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The Western Separatist



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"Separate or Surrender"

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Our cover: This month's cover continues our series featuring Western Canadian separatist folk heroes. Pat Burns was a courageous radio talk show host who enlivened the Vancouver and area radio waves in the 1970's and 80's. The printed word cannot begin to convey his inimitable style and his unique voice, but for a sample of his editorial opinions, see page 4.

The Untouchables

by Richard McBride

The official motto of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police is *Maintiens le Droit* or Uphold the Right. The RCMP's unofficial motto appears to be Maintain the Privilege. As Brian Hutchinson writes in the *National Post*, "Whether it is abandoning a post, being caught masturbating in a police vehicle while on surveillance duty, fabricating notes from a crime scene, or drunk driving, any number of infractions by

RCMP officers result in no more than being docked a few days pay."

Want examples? Mr. Hutchinson surveyed 84 adjudication decisions since January 2008. Here's my favourite:

Constable Milo Kent Ramsey: Cited for "disgraceful" conduct by an RCMP adjudication board in 2007 for a series of incidents over a 34-day period, involving impaired driving, shouting obscenities and throwing a rock at a passenger bus. On one occasion he drove his motor home while intoxicated, hitting seven parked cars and then

backing over a homeowner's hedge and striking a carport. His blood-alcohol level was determined to be almost twice the legal limit. He was docked 12 days' pay. He pleaded guilty in court to a related charge of impaired driving. He remains on active duty in B.C.

Even a criminal conviction, for a crime as serious as assault, is no guarantee of dismissal. It has become alarmingly common for Mounties to be convicted of beating suspects they have handcuffed behind their backs and thrown into the back of police cars. The usual penalty for this is losing five or 10 days pay.

And then there's Corporal Monty Robinson, who has yet to lose even a single day's pay. Cpl. Robinson, you may recall, was in charge of the notable operation at Vancouver International Airport in 2007 when a just-arrived Polish immigrant, Robert Dziekanski, was administered the death penalty for the crimes of being confused and belligerent.

Cpl. Robinson and the Famous Four were then rather "economical with the actualité" with the subsequent (and ongoing) investigations and probably would have got away with it except that, unluckily for them, their ministrations to Dziekanski had been caught on video.

A year later, Cpl. Robinson had an unfortunate encounter in Delta, BC, with a 21-year-old called Orion Hutchinson. The latter was driving his motorcycle, the former his Jeep. The Jeep prevailed, whereupon Robinson fled the scene. He returned 10 minutes later and blew .16, twice the legal limit. He claimed he had calmed himself with vodka shots while Hutchinson lay dying and was charged only with obstruction of justice. Incredibly, he later sued to have his 90-day driving suspension overturned. He was unsuccessful in this, but continues to draw his salary, which is probably not unadjacent to \$100,000, while suspended. After two violent and unnecessary deaths in 13

months. A career nowhere near ordinary, indeed.

It would be unfair to suggest that the great majority of Mounties resemble Monty Robinson in the execution of their duties. But all of them are identical to him in that they are in no way responsible to the communities and provinces in which they serve—they report solely to Ottawa. And given that a culture of irresponsibility permeates the RCMP from top to bottom, it is no surprise that Mounties are increasingly wont to treat Alberta and especially British Columbia as the Wild West.

Group solidarity is important, even essential, to any police force. But this cannot be the highest virtue, otherwise discipline devolves to the point of hang together, or hang separately.

Ontario and Quebec have the OPP and the QPP, of course. But there is no reason why the Western provinces could not have their own provincial police forces as well. Most British Columbians would be surprised to learn of the existence of the British Columbia Provincial Police and that it was formed before the RCMP and even the North West Mounted Police. The BCPP, a highly regarded unit, was disbanded in 1950 for reasons that remain obscure.

Most Westerners probably believe that we are not allowed to have our own police forces. But this is not the case. Policing remains a provincial responsibility under the Constitution, and BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba routinely enter into contracts with Ottawa whereby they pay the RCMP to assume this duty. The BC and Alberta contracts come up for renewal in 2012.

The RCMP became a Conservative Party leadership issue in 2007. Ed Stelmach, of course, promised that the RCMP was here to stay in Alberta, and Jim Dinning jumped on board, with his website providing a gratuitous insult of the Alberta Sheriffs as "a bunch of rent-a-cops."

Premier Stelmach argues on the basis of cost, but according to the Alberta Federation of Police Associations, “One of the biggest myths in Canadian law enforcement is a belief that RCMP policing is less expensive than municipal or regional policing.”

In BC, as far back as 1994, former Justice and Attorney General Wally Oppal declared after an official inquiry:

The RCMP must make fundamental changes and be more responsive to the needs of British Columbia’s communities. The force simply must become more accountable to local needs and allow more participation by local government. British Columbians are entitled to an open and uniform system of policing... In the event that the RCMP is not prepared to undergo the necessary change that is suggested in this report, it will be imperative for the province to consider establishing its own provincial police force.

As we have seen, the RCMP is no more accountable and responsive than it was 15 years ago. And yet our provincial leaders remain more attached to the symbols of colonial glory than they do to the rights and needs of their own people. No surprise there, of course. The only surprise is why we continue to put up with it.

The Cost of Confederation

The following excerpts from an article in the National Post, of Tuesday, December 15, 2009, and entitled “In Copenhagen, oil-sands hypocrisy” demonstrate the double standard that is continually applied to Western Canadian provinces, as opposed to Central Canada, who takes Alberta’s money while proclaiming them an embarrassment:

... But what sacrifices are the Ontario and Quebec governments talking about? So far, all either has done is make sanctimonious promises of deep cuts. Neither has made much progress in ac-

tually limiting emissions from industries or residents.

Ontario is pledging to reduce emissions by 15% below 1990 levels by 2020. Quebec is pledging 20%. But a pledge is not the same as an actual cut. Neither province’s emissions have come down appreciably, unless one counts the shuttering of a few manufacturing plants due to the recession.

... The Ontario government, for instance, remains the owner of four large coal-fired electricity plants, including Nanticoke, on Lake Erie, which is the largest coal-fuelled plant in North America.

Never mind that when the Liberals were in power in Ottawa, the Liberal government of Ontario extracted a pledge from the feds not to include emissions from automakers in the national caps required to meet our Kyoto commitments, and to put a larger burden on energy-producing provinces such as Alberta and Saskatchewan. We don’t recall Ontario and Quebec squawking about emissions “fairness” then.

Ontario and Quebec are merely being opportunistic, using the current bad publicity for the oil sands to pile on Alberta in hopes of increasing the taxes that province pays to fund the federal equalization scheme, of which both central Canadian provinces are recipients.

Alberta’s contribution to Confederation is already three times higher than Ontario’s on a per capita basis. Albertans paid an estimated \$21.1-billion — or \$5,700 per person — more to the feds than they got back in federal services in 2009. Quebec, on the other hand, receives nearly half of all the equalization dollars Ottawa doles out. Much of the money that Quebec uses to fund “free” college and university tuition and cheap daycare comes from Ottawa’s taxes on the oil sands. Ditto the money used to bail out Ontario automakers. *[emphasis added]*

So here’s a suggestion for eastern Canada’s two big, self-righteous provincial govern-

ments: If you want none of the “embarrassment” of the oil sands, fine; forego all that dirty oil sands money, too. That would effectively mean saying no to the billions on offer from equalization — but that’s the price of high principle, right?

Oh, and Ontario and Quebec should find other, “morally superior” sources for their oil, too — such as Venezuela, Iran and Russia. To do otherwise would be to share in a Canadian “embarrassment.”

About a year ago, in Vancouver’s Gastown district, Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff gave a speech praising the oil sands as the engine of Canada’s economy. It is. Energy is Canada’s No. 1 export and biggest source of foreign income. Ottawa avoided deficits for years before the recession thanks largely to revenues from oil and gas activity in Alberta.

In other words, the oil sands haven’t just made Alberta rich — they’ve made the rest of the country wealthy, too. If Ontario and Quebec want to turn their back on that wealth, let them say so forthrightly — instead of making a display of their hypocrisy on the world stage. *[end of excerpts]*

Federal transfers to the provinces and territories will reach a record \$54.4 billion

The following excerpts from an article by Canwest News Service, December 19, 2009, demonstrates that the process of equalization continues to operate to Western Canada’s disadvantage:

Federal transfers to the provinces and territories will reach a record \$54.4 billion in the coming fiscal year, the Finance Department announced Friday.

The figure includes a special injection of \$525 million, divvied up among six provinces, to ensure no provinces get less than they did

this year in combined equalization, health and social transfers.

The provinces getting the extra boost in fiscal 2010-11 are Nova Scotia (\$250 million), Manitoba (\$175 million), New Brunswick (\$80 million), Newfoundland and Labrador (\$8 million), Saskatchewan (\$7 million) and Prince Edward Island (\$3 million.)

...

The total payments, including everything from equalization transfers to health transfers, will be \$2.5 billion more than the current fiscal year.

Transfers to Ontario mark the biggest increase, rising about \$1.2 billion to \$15.48 billion in the coming fiscal year.

Equalization payments will climb to \$14.4 billion, up \$187 million.

... The funding will be split up this way: British Columbia, \$5.06 billion; Alberta, \$3.31 billion; Saskatchewan \$1.2 billion; Manitoba, \$3.4 billion; Ontario \$15.50 billion; Quebec, \$17.2 billion; New Brunswick, \$2.5 billion; Nova Scotia, \$2.4 billion; Prince Edward Island, \$490 million; and Newfoundland and Labrador \$614 million. *[end of excerpt]*

This Month’s Cover

Our cover features Pat Burns, the longtime CJOR talk show host. The following is transcribed from one of his daily editorials, March 16, 1987:

The subject of Western Separatism will not go away, much to the chagrin of emotional flag-wavers. The idea of Western Separatism is not fostered by outrageous red-necks, who are never so happy as when they are stirring up trouble and relishing the thought that they have upset the mental equilibrium of those persons who equate any such thought with prescind. No! The idea has its genesis in the best reason possible for change.

Westerners are second-class citizens in their own country. A region whose sole reason for existence in the eyes of the federal government — and it doesn't matter which party is in power — is to act as a milk cow for Quebec and Ontario. This statement is indisputable, so much so that I will not bother justifying it, for if any Westerner does not know this by now, he is so stupid he should be treated as a second-class citizen.

The name of the game is power. In order for any political party to capture power at the federal level, it is necessary to cater to those two provinces, Quebec and Ontario. Since between them, they control sixty percent of the seats in the House of Commons and in order to retain power once a party has achieved it, it must go on catering to those two provinces. It is a simple question of mathematics.

Peter Brimelow, a journalist with an international reputation, recently did an article on the subject of Western Separatism. Let me quote you a part of it. The last line is the one I like best.

In it he says. "For an outsider, it is fascinating to watch Westerners working their way towards a political solution of their problems. A major step was taken recently when the Western Canada Concept Party decided to run candidates in federal elections. Previously, like the Parti Quebecois, the Western Canada Concept Party felt it somehow illogical for separatists to participate federally. But this excessive Gallic logic never troubled Irish Nationalists in the 19th century. They elected members to the British House of Commons and kicked up so much fuss, that by 1914 an Irish Home Rule Bill was actually on the statutes books. Only the outbreak of the first World War delayed its implementation.

"The dramatic impact that separatist candidates could have was illustrated by last fall's Pembina by-election in Alberta. Doug Christie, the leader of the Western Canada Concept

Party, got 2,800 votes, and consequently the Tory victor edged the NDP by only a few hundred. In other words, the separatists or particularist party defending western interests offers a way for Westerners to discipline the Tory party. It won't be able to take the West for granted anymore."

Then Brimelow outlined some of the policies hatched in Ottawa to hurt the West. Let me quote:

"Above all there is the atrocity of the National Energy Policy. The National Energy Policy was essentially an attempt by Ottawa under the guise of Canadian nationalism to expropriate the West's energy wealth. It was the climax of a decade of Ottawa politicking that has caused Canada to miss the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to develop its high-cost energy reserves which had been presented by OPEC's price hikes.

"The Americans were willing to take the risk and put up the massive initial capital investment needed to bring Canada's reserves on-stream. Once this investment was in place, continuing to exploit the reserves would have been cheap. Canadians could now be coasting on the result. It is one of the great economic tragedies of modern times. All Canada, but particularly the West, should be holding treason trials and hanging politicians from bilingual road signs to ensure that never happens again."

The following is another editorial by Pat Burns, broadcast August 9, 1986.

It took the best part of five years, but it has finally dawned on Jamie Lamb, the Sun's Ottawa Correspondent, that the only way for British Columbia to get a fair deal is to get out of Confederation and join the United States or at least make noises and threats as though we fully intended to pursue that goal.

The Western separatists, now apparently in total disarray have been saying the same

thing for some years and when they weren't ignored by Mr. Lamb's employer the Vancouver Sun, they were characterized as a bunch of half-crazed malcontents.

But the separatists are right, and now belatedly, so is Mr. Jamie Lamb.

In our lifetime and perhaps in the lifetime of our children and grandchildren, British Columbia will never get a fair deal from Ottawa because politicians are not interested in fairness. They are interested solely in self-preservation - getting themselves re-elected with their fat salaries and expense allowances and their obscene pensions.

It is a simple case of mathematics, there are 282 seats in the House of Commons. Ontario has 95 of them; Quebec has 75. Combined, that makes a total of 170 seats or way more than half the total representation in the House of Commons. And so if a political party wants to get itself elected or re-elected, it must cater to Ontario and Quebec. It really does not matter if the Conservatives, or the Liberals or the New Democrats are in power, the name of the game remains the same, and anyone who thinks differently is deluding himself.

We in British Columbia, or for that matter, all of Western Canada are nothing more than milk cows for the East.

When Jamie Lamb suggests that the new Premier of British Columbia, Bill Vander Zalm, discuss union with the United States with a number of state Governors to get Ottawa's attention he is on the right track. He does not go far enough.

Western separatists, whose thinking is way ahead of Lamb's, or most other persons, for that matter, are not really interested in joining the United States. They prefer to secede from Canada and be an independent country able to fashion its own destiny.

There is not the slightest doubt that we would survive. Indeed our standard of living

would be higher once we got the Ottawa bandits out of our wallets and bank accounts.

If Alberta were to join in such a secession plan, the combined natural resources of the two provinces would make us the wealthiest area in all of North America.

Some people think it is heresy to speak this way. Obviously, they prefer to think that being robbed blind is one of Nature's immutable laws which we should accept without question.

I am not of that train of thought, nor do I think it heretical ceasing to be a Canadian and being just a plain British Columbian with complete control over my destiny. I see no virtue in being a permanent mugging victim, just to be able to say I am a Canadian.

A Separatist Speaks

Political Philosophy or Political Pragmatism?

I have always admired the capacity of people of Stephen Harper to manipulate the system to their own advantage. When I say "admired," I should probably say I am left in a state of stark and somewhat appalled awe by their ability to disregard the effects of their actions on society as a whole. It is obvious that Mr. Harper has become more powerful than Charles I, for when he prorogues Parliament, he will not suffer the fate of that monarch but instead will return in March with a whole new slate of whatever he chooses to put on the agenda.

It is now evident that Mr. Harper has escaped questioning over the possibility of war crimes in the exchange of prisoners in Afghanistan, where it is clear that the Canadian Forces handed prisoners over in circumstances where they strongly suspected torture would result. Why else would they take photographs of the prisoners beforehand, unless they expected

something dire to happen subsequently? And why else would the Canadian Forces then see fit to rescue these prisoners from the people to whom they had handed them over. In any event, Afghanistan is a debacle from which many nations not only remain reluctant to extract themselves but a debacle to which they remain disastrously enthralled. Alexander the Great, the British, the Russians and now the so-called NATO forces are experiencing much the same problem with this land and this people.

In the past we have seen Stephen Harper's virtual abandonment of UN Security Council Resolution 242, which compels Israel to return the territories taken by force in 1967. This too is likely to bode ill in the world, especially among the Arab nations. To disregard international law, as Canada apparently sees fit to do on occasion, will not ingratiate us with certainly those who believe that international law applies both for us and against us.

In the administration of politics generally Stephen Harper has been a consummate opportunist. He has consumed the Canadian right-wing and turned it into a force indistinguishable from the Liberal Party. As political commentator Don Martin has observed, Mr. Harper likes it that way. He has allegedly moved the Conservative Party to the "centre." In effect, this means surrendering the entire conservative agenda to become the darling of Ontario and Quebec. His sojourn in Quebec has been short-lived and rather unproductive, but does he really care? Ontario alone can maintain Mr. Harper in power, if he can simply cater to that province with auto industry bailouts and by providing other privileges and perquisites.

I, on the other hand, have always been a political philosopher. I have never been interested in finding my way to the top of the system but rather in finding a system that serves us all better and is as close to perfection as is possible in this world.

In this regard, Mr. Harper has accomplished nothing. He has cast aside all that Western Canada gave him by way of hopes, aspirations and promises and become in effect our worst nightmare. He has by adopting the strategy of divide and conquer achieved success over the "left wing" but as a result there is now nothing to distinguish him from it.

On the other hand, Western Canada needs a whole new political system. We need a regionally-representative senate, elected on the basis of equal geographical area. We need a representation by a House of Commons which will give voice to the major cities of Western Canada. We need these two bodies to work in tandem, so that no decisions are made to the detriment of the two power bases in the country: the resource base of the regions and the manufacturing and service base of the cities. We need a proper balance between the rural and urban dweller and their different functions and preoccupations in the social structure of Western Canada.

We need a common language of English, which will unite and create eventually a common culture. We need a judicial system that reflects our values and a Parliament unafraid to legislate those values once they have been articulated through the democratic process.

We also need a balance between the legislative authority of the Parliament and the judicial authority of the courts, which has frequently become remote from the will of the people. For this reason, we need a third level of government achieved by the people themselves, using modern technology and the possibilities of referendum, initiative and recall.

We need to know that the whole legislative process, our foreign policy and taxation policies are open to scrutiny, correction and rebuke on occasion from the people who pay for them. Government of, for and by the people is now a real possibility because modern technology has now removed the barriers once consti-

tuted by reason of distance and the difficulties of communication. But with the Internet, TV, radio, the telephone and other media we are able to tap into and communicate with the public will at all times and be responsive to it.

Properly informed trust the people was the maxim of Lord Randolph Churchill, but he lived at a time when communication with the people was not possible on a daily basis, since not all could read and few had access to the printed media on a timely basis. Today, that is not a problem. We are living with 19th century legislative technology in an age of the 21st century technological capacity, which should be incorporated into the legislative process. Referendum initiative and recall accomplishes all of this, activates the intellectual capacity of the masses, and in effect, is the most perfect demonstration of crowd sourcing, that is, the resort to large members of people to solve a problem.

Western Canada has the resource capacity, the intellectual capacity, the financial, academic, and linguistic capacity, to be a beacon of hope in a world of chaos. Living in the 19th century machinations of the political scene in Ottawa is a gross waste of time and money. Western Canada deserves better and we have the ability to give it to the people of Western Canada through a properly informed campaign initiated federally by the Western Block Party, and provincially by the Western Canada Concept, so that we provide the only positive, constructive solution to the social, political, and economic problems of our day. The Western Independence movement manifested by those of us who are involved in the political philosophy of a better system requires a commitment from each of us to help to communicate this idea, and for this reason, I would ask you to take this article and distribute it as far and wide as you can through the newspapers, by radio communication, television, and perhaps the Internet.

In the process of advocating Western Independence, I have used YouTube videos,

which some of you with Internet connections could view and criticize, or even participate in by posting your own videos about the subject of Western Canadian independence. This is only one of the many forms of technology available to help to communicate our ideas.

I look forward to your advice, suggestions, and input in this new outreach which we hope to initiate in 2010. If you and I work together to promote this concept of a whole new vision using a new political philosophy to create a better system, then our lives will be fulfilled as individuals and our society will benefit collectively. You and I have the duty to be truth-tellers in an age of deception, to be the forerunners and precursors of a whole new vision of political involvement.

“The most dangerous man, to any government, is the man who is able to think things out for himself without regard to the prevailing superstitions and taboos. Almost inevitable he comes to the conclusion that the government he lives under is dishonest, insane and intolerable, and so, if he is romantic, he tries to change it. And even if he is not romantic personally he is apt to spread discontent among those who are.” — H.L. Mencken

I hope to be that dangerous man as I have been in the past, speaking out in favour of a whole new government, of a whole new nation of Western Canada where each of us will have a part to play in the creation of that nation, its political system, and of its daily operation.

I look forward to working with you in 2010 to achieve this great goal for the future of our children and our land.

Free the West!

Douglas Christie