGE

Inspired broadly by the remarks Quebeckers made to the Commissions on the Future of Québec, *Our hearts in our work* opens prospects for Québec following a Yes. Messrs. Jacques Parizeau, Lucien Bouchard and Mario Dumont invite the women and men of Québec to read what it contains and to join, in large numbers, the Coalition for Change.

We are firmly convinced that the Québec we will build will be infinitely more efficient, more prosperous, more fair, more open to others and more sure of itself than the one we have today -- and that this is something the current regime will never allow it to become.

— RENÉ LÉVESQUE

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Change, for
whom?

A different society because Quebeckers are different

This fall we, the men and women of Québec, will be granted a rare opportunity in the history of a people. Voting Yes means that we'll be able to open a door on the future and give ourselves the means to create a better society, for ourselves and for our children.

One thing is certain: Québec's plan for sovereignty and the offer of a partnership with the rest of Canada is not a magic wand that will cure unemployment and poverty at one stroke. But by saying Yes we will finally be able to stop marking time, to stop wasting our energy, and to make decisions that reflect who we are.

Quebeckers are no better and no worse than other peoples on this Earth. But they're different. Experts have said that Quebeckers are as different from English-Canadians as for example the French are from the Germans. It's true for our history, our language and our culture, but it can also be felt in a host of other areas, in our way of living.

This is so true that in the words of one of the best pollsters in Canada, Michael Adams: "If you take any Francophone Quebecker at random, ask him or her a question about teenagers, the Church, about all sorts of things that ordinary people discuss, about the attitudes they adopt for organizing their lives and for understanding the world around them, the opinions you get will be different from those of a typical English Canadian."

This difference is present everywhere, it's constantly changing, and it can't be defined once and for all. One thing we do know is that we are at the junction of three civilizations. We're steeped in a shared French culture, which has given us notably the Civil Code. We've integrated into our lives and customs elements of British society, such as a parliamentary government. And our way of living is American.

A People is a collectivity that possesses a history, a territory, a government, a culture, and a language. And these characteristics, specific to us, are expressed in our values and attitudes.

We value solidarity, freedom, equality, tolerance, pacifism, and openness to the world. We are constantly looking for consensus. We come together when great challenges are presented. Where equality between women and men is concerned, our progress has been more rapid than that of our neighbours, especially when it comes to our attitudes towards each other. We're more respectful of individual rights, more tolerant and more permissive towards the people around us. We have no colonizing past and we have no designs on conquest, but we are prompt to participate in peacemaking efforts. We travel widely and we have customers and suppliers around the world, we're open to outside influences, we're on the lookout for new ideas and trends that we integrate into our culture.

8 Words are important to us. The French language of Québec is unique. And it is rich, encompassing all of modern French and more than fifteen thousand words and five thousand expressions that are specific to Québec. It is the language that tells our stories, describes our experiences, inspires our humour.

We are known for our creativity, particularly in the fields of fashion, advertising, and communications. Our advertising people reflect our difference by designing campaigns that are more human, that have more bite. Our creativity in our resourcefulness. According to a Léger & Léger poll, 91% of Quebeckers consider *joie de vivre* to be very important. And English Canadians envy our *bon vivant* approach to life that is evident in both our personal and professional relationships. This creativity, this *joie de vivre* make us a people that is emotional, warm, and open.

Our generosity and hospitality are qualities recognized by the tourists from all over the world whom we welcome here in ever-growing numbers.

Studies of people's attitudes show that it's in Québec that we find the largest proportion of "committed reformers" in Canada and in North America. This suggests that fewer and fewer Quebeckers are frightened by the prospect of things changing and improving. They don't live in the past. On the contrary, they're ready to experiment, to innovate, to take up new challenges. These attitudes constitute an invaluable natural resource.

And so we behave differently, in matters both basic and superficial. For instance, we see ourselves in our *téléromans*, a kind of TV entertainment largely specific to us. Our consumer habits are different too: we like to shop in specialized boutiques, while our neighbours prefer department stores. We spend more to dress in the latest style. We're concerned about calories while our neighbours care more about the nutritional value of food. We do more cycling, we buy more lottery tickets, and we have proportionately more personal life insurance coverage. We tend to do our banking at Caisses populaires, while our neighbours mainly use banks. All these characteristics reflect a society that is profoundly distinct, more spontaneous, practical, regional and humane.

Quebeckers, champions of old-fashioned common sense

Even our political behaviour is different. Quebeckers tend to stick to the centre, on the side of old-fashioned common sense. For example, in recent years the "politically correct" movement has had a tremendous impact in the United States and English Canada. This sort of moral catechism often comes across as a kind of censorship. Except for a few isolated cases, Quebeckers have been cool to this trend.

Just now the rest of North America is becoming very conservative, advocating a politics of individualism that turns its back on social solidarity, particularly measures favourable to women.

10 We have seen this in the United States for some time now, and we can see it in Canada too, with the election of Ralph Klein in Alberta and Michael Harris in Ontario, and with the surprising success of the Reform Party in the last federal election. We also see it in the present swing to the right by the federal Conservative party.

In Québec, all parties represented in the Assemblée nationale advocate reducing the deficit and taking a more rigorous approach to managing government affairs; and there are those who believe that strong medicine is needed. It is undeniable that some difficult decisions have to be made. However, all the parties in Québec -- including, of course, the Bloc Québécois -- refuse to sacrifice the most destitute, and assistance to families or to housing, on the altar of blind capitalism. In short, we want a society that knows how to count and can tighten its belt when it has to -- but we want a society that will always have a heart.

We're not perfect, far from it. We have our strengths and our weaknesses, our virtues and our flaws. And of course we're experiencing our own problems, the integration of immigrants, for instance, as well as school dropouts and the rate of debt and poverty.

In short, we're not French or English or American. We are quite simply Quebeckers.

And we're entitled to be different, to be ourselves. But being different, acting in our own way, doesn't mean that we're better or worse than our neighbours. As we will see throughout the rest of this document, what it does mean is that often their priorities are not our priorities. Their attitudes in the face of change are not our attitudes. And their solutions aren't our solutions.

If we choose to remain a minority in our neighbours' country, they're the ones who will make decisions for us in a great many areas.

But if we choose to become sovereign we'll be able to make our choices according to our own values and our own priorities. By offering to join with Canada in a partnership, we will also be able to make decisions in concert with our neighbours, but only when we truly agree with them, and not on questions where our values, our priorities and our solutions don't converge.

And that's the winning combination. It combines autonomy and cooperation. It lets us take advantage of what we have built together -- the Canadian currency, the Canadian economic space -- and to stop squabbling, at last, over matters where our interests diverge.

This proposal is in keeping with the dominant modern trends on the planet. On the one hand, peoples want more autonomy so they can assert their personalities and speak in their own voices. While on the other hand, sovereign peoples are forming alliances of all kinds, like the fifteen countries of Europe, who are sovereign but partners in the European Union.

During the Commissions on the Future of Québec, many participants asked for a *projet de société* -- a blueprint for society. They also wanted to know, in concrete terms, how a Yes vote was going to change their lives, improve their situation, in the years to come. The following pages do not claim to offer the last word on what the Québec of tomorrow will be. It will be up to the men and women of Québec to create and improve on the blueprint for society. What this document sets out to do is to erect signposts, to mark the starting point, to plot a course and provide information so that all of us can better understand how a Yes vote will create more space where freedom and responsibility can flourish in Québec.

A vote for change is a vote for ourselves, as men and women of Québec, beyond the politicians or political parties. A Yes vote means at last being able to draw conclusions from our own convictions. It means voting for what we are and for what we want to become.

Change, with
whom?

In the coming years, whatever happens, Quebeckers will have to make a collective effort.

If we vote No in the referendum, the Federal government will impose that effort on us. Its massive budget cuts, its reforms to unemployment-insurance and old age pensions among others, herald difficult days ahead. In the great social debates that are now beginning, our neighbours will define our future. Which is normal: they're the majority. We won't have a choice.

If we vote Yes in the referendum, Quebeckers will also be invited to make a collective effort. For some years Québec will be one vast jobsite. But it will be our jobsite, following plans and estimates determined by us, at a rate to be established by us. If we don't want to be subjected to changes imposed by others, if we want to bring about changes in our own way, it's entirely up to us.

We will at last be able to decide on our own affairs in all those areas that have escaped us up till now: our entire tax system, our entire family policy, the war on crime, relations with the rest of the world, and so on.

14 But there's more to be done. We have to channel that collective effort so the Yes will be, as the song goes, "the start of something new." We must harness it to get those energies moving that have been too long dormant, and to extend our desire for renewal to such areas as education and health care, our responsibility, for the most part, but which we must now reinvent.

Thirty-five years ago this year, Premier Jean Lesage launched his "Quiet Revolution." It gave rise to a modern, educated Québec, freed of its inferiority complexes. This spring, the Youth Commission on the Future of Québec called on us to launch "a second Quiet Revolution," to give a fresh boost to Québec, in every area.

To do that, we need two ingredients. First, we have to make our own decisions, which means freeing ourselves of the federalist harness. And then, we need to mobilize all the forces of Québec so we can take full advantage of our Yes.

A moment of exceptional solidarity

During the referendum campaign we know Québec will be divided into two camps, the Yes and the No, which is normal. But we also know that Quebeckers are deeply democratic, and that on the day after the majority decision, a movement of solidarity will emerge.

During the National Commission on the Future of Québec last spring, several large bodies, such as the Québec Chamber of Commerce and the Manufacturers Association, explained that out of respect for their members and for the electorate, they would remain neutral during the debate. But they also made a crucial commitment: if Quebeckers vote Yes, they will use all their influence to ensure the success of that Yes. The same is true for the 400 business people, both federalist and sovereigntist, who have come together to form the organization RESPEQ, specifically to encourage forces to unite after the referendum.

Significant figures in the No camp are in full agreement with this approach. Guy Saint-Pierre, a former Liberal cabinet minister and now president of the big engineering firm SNC-Lavalin, declared as early as 1991 that if Quebeckers said Yes, "I would give the best of myself to contribute to its success." Last March, Ghislain Dufour, President of the employers' group the Conseil du patronat, also stated that "If the population says Yes, we'll do our best to negotiate with Canada the most advantageous agreements for Québec, that's obvious." In August, Robert Bourassa declared that he would side with the majority in the case of a victory for the Yes, because that is the democratic rule.

And so it's not surprising that the leader of the No camp, Daniel Johnson, stated last June that "we must consolidate our solidarity beyond the events we're now living through and the trials we'll meet along the way, while we prepare to write our future on the blank page" of the referendum. Addressing members of the Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste, he declared: "I suggest that we pre-

pare now to live together after the upcoming vote and I hope we go on in that way, setting an example for everyone who's watching us of the ongoing practice of freedom, democracy, respect, and serenity."

In this spirit, and starting on the evening of their victory, the leaders of the Yes will extend a hand to Quebeckers of all political beliefs and of all social backgrounds who will have contributed to the No campaign. Given their democratic spirit, their attachment to Québec, their good will and their practice as citizens of putting their hearts into their work, we will be able to create a moment of exceptional solidarity.

The victory of the Yes will create a new situation in which all the forces -- employers, unions, and community groups, urban and rural, Francophone and non-Francophone, will unite behind the same project. Because on the day after the vote, there will no longer be a Yes camp or a No camp, there will be just one camp: the Québec camp.

Change, to do

what?

To improve our lives and our families' lives in just a few years

By voting Yes we don't want to "change four quarters for a dollar." The change we need isn't restricted to a game of musical chairs between civil servants or cabinet ministers, or a shuffling of structures. A Yes must be translated into our daily lives: by better decisions when it comes to our jobs, our families, our companies, our cities and towns, and our regions.

And we don't want these improvements to be made in some far-off future. We don't want vague promises and false hopes.

In the months following the vote and starting in the very first years, our Yes has to produce specific, tangible changes in our lives. At work, in our regions, in the way we tackle problems and find solutions. We're ready for change, we want to put all our energy into change, and we want results in the short term.

18 Québec society cannot define itself once and for all, with a catalogue of ideas and programmes that would lock us into one position. By becoming "masters in our own house" we will be able to make our choices, and to modify them, according to our evolution and the opportunities that present themselves.

There are however certain broad themes that can be derived from our experience as a people, and which stood out clearly during the wide-ranging consultation carried out last winter by the Regional Commissions on the Future of Québec.

Quebeckers want Québec to be a society in which people stick together, one that's more responsible, more efficient, more equitable and more humane. A Québec with a deep belief in and a commitment to equality of opportunity across the board.

Which is to say, a society that puts its heart in its work. Its heart because we have a sense of mutual assistance, the desire to look after the well-being of our families, our communities, the entire population of Québec. In our work because we've had enough of economic policies that leave too many Quebeckers excluded, idle, powerless. We want to favour access to the job market -- and hence to dignity -- for the greatest number of Quebeckers possible.

To do this, job creation will be the number one priority.

Change, for **jobs**

It is quite simply abnormal for a place like Québec, with its educated population, its abundant natural resources, its unbounded creativity, to have an unemployment rate of more than 10 per cent.

It's not the fault of the men and women of Québec. In the past 25 years on the job, productivity here has grown more rapidly than in Ontario or the United States. And when we're unemployed we take more initiatives to find jobs than do other Canadians.

And yet several other peoples, similar to Québec in terms of size and collective wealth, have far lower rates of unemployment. This is the case for Austria and Norway, for example.

Finally, a National Employment Strategy

The difference is that these countries, like others such as Switzerland and Japan, have their own employment policy. In Canada, the federal government controls most of the economic levers that have to do with employment. Why hasn't it done the same thing?

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After looking into this question, experts from the Economic Council of Canada, a federal body, concluded that it would have been "utopian," i.e. impossible, "to imagine that Canada would have been able to reproduce institutions and mechanisms similar to those that exist in Japan, Sweden and Austria." Why? Because "each of these countries has a distinctive history and culture that have shaped the development of their unique institutions and mechanisms."

But that's not the case here, explain the Economic Council experts, because Canada "is distinguished by its federal political system, its cultural and linguistic diversity, its strong tradition of liberalism and individualism, the size of its territory and its tremendous regional differences."

In other words, it's precisely because Canada is too vast, too cumbersome and too divided that it can't give itself an employment policy.

In Québec, the opposite is true. We have developed here, as have Austria and Norway, institutions that group together our employers, our workers, our cooperatives, our government, our community groups: *Corvée habitation*, the economic summits, the Forum for Jobs, the Québec Society for Manpower and Development, the Regional Development Councils and several others. They agree on working together to reduce unemployment -- but federalism doesn't allow it.

Since 1989, Quebeckers have been prepared to put together manpower training measures under one roof and have been willing to design an employment policy. But Ottawa refuses to give them the means. René Lévesque, Pierre-Marc Johnson, Robert Bourassa and Daniel Johnson all tried persuading Ottawa and the other provinces to give us the freedom to decide in this area. The answer has always been No.

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The worst is, it's not a question of money. The amount spent in Québec on access to jobs is about twice that of other industrialized countries. In fact 275 million dollars per year are wasted because the governments in Ottawa and Québec can't reach an understanding. Most of all, the money is badly spent and badly coordinated.

Unlike countries that have been successful in combating unemployment, the federal government does not seem determined to pursue a goal of full employment. As well, Ottawa's programmes are not based on a consensus between employers, unions, and the State. Whereas we know that the key to the struggle for jobs is to coordinate the actions of each party.

We also have to adapt our strategies to the needs of each region, to count on the regional partners' knowledge of their own territory and their dynamism. After a Yes, the necessary budgets will be transferred to those responsible in the regions, with the fewest possible guidelines and the maximum room to maneuver. We have to target results, not respect for some abstract guidelines.

Voting Yes means that we'll be able to bring order to our employment policies, making the most of all the energy in Québec and in each region to devise for ourselves a distinctive employment policy, sustained by our solidarity and adapted to our values and our needs.

The first item on Québec's "blueprint for society" after a Yes will be starting work on a National Employment Strategy to finally reduce unemployment, in the short term, throughout Québec.

Better conditions, now, for 250,000 workers

At the present time, one Québec worker in ten is subject to federal laws governing job conditions, which are not as generous as Québec laws. Following a Yes, we'll be able to eliminate such discrimination and offer better conditions to Quebeckers:

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For example, pregnant or nursing mothers have the right to stop work temporarily and to receive an allowance if their work environment is dangerous. But the working woman subject to federal laws is entitled to a maximum of 60%, and then only if she declares herself to be "sick." After a Yes, like other Québec women, she'll be entitled to 90%, as a precaution, which is only right.

Other improvements will apply automatically to these working women: one extra week of maternity leave, plus twice the parental leave currently available for both parents, access to leave for adoption and for family obligations. Québec law is more generous than the federal law, it has more heart. After a Yes, this will be to the advantage of everyone.

As well, the government of René Lévesque passed an anti-scab law that has contributed significantly to making labour conflicts more peaceful and less drawn-out, and has made violent incidents during strikes much rarer. But that law doesn't apply to firms regulated by the federal government. After a Yes, it will make labour conflicts more civilized for company heads and workers alike.

Thanks to a Yes, 10% of our working men and women will automatically benefit from better conditions: for allowances to pregnant or nursing mothers, for parental, adoption and maternity leave, and for restoring peace to labour relations.

Change, for

prosperity

Taking care of jobs doesn't just mean looking after those who are currently unemployed, it means ensuring that our economy will be stronger so it can offer us better jobs and a better quality of life. Voting Yes means giving ourselves the means to achieve that.

There are measures that will have an impact in the very short term. We currently send Ottawa 28 billion dollars in taxes. Economists disagree among themselves about whether Québec is getting its money's worth.

Invest in jobs, not unemployment

We know however that a lot of this money is wasted because Ottawa and Québec are walking on each other's toes: two departments of Health, two departments of the Environment, two departments of Agriculture, and so on.

26 It's true that until last year, Ottawa paid more in unemployment insurance benefits to Québec than it collected from Quebeckers in contributions. Now there is an old Chinese proverb that says: It's better to teach a man to fish than to give him a fish. And that's the problem: Ottawa invests in unemployment in Québec, while in Ontario it invests in jobs.

Though we make up 25% of the population of Canada, the federal government has paid out in Québec only 18% of its spending to create jobs and wealth: research and development.

If we consider spending by the Department of Defense alone, which is often beneficial in terms of job quality and economic consequences, Québec has received less than its share. Much less: it has been deprived of \$600 million a year, over the past ten years if not longer. By recovering our fair share of the federal budget, we would finally be able to spend that money as we wish -- and not necessarily on defense.

It is particularly unfair because we've been able to rise to the top in a number of high-tech sectors, and

because we ourselves invest more than the Canadian average in research. The Montreal region in particular has seen the creation of world centers for telecommunications, aerospace, and in the pharmaceutical, engineering and software industries. There's no shortage of brain power in Québec. And yet whenever Ottawa spends out five dollars for research and development in Ontario, only one dollar goes to Québec.

In the first year following a Yes, Quebecers will recover taxes paid to Ottawa and will at last be able to invest appropriately in research and development. Learn how to fish instead of being given a fish. Concrete benefits in terms of the number and quality of jobs will be felt within the next three or four years.

Taking advantage of our strong point:

flexibility

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Some people think that wealth depends on the size of the country. That's true, but not in the way people assume. The American Gary Becker, winner of the Nobel Prize for Economics, reckons that over the past 45 years, the standard of living has gone up more rapidly in small countries than in big ones. In fact, eleven of the twenty most competitive States in the world are comparable in size to Québec. Becker writes that Québec has every chance of doing the same -- if it agrees to change.

As a result, more and more experts think that nations have to combine two ingredients if they're to prosper in the new global economy: first of all, a strong identity that gives them cohesion and flexibility; and then, the capacity to export their goods to a large market.

Present-day Canada does not meet these criteria. According to a report published last year, Canada ranks 19th among the 23 most highly industrialized countries

as far as ability to adapt effectively to new economic realities is concerned. Already in 1990, the Greater Montreal Chamber of Commerce sent this warning to the Bélanger-Campeau Commission:

"Let's look at things clearly: Canada is the site of a balance of power of unprecedented rigidity which is paralyzing it and preventing it from acting effectively on real problems [...] If our institutions do not allow change, they have to be replaced. If this country does not change it is headed for ruin."

Since 1990, nothing has changed. The Canadian system is totally blocked. And in a poll published this year, 78% of our Canadian neighbours said that if Quebeckers vote No, they'll have to be satisfied with the status quo.

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On the other hand, Quebeckers fit perfectly the definition of flexible and prosperous peoples. First of all, few societies stick together as much as does Québec. Cooperatives can be found world-wide, but in Québec the Mouvement Desjardins is the leading private sector employer. Investors' groups can be found world-wide, but there are few examples of citizens investing massively in a body like the FTQ Solidarity Fund.

Because we form a community that combines entrepreneurship and solidarity, innovation and mutual assistance, we have the potential to react quickly to new challenges so as to find new solutions.

As well, we have been able to make a name for ourselves with our products in many parts of the world. Nowhere today can the talk turn to mid-range airplanes, trains, circuses or software, engineering or hydro-electricity without reference to companies and products from Québec.

As individuals, we are open to the world; we form the most bilingual population in North America. Collectively we are open to the world: unlike the situa-

tion in the United States or Canada, our political parties are all in favour of free trade. Even our trade union organizations, which had expressed legitimate concerns, have joined the Québec consensus. This is in fact something of a tradition with us, for already in 1911 Wilfrid Laurier was defending this idea. And because we are free-traders, we export half of what we produce beyond our borders.

At present we cannot take proper advantage of this flexibility and openness, because we always have to wait for the rest of Canada, which often doesn't have the same interests, or quite simply can't come to an agreement on the steps to follow. So we miss out on opportunities. Just think: without Québec, Canada wouldn't have agreed to join in free trade with the United States.

By voting Yes, by achieving sovereignty and offering an economic and political partnership to Canada, we will be able to make our own decisions and give proof of our flexibility, while preserving the Canadian economic space. When our interests are the same, we will be able to make common cause in order to preserve and expand the foreign markets to which we export our products.

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Québec's great blueprint for society means taking full advantage of our ability to adapt quickly, to forge consensus and, like other peoples who possess these qualities, to be among the most prosperous.

Change, for a more

humane,

less

violent society

Crime and violence are universal problems, but each people reacts to them with its own individual approach. In Québec in recent years, we have become very active in refusing violence and its manifestations.

Quebeckers, a people working harder against violence

Think about the petition against violence on TV started by young Virginie Larivière and signed by one million two hundred and eighty thousand people. Think about our laws governing advertising for children's toys and about the retailers who now refuse to sell violent toys.

All points of view are present in Québec society, but we know that support for arms control, particularly handguns, is stronger here than in the rest of Canada. It is likely that after a Yes, we would be able to make Québec the most difficult place to obtain handguns in North America.

Already, significantly fewer violent crimes are committed in Québec than elsewhere in Canada. This is a difference we must cultivate. Over the past five years, compared with experiences here, our Canadian neighbours had a 50% greater risk of being victims of violent crimes.

Many Quebeckers think that violence on the screen will have harmful effects on young people and throughout our society. At present, regulation of TV programming is controlled by Ottawa. And in any case, since English Canadians watch American television primarily, any decision on content would have very little effect on them.

The situation will be very different in Québec, where we mainly watch our own programmes. After holding a debate among ourselves, we will for instance have the power to urge our TV broadcasters to reduce substantially the level of violence at peak viewing hours. Our decisions will have a sure and immediate impact on our lives. Today, even if there were a consensus on the subject among us, we don't have the power to decide.

It's the same for organized crime. At the moment Québec is grappling with criminal motorcycle gangs that distribute drugs in our schools. Would an "anti-gang" law of the kind that exists in the United States, Italy and France help us deal with these groups? Opinions are divided. One thing, however, is clear: under federalism, our Assemblée nationale does not have the power to act on this matter.

These are just some examples among many. Now, any legislation having to do with crime, long-term prison sentencing, and rehabilitation is federal. It is modified according to the values of the Canadian majority, its experience and its priorities.

When we examine the trends in Québec society, we realize that we'd probably be less severe in certain areas, more severe in others (for example where hate propaganda and domestic violence are concerned). We would invest more effort in rehabilitating young delinquents.

Quebeckers, a more peace-loving people

We support the participation of our soldiers in humanitarian or peace-keeping operations and we volunteered in large numbers to fight Nazism during the Second World War. Quebeckers aren't warmongers however, and throughout history they've been more guarded than other Canadians when the time came, for example, to conscript citizens. More recently, it was probably a good thing to take part in the Gulf War to prevent Iraq from occupying Kuwait, but Quebeckers have never been able to make such a decision for and by themselves. It was the Canadian majority that chose for us.

If we vote Yes, the next time such a debate arises we'll be able to settle it among ourselves, according to our own priorities. We know that we want to give priority to humanitarian action and peacekeeping missions. In this spirit, the fifteen grassroots organizations that together form the *Partenaires pour la souveraineté* propose to set up in Québec an international school for peacekeeping. Already we are helping several countries that are in the process of democratizing to organize their first elections, and to have their first experience of freedom. Consolidation of our presence in the Francophonie will enable us to be more active after a Yes than we are today, in carrying out this important task.

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When we accede to sovereignty, Québec will take over from Canada at the side of our allies in organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). And when the time comes to renew our "membership contract" in these international organizations, or in five years' time at the latest, a public debate will allow Quebeckers to decide on our participation in them and on the role we want to play.

The partnership with our Canadian neighbours will allow us to coordinate our actions in defense matters, notably in peacekeeping and continental defense. But we will decide what operations suit us and what resources we want to invest in them.

Decisions that will affect us, that must reflect us

The more time passes, the more courts and parliaments make decisions that affect the way we live and what we see as our rights and duties.

Today's discussions on thorny issues such as abortion, euthanasia, surrogate mothers, prostitution, medical ethics, and AIDS are being conducted in a country where we are a minority.

34 There are no perfect answers to these questions, but we know that the laws or the courts in the United States, for example, don't give the same answers as the laws or the courts of England, France, Italy, or Canada. Why? Because each people has its own attitude to these questions, its own degree of tolerance or concern. That is why judges, as well as being guided by their own experience and their own values, often decide on what is acceptable or reprehensible on the basis of what they call "socially accepted rules of conduct" or "community standards". And these of course vary, depending on the society on the community in question.

In Canada these decisions are made either by the Supreme Court (with six of nine judges from English Canada) or by Parliament (where we currently have just one Member in four). On several questions the beliefs of Canadians and Quebeckers come together. But it's quite simply impossible for this system to be respectful overall of our approaches and our values. In fact, by ignoring these differences the Canadian system prevents us from truly expressing what we are, in all our uniqueness and our creativity, as other peoples are able to do.

Voting Yes means we'll be able to determine increasingly our own direction. Our Assemblée nationale, our courts and our Supreme Court will reflect our respect for individual and collective rights and for the rights of minorities, our concern with tolerance and solidarity, as well as the duties that go along with citizenship.

It is impossible to foresee what contributions we will make to the solution of the great social problems, and it's unlikely that we'll make any 180-degree turns. What is certain is that these contributions will be in our image, that they'll reflect us. This is not a passing fancy: democracy and justice can function only when people see themselves reflected in them and consequently trust them.

Change, to affirm our

culture

and our

language

How do we recognize the existence and vitality of a people? By its culture. It so happens that where culture is concerned, Quebecers are one of the most creative peoples on the planet. The number of books, songs, television programmes and magazines that we produce in relation to our population, is remarkable. For example while nine out of the ten programmes most watched by English Canadians are American, nine of the ten most watched programmes in Québec are produced in Québec.

No one doubts that there exists in Québec a different kind of awareness, our own particular way of expressing ourselves, of seeing things, of translating them into images, movement, and sounds.

No one doubts it except Ottawa, which claims that there are not two cultures in Canada, but one: multicultural and pan-Canadian culture. This is an idea that Canadian diplomats have a mandate to propagate around the world. And it's the same idea that is constantly transmitted by Radio-Canada when it presents itself in its messages as "the national network" -- as if there was just one nation in Canada.

37

The danger in the long term is that decisions made in Ottawa and Toronto concerning the so-called "pan-Canadian" culture will interfere with our ability to create and to invent, because Canada wants to impose on us standards and structures that don't suit us. For example, in its new "international cultural policy," the federal government has decided to use our taxes to organize meetings between artists from France and Canadian artists -- in Banff! If only they were held in Saint-Boniface or Caraquet we'd understand!

The federal government's goal is to gradually convince us that there's no such thing as a Québec identity or culture, only a Canadian culture, which is multicultural and which expresses itself in several languages, one of which is French.

Voting Yes means finally enabling Québec to give itself all necessary means to lend a strong hand to the creation, distribution, and export of our culture, to the promotion of our cultural industries and to the in-depth reform of the copyright policy our artists have been asking from the federal government for a long time -- and in vain.

Ensuring the lasting survival of French by curbing its decline in Montreal

38 It is not Canadian laws that have protected us from assimilation. In fact Québec, along with Acadia, is the only region in Canada where Francophones are not in the process of losing their language. Elsewhere, among the last generation, more than 40% of those born into Francophone families no longer use French at home. In several provinces, unfortunately, French is quite obviously disappearing.

Today the survival of French is not threatened in the regions of Québec. But in Montreal the situation is not so rosy. According to Québec and American experts, in 25 years the language used at home by the majority of Montrealers could very well no longer be French.

The tools we now have available don't allow us to curb this decline of French in Montreal. The French language charter, Law 101, was considerably weakened by the Supreme Court. Three times, Federal courts have invalidated whole sections of it.

Recently, by allowing more students access to English schools through the back door, Federal courts have opened a new breach in Law 101, and are attacking one of its main objectives: to make French schools a site for the integration of all non-Anglophone Quebecers. There are many other ways of asserting our identity that are

escaping us as well. For example, the Canadian Constitution, which we cannot change, enables tens of thousands of young neo-Quebeckers being educated in French -- in the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal, which has a long Anglophone tradition.

In accordance with the recommendation by the National Commission on the Future of Québec:

In the first year after a Yes, a National Commission on the Language Question and the Integration of Immigrants, notably in the Montreal region, will be set up. It will recommend, in particular, ways to check the decline of French in Montreal, while respecting the rights of the Anglophone minority.

Having full control over our immigration policy

39

One of the very great advantages of a Yes vote will be our ability to determine by ourselves our own immigration policy.

Studies have shown that Quebeckers are in general more welcoming towards immigrants than are other Canadians. The contributions to our culture and our economy by Quebeckers of various backgrounds can be seen everywhere. Québec would not be the same without Marina Orsini and Pierre Foglia, Robert Burns, Sam Steinberg and Marian Stasny, Norman Brathwaite, Oscar Peterson, and Julie Snyder -- not to mention the Johnson family who have given us three Premiers, and all those Quebeckers whose ancestors came from places far distant from New France.

Immigration contributes to our collective enrichment. Over the past 15 years about 60% of new arrivals had completed post-secondary education. And as most of them come here in the prime of life, their presence makes

a substantial contribution to checking the aging of the population and alleviating its social cost. In short, culturally, economically and socially, immigration is a good investment. On condition, of course, that it doesn't call our linguistic security into question.

We want Québec to continue to be a welcoming place, where differences are neither forced to disappear into an intransigent melting pot, nor cultivated in isolation as the Canadian policy of multiculturalism would have it. We want a citizenship that is pluralist, that integrates differences into a joint blueprint for Québec. At present we are unable to fully realize that objective. Ottawa chooses up to 40% of the immigrants who come to Québec. It defines the categories and criteria, it manages the flow of refugees.

40 Above all, through the way it informs them abroad and greets them on their arrival, Ottawa strongly prejudices the integration of immigrants into Francophone Québec. Ottawa never tells immigrants that Quebecers form a distinct people. Nor does it tell them they must integrate into the Québec community. On the contrary, it tells them that Canada is a "multicultural" country where they will be encouraged to hold on to their own culture and their own language. And every immigrant has to swear this oath:

"I swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada, and to her heirs and successors in conformity with the law and that I shall faithfully observe the laws of Canada and fulfill my duties as a Canadian citizen."

It's not surprising that immigrants are amazed when they find in Québec a society where the monarchy doesn't occupy a lot of room!

Every year around 30,000 immigrants arrive in Québec with a false impression of our reality. After a Yes, immigrants who come to Québec will know what to expect when they make their decision. They'll know that they are settling into a society whose shared language and culture are French, tolerant, and open. A society that like the overwhelming majority of the other peoples on Earth, encourages the integration of new arrivals. This change will make all the difference in their attitudes and in our ability to integrate them.

At last, we will give ourselves the means to integrate immigrants properly into our society. Just a few years after a Yes the change will be perceptible.

Strengthening French without reopening the quarrel over language

Currently all companies subject to federal legislation are outside the jurisdiction of Law 101: banks, companies in the fields of transportation, communications, or inter-provincial trade, to say nothing of federal Crown corporations and government departments.

41

After a Yes, these firms, like others, will have to respect the provisions of Law 101; that will immediately give French an infusion of energy in our day-to-day environment.

Change, for an education policy

in keeping
with our
ambitions

Parents, students, teachers and administrators all know: education in Québec is in bad shape. Its most serious symptom is the abnormally high dropout rate among secondary school students. Our system of education, which was developed during the sixties, has aged. It will take a strong push to renew it. Educational reform is the key component in tomorrow's Québec.

But there are privileged moments when societies are granted a new lease on life like an ice jam that breaks up after winter. That was what happened when the Quiet Revolution was launched in 1960. Quebeckers had rediscovered their appetite for change. And the same thing can happen again after a Yes vote this year: it will provide momentum, a springboard.

The time will be wonderfully ripe, next year, to break up the logjams of which our educational system is a victim. First of all, in June the National Estates General on Education will meet to arrive at a consensus among parents, educators, students, administrators and the other social partners. A Yes in the referendum would give them the tools they lack to completely rethink the system: they would repatriate funds for post-secondary education and research from the federal government, they would bring order to its misplaced initiatives in training, in literacy programmes, and the dropout question. And it would make it possible to free our education forever from the constraints of the Canadian constitution and to establish everywhere linguistic school-boards that are more suited to the integration of young neo-Quebeckers.

We can't judge in advance what consensus will be forged by the Estates General. But already we can make out the path that will lead to the reform of our educational system. We have to complete the adjustments already underway in learning and mastering spoken and written French, in all subjects and at all levels. Our future is at stake, and so are our pride and our ability to welcome new Quebeckers.

Our schools currently devote one-tenth as much time to teaching history as do schools in England, Italy or France. This applies to our own history as well as to world history. We are preparing our young people for a kind of collective amnesia, and for planetary ignorance. There too, a change in direction is essential.

Over the past decades, despite significant success in a number of areas, our education has taken some perilous turns. It has neglected practical training, the teaching of trades -- though this is essential. And then it has been unable either to curb school failure or to guarantee basic knowledge and skills to all Quebeckers, adults as well as youth.

We must improve our aim, by focusing on the will to change to be found in schools, among educators, and throughout our society.

There are those who dream of an education that transmits to all our young people not only knowledge and culture, but also shared values. The philosopher Jacques Dufresne has recommended a list of values, including: autonomy and responsibility; a job well done; a critical vision of the individual and society; intellectual honesty; a sense of belonging; a sense of democracy; team spirit; concern with using language well; perseverance. That would be a good beginning. Something else that must be taught is that excellence is a concept which applies as much to the future neighbourhood mechanic as to the future brain surgeon.

Obviously the school has to be a place where equality of opportunity is encouraged. Equal access to knowledge today means access to the tools of the 21st century: computers. We don't want to create two classes of Quebeckers, those who can travel on the information highway and others condemned to lag behind in the back alley of knowledge.

After a Yes, 1996 will be the year of education reform. A reform that will produce a Québec that is educated, cultivated, competent, enterprising, and tuned in to the major channels of knowledge and know-how.

Change, to

look after

all our

generations

A healthy society has to achieve a good balance between its young, its adult and its elderly populations. Unfortunately, Québec is entering a difficult period in this respect and risks going through some years of serious imbalance.

In 1991, there were two young people in Québec under the age of 15 for every retired person. If we do nothing, in 45 years the proportions will be reversed: there will be two retired people for every young person. This statistic is one that will hit every pocketbook: in 45 years, every active Quebecker would have to spend 50% more to assume the costs of social services.

This is not unavoidable. As a society we can reduce this problem substantially by acting in two ways: by properly integrating our immigrants, as we've just seen, and by helping families that want to have children. In both cases, a vote for the Yes is vital.

Having the children we want

46 The drop in Quebeckers' birthrate is largely responsible for the present imbalance. In a free society there is no question of urging families to have more children than they want. However, all recent inquiries show that Quebeckers would like to have, on average, one more child than they have now.

We must get rid of the obstacles to "preventing a family" as our grandmothers would say. We must help parents reconcile work and family responsibilities. That means developing a system of better paid maternity and parental leaves, increasing child-care and services for very young children, and making work schedules more flexible. We could take our inspiration from European experiments and create services on the local level to help our parents who are experiencing special problems.

We all know that budgetary restraints won't come to an end after a Yes and that we can't do everything right away. But it's a matter of what our approach is and what our priorities are. Some things can be done immediately,

with our current budgets: the universal system for automatic collection of alimony payments, adopted this year, will give more financial security to parents -- especially women -- who are afraid to find themselves in single parent families. That is a giant step. But it's not enough.

Why have other societies, such as the Scandinavian countries and France, had successful family policies and a higher birthrate? There's a lesson to be drawn from their experiments: the more family policies are developed, adapted, and readily understandable, the more they are liable to have a genuine impact.

And what is the current situation in Canada and Québec? An indescribable hodgepodge of 25 contradictory, constantly changing federal and provincial measures and programmes. An internal report prepared for the Québec government two years ago draws this conclusion:

"Despite the action undertaken over the past few years, Québec's family policy is incomplete. What is more, the action of the two levels of government is not harmonized: both orientations and means are divergent, and that makes consistency very difficult, where family support is concerned."

47

And so a Yes would make it possible to consolidate the sums of money Ottawa and Québec currently spend for the family and children, which amounts to 5 billion dollars. It would make aid programmes more understandable, more predictable, more reliable, so that couples, particularly young couples, could better plan their families and their futures.

After a Yes Québec's family policy will be clearly established, foreseeable over the long term, and reliable.

But bringing more young Quebeckers into the world isn't enough. We have to be sure they start out on the right foot. It's during childhood that our goal of equality

of opportunity is most important. Children who are disadvantaged in their first years are tomorrow's dropouts. So we have to concentrate our efforts on helping families, increase programmes for early schooling, child-care services and infant care. Equality of opportunity starts at the very beginning.

Adapting our medicine to our health

The population of Québec is changing and its needs are changing along with it. For some years now the efforts we have invested, together, in prevention, health, and safety on the job have borne fruit. Increased physical activity, reduced cigarette smoking and better diet have contributed to an appreciable reduction in death from heart disease in both men and women. The use of car seat belts, campaigns against drinking and driving, and the *Opérations nez rouge* have reduced the number of victims of traffic accidents.

48 That is the power of prevention. And other means must be found to prevent instead of cure whenever possible.

Even if measures can be taken to ease its impact on society, there is no doubt that Québec's population is aging, and that the number of very old Quebecers is rapidly increasing. This means that society and the health care system in particular have to adapt to the needs of that population, for instance by allowing for more places in long-term care facilities.

Elderly Quebecers as well as the less elderly, in fact, are more independent than they used to be. And medicine has developed techniques that are more precise and more easily administered, that no longer require long hospital stays as was the case in the past. That's why more and more "day surgery" is being practiced, which allows patients to return home very quickly. They can then receive either at home or at their local CLSC the medical care or complementary help they might need.

These changes require reorganizing our present health care resources, to adapt them to new techniques and new needs. This is a process that demands the maximum room to maneuver.

Some years ago, Liberal Health Minister Marc-Yvan Côté wanted to give patients an incentive not to misuse medical services. He had proposed that those going to a hospital emergency room with a minor problem, when they should have gone to their CLSC, be asked to pay a five-dollar "user fee." Good or bad, this idea was central to the policy of the Québec government of the day. Ottawa, however, promptly said "No way" and threatened to cut federal transfer payments to Québec if the Québec government went ahead with its initiative. The Bourassa government had to back-pedal, a victim of what it called "domineering federalism."

With their Yes, Quebeckers will obtain their full room to maneuver in health care and they'll be able to make their own decisions, on the basis of their own needs and their own consensus.

49

Making our lives more humane

Quality of life often stems from very minor acts. Giving a person a hand when they really need it. Arranging a weekend off for parents of a handicapped child. Providing transportation for an elderly person. An informal group to offer mutual assistance for those who want small jobs done at home.

The big machines of government really aren't properly equipped to provide this extra measure of humanity. But the million volunteers in Québec, the six to eight thousand autonomous community groups who, together, form a vast network of goodwill in our neighbourhoods and along our country roads are the source of it and they make it happen.

A Québec that puts its heart into its work will favour the action of those Quebeckers who want to make this corner of the planet a place where human warmth is not an endangered quality. The sums of money needed are often modest, it's essentially a matter of wanting to make room for them, of recognizing and encouraging their unique and innovative contributions. Already, the Parti Québécois government has assured them of more stable financing and has opened a single wicket for them. But one of the immediate consequences of a Yes will be the feasibility of vastly simplifying the financing of these groups, by eliminating at one stroke half the bureaucracy that saps their valuable energy. But there's more to do as well: eliminate other irritants, invent new ways of financing, fit community action into the decentralization of tomorrow's Québec.

50 In the effort we'll have to make against exclusion, against a "Québec split in two," the work of volunteers and independent community groups, their knowledge of specific problems and their gift for finding solutions that are imaginative, relevant, flexible, and realistic, will be indispensable.

A society that respects its elders

Quebeckers past retirement age are more and more active, and they want to play an important role in the future of Québec.

The Commission of Elders who investigated the role of elders in the future of Québec recommended that Québec acquire an integrated policy on aging. After a Yes, we'll finally have the tools to do that.

Thanks to the Québec Pension Board, for example, Québec has all the structures necessary to continue administering the old age pensions Ottawa is now paying out of the taxes of Quebeckers. The government of Québec will ensure that pensions and income supplements to the elderly are paid, following the same schedule

and conditions as before. This is spelled out clearly in the Bill respecting the future of Québec.

Several measures are needed to let Québec take advantage of the experience acquired by elderly Quebecers. Those who took part in the work of the Commission of Elders made a number of important recommendations, such as naming a protector of the rights of the elderly and appointing a Council of Elders that will suggest ways of adapting society to an aging population.

Above all, the elderly have expressed their desire to increase the initiatives that will put all generations of Quebecers to work, together.

Change, to take our

and our **towns**
regions
in hand

The time has passed when people thought the central State was best able to solve our problems and encourage growth. Just as Québec is better able than Ottawa to devise strategies that will mean prosperity for Quebeckers, so are the regions better able than the capital to define their specific needs and actions.

At the present time, Canada refuses to decentralize its powers at the level of Québec, and interferes in every field where Québec has jurisdiction, without exception. Only a Yes will enable us to provide a good balance between two levels of power: an effective national government, that of Québec, and regional bodies custom-made for local needs.

Montreal, Québec's metropolis and the heart of its economic and cultural activity, has paid dearly for the federal government's monumental errors. The decision to build the Mirabel airport for example, undermined Montreal's position as the port of entry to the continent. Other decisions concerning port activities or energy supply have also done it a lot of harm. When Québec controls major facilities such as the Port of Montreal, a more consistent administration of the Montreal economy will be possible. It will also make it possible to delegate to the metropolis a greater number of decisions of all kinds. The federal government and the other provinces have opposed making Montreal a genuine international financial centre, which would create high-quality jobs. By voting Yes, we'll be able to do it at last.

53

The city of Québec, national capital of Québec, will have the necessary means to fulfill its mission. Not like Ottawa, with its sumptuous payments to itself every year, but in keeping with its status and who we are: modern, proud of ourselves, competent.

Every region of Québec is different, and every region must be able to mobilize its forces and direct its actions according to its situation. Without ever reproducing in Québec a kind of "federalism of regions" that would recreate the problems we're experiencing inside Canada today, decentralization will be a way of consolidating

control by citizens over their institutions and of encouraging their participation in democratic life and the economic, social, and cultural development of their regions.

Immediately after the Yes we need to define, together, the formula we want to adopt. Already in the Green Paper on Decentralization tabled last June, the government of Québec drew on the recommendations by the Regional Commissions to develop the principles of a new decentralization arrangement.

Here are the main ones:

- The regions will receive new responsibilities and the independent, unconditional and stable sources of financing to assume them;
- These resources will be administered by officials elected by universal suffrage;
- The poor regions will benefit from this decentralization through an equalization formula that will be set up to respect the principle of regional equity;
- The regions will not have the right to produce deficits.

54

How far must we go in decentralizing powers? By recovering all our taxes, Québec would be able for instance to delegate one-third of its resources, 20 billion dollars, to the local and regional levels.

Specifically, we could keep at the national level everything necessary for the harmonious development of the territory overall, the establishment of policies, of common standards and objectives and for protecting accessibility and the general interest. The levers of economic development, including re-entry onto the job market and implantation of cultural and recreational facilities, could be delegated to the local and regional levels.

We can envisage local responsibility for primary education and for local health care. Québec could contract the administration of certain services to the communities, and assign them the role of local wicket, in particular for birth certificates, drivers' permits, passports, student loans, unemployment payments, food inspection, etc. We have to make these decisions ourselves.

In the regions of Québec, elected officials, unions, employers and other partners will work together, particularly in the Regional Development Councils. Here is one of the areas where regional solidarity takes shape and is transformed into plans and actions. Decentralization will allow this teamwork to be more fruitful, because it will have access to more decision-making powers. Decentralization means translating solidarity into action.

No two regions are alike. The Outaouais, for example, could be the site for the institutions concerned with the new political and economic Partnership with Canada: the Parliamentary Assembly that will bring together Members delegated by the two countries, the Permanent Secretariat for the Partnership, and the Tribunal for Resolving Differences.

55

A Yes makes it possible to give citizens better control over decisions that affect them in their streets, their neighbourhoods, their towns and their regions. It also means restoring bonds of trust between citizens and their government.

This effort will be launched immediately following the victory of the Yes and will very quickly have concrete effects on our lives.

Change, for a true

partnership

with

Canada

Comedian Yvon Deschamps once said that "Quebeckers want an independent Québec inside a strong Canada!" It's no accident that his quip has become famous: it contains a strong grain of truth.

And it's a fact: a very large majority of us want to control our own taxes, vote our own laws, sign our own treaties. Which is the definition of sovereignty. At the same time we worked hard to build Canada, to create its institutions, contribute to its reputation around the world. In particular, it was Montrealers who invented the Canadian dollar. Before the federal government got involved, paper money was printed by the Bank of Montreal!

In the past many Quebeckers thought it was possible to combine our two objectives -- by remaining a province in Canada but on condition that we make in Québec a larger proportion of our own decisions. For a while, it seemed possible.

During the 1960s, Liberal Premier Jean Lesage said Quebeckers had to be **Masters in Our Own House**. Then his successor as Premier, Daniel Johnson Senior, of the Union Nationale, said what was needed was **Equality or Independence**. After that, Robert Bourassa asked first for **cultural sovereignty**, then for recognition of Québec as a **distinct society**. All these attempts had just one goal: to allow Quebeckers to make their own choices on a certain number of important matters.

But they all failed. Every time, English Canada's No was expressed a little louder. Canadians elsewhere believe that if Quebeckers stay in Canada, they have to behave exactly like the others, and submit to the decisions of the majority, without having any unique rights or status. In fact the vast majority of Canadians are convinced that Quebeckers do not form a distinct people.

Even worse, when the other provinces got together to change the Constitution in 1982, they did so without our agreement and they took powers away from us, particularly in the areas of language and education. All political parties in Québec were opposed to that measure.

Recently Daniel Johnson, leader of the Québec Liberal Party, wrote that the 1982 Constitution created among Quebeckers "a sense of betrayal and isolation."

Another Québec federalist, former Liberal cabinet minister Claude Forget, calculates that since we are increasingly a minority, we're increasingly vulnerable to the Canadian majority. Recently he wrote in *La Presse* that it is "an illusion" to think we'll obtain more autonomy if we remain in Canada, because, in fact, that "any change will worsen the situation, not improve it." At the present time, Québec has one seat in four in the federal Parliament. Over the next 50 years, because of the evolution of the population, we'll be down to one in five or six.

And it's true that at any time, seven Anglophone provinces together with the federal government can modify the Canadian constitution without our approval, thereby weakening Québec. This is more or less what the Supreme Court of Canada did last year when it declared that Québec had no power in one of the areas most important for our future, our culture, and our language: telecommunications.

58

Sovereignty and Partnership: the winning combination

So we can see that the longer we remain a province in Canada like the others, the less we'll be able to make decisions that reflect us. And we would pass on to our children the never-ending debate on the future of Québec, because we'll have decided not to settle it ourselves.

Even if we've been unable to reach an agreement on some fundamental political subjects over the past 30 years, we and the Canadians have forged significant economic ties. The jobs of hundreds of thousands of Canadians depend on us, and the reverse is true as well. Every fifteen minutes we buy a million dollars worth of goods manufactured in the rest of Canada, which is why it's as important for them as for us to maintain economic

exchanges. The Québec government was in fact in the forefront in the negotiations in recent months that led to freer trade between the provinces of Canada.

Even if the Canadians refuse to recognize our existence and our identity, there are things on which we can agree, areas in which it's preferable to act in common. We hold no animosity towards Canadians. We'd even like to maintain a new, permanent political link with our neighbours, to properly manage our common interests.

Which is where the proposal of a political and economic Partnership with Canada comes in. Inside of joint, light, effective institutions, this partnership will consolidate free trade between Québec and Canada. It will confirm the absence of customs at the borders with the provinces. It will allow mobility of manpower. It will oversee the monetary union and provide arrangements on Québec and Canadian citizenship. A joint tribunal will also be charged with resolving possible disputes, particularly in commercial matters.

Inside a Partnership Council, made up equally of ministers from Québec and Canada, and with the views of a Parliamentary Assembly consisting of Members delegated by the two countries, we will be able to choose to act jointly in other areas too.

First come all the areas involved in being good neighbours. We'll have to cooperate so we can facilitate transportation between the two States, join forces for example against cross-border pollution or to stop the trafficking in weapons and drugs.

On the international scene, Québec will have its own seat in the United Nations, in the Francophonie and elsewhere, so that its own unique, distinct voice can be heard. But thanks to the Partnership, Québec and Canada will be able to speak in a single voice at certain international forums, when they decide it will give them more weight. We can also decide to associate with Canadians during peacekeeping operations, for example.

The big difference with the current situation is that every time it will be our choice whether we act independently or jointly with Canada inside the partnership. They won't be able to impose their decisions on us and we won't be able to impose ours on them. Which is what a true partnership is.

To get there we need the agreement of the rest of Canada, naturally. But we know that the Canadian people aren't opposed to this idea. As far as the basic components of an economic association are concerned, the vast majority of English Canadians think an arrangement with Québec is inevitable. After a Yes perhaps they'll have their own proposal to make on how to organize the partnership, what scope it will have, and how it will operate. And Quebeckers will welcome these proposals with the open and constructive spirit that characterizes them.

It's in all our interests to build a partnership with the minimum of frictions and the maximum of mutually advantageous cooperation.

60 A Yes vote means wanting a sovereign Québec in a strong Partnership with Canada.

And it means proving that Yvon Deschamps was essentially right!

Change for a society where

men

and women

are truly

equal

The great "Du pain et des roses" march by women last June demonstrated the importance of women's voices in Québec society.

According to Françoise David, president of the Fédération des femmes du Québec, with the means it has available the government of Québec has met about 70% of the demands it received, while at the same time respecting the spending freeze on State programmes.

In Québec there's a will to do more, and to do it better so that women can take their rightful place at every level of society. One of the most significant decisions by the Parti Québécois government -- supported by all parties in the Assemblée nationale and by the Bloc Québécois -- was the setting up of a universal system for the automatic collection of alimony payments.

The next important step: adoption of a wage equity law that will ensure that the principle of "equal pay for equivalent work" is applied throughout all of Québec society.

62 But as tens of thousands of Québec women insisted during the "Du pain et des roses" march, there has to be a more comprehensive approach to the matter.

The Yes forces support increased community action and recognition for socially useful jobs that are largely done by women.

Two economies must exist side-by-side in Québec: the competitive, entrepreneurial economy that creates the collective wealth and the economy of mutual assistance at the social and community level which makes Québec a humane and hospitable society.

Whether at the time of René Lévesque or since the election of Jacques Parizeau in Québec and Lucien Bouchard in Ottawa, the forces of change have always

been in the forefront of the movement for equality and equity. Today for the first time in our history, the government's powerful "committee on priorities" is made up of three women and three men. Moreover, there were almost as many women as men in the Commissions on the Future of Québec. This gender equality will be indispensable in a Québec that will have said Yes to change.

Unlike the 1982 Constitution, which was drawn up only by men, our Québec Constitution will be written by an equal number of women and men, in accordance with a recommendation by the National Commission on the Future of Québec.

According to the Canadian Advisory Committee on the Status of Women, the defense and promotion of women's rights are better protected by the *Québec Charter of Rights and Freedoms* than by the federal Charter. That's because unlike the federal Charter, which only covers actions by the State, the Québec Charter also applies to private disputes and it has made provision for an easily accessible administrative structure for processing complaints. After a Yes, the Québec Charter will be integrated into our fundamental law.

Change, for a less

bureaucratic
society

Bureaucracy is one of the things most harmful to business and most irritating to citizens. The federal government and the Québec government have managed to bury Quebeckers under an unwieldy, contradictory and costly load of paperwork.

When the Québec government announced last May that it was going to harmonize the Québec sales tax with the federal GST, the Federation of Independent Business announced that this one measure would save businesses up to 400 million dollars every year. Following this simplification, businesses now spend less time filling out forms and more time making their business grow.

Just imagine the billions of dollars and the billions of hours of work that we'll save, collectively, when we just have to complete one income tax return!

And that's not all: change means creating a single wicket for jobs, a single set of environmental regulations instead of two, a single system of agricultural inspection instead of two, and so on.

65

By voting Yes, because the federal and provincial public service will have to be amalgamated, Quebeckers will be able to do what many peoples dream of: reinvent their State, making it more flexible, less unwieldy, more efficient, and closer to the citizens.

Just now there are fewer federal officials from Québec than the proportion of Quebeckers in Canada. It will be possible then to integrate into the Québec public service those who wish and who reside in Québec, by making the necessary adjustments. There's no reason why those Quebeckers and their families in the Outaouais region where they're most numerous, should be penalized by the change.

But this doesn't mean that things are carved in stone. On the contrary. Many measures will lead to a noticeable reduction in weight of the State apparatus in Québec society. Thanks to the change, we'll eliminate overlapping and waste. We will redefine our ways of working. We will integrate the new technologies -- particularly the information highway -- into the delivery of government services. We will decentralize decisions and staff in favour of the regions. With retirements and readjustments, we will be able in just a few years to lighten the Québec State and at the same time improve the quality of services.

If we go about it properly, Québec could become a model, as the first country to reinvent its State apparatus at the dawn of the 21st century.

Change, for a more

equitable
society

Is it normal that extremely wealthy families are able to benefit from those watertight tax loopholes, family trusts?

Is it normal that overall, individuals are paying more and more taxes, business less and less?

Is it normal that the companies who make the biggest profits, like the banks, are the ones that benefit most from tax exemptions for research and development, while small and medium-sized businesses have the greatest need?

We Quebeckers want an active and dynamic society, one that encourages job creation, rewards companies and workers, supports community groups and provides for the disadvantaged.

We want a society that affirms the freedom of individuals and rejects the lowest common denominator. And we want an equitable society, one that avoids the excesses of blind capitalism, that won't allow a growing gap between an increasingly wealthy minority and an increasingly poor majority. We want a society that looks for equal opportunities, for universal access to knowledge.

68 How can we make sure our policies favour businesses and job creation, but discourage speculation and undeserved privilege? How can we make sure our policies encourage work and restore dignity to the most disadvantaged?

How can we assure for those families who are currently getting lost in the federal-provincial maze of standards and programmes, financial help that is significant, simple, equitable, consistent and stable?

The fiscal tool isn't the only one that influences the course of things, but it's a very important one. Because the change will enable us to hold all the levers and control all our taxes, we'll finally be able to ask ourselves these questions, and to provide prompt answers.

As was indicated in last May's budget:

A Commission to Study Tax Reform in a Sovereign Québec will be created so as to give Quebeckers fiscal tools that are modern, simple, flexible and equitable. Concrete results will be visible in less than five years.

Finally: a single tax return

Up to 80% of present-day jobs have been created by firms that have existed for under 15 years. But the tax laws were designed on 75-year-old models! Québec's economy is dominated by small and medium-sized businesses, but the federal tax system is structured to help out big business, which is concentrated in Ontario.

Voting Yes means that we'll have the power to modify tax laws, including those currently controlled by the federal government.

We will have to carry on the debate between Quebeckers, but we'll have a great many possibilities. We could considerably simplify our entire tax system.

For instance, the noted Chartered Accountant Yvon Cyrenne thinks that after a Yes Québec could replace the tax (federal and provincial) on businesses by a single Tax on Commercial Operations, which would simplify our system and make it more flexible, encourage the small and medium businesses that are the heart of our economy, and make us more competitive on foreign markets.

69

Is that a good idea? There are dozens of other possibilities. If we vote No, we won't even be able to ask ourselves the question, because at present these decisions aren't ours to make.

By voting for change, we will give ourselves the power to decide on the form all our taxes will take. We'll be able to simplify them and adapt them to our economy and our priorities.

Immediately after sovereignty, there will be just one tax return.

Change, for a more

democratic
society

We have to remind ourselves, Quebeckers constitute one of the most actively democratic societies in the world. We vote massively in national elections. During the 1992 referendum for example, 82 Quebeckers in 100 performed their civic duty, 10% more than the Canadian average.

We also like to take part in defining government policies. Elsewhere, the federal commissions of inquiry into Canada's future were flops. One commission had to break off its work because only five people showed up for a meeting in Manitoba. In Québec on the other hand, everyone remembers the success of the Bélanger-Campeau Commission in 1990. And this winter the Regional Commissions on the Future of Québec attracted a record number of participants: more than 53,000! One of their chief recommendations was to allow for such consultations to take place frequently after a Yes.

There's no doubt about it: Canada is a healthy democracy. But historians differ as to whether a majority of Quebeckers did or did not agree that Québec should become a member of the federation when it was created in 1867. Despite repeated requests, authorities refused to hold a referendum in which Quebeckers would have expressed themselves clearly on joining Canada. And in the election that ratified the accord, the vote wasn't secret. Voters had to place their names in a big open book. Those who wanted to vote on the "wrong side" were threatened with hell-fire by the clergy. That's the choice our great-grandparents had!

It's certain though that the present Canadian Constitution, the one from 1982, was imposed on Québec in an undemocratic fashion. No referendum was held to accept or reject it.

When he was presiding over the Bélanger-Campeau Commission, Michel Bélanger declared the situation was serious enough to push federalists like him to reject the status quo. "Do you think," he asked, "that we're people who will always have to be governed by a Constitution that was drawn up by others, without us?"

A Constitution we ourselves will write

If we vote Yes, to achieve Sovereignty and offer a Partnership, we will at last be in a position to found our society on a solidly democratic base.

First of all, the founding act of Québec will have been embodied in a vote: the referendum to be held this fall. Then the future constitution of Québec will be the fruit of an extensive mass consultation as recommended by the Commissions on the Future of Québec.

As a first step, Québec after a Yes will maintain the Québec political institutions it now has. They have served Quebecers well for a long time. Afterwards it will be possible to improve them, in accordance with the wishes expressed by the citizens.

72 Last winter many Quebecers of all ages talked about the need to assert more clearly not just the rights of citizens but their obligations as well. Others asked for a better balance between individual and collective rights, for which the Canadian Constitution leaves very little room. The discussions surrounding our new constitution will allow us to decide on our directions in this matter. What role will the regions play in relation to the national government? How can durable development be enshrined as a governing principle? How much influence should judges have, as opposed to elected officials, on societal debates? The majority of our Canadian neighbours think judges should have the final word. The majority of Quebecers think elected officials should have the final word.

These questions will be the object of an extensive consultation which could take several forms, but which must satisfy the need expressed by citizens of Montreal, Québec and the regions to play a part in drawing up their constitution. The fundamental law of Québec will stem

from the people of Québec, it won't be imposed by our neighbours without consulting us.

Respect for Minorities

Because we have never been able to have ourselves recognized within Canada, we intend to be particularly respectful of the rights of Québec's minorities. As it says in the Preamble to the Act Respecting the Future of Québec: "Our shared future is in the hands of all those for whom Québec is a homeland."

Our Anglophone fellow-citizens who have lived through the tremendous changes of the past 30 years and who have chosen to make Québec their homeland, are a source of strength for the Québec of tomorrow. They are at the junction of two civilizations, they're more bilingual than ever before, they have created cultural and educational institutions like McGill University that have given five Nobel Prizes to Québec, and they must be granted assurance that following a Yes, they will be part of the founding people of the new Québec.

73

By inscribing explicitly in our Constitution the rights of our Anglophone citizens, we will protect their rights better than the Canadian Constitution has protected the rights of Francophones.

Likewise for the aboriginal nations of Québec, whom we recognize as distinct nations living on our shared territory. We intend to recognize, through negotiations founded on mutual respect, a level of governmental autonomy equivalent or superior to what exists on the rest of the continent.

We in Québec aren't afraid of distinct societies.

Change, for a society

in harmony

with the

environment

Our quality of life depends on the care we take to preserve our lakes, our rivers and the St. Lawrence, the air we breathe, the land we live on and all our ecosystems. Collectively we Quebeckers have been entrusted with a vast, rich and diversified territory. As our Aboriginal fellow citizens say, when we act on the environment we must constantly bear in mind the impact our actions will have on our children's children unto the seventh generation.

The forces for the Yes have always been active on this issue. It is to Marcel Léger, under the government of René Lévesque, that we owe the first Ministry of the Environment, the establishment of the Office for Public Hearings on the Environment, and the law on water purification. Just as Lucien Bouchard, when he was a cabinet minister in Ottawa, was the author of the federal government's first Green Plan.

There's no lack of good will in Québec to do more for the environment and to do it better. But as all heads of companies will tell you, pollution isn't the only nightmare, there's also the double set of regulations. With two systems, federal and provincial, of sampling and surveillance, of permits, of registrations, reports, preventive measures and control of waste, the environmental cause is at the mercy of bureaucracy.

75

Voting Yes means allowing for a single environmental regulation, one that's simpler, hence more economical and more effective.

Drawing up a new Québec constitution will let us decide how far we want to go to truly protect our environment. Several people have suggested that a principle be inscribed in the constitution of Québec describing the environment as a "collective good" so that defending it is everyone's responsibility.

The new constitution could also see to it that Québec's futures governments are guided by the principle of "durable development." This principle, put forward by the World Commission on the Environment and Development assumes that industry, the State and citizens use natural resources without endangering them so that they will still be available to future generations.

Change, for

the new
generation

Voting Yes this fall, setting in motion a significant change in our society, makes sense only if young Quebecers are on board. Because the Québec of tomorrow belongs to them.

We know that the majority of young people in Québec are planning to vote Yes in the referendum. In the consultation on the future of Québec carried out last winter, no group spoke out as clearly as the 5000 young people who appeared before the Youth Commission: change must mean a renewal of society and it has to make significant room for its young generation.

Young Quebecers hope that the "second Quiet Revolution" prompted by a Yes will be founded on principles that "this time embody a vision of society governed less by a doctrine of state control and more by a profound sense of community life and responsibility." The young members of the Commission propose that the Québec of tomorrow be founded on "a new bond of trust between the generations."

The forces of the Yes support these goals 100%.

78 **Stop** getting our young people

into debt, **now**

Young Quebecers are very worried about government debt and they have every reason to be. In Canada the debt is largely the result of competition between two levels of government both wanting to entice the voters. The problem really started when Pierre Trudeau and his minister Jean Chrétien wanted to construct a Canadian State that would intervene in every area. It was as if they were giving us presents -- that they'd put on our credit cards.

Voting Yes means putting an end, at once, to the insane competition Ottawa is carrying on in Québec. In 12 months' time Ottawa will no longer be able to buy anything on credit in our name.

The new partnership between Québec and Canada will enable us to freeze our shared debt at its present level and then to take on our fair share of the burden. No more, and no less.

At this very moment, if Ottawa weren't shoveling its deficit into Québec's back yard, the Québec government would be able not only to stop borrowing for its everyday affairs (which it will do within two years) but also to show a considerable surplus. But since we never know from one year to the next what cuts the federal government is going to impose on us, we cannot properly plan the stabilization of our finances.

The parties that together form the coalition for change are firmly convinced of the need to proceed rapidly to straighten out our finances. In fact it is a cornerstone for the programme and political strategy of Mario Dumont and Jean Allaire's Action démocratique du Québec.

Voting Yes means enabling Quebeckers in the next two years to put some order in their budget, and to make the decisions needed to curb the debt.

79

Young and old people alike have also asked that the future constitution of Québec make acknowledge the responsibilities of citizens. This principle could be adopted so that starting now, every generation of Quebeckers will be responsible for not getting the next generation into debt.

Refuse to tax knowledge

The debt load of the young also includes debts caused by school fees. Everywhere else on the continent, school fees are in the tens of thousands of dollars per year of post-secondary study. In the United States, parents often have to choose between buying a house or paying for their children's higher education. They can't afford to do both. The rest of Canada is also heading towards a policy that will increase school fees considerably.

Quebeckers are different. They think that access to higher education shouldn't depend on the size of the pocketbook, but on the effort and talent of each and every student.

Voting Yes means making sure that education will remain accessible to all.

Broaden **ACCESS** to the job market

Youth unemployment is one of the problems that will concern us the most. The National Employment Strategy that will be put in place immediately after a Yes must make the new generation its priority.

80 We have to count on the strength and creativity of young people. For example it's estimated that in less than six months this year, the business start-up programme called the "Plan Paillé" has enabled young entrepreneurs to create 3200 businesses and to hire 17,000 persons. These young people have been able to invest 126 million dollars in Québec's economy. That's showing confidence in the new generation. And it's an approach that must guide us in tomorrow's Québec.

It's necessary too to give young people the means to develop their abilities to the maximum, through training that is more practical, more concrete, more immediately applicable.

With a Yes and the repatriation of all levers for manpower training, Québec will be able immediately to undertake a massive new manpower training and enhancement programme linking schools and companies, the State and the regions, employers, unions, cooperatives and community groups.

Everything is in place to get this training revolution underway. All that's missing is the starting signal: a Yes.

By controlling all their labour laws Quebeckers will also be able to invent new ways to distribute the jobs currently available and to speed up hiring young people. Work-sharing, flexible schedules and time-sharing, greater flexibility in departures for retirement or upgrading, will in a few years free up tens of thousands of jobs for young people.

Mobilize energies

Young Quebeckers must be able to participate in every facet of tomorrow's Québec.

Their participation in the broad consultation that will give rise to the new constitution of Québec will be essential. They must be able to inscribe in it their values, their hopes, the challenges they intend to meet.

Young Quebeckers must be able to participate in Québec's new international effort. Recently the programme *Québec Without Borders* was created, which associates young people with Québec's humanitarian action abroad. Young people are trained, then they go to work with our teams in the field, in countries that need our active solidarity.

As soon as Québec can control all its actions abroad and give more importance to humanitarian action, initiatives like this could become more widespread.

Energies must also be mobilized in Québec for environmental, local and community action, and recreational projects. Our only frontier will be our imagination.

We're seven million, let's connect

In five years' time the third millennium will begin.
Are we ready?

One of the great revolutions now underway is the amalgamation of communications, culture, and computers. In Québec we have all the ingredients needed: a flourishing culture, some of the best telecommunications companies in the world, designers of avant-garde software: it was in Montreal that the virtual dinosaurs in "Jurassic Park" were invented.

Everything is in place for us to create, here, one of the busiest crossroads on the information highway. There's just one problem: the federal government and the Supreme Court of Canada tell us we have no right to do it.

In July this year the government of Québec received some innovative and detailed recommendations on how to position ourselves in the fast lane on the information highway. We have the resources, we know how to use them, we have the brainpower.

It's our decision. If we say No, Ottawa will leave us on the access road to the information highway. If we say Yes, we can begin right away to make connections the way we want, between ourselves and the rest of the planet.

The referendum,
a logical step in our
history

The referendum, finally, is our rendez-vous with the logical outcome of our history. For almost fifteen years now, Quebeckers' march towards their self-affirmation, their blossoming, their presence in the world, has been checked by Canadian impediments and by a constitution that was imposed on us against our will.

To pursue our development as a people and to restore healthy cooperation with our Canadian neighbours, we have to take the step of saying Yes, united and serene, consistent with our actions in the past.

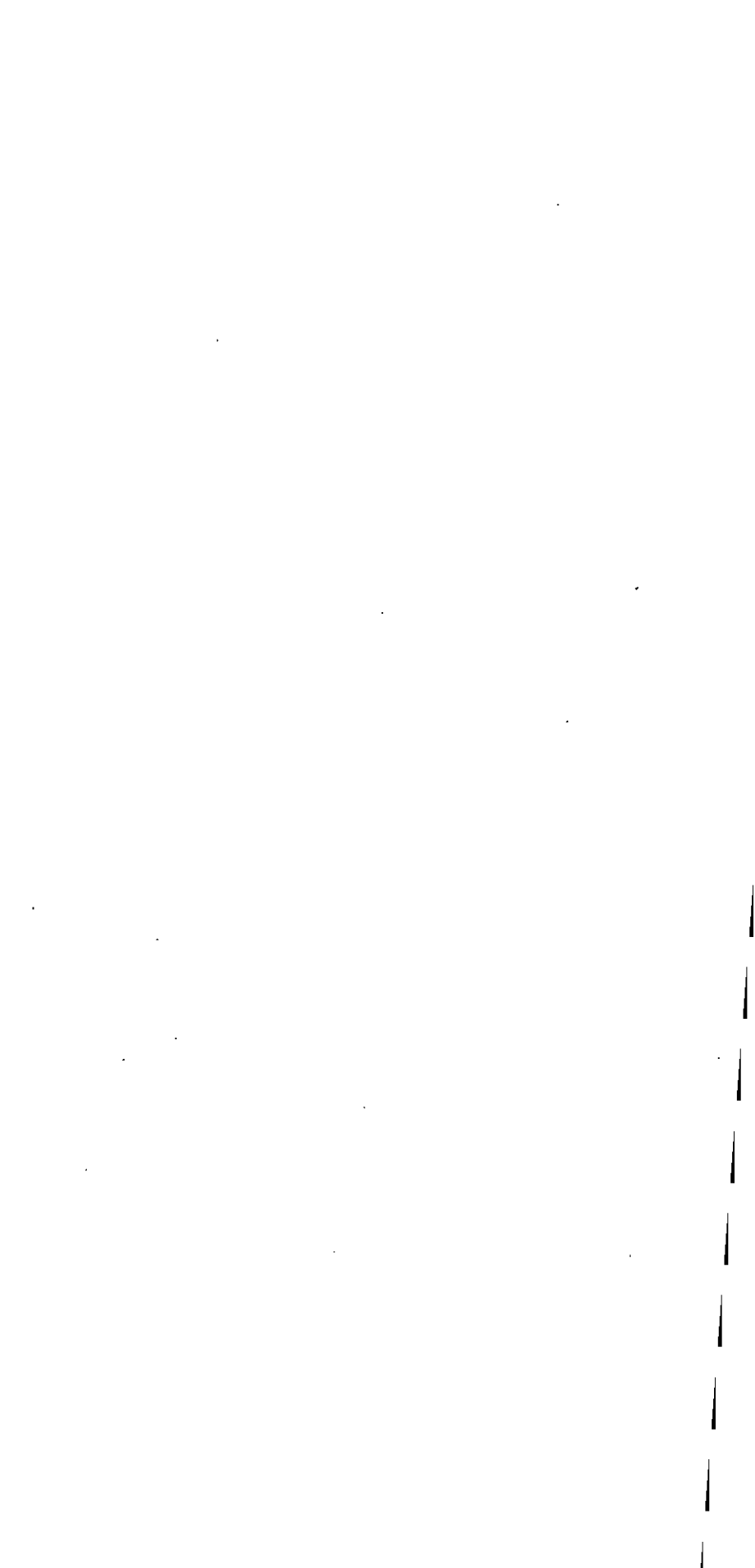
The stakes are important. Saying No on October 30 would mean abandoning Québec on that march. It would mean lingering in a dead end that would be dangerous for our future. It would mean accepting decline and impediments to progress. It would mean choosing not to solve any of our problems. It would mean agreeing to renew, every year, the squabbling between Québec and Ottawa. It would mean continuing to ask permission of others when we want to make decisions fundamental to our future. And above all, it would mean shoveling our problems into the backyard of the next generation, forcing our young people to be divided among themselves on what path to choose for the future, and condemning them to endless bickering with the Canadian majority.

84

Continuity urges us instead to go on building a responsible, dynamic Québec, a young and modern Québec that is proud of its achievements and in touch with the world. A Québec that reflects us, with its heart in its work. A Québec in harmony with current world trends, like the European countries: sovereign, but partners with their neighbours in joint institutions.

Voting Yes doesn't mean taking a chance, it means giving ourselves a chance. The chance to go on building, here, a society to prepare us for the challenges of tomorrow. It means breathing a breath of fresh air, and finally regaining our freedom to choose. It means giving ourselves the power to decide on our future and to become, at last, "Masters in Our Own House."

Voting Yes means giving ourselves a new start.



Since the beginning of the year, many Quebecers have asked to have a "blueprint for society" for the Québec of tomorrow. They have also asked how, in concrete terms, a Yes was going to change their lives and improve their situation in the years to come.

Our Hearts in Our Work does not claim to be a definitive answer. The blueprint for society is something the women and men of Québec will create and improve. What this document does is to offer a certain number of starting points, information, and courses to follow so that everyone will better understand in what way a Yes means a new space of freedom and responsibility for Québec.

In short, change means giving ourselves a chance to do better -- for job creation, for language and immigration, for the young and the elderly, and against violence and discrimination.

Change means giving Québec society a new start.

\$4.95

