Document généré le 24 avr. 2024 09:00

Journal of the Canadian Historical Association
Revue de la Société historique du Canada

Winning Back the Intellectuals: Inside Canada's "First War on Terror," 1968-1970

Michael Gauvreau

Volume 20, numéro 1, 2009

URI : https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/039786ar
DOI : https://doi.org/10.7202/039786ar

Aller au sommaire du numéro

Éditeur(s)

The Canadian Historical Association / La Société historique du Canada

ISSN

0847-4478 (imprimé)
1712-6274 (numérique)

Découvrir la revue

Citer cet article

Gauvreau, M. (2009). Winning Back the Intellectuals: Inside Canada's "First War on Terror," 1968-1970. *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association / Revue de la Société historique du Canada*, *20*(1), 161–190. https://doi.org/10.7202/039786ar

Résumé de l'article

Les analyses historiques de la Crise d'octobre ont tendance à se cristalliser autour d'une dichotomie simple entre les intentions du gouvernement du Canada et le Front de libération du Québec (FLQ), à souligner les tensions entre les États fédéral et provincial pendant la crise, ou encore à replacer le FLQ dans le contexte de l'éclosion d'idées radicales au Québec des années 1960. La présente recherche prend comme point de départ la réticence paradoxale de l'administration Trudeau à qualifier les felquistes de « terroristes » et étudie la réaction du gouvernement fédéral dans le contexte d'une stratégie élargie visant à forcer l'intelligentsia tant anglo-canadienne que québécoise à se désolidariser du radicalisme étudiant et des luttes de décolonisation internationales. L'auteur envisage la « guerre au terrorisme » entreprise par le gouvernement Trudeau moins comme une réaction ponctuelle à l'enlèvement de James Cross et de Pierre Laporte que comme un élan de conservatisme suscité par la rencontre des autorités avec certains éléments de la révolution culturelle des années 1960. Il se demande si la réaction du gouvernement fédéral est attribuable à la volonté, qui existait dans le cercle restreint du premier ministre Trudeau, de promouvoir un nouveau type de libéralisme. Opposés aux tendances anciennes de légitimation de la participation civique par le truchement d'organismes « représentatifs » non élus, Trudeau et les siens auraient caractérisé ces derniers de complices, volontaires ou inadvertants, d'actes de violence terroriste. Cet article repose sur une série de documents nouvellement déclassifiés du cabinet fédéral et des services secrets déposés dans les archives du premier ministre Trudeau, ainsi que sur une relecture de périodiques et de sources médiatiques du Québec.

All rights reserved / Tous droits réservés © The Canadian Historical Association / La Société historique du Canada, 2010

Ce document est protégé par la loi sur le droit d'auteur. L'utilisation des services d'Érudit (y compris la reproduction) est assujettie à sa politique d'utilisation que vous pouvez consulter en ligne.

https://apropos.erudit.org/fr/usagers/politique-dutilisation/

Cet article est diffusé et préservé par Érudit.

Érudit est un consortium interuniversitaire sans but lucratif composé de l'Université de Montréal, l'Université Laval et l'Université du Québec à Montréal. Il a pour mission la promotion et la valorisation de la recherche.

https://www.erudit.org/fr/

Winning Back the Intellectuals: Inside Canada's "First War on Terror," 1968-1970

MICHAEL GAUVREAU

Abstract

Historical treatments of the October Crisis have tended to focus on a simple dichotomy between the aims of the Canadian government and the Front de Libération du Québec*, have suggested the tensions in the relationship between federal and provincial levels of government during the crisis, or have sought to situate the* FLQ *within the emergence of a new strain of radical ideas in Québec during the 1960s. This paper takes as its starting-point the irony of the reluctance of the Trudeau government to brand the FLQ as "terrorists," and examines the federal government's response within a larger strategy to force the intellectual communities in both English Canada and Québec away from a sympathy for student radicalism and international decolonization struggles. It situates the Trudeau government's "war on terror" as less an episodic response to the kidnappings of James Cross and Pierre Laporte, but within a growing strand of conservatism in the encounter of the authorities with elements of the cultural revolution of the 1960s. It poses the question of whether the nature of the federal government's response may have been due to the desire, among members of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's inner circle, to promote a new type of liberal ideology that sought to dispense with older versions that legitimated civic participation through non-elected, "representative" bodies by defining the latter as conscious or unwitting accomplices of terrorist violence. The paper is based on a range of newly-declassified documents from both the federal cabinet and the security services deposited in Pierre Trudeau's prime ministerial archive, as well as a new reading of newspaper and media sources in Québec.*

Résumé

Les analyses historiques de la Crise d'octobre ont tendance à se cristalliser autour d'une dichotomie simple entre les intentions du gouvernement du

I would like to thank SSHRCC for supporting the research for this paper, as well as suggestions from Nancy Christie, the anonymous readers, and the editors of the JCHA for their constructive comments and suggestions which greatly improved the paper.

Canada et le Front de libération du Québec (FLQ), à souligner les tensions entre les États fédéral et provincial pendant la crise, ou encore à replacer le FLQ dans le contexte de l'éclosion d'idées radicales au Québec des années 1960. La présente recherche prend comme point de départ la réticence paradoxale de l'administration Trudeau à qualifier les felquistes de « terroristes » et étudie la réaction du gouvernement fédéral dans le contexte d'une stratégie élargie visant à forcer l'intelligentsia tant anglo-canadienne que québécoise à se désolidariser du radicalisme étudiant et des luttes de décolonisation internationales. L'auteur envisage la « guerre au terrorisme » entreprise par le gouvernement Trudeau moins comme une réaction ponctuelle à l'enlèvement de James Cross et de Pierre Laporte que comme un élan de conservatisme suscité par la rencontre des autorités avec certains éléments de la révolution culturelle des années 1960. Il se demande si la réaction du gouvernement fédéral est attribuable à la volonté, qui existait dans le cercle restreint du premier ministre Trudeau, de promouvoir un nouveau type de libéralisme. Opposés aux tendances anciennes de légitimation de la participation civique par le truchement d'organismes « représentatifs » non élus, Trudeau et les siens auraient caractérisé ces derniers de complices, volontaires ou inadvertants, d'actes de violence terroriste. Cet article repose sur une série de documents nouvellement déclassifiés du cabinet fédéral et des services secrets déposés dans les archives du premier ministre Trudeau, ainsi que sur une relecture de périodiques et de sources médiatiques du Québec.

> It would be very difficult to see how, if the Government had had the support, as it did not only of the large mass of the population, but also of the intermediary groups, the unions, the media, the professional associations and the universities, the crisis could have reached the proportions that it did.[1]

Since 2001, Canadians have participated in a global "War on Terror," a struggle engaging diplomatic, intelligence, economic, and military efforts. However, none of these interventions has matched either the military manpower or the political resources directed to the suppression, almost 40 years ago now, of the Front de Libération du Québec (FLQ), between October 1970 and January 1971.[2] This confrontation between the Canadian and Québec governments and the FLQ, a group of home-grown terrorists, has entered Canadian history as The "October Crisis." Though the facts are well-known, historical debate has centred around the rationale behind the imposition of the War

1 Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Fonds Pierre Elliott Trudeau (hereafter PET), MG 26 001, 41-3, FLQ Documentation, "Report of the Strategic Operations Centre," 10-12-1970.

2 Ibid., 43-18, General "SITREP no. 17, Dept. of National Defence," 30-10-1907. The operation involved over 10,000 troops, 1,200 vehicles, and 53 aircraft.

Measures Act (WMA) by the federal government on 16 October 1970. Was the WMA, with its abridgment of civil liberties in the name of rooting out FLQ terrorism, a response out of proportion to the actual extent of the insurrectionary threat? Was Québec, in fact, in a state of "apprehended insurrection" on 15 October 1970?

Though these events occurred nearly 40 years ago, there is a curious imbalance in the historiography surrounding the "October Crisis." Historians now know a great deal about the FLQ itself in terms of its members, ideology, and its context within a wider culture of radicalism in both Quebec and Canada[3] There are, however, two curious lacunae identified recently by William Tetley, a minister in Robert Bourassa's cabinet during the October events and author of a recent memoir on the crisis. One, a "silence" on the part of FLQ sympathizers who participated in some of the group's activities, but more significantly, a resounding absence of accounts from those implicated on the government side.[4] This paper seeks to redress the imbalance by examining a large, recently declassified federal documentation on the FLQ crisis assembled in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) as part of a quickly-orchestrated campaign against the FLQ between October and December 1970.

However, a number of disclaimers are necessary at the outset. First, this paper makes no attempt to enter the lists of the debate between government supporters and "revisionists" on the need to impose the WMA. That said, this new documentation enables us to pose more precise questions: were the Canadian and Québec governments, as many at the time claimed, "innocent" of the extent of the FLQ threat, and therefore failed to take the necessary precautions that might have precluded the resort to more extreme measures that

3 See Pierre Vallières, *Nègres blancs d'Amérique: Autobiographie précoce d'un terroriste québécois* (Montréal: Editions Parti Pris, 1968); Pierre Vallières, *The Assassination of Pierre Laporte: Behind the October 70 Scenario* (Toronto: James Lorimer, 1977). For recent historical treatments placing the FLQ in a larger radical culture of the 1960s, see Éric Bédard, *Chronique d'une insurrection appréhendée: la crise d'Octobre et le milieu universitaire* (Sillery: Septentrion, 1998); Éric Bédard, "The Intellectual Origins of the October Crisis," in *Creating Postwar Canada, 1945–1975*, eds. Magda Fahrni and Robert Rutherdale (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008), 45–60; Manon Leroux, *Les silences d'Octobre: les discours des acteurs de la crise de 1970* (Montréal: VLB éditeur, 2002); Sean Mills, "The Empire Within: Montreal, the Sixties, and the Forging of a Radical Imagination," (Ph.D. diss., Queen's University, 2007); Jean-Philippe Warren, *Ils voulaient changer le monde: le militantisme marxiste-léniniste au Québec* (Montréal: VLB éditeur, 2007); Bryan D. Palmer, *Canada's 1960s: The Ironies of Identity in a Rebellious Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 311–65.

4 William Tetley, *The October Crisis, 1970: An Insider's View* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), xix–xx. The only other published account of the October events by a government figure was undertaken by Gérard Pelletier, secretary of state in the Liberal government of Pierre Trudeau. This work was entitled *La crise d'Octobre* (Montreal: Les Éditions du Jour, 1971), translated into English as *The October Crisis* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1971; translated by Joyce Marshall).

involved restriction on civil liberties? What did the federal government really know about the FLQ, and to what extent did this knowledge shape a federal counter-terror strategy? Did government officials believe that there was a good case for the existence of a wider conspiracy that constituted a state of "apprehended insurrection" in Québec, which was advanced as the major justification for the WMA? Was there a concerted attempt at the ideological and political levels orchestrated by the federal government to beat back further threats of terrorism from the FLQ?

The major hypothesis advanced in this paper is that the October Crisis affords a lens for a more finely-nuanced exploration of the history of liberalism in Canada and Québec as it confronted the cultural transformations of the 1960s. Indeed, it is possible to suggest that the capture and neutralization of FLQ perpetrators was always coupled, in the mind of the Trudeau Cabinet and its civil servants, with the imperative necessity to engage in "a form of psychological warfare"[5] to counter what was perceived as a grave defection among the media and intellectuals in both English Canada and Québec from the central tenets of liberal democracy. In particular, government officials perceived a number of these groups and individuals as dangerously compromised by their adherence to an analogy between Québec and the Third World, with the corollary that violence was a legitimate part of the political process, especially when it came to righting social injustices. Central to the government position was a particular view of the social and cultural climate of the 1960s, which underpinned a conviction among many senior government figures, that *all* public authorities, and not simply those in Québec, were facing a serious, long-term crisis of legitimacy, and that further incidents of extremist violence were to be expected. Ranging from the prime minister of Canada, the premier of Québec, their ministers and officials, this effort involved the redefinition of democratic thought and action as grounded in an absolute rejection of violence, a definition that placed rather insurmountable obstacles between any mutual interaction or cross-fertilization between liberalism and certain types of radical thought and action. The Liberal governments of Pierre Trudeau and Robert Bourassa, while flaunting their reformist credentials, used their experience of the October Crisis to offer their respective publics a new liberalism that actively sought, in the name of democracy, to eviscerate from the liberal canon older notions of "corporatism" or the legitimacy of intervention in the public sphere by intermediary bodies such as unions, citizens' committees, and student groups. These groups, once regarded as healthy channels for the exercise of public opinion, were recast in the aftermath of the October Crisis in negative terms, as either con-

5 LAC-PET, 38-20, Diary, Notes for Mr. Chouinard, 26-10-1970.

duits for terrorist ideologies or activities or unwitting dupes or "multipliers" for extremist groups such as the FLQ. Henceforth, liberal democracy in Canada was to be a function of a personal, unmediated relationship between the government and the individual citizen based on a common adherence to values of orderly change and a shared willingness to defend liberalism against the threat of extremist violence.

One of the prevailing tropes that characterized the authorities' position in the crisis was that Canada and Canadians were somehow "innocent," and that the kidnappings had brutally awakened Canadians to the fact that their society was not immune from political violence.[6] However, the moral dichotomy between an "innocent" public and government and the calculated ruthlessness of the terrorists has tended, both during the October Crisis and subsequently, to obscure the question of what the government actually knew about the FLQ and how this knowledge was used to calibrate a counter-terrorist strategy. By the spring of 1970, the Montréal, Québec, and Canadian governments all possessed knowledge of the FLQ, which had, after all, been pursuing a campaign of violent crimes since 1963. Moreover, all three levels of government had, at least six months before October 1970, a clear prior warning that the FLQ intended to pursue a strategy of political kidnapping in order to radicalize the masses, especially following the arrest in February 1970 of two alleged members of the FLQ who were attempting to kidnap the Israeli consul in Montréal.[7] John Starnes, Director-General of the Security and Intelligence Branch of the RCMP, wrote in April 1970 that "we must seriously consider the possibility that attempts to kidnap prominent persons may be made" and urged the preparation of contingency plans.[8] Significantly, the same day, Starnes informed Solicitor-General George McIlraith of the possibility of radical elements in Québec resorting to kidnapping to secure the release of "political prisoners,"[9] while his colleague

6 Ibid., 38-3, Bill C-181, Speech of the Hon. John Turner, 4 November 1970, Commons Debates, Public Order (Temporary Measures) Act 1970, Provision of Emergency Powers for Preservation of Public Order, 883; ibid., 44-6, Speeches 1970, Government of Quebec, Department of Justice, Office of the Minister; ibid., 38-4, Discours de M. Bourassa à l'Assemblée Nationale sur les événements survenus récemment au Québec d'après le Journal des Débats du jeudi, 12 novembre 1970.

7 Ibid., 46-15, Miscellaneous 1970-71, J.E.M. Barrette, Assistant Commissioner D.S.I. (RCMP), "Threats Against Prominent Individuals by Organizations or Persons of "I" Directorate Interest — Canada," 14 April 1970. For an earlier statement of this argument, see Reg Whitaker, "Apprehended Insurrection?: RCMP Intelligence and the October Crisis," *Queen's Quarterly* 100, no. 2 (Summer 1993): 383–405, who states that the RCMP Security Service had infiltrated the FLQ by the mid-1960s, had supplied the federal government with realistic assessments of the threat of revolutionary terrorism, and had prepared contingency plans to deal with possible kidnappings.

8 LAC, PET, 46-15, Miscellaneous 1970-71, John Starnes, Director-General Security and Intelligence, "Memorandum," 27 April 1970

9 Ibid., Starnes to Hon. George McIlraith, Solicitor-General, 27 April 1970.

RCMP Assistant-Commissioner J.E.M. Barrette noted that "unsubstantiated information" suggested that the FLQ intended to kidnap the premier of Québec and murder hostages if their demands were not met, storing the bodies in abandoned, stolen cars.[10] This was almost exactly the script adhered to by the FLQ six months later. As early as 1 June 1970, one assessment of the Québec situation urged the federal government to "consider … attacking these organizations with at least psychological warfare."[11] At this point, the RCMP initiated contacts with the CIA to obtain information on the political ideologies motivating similar incidents in Latin America.[12]

One of the central elements in the decision by both the Québec and Canadian governments to invoke the WMA was the supposed evidence of a concerted FLQ strategy to use escalating violence to publicize its aims, win sympathy and support, and ultimately destabilize and paralyze the Québec government as the prelude to a popular insurrection. The question thus turns on what the governments thought they knew about the FLQ as an organization. A key component to support the thesis of prior planning was the supposed analogy between the FLQ and a variety of urban guerrilla organizations in Latin America. The approach to the CIA yielded an appraisal of one of the central texts of the Latin American revolutionary movement, the Brazilian Carlos Marighella's *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*.[13] Based on this appraisal, officials in the RCMP Security Services concluded as early as 14 April 1970, that the FLQ was "motivated exclusively by recent events in Central and South America which … might inspire similar acts in this country."[14]

In his speech to the Québec National Assembly on 12 November 1970, Premier Bourassa referred to the existence of the FLQ's four-stage plan, made public by Lucien Saulnier, the chairman of the Executive Committee of the city of Montréal, which advocated an escalation from "violent demonstrations, bombings, kidnappings, and selective assassinations." Bourassa informed the assembled legislators that three stages had already been successfully carried out, and unless firm action was taken to break the terrorists, he feared that there would be more kidnappings and actual assassinations.[15] Saulnier's allegations,

10 Ibid., Barrette, "Threats Against Prominent Individuals."

11 Ibid., 43-29, "Polaris — On Matters Concerning Canada's Internal Security," Issue 5, 1 June 1970.

12 Ibid., Barrette, "Threats Against Prominent Individuals."

13 Ibid., 46-15, Miscellaneous 1970-71, J.E.M. Barrette to CO's and Officers, 8 May 1970, "Carlos Marighella's Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla." The *Minimanual*'s chief contribution to revolutionary strategy was its emphasis on action by small cells of revolutionaries, designed to obviate infiltration by the police. By kidnapping "important persons," Marighella observed, a small number of revolutionaries would be able to sustain pressure on the police and armed forces, and by propagandizing government failures, would win the support of the masses of people.

14 Ibid., Barrette, "Threats Against Prominent Individuals."

15 Ibid., 38-4, "Discours de M. Bourassa à l'Assemblée Nationale."

though sensational, were not new information, but had, in fact, been rehearsed during 1969 testimony before a House of Commons committee investigating allegations of links between the federally-funded Company of Young Canadians and revolutionary movements in Montréal. Calling for a federal royal commission and immediate action to protect the security of the state, Saulnier drew upon a document captured during a police raid, allegedly authored by Pierre Vallières. Although Saulnier's allegations were greeted skeptically in November 1969 by federal parliamentarians and generally discounted as completely circumstantial in their linkage of the Company of Young Canadians and violent revolution,[16] they, and Vallières' *Stratégie révolutionnaire* were eagerly pursued by federal officials after 16 October 1970, as evidence of a blueprint for FLQ plans for future terrorist acts.

Once the October Crisis broke, this earlier documentation, some of which dated from 1964, was dusted off and enlisted to understand the FLQ mind-set. Documents purporting to link the Communist Party of Canada with the FLQ, circumstantial dealings between FLQ members and Cuban, Soviet, and French officials made their rounds of various federal departments,[17] but the two key influences on government responses were the *Minimanual* and the comparison between the FLQ and Latin American groups such as the Tupamaros,[18] and *Stratégie révolutionnaire*. No less an authority than Lieutenant-General Michael Dare, Vice-Chief of the Defence Staff, considered the latter pamphlet "as one of great significance in that it sets forth the broad doctrinal outline for the 'liberation' of Quebec from the bonds of Canadian colonialism, capitalism, and American imperialism." What was most disturbing for Canadian police and intelligence officials was that the FLQ anticipated a long-term struggle encompassing three stages of revolution: radicalization of social agitation; organization of people into committees of liberation with a view to mass uprising; and, finally, armed confrontation with the established order.[19] Most troubling for the government's strategy was the estimate of intelligence officials that if the emergency powers of the WMA were of limited duration (maximum of six months), this was of comparatively little significance for the FLQ, which was organized along the lines of a "compartment" type

16 On Saulnier's evidence and his reception at the House of Commons hearings, see Marcel Pépin, "Montréal depose une preuve de 47 points — pour prouver la subversion de la CJC," La Presse (28 novembre 1969); Gordon Pape, "Saulnier at CYC Hearing City Labelled Rebel HQ Canada-Wide Scrutiny Urged," Montreal Gazette (28 November 1969).

17 LAC, PET, 40-18, FLQ Documentation A-7, "Communist Involvement in the Quebec Separatist Movement," 22 October 1970; ibid., 40-20, FLQ Documentation A-9, "FLQ External Influences," 22 October 1970.

18 Ibid., 47-22, "Terrorist Organization, 1970," "Memorandum External Affairs to SOC — The Terrorist Movements in Canada and Uruguay — Similarities in Tactics," 6 November 1970.

19 Ibid., 40-13, FLQ Documents A-2, "Analyse de 'Stratégie révolutionnaire: rôle de l'avant-garde," M.R. Dare, Lt.-General, Vice-Chief of Defence Staff, 25 October 1970.

of security difficult for the police or intelligence services to penetrate. The revolutionaries would simply submerge themselves and preserve their apparatus intact, and then reconstitute their network with "considerable impunity."[20] Even reckoning on the capture of Cross's kidnappers and Laporte's killers, and the considerable public revulsion these acts engendered, government officials rated the odds of the FLQ's survival as "better than … even."[21] All this seemed to point to the existence of some explicit, well-planned FLQ strategy masterminded by an individual or group.[22] Even the shifting constellation of radical groups in Montréal was interpreted in a nefarious light by the authorities as "a deliberate attempt to confuse … and conceal the true identity of a clandestine group."[23] The Cross-Laporte kidnappings, far from being a final confrontation, were "an exercise in technique," with the FLQ probably reverting to bombing and threats. Its intention, pessimistically concluded one assessment, was "to maintain an atmosphere of terrorism," which would force governments into making errors of judgment, which would ultimately "alienate the young. They 'do not propose to win, but merely to make the governments lose'."[24]

From the perspective of the authorities, the prevailing tendency in these assessments was to credit the organization with far more unity of purpose than it in fact possessed.[25] Whether or not the kidnappings were consciously orchestrated by a centralized group of terrorist "masterminds," intelligence assessments of the situation subscribed to a conspiracy theory that posited a dynamic and reciprocal connection between terrorist acts as events, and the uncanny ability of FLQ leaders and propagandists to motivate and energize potential masses of sympathizers.[26] It is this that explains the rather bizarre interview on 5 December 1970, between the recently-released James Cross, the abducted British trade commissioner, and James Davey, program secretary to Prime Minister Trudeau, and the federal official responsible for coordinating the political campaign against the FLQ. Clearly influenced by government

20 Ibid., Barrette, "Threats Against Prominent Individuals."

21 Ibid., 40-12, "A Paper on the FLQ," 22 Oct. 1970.

22 Ibid., 40-19, FLQ Documentation A-8, "FLQ – Organization and Membership," 22 Oct. 1970.

23 Ibid., 40-12, "A Paper on the FLQ," 22 Oct. 1970.

24 Ibid., 41-9, FLQ Documentation A-30, "Observations Relating to the Critical Political Atmosphere in Canada," 17 Oct. 1970.

25 This was the conclusion of one report written the day after the proclamation of the WMA. Ibid., "Observations Relating to the Critical Political Atmosphere in Canada".

26 More recent scholarship has downplayed the idea that there was an FLQ "ideology," suggesting that particularly after 1968, those engaged in the movement tended to be largely anti-intellectual, and more dedicated to the idea that revolution would be achieved by "spontaneous" action that would supply a kind of shock therapy to galvanize the masses towards revolutionary action. See Bédard, "The Intellectual Origins of the October Crisis," 53-60.

27 In this respect, the term "eye-witness" is somewhat problematic, because Cross stated that he had been blindfolded throughout his captivity, although he appears to have had considerable verbal discussion with his captors. He did not learn their names or identities until after his release.

intelligence assessments and working from the premise that the FLQ possessed a coherent ideology and long-term plan of action, Davey queried Cross, the principal "eye-witness," to the inner workings of an FLQ cell,[27] on what motivated his captors, their ideological beliefs, and whether they were taking orders from above. For Cross, the outstanding feature of his captors was that while they had a clear perspective on Québec as a colonized society, "their intellectual basis in Marxism is very weak." Though aware of the Brazilian kidnapping situation, none of them appeared to have read Marighella's *Minimanual* or any of the other classic statements of Third-World revolutionary warfare.[28] Nor was Cross giving Davey the answers he wanted about long-term revolutionary organization and strategy: beyond hinting at the existence of certain broad guidelines for action and the possibility that there were other members, it appeared no one in the Libération cell had any plans to enlist university or CEGEP students. More significantly, they evinced little interest in the writings of Pierre Vallières, regarded as one of the ideologists or "masterminds" of the FLQ. Nor beyond the building of parcel bombs disguised as children's toys, was there any planned long-term escalation of terror.[29]

If with hindsight we know that the authorities may well have overestimated the numbers, coherence, and strategic abilities of the terrorists, assessments based on the *Minimanual* and *Stratégie révolutionnaire* played a key role in crafting an explicit counter-terrorism strategy by the federal government. Writing on 8 October 1970, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs A.E. Ritchie was the first to suggest the need for a centralized, controlled federal response managed by a small working group within the Privy Council Office, explicitly set up to consider what statements the prime minister should make in response to a variety of possible outcomes to the Cross kidnapping.[30] Within the Cabinet, the decision to take a hard line to suppress the FLQ threat was pushed most emphatically by the Minister of Regional and Economic Expansion Jean Marchand, Trudeau's most senior Québec minister, and reinforced by Principal Secretary Marc Lalonde, head of the PMO, who were both worried about the likelihood of Premier Bourassa losing control of the situation.[31] However, it was only after the proclamation of the WMA on 16 October 1970, that the Trudeau government established the Special Operations Centre (SOC), a more formal mechanism to direct and coordinate federal strategy. To

28 LAC-PET, 38-14, J.M. Davey, "Interview with Mr. J.R. Cross, Dec. 5, 1970."

29 Ibid.

30 LAC-PET, 40-9, A.E. Ritchie "Memorandum for Mr. R.G. Robertson (Privy Council Office), Oct. 8, 1970."

31 For a recent account of decision-making during the Crisis, see John English, *Just Watch Me: The Life of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, 1968-2000* (Toronto: Knopf Canada, 2009), 86-7. The significance of Marchand's influence on the decision has been suggested by Whitaker, "Apprehended Insurrection."

this end, key figures within the PMO such as Lalonde and James Davey sought to forge some direction and coordination among the four federal intelligence agencies dealing with the crisis. Anticipating a drawn-out campaign against the FLQ and lack of a positive outcome to Cross's abduction, the cabinet agreed on 19 October 1970, to the constitution of a SOC within the PMO, headed by James M. Davey, Trudeau's program secretary, who reported directly to Marc Lalonde.[32] The mandate of this organization was to end the overall lack of political direction by channeling information from departments and agencies directly to the PMO and cabinet, and to formulate and implement a communications strategy to contain and pre-empt FLQ strategy by harnessing "all the levers the government have" to ensure the return of stability, which would "allow all governments to return to the vital task of the reform and development of Canadian society and its structures."[33] Armed with intelligence assessments going back several months and a wealth of information now available about the FLQ, a cabinet meeting on 18 October concluded that "there appeared to be an FLQ strategy which must be contained and pre-empted by a federal strategy which would retain and reinforce the confidence in an support of all Canadians for their government."[34] At this point, despite the emergency powers of the WMA having given the police and military the legal upper hand in their campaign against the FLQ, the mood in Trudeau's inner circle was quite pessimistic as to how the crisis was going to play out. Short-term analyses stressed the possibility of more demonstrations, with the "frightening" possibility of "explosive escalation." One report rated the possibility of large demonstrations, "'brutal'" suppression of demonstrations, assassinations, further kidnappings, and the death of Cross as "high," and the capture of the FLQ terrorists as "low."[35] Gordon Gibson, one of the PM's main policy advisers, specifically cited the dangers "of a confrontation between the Army and student groups … in the event that the Army remains in place for very long."[36] Gibson urged the federal government to formulate contingency plans for the most likely scenario of "a

32 Ibid, 43-24 General, "Memorandum to Mr. Robertson from J.M. Davey re Roles of Various Organizations in Relation to Quebec Crisis," 9-11-1970. Other key players in the SOC were Gordon Gibson, one of Trudeau's principal speechwriters, and D.F. Wall, Assistant-Secretary to the Cabinet for Security Matters.

33 Ibid., 43-8 FLQ Documentation General, "Memo to PM, re A Strategy for Dealing with tge FLQ, by Crowe," 21-10-1970; Ibid., 43-24, General, "Memorandum to Mr. Robertson from Mr. J. Davey re Roles of Various Organizations in Relation to Quebec Crisis," 9-11-1970.

34 Ibid., 42-35, General, "Record of Cabinet Decisions re FLQ Kidnappings," 18-10-1970.

35 Ibid., 43-9 General, "Climax Events," 21-10-1970; Ibid., 43-10, General, "Spontaneous Events (outside government control)," 21-10-1970.

36 Ibid., Gordon Gibson, "Memorandum" to Marc Lalonde, Notes of Meeting Oct. 19, Operations Task Force.

37 Ibid., Gibson, "Memorandum."

long siege," with emotions of shock and revulsion drained away, and "the government, the police, the Army, the War Measures Act looking increasingly helpless and perhaps even ridiculous."[37]

What emerged in Ottawa during the days and weeks following the proclamation of the WMA was the conviction that both Québec and Canada faced a widespread threat at the level of basic values that went far beyond the rooting out of a few terrorists. Clearly alarmed that a very small group of revolutionary activists had triggered a process "in which many separate actions by individuals in various parts of Quebec society interacted to have a snowball effect," Trudeau's key advisers explained that ministers must realize that "there is a substantial group of people in Canada, who not only do not accept the electoral-parliamentary route as a means of bringing about change, but who actively propose the use of violence to support their opinions." Many of these radicals were highly-educated and understood "the way in which the system functions, its many inherent contradictions and of how to exploit these contradictions either to slow down the system or to make it look ridiculous, the use of communications in all forms, written, electronic, mass psychology, in all its aspects." While easy to dismiss as "bandits and criminals," Trudeau's advisers concluded that this element possessed "a coherent and well articulated philosophy to justify to themselves and to their peers, both politically and morally, the methods that they use, including violence.[38] Ministers and senior officials were concerned about what they considered an alarming political vacuum. In their estimation, a profile of the authorities had emerged among the media and the wider public, one that tended to highlight security rather than the political struggle against separatism.[39] This indicated an imperative need, not only for a more well-calibrated coordination of a strategy that must ultimately be *political* in character, but for a long-term campaign designed to break the psychological hold that revolutionary activism had apparently established over wide sections of the Québec population.

One immediate problem lay in explaining how, despite having had clear prior warning of political kidnappings from its own security services, Ottawa did not take preventive action designed to forestall the FLQ.[40] According to the SOC, prior to Cross's abduction, there was sufficient but not complete information available to forewarn the government of the "possibility/probability of

38 Ibid., 41-3, FLQ Documentation A-25, "Report of the Strategic Operations Centre," 10-12-1970, D.F. Wall, Assistant Secretary to the Cabinet, to Hon. Gérard Pelletier, Secretary of State, 17 Dec. 1970.

39 Ibid., 43-8, FLQ Documentation General, "Memo to PM: re: A Strategy for Dealing with the FLQ, by Crowe," 21-10-1970.

40 This view that the RCMP had failed in its intelligence-gathering was even promoted within Trudeau's Cabinet by Gérard Pelletier, the Secretary of State, and author of an influential account of the October events. See Whitaker, "Apprehended Insurrection?," 393.

an 'October crisis' occurring" and to warrant preventative or preparatory steps. The failure to do this was blamed on lack of mechanisms within the federal government for "political evaluation" of information collected by the RCMP, and an absence of effective channels of communication or of analytical tools to relate information about the FLQ to wider political, social, and economic developments.[41]

Central to the long-term strategy devised in the SOC was an emphasis on a centrally-controlled "contre-offensive psychologique," aimed at "isolating the FLQ from the society in which it operates."[42] Despite statements for public consumption that distinguished the FLQ from the Parti Québécois (PQ), inner circles of the federal government clearly maintained that a connection did exist between the terrorists and the political separatist movement that maintained its allegiance to electoral-parliamentary democracy. What so perplexed the authorities, and was underscored by the federal Justice Minister John Turner as a major rationale behind the imposition of the WMA, was that the ordinary process of law was not designed to cope with a "criminal" organization like the FLQ which paid "lip service to causes that are perfectly legitimate; causes such as unemployment, inadequate housing, grievances of taxi drivers, and so on."[43] More troubling, the FLQ's revolutionary activism clearly benefited from the *guerre psychologique* waged by the PQ, which had successfully propagated a fixed image of federalism and the government as manipulated by the rich.[44] Given these perceptions, it was imperative, stated Deputy-Secretary to the Cabinet M.A. Crowe, that the government break out of a "reactive mode" and recover freedom of action — to clearly set forth that its priorities were reformist rather than simply directed to the reimposition of law and order. Only the understanding and use of psychological warfare would enable the government to re-enlist the allegiance of "the legitimate forces for change within Canada."[45] This, according to A.E. Ritchie of external affairs, was absolutely crucial to ensure that the government avoided doing anything that might "drive moderate or radical opinion in[to] the arms of the FLQ."[46] While not holding this forth as a panacea to solve the crisis in Canada or Québec, the key was to break the image, held by a number of elements in Québec society, that the FLQ was a

41 Ibid., 41-3, FLQ Documentation A-25(1), "Report of the Strategic Operations Centre," 10-12-1970.

42 Ibid., 48-12 General 22-10-1970, "Offensive Psywar Guidelines"; Ibid, 40-28, FLQ Documentation A-17, "Le FLQ et les institutions éducationnelles," 12-11-1970.

43 Ibid., 38-3, "Bill C-181 …", 883.

44 Ibid., 41-4, FLQ Documentation A-25 (2), "Structures et programmes de la Phase II (Séparatisme)," 10-12-1970.

45 Ibid., 43-8, General 21-10-1970, Memo to PM re: A Strategy for Dealing with the FLQ"; Ibid., 42-35, General, "Record of Cabinet Decisions re FLQ Kidnappings," 18-10-1970.

46 Ibid., 40-9, Appended, A.E. Ritchie, "Memorandum for the Minister – Kidnappings," – Confidential, 19 Oct. 1970.

socially progressive force. In addition to assaulting the moral and ideological credibility of revolutionary separatism, federal authorities maintained that the decisive battleground would be the mass media, which was widely condemned within government circles for disseminating false and misleading information (i.e., FLQ propaganda) and for either consciously or unconsciously creating a climate of sympathy for the FLQ, giving "aid and comfort to the radical enemy." It was here that the authorities estimated that they would be able to break the back of the FLQ by detaching from the activist hard-core those individuals who sympathized with the terrorists out of ideological motivation to better society.[47] Looking beyond the immediate kidnappings, officials in the PMO recommended setting up permanent organizational structures, in particular, a working group to be headed by Marc Lalonde, to deal with "revolution and separatism." This group would launch an expanded the coordinated intelligence and information campaign designed to infiltrate the PQ and other "intermediate" bodies[48] in Québec, such as unions and anti-poverty groups which had evinced too much sympathy for the FLQ. "Dans une année," lugubriously concluded one report, "il sera trop tard, car alors le FLQ aura pénétré directement la masse révolutionnaire."[49]

The conflation of terrorism and separatism, and the recasting of the crisis as a question of psychology rather than as an issue of national security, reflected two significant concerns which influenced the thinking of the prime minister's inner circle. First, despite the overwhelming public support both in English Canada and Québec for the proclamation of the WMA and the refusal to accede to FLQ demands,[50] there was a persistent fear that the authorities might, in the long run, lose the battle for the hearts and minds of Canadians because they did not command the full allegiance of the "intellectuals," a term variously used to describe the media, university professors, and students. The corollary to this belief was that winning the adhesion of this group to the virtues of electoral-parliamentary democracy was key to the long-term stability and progress of Canadian society, which government officials regarded as troubled by what they viewed as a growing wave of radical dissent. This flowed from a specific interpretation of the social and cultural changes of the 1960s, which stressed the "frustration" and "confusion" of young university students as the key vector of protest and revolutionary activism. Second, the location of the October Crisis in the psychological-intellec-

47 Ibid., 48-12 General 22-10-1970, "Offensive Psywar Guidelines."

48 Ibid., 43-49, General, "Mémo de Marc Lalonde au PM au sujet du separatisme et terrorisme au Québec," 14-12-1970; Ibid., 41-4, "Structures et programmes de la Phase II (Séparatisme)."

49 Ibid., 40-28, FLQ Documentation A-17, "Le FLQ et les institutions éducationnelles," 12-11-1970.

50 See results of the 15 November 1970 CTV Poll, which indicated an approval rating of 86.6% in Canada as a whole for imposition of the War Measures Act, with the Quebec figure standing at 84.8%. See LAC, MG 26 O11, 43-25, General 15/11/1970 – CTV's W5 Survey.

tual realm was a strategy engaged in by federal officials to deflect attention from what many of them considered a rather weak case for "apprehended insurrection," the key justification for the assumption of emergency powers.

In the days that followed the proclamation of the WMA, Pierre Trudeau's inner circle sought some coordinated direction over the campaign against the FLQ. One of the more interesting discussions centred around the language to be employed to describe the adversary. Up to that point, media commentators, Canadian and Québec government ministers had used the term "terrorist" to describe the FLQ; but a number of the prime minister's advisers were clearly uncomfortable with this designation, as one that was too positive and tending to legitimize the organization and purposes of the FLQ. Writing to Marc Lalonde, Gordon Gibson summarized the reservations felt by a number of officials regarding the terminology employed to describe the "bandits." "The use of the word 'terrorists,'" Gibson stated, "connotes a depth and continuity to the movement which we would wish to avoid, and that the description of the group as the 'FLQ' inevitably cloaks them with some of the legitimacy of a political party."[51] The relative caution surrounding the use of a term that is today employed far more indiscriminately is revelatory both of the government's sense of a rather tenuous relationship with the intellectual community, and the rather positive view that "liberation front" struggles enjoyed in a vocal and influential, though perhaps small, segment of Canadian opinion, but one that both the Canadian and Québec governments regarded as critical to rebuilding social consensus and stable authority.

Writing in January 1971, after the immediate urgency of the crisis had passed and the army had withdrawn from Québec, James Davey vented his displeasure to Ramsay Cook who, with a number of prominent academics and personalities in Quebec and English Canada, had endorsed a booklet critical of the WMA. Although one of the key "organic intellectuals" of Canadian liberalism and a major backer of Pierre Trudeau,[52] Cook became the target of official wrath because he did not concur with the necessity of the WMA, a position which, Davey reckoned, would hamper government efforts at political stabilization. Prominent personalities such as Cook clearly did not appreciate the precariousness of the situation, which Davey ascribed to the fissure between the authorities and the intellectuals. How, he wondered, had the FLQ been able to command more space "in the electronic and written media of this country than the elected representatives?" Building to a paroxysm of anger, Davey reminded Cook of the moral failings of his fellow intellectuals and social progressives:

51 Ibid., 40-9, Gibson to Marc Lalonde, "Memorandum"; Ibid., A.E. Ritchie, "Memorandum for the Minister – Kidnappings," 19 Oct. 1970.

52 For Cook's critique of the imposition of the War Measures Act, see Ramsay Cook, *The Teeth of Time: Remembering Pierre Elliott Trudeau* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006), 103-22.

"This was a province, in which 'the editor of a respected newspaper' idly speculated on the life of the government. This was a province in which some of the 'elite' recommended that the government give in to the demands of the FLQ. This was a province in which, to my knowledge, virtually no intellectual stood up at the height of the crisis to give any kind of moral support to the government."[53]

The vehemence of this exchange reflected a nagging sense in Trudeau's inner circle that the rationale for acceding to the Québec government's request to use the WMA was highly debatable and that despite the massive public approbation, the federal government had not made the strongest possible case for using emergency powers. What the PMO feared, more than anything else, was that the October Crisis would drag on with no resolution to Cross's abduction, and despite the replacement of the WMA in November 1970 by a more anodyne Public Order (Temporary Measures) Act, the authorities would have to contemplate making a case for extending the emergency legislation beyond April 1971, which would expose the government to more critical scrutiny of their intentions and actions. From the perspective of the PMO and Cabinet, the existence of an "influential group in Quebec," centred on Claude Ryan, the editor of *Le Devoir*, and René Lévesque, leader of the PQ, who were critical of the actions of both Québec and Canadian governments during the hostage crisis, and opposed to the WMA, was highly problematic, as there was in existence a respectable counter-narrative of the October Crisis at odds with government claims, one that could not simply be dismissed as inspired by the FLQ. As one official in the PMO declared, the "propaganda line" proffered by Ryan, Lévesque, and their supporters "reinforced by the widespread concern about civil rights, could be fairly effective in blurring these issues," because they enjoyed "a good deal of credibility in the minds of many educated Quebeckers."[54] Government spokesmen were acutely conscious of the fact that the case for the WMA rested upon the concept of "apprehended insurrection," rather than upon the fact of an actual insurrection. It was a justification that always, in their minds, was exposed to contestation, and was one that a number of key advisers to the prime minister found a weak grounds for the imposition of emergency measures.

Despite outward solidarity between the Liberal administrations at Ottawa and Québec City, there was, in fact, a significant difference in interpretation of the nature of "apprehended insurrection" offered by spokesmen for the respective governments. For Premier Robert Bourassa and his Justice Minister Jérôme Choquette, the situation on 15 October 1970, was critical, because the police

53 LAC-PET, 43-69, J.M. Davey to Ramsay Cook, 28 Jan. 1971.

54 Ibid., 41-17, FLQ Documentation, A-38, Kidnappings, Discrediting the Policies of the Third Force, C. Roquet, Task force, Operations Centre to Mr. Davey, Special Operations Centre, 30 Oct. 1970.

forces were exhausted in dealing with the hostage crisis, and the negotiations between the government and the FLQ had reached an impasse. The intervention of the FLQ Chénier cell, which kidnapped Pierre Laporte, produced, according to Choquette, "an extremely ambiguous situation," raising the possibility of further social deterioration accentuating the fragile position of the Québec government.[55] Québec cabinet ministers, in particular, have cited the 14 October 1970 petition of the 16 "eminent" personalities, urging the government to show greater flexibility in negotiating to save Cross and Laporte and the "Grand Soir" demonstration of 15 October at the Paul Sauvé Arena in Montréal, where a crowd of 3,000 listened to Pierre Vallières, Charles Gagnon, and Michel Chartrand, president of the Montréal Central Council of the Confederation des Syndicats Nationaux (CSN) whip up support for the FLQ Manifesto.[56]

However, the "fragility of authority" thesis advanced by Bourassa and his ministers was contested by no less a figure than Pierre Trudeau himself. In a 5 November 1970 interview on the CBC program "Encounter," the prime minister responded to a question from regarding the state of the Québec government by declaring, "I wasn't worried at anytime that the Government would be upset by a coup d'état or anything like that." Rather, Trudeau alluded to the insufficiency of the means at the disposal of the police, the province, and the city of Montréal to "come to grips with the terrorist conspiracy."[57] Likewise, Trudeau moved quickly to scotch rumours swirling regarding Claude Ryan's role in attempting to establish a "provisional government" that would have, at the

55 Ibid., "Speeches 1970"; 38-4, "Discours de M. Robert Bourassa."

56 The Oct. 15 demonstration, held just before the War Measures Act came into effect, was alluded to by Bourassa in his 12 November speech to the National Assembly (38-4, "Discours de M. Robert Bourassa), and by Choquette, (44-6, Speeches 1970). The recent memoir by William Tetley expressed the Bourassa Cabinet's concern for the petition of the sixteen "eminent personalities" and the *Grand Soir* demonstration as key evidence of a chain of events leading to further marches, riots, and confrontations with the authorities. See *The October Crisis*, 69-70, 50-58.

57 Ibid., "Programme Encounter: Interview with the Prime Minister," 10:30 hrs. P.M., November 5th, Interviewing Ron Collister CBC, Charles Lynch, Southam News, and Pierre C. O'Neil, La Presse.

58 Ibid. The rumours of Ryan's role in a "provisional government" have been taken more seriously by Tetley in *The October Crisis*, 117-131, who subscribes to the thesis that "if there was smoke, there must be fire." For an analysis of the "alliance" between Ryan and René Lévesque during the October Crisis, see the recent treatment of the role of *Le Devoir* by Guy Lachapelle, *Claude Ryan et la violence du pouvoir:* Le Devoir *et la Crise d'octobre 1970 ou le combat des journalistes démocrates* (Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2005). According to Ryan, the rumours originated, not in the early days of the Crisis itself, but after the proclamation of the WMA. They were initially circulated by Alexandrine Pelletier, wife of the federal Secretary of State, Gérard Pelletier, at a party in Ottawa two days before the Montreal municipal election pitting Mayor Jean Drapeau, a hard-line foe of the FLQ and other left-wing groups, against the *Front d'action populaire* [FRAP], a reformist coalition of civic activists.

height of the hostage crisis, replaced Bourassa's Liberal team, reminding his interviewers that Ryan had simply written an editorial outlining three hypothetical scenarios that might result from the hostage crisis.[58] Indeed, the public pronouncements of the federal government were explicitly crafted to draw attention away from any precise chain of evidence or of the existence of any precise FLQ plan that would underpin the claim that Québec was in a state of "apprehended insurrection." This was obliquely suggested by the prime minister himself in his national broadcast of 16 October, in which he urged Canadians "not to become so obsessed by what the government has done today in response to terrorism that they forget the opening play in this vicious game. That play was taken by the revolutionaries; they chose to use bombing, murder, and kidnapping."[59] For Justice Minister John Turner, the government did not have to prove the existence of wider conspiracies or "allegations of provisional governments." Turner had harsh words for those "who still continue to suggest that our decision had to be based upon some sort of tallying up, some sort of mathematical summary of the number of sticks of dynamite that had been stolen, or the estimate of the number of terrorists involved with the FLQ and the number of specific instances of violence that had taken place." He countered that the government's decision "involved a value judgment" that had to be seen against a "total background" of events in Québec that formed "a continuum of change in the social fabric of that province."[60]

Within Trudeau's inner circle, there was considerable discussion surrounding the crafting of a justification and some questioning of the amount of information that should be released to the Canadian public. While it is certainly true that the immediate public support for the proclamation of the WMA was overwhelmingly positive, there were certain notes of skepticism. For example, on 27 October, reports received from 17 of 22 Liberal riding presidents in the Montréal area noted that on the subject of a widespread and growing FLQ conspiracy, "généralement on n'y croit pas: ce n'est pas possible qu'au Québec, quelques hommes renversent le gouvernement." Their suggestion regarding the WMA: "laisser mourir cette affaire si possible."[61] Because of this widespread skepticism, the federal cabinet set forth a series of guidelines for public statements by ministers. It was especially important "not to give any indications that more information will be forthcoming in the future to justify the actions of the

Because Ryan and the Pelletiers had a long and somewhat adversarial history going back to their days in *Action Catholique* and Ryan's consistent skepticism regarding the intellectual and religious value of Gérard Pelletier's periodical, *Cité libre*, his assertion adds a complex personal dimension to the events of the October Crisis. See Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (Montréal), Fonds Claude-Ryan, P558, 1995-12-001/353, Claude Ryan, "La dernière crise n'a rien réglée au contraire," *Joliette: Journal du Nord*, 3 fév. 1971.

59 Ibid., 42-32, "Notes for a National Broadcast by the Prime Minister," Oct. 16, 1970.

60 Ibid., 38-3, "Bill C-181 …" 879.

61 Ibid., 38-21, Diary 27-10-1970, "Secret-Rapport B-1."

government. The important facts are known and a judgment was made. No amount of future information will make happy the people who are criticizing now."[62] In the opinion of Deputy-Secretary to the Cabinet M.A. Crowe, it was not necessary to identify particular FLQ plots; but it was incumbent upon the authorities to establish that there were serious underlying conditions of instability, unrest, and dissatisfaction that might have discredited the regime sufficiently that it would have been forced to abdicate; and, secondly, "that there is in existence a disciplined and determined revolutionary group whose significant membership may be extremely small but which is prepared to take advantage of the situation."[63]

Unfortunately, for Crowe's chain of reasoning, the prime minister himself, a few weeks later poured cold water on the notion that the crisis was of sufficient magnitude to have compelled the abdication of the Québec government — a notion also repudiated by William Tetley's "insider" account of the October Crisis[64] — and in the ensuing weeks, government intelligence assessments also tended to discount the notion of a well-organized revolutionary conspiracy that had infiltrated the student milieus of Québec.[65] By early December, the RCMP Security Services informed the PMO that it was no longer reasonable to "talk of a plan in which the FLQ masterminded the actions of hundreds of people …. Rather it is more realistic to think that they created a basic situation that was exploited by the Parti Québécois and many other individuals for their own particular purposes."[66] Here, the focus had clearly shifted from revolutionary terrorism to the "threat" to Canadian federalism posed by a legitimate sovereignty option, and a denunciation of the failure of "intellectuals" to support the government's position. Indeed, while insiders like James Davey continued to insist that the government had correctly assessed the nature of an "apprehended insurrection," and had engaged in a proper exercise of judgment in order to protect Canadians and ward off future violence,[67] other high-placed officials were not so sure. Gordon Robertson, the Clerk of the Privy Council, advised the prime minister to turn down the request of Robert Stanfield, the leader of the opposition, for a royal commission into "the background of the terrorism and other

62 Ibid., 38-20, Diary, "Notes for Mr. Chouinard," 26-10-1970.

63 Ibid., 43-7 General, "Memo from Crowe re the FLQ Revolution, " 20 Oct. 1970.

64 Tetley described Bourassa as a strong and discerning leader very much in command of the situation throughout.

65 LAC-PET, 40-28, FLQ Documentation A-17, "Le FLQ et les institutions éducationnelles," 12-11-1970; Ibid., 41-20, FLQ Documentation A-41, "Memo concerning possible Campus Unrest at the University of Quebec," 23-11-1970.

66 Ibid., 41-3 FLQ Documentation A-25 (1), "Report of the Strategic Operations Centre," 10-12-1970.

67 Ibid., 43-69, Davey to Cook, 28 Jan. 1971.

68 Ibid., 43-55, Memo to PM from Robertson re Proposal by Mr. Stanfield for a Commission of Inquiry on Terrorism, 18-12-1970, Robert Stanfield to PM, 4 Dec. 1970.

events leading up to the War Measures Act as well as the administration of the Act."[68] In his official response to Stanfield, Trudeau cited the fact that terrorism was still going on and it would be unwise to reveal sources of intelligence necessary for police work; however, Robertson's advice went beyond this, urging Trudeau that a royal commission "could not do other than reopen for contention a whole host of arguments that would be damaging both in Quebec and in the country generally."[69] In proffering this advice, Robertson was clearly worried that the government's case for apprehended insurrection might not, in light of recent developments, actually hold up in the court of public opinion, and this might give credence to the much-derided "intellectuals" like Ryan and Lévesque by validating their stand in defence of civil liberties.

Perhaps the most skeptical and critical conclusion to be drawn by someone from the inner circle was that of D.F. Wall, assistant-secretary to the cabinet for security matters. Anticipating that emergency legislation might have to be extended beyond April 1971, Wall was concerned that the government would have to make a reasonable case to the Canadian public, and would have to answer questions regarding the significant role that certain incidents, such as the *Grand Soir* at the Paul Sauvé Arena, played in the decision of the Québec and Canadian governments to resort to emergency powers. Rather than the fiery invocation to violence that Bourassa, Choquette, and Tetley remembered from this occasion, Wall's own sources described the assembly as "dull and unprovocative" which began as a "cheerful political meeting" to support the Front d'action populaire (FRAP), the Montréal municipal party opposed to Mayor Jean Drapeau. While copies of the FLQ Manifesto had been passed out at the door, no one present regarded the assembly as supportive of the FLQ, and the audience evinced disinterest and cynicism towards the FLQ cause, and there was certainly no descent into the streets in support of revolutionary violence. If this was true, Wall stated, "it is probable that any attempt by the Government to justify the invocation of the War Measures Act on the basis of incidents such as this will be laughed out of court." He suggested that the government be prepared to make "a realistic case" for continuing emergency legislation. In the final analysis, the government could not rely upon "shock and fear" to maintain a public consensus in favour of its stand in Québec, but would ultimately have to offer factual evidence to explain its position.[70] Fortunately for the authorities, the release of James Cross on 3 December 1970, obviated the need to seek

69 Ibid., R.G. Robertson, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister," 18 December 1970; Trudeau to Stanfield, 18 December 1970. Robertson's memoirs, published in 2000, differ somewhat by adhering closely to the idea that Trudeau was more than justified in proclaiming the WMA. See Gordon Robertson, Memoirs of a Very Civil Servant: Mackenzie King to Pierre Trudeau (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 264–5.

70 Ibid., 47-24, War Measures Act 1970–1971, D.F. Wall, "Memorandum for Mr. J. Davey, Justification for Invocation of the War Measures Act," 10 March 1971.

an extension of the emergency legislation beyond April 1971, and the government did not have to offer more information to the Canadian public.

However, perhaps the most intriguing element that emerges from the government response to the October Crisis is not so much the assessment of the threat from revolutionary terrorism, but the overwhelming sense of a gulf between the authorities and the intellectuals in Québec and to a lesser extent in English Canada. The sense that the government was isolated and did not command the moral approbation of the makers of public opinion rested on a belief that in Québec, 90 percent of the "classes intellectuelles, académiques," had been reached by the separatist message.[71] The intellectuals, identified as Radio-Canada journalists, popular radio show hosts, "certains radicaux du PQ et … de FRAP," journals such as *Québec-Presse* and *Quartier latin*, were blamed for inciting a "pedagogy of subversion" among Québec college and university students, persuading them to believe that they were alienated and confused. Since 1968, this process, fomented by younger professors who touched the nationalist and socialist emotions of their students, had been penetrated by outside agitators who, while rarely directly involved in student protests, had been able to ignite spectacular demonstrations among Québec students. This made higher education "le meilleur milieu révolutionnaire en puissance" because a few outside agitators sympathetic to the FLQ could take advantage of this alienation and confusion to provoke a violent confrontation with the authorities.[72]

In explaining how this situation had arisen, the government's reasoning is highly revealing. From the outset, this breakdown could be ascribed neither to the existence of profound socio-economic cleavages in Québec society, nor to the persistence of intractable social injustices, nor to the presence of a coherent radical ideology, for this would be to lend credence to a substantial portion of the FLQ grievances against the liberal-democratic regime. Most tellingly, to employ any language suggesting an analogy between the FLQ and Third World liberation movements would, in the estimation of officials in the PMO, not only further polarize the struggle between federalism and separatism, but would also reinforce, in the minds of the intellectuals, the view that the FLQ did, after all, represent a socially progressive force in Québec society. The latter assumption, according to the authorities, rested on a widespread belief that the analogy between the FLQ and decolonization movements was a valid one, and from the early days of the crisis, it became a particular target of government statements.[73]

---

71 Ibid., 41-4, FLQ Documentation A-25 (2), "Structures et programmes de la Phase II (Séparatisme)," 10-12-1970.

72 Ibid., 40-28, FLQ Documentation A-17, "Le FLQ et les institutions éducationnelles," 12-11-1970.

73 Ibid., 44-6, "Speeches 1970," Government of Quebec, Department of Justice, Office of the Minister.

To avoid this potential pitfall, assessments of the situation carried out by the PMO and federal government agencies turned, in order to explain the rise in subversion to the point of crisis, to a somewhat more conservative explanation which downplayed the clash of ideology between advocates of liberalism and promoters of revolution. These analyses stressed the political importance of the 18-30 age group, with a particular focus on the somewhat narcissistic preoccupation of this cohort with asserting their own social prominence and quest for security. Since 1958, asserted one study, a generational consciousness had been formed among Montréal students, which resembled that found in other parts of Canada and Western Europe with its peculiar blend of a heightened social consciousness and allegiance to special interests. Rejecting the authority of parents and religious values promulgated by the church, this group found its leaders in "the top end of the generation … those who are educators, creative artists, political thinkers and the established professions." For the past 12 years, "they have been 'selling' themselves, unconsciously, on themselves. In order for their special generation to survive they have chosen to secure their own future politically, and generally seem to agree that they must control politically, socially and geographically in order to have this security."[74]

However, where Québec differed from English Canada and the United States was that where "the special generation" in Anglo-Saxon countries rejected parental values, they preserved a political allegiance to the "system" by casting their demands in terms of "the democratic rule of law," and were thus about ten years behind their Québec counterparts in their revolutionary activism. Because of the violent milieu of Montréal, where many youth were familiar with "the gangster element," there was a greater willingness to reject the rule of law and democratic process, and to couple revolutionary activism with violent acts.[75] This was exacerbated by the anarchic climate prevailing within student milieus in Québec post-secondary institutions after 1968, where mainline student organizations had largely disappeared, replaced by a bewildering variety of "groupuscules" whose only common denominator propelling them towards spasmodic action was "des thèmes nationalistes," such as the St. Léonard affair, the agitation over Bill 63, support for the PQ, and study of the FLQ Manifesto.[76] The overall sense, however, was that students were confused and narcissistic, and were especially prone to be motivated by revolutionary activism largely because with the slowing of the Québec economy, there were no longer enough jobs open to them upon graduation. Hence, their intent was not first and foremost in the direction of revolution and social justice, but

74 Ibid., 41-9, FLQ Documentation A-30, "Observations Relating to the Critical Political Atmosphere in Canada: Quebec and the Continuing Revolution," 17-10-1970.

75 Ibid, "Quebec and the Continuing Revolution."

76 Ibid., 40-28, FLQ Documentation A-17, "Le FLQ et les institutions éducationnelles," 12-11-1970.

the rejection of a type of civilization that no longer corresponded to their desires, and the search for "une certaine sécuritisation ou à défaut une certaine évasion."[77] The appeal of revolutionary nationalism to young Québécois was thus, according to these analyses, inspired by more conservative desires to advance both personal and group status, and was always described as a difference or conflict in "values" between older and younger generations, or between the capitalism and materialism of North American mainstream and the quest for a distinctive set of Québec values that would underpin a new, and more cohesive set of social relations.[78] However, it should be noted that the emphasis upon culture, values, and psychology, rather than ideology, did not provide the authorities with greater reassurance. Indeed, some officials drew the conclusion that this would merely broaden and prolong the atmosphere of crisis, and that without emergency legislation on the books, waves of anti-government agitation would ultimately extend to other provinces like British Columbia.[79]

From the standpoint of officials in the PMO, one of the most imperative considerations, apart from securing the release of James Cross, was the "psywar" to be waged in Québec universities and CEGEPs against FLQ influence, and the more long-term goal of detaching portions of the Québec intellectual community from their supposedly monolithic allegiance to separatism. The dossiers of the SOC are filled with reports from operatives in Quebec universities describing the anti-government climate throughout late October and November 1970, and the articulation of a strategy, worked out by Jean-Pierre Mongeau, a former student leader and speech-writer for Prime Minister Trudeau, and Carol Boucher, a leader of the Québec Liberal Party's youth wing. Fearing that while the WMA had temporarily dampened student activism, the same negative images of Trudeau, Bourassa, and federalism persisted on Québec campuses, and that a minority of students was still committed to radical action.[80] The "psywar" tactics pursued among Québec students amounted to rather *opéra-bouffe* measures such as recruiting a pro-federal student activist in each campus building, who was charged with scooping up and junking radical tracts, thus forcing pro-FLQ students to the more expensive expedient of producing posters to disseminate their message, to keeping a watch on the doings of pro-sovereignty faculty members.[81] By early November, with the pressure of examinations looming and the continued

77 Ibid., "Le FLQ et les institutions éducationnelles."

78 Ibid., 44-5, "Interesting Articles, 1970," Claude Castonguay, Ministre de la santé et du bien-être social, "Nombre de québécois se sentent aliénés dans le système actuel," *La Presse* (17 November 1970).

79 Ibid., 43-43, General, "Memo to Robertson from Nixon re 'Threats to Peace and Public Order,'" 5-12-1970.

80 Ibid., 44-2, "Information politique," 11-1970, Rapport A-1.

81 Ibid.

presence of federal troops, Boucher and Mongeau could report that the university situation was calmer, but expected further radical explosions in the spring of 1971.[82] Federal strategy thus moved towards more long-term plans to win over, or at least silence the professoriate in Québec through a plan initiated by Marc Lalonde to initiate sustained dialogue between Québec academics and federal officials.[83] He hoped through these ongoing contacts to close the dangerous gap between government and intellectuals that was subversive of both the federalist cause and that of liberal democracy in both Québec and Canada.

Indeed, that both levels of government viewed the October Crisis as less an issue of national security and more of a profound crisis of social authority affecting the legitimacy of a specific concept of liberal democracy is evidenced by Pierre Trudeau's broadcast to the nation on 16 October 1970. Expressing shock and revulsion at the killing of Pierre Laporte by a group of "self-styled revolutionaries" and his reluctance to invoke the WMA, he vowed to "root out the cancer" of the FLQ. Trudeau reminded his audience that "violence is also a symptom of deep social unrest." He pledged that his government would introduce legislation to address "the social causes which often underlie or serve as an excuse for crime and disorder," but in the same breath warned that those who defied the law and ignored democratic opportunities for change "will receive no hearing from this government."[84] Trudeau's Québec counterparts spoke in similar terms, with Premier Bourassa reaffirming that his government was one of "social progress," dedicated to solving "the conflict between generations."[85]

Where one might expect a one-dimensional discourse oriented to national security and the restoration of law and order, the vaunting of the reformist credentials by the Liberal regimes in Ottawa and Québec City injects a note of complexity into our understanding of the October Crisis. At one level, government leaders intended to reassure those intellectuals and makers of public opinion that the resort to emergency police powers did not signal either a weakening or abandonment of the reformist energies of the 1960s, which had, in large sections of the academic and intellectual communities, identified the Liberal Party with more generous social security policies.[86] However, less obviously, such statements indicated a desire, particularly among Trudeau's inner circle, that a new, less open definition of liberal democracy was necessary to accomplish the reconstruction of a social and ideological consensus which

82 Ibid., Rapport A-5.

83 Ibid., 43-27, General, "Mémorandum de Marc Lalonde au sujet de la visite à Sherbrooke et à Montréal les 11 et 12 novembre," 16-11-70.

84 Ibid., 43-32, "Notes for a National Broadcast by the Prime Minister," 16 October 1970.

85 Ibid., 38-4, "Discours de M. Robert Bourassa … à l'Assemblée Nationale …, 12 novembre 1970."

86 For this identification, see Penny Bryden, *Planners and Politicians: Liberal Politics and Social Policy, 1955–1968* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997).

many believed had been dislocated by the political and cultural challenges of the 1960s. This reconstruction would be accomplished through the marginalization and de-legitimization of definitions of liberalism which conceded too much ideological scope to radicalism.

Like other liberal regimes in the western world, the governments of Canada and Québec had experienced a far-reaching challenge to authority stemming from the cultural transformations of the 1960s. The European events of May 1968 were simply some of the most prominent moments in this dislocation of authority, as was the alarming polarization which occurred in American culture and politics during the latter half of the 1960s, which destroyed the "consensus" which had stabilized that society since the Great Depression. Read from the perspective of Trudeau's inner circle, the waves of New Left activism on Canadian campuses culminating in 1969, and the proliferation of radical groups in Québec during the late 1960s, threatened the conditions of a stable, widely-accepted reformist political agenda by reintroducing ideological competition into Canadian society.[87] This, in turn, created a sense of urgency among government insiders who both lamented the loss of stable authority and discerned a compelling need to recast political legitimacy in new terms for a changed cultural climate. Writing to Ramsay Cook as the October Crisis wound down, James Davey lambasted those intellectuals who assumed that the Canadian government still possessed a "St. Laurent type" of stability. "The reality," he informed Cook, "is that the government is operating very close to the margins on many issues. What power do elected or appointed officials have today?" Davey feared that the moral authority of government had been reduced to its bare minimum, that which was "gained daily and which is based on the respect that an individual politician commands as a result of his relationships with his electorate."[88] Expressing the views of a number of key officials in the PMO, Davey traced the vacuum of political authority to the succession of minority governments that had ruled Canada from 1963 to 1968. Preoccupied with survival, these governments had not given sufficient attention to orderly planning in the spheres of environment, urban affairs, social policy, defence, and aboriginal policy, and in the process, had neglected to institute

87 For the cultural revolution of the 1960s in transnational perspective, see Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy, and the United States, c. 1958–c. 1974* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). New interpretations of the background and events of May 1968 have been offered by Kristin Ross, *May '68 and Its Afterlives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), and Martin Klimke and Joachim Scharloth, *1968 in Europe: A History of Protest and Activism, 1956–1977* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008). For a stimulating reading of political polarization in 1960s America, see Rick Perlstein, *Nixonland: The Rise of a President and the Fracturing of America* (New York: Scribner, 2009). For the growing wave of radical activism in both Québec and English Canada, see Palmer, *Canada's 1960s*, 245–365.

88 Ibid., 43-69, Davey to Cook, 28 Jan. 1971.

modern mechanisms that would connect the individual and the government. Participation, stated Davey to the national director of the Liberal Federation of Canada, "is the means, the link, through which the stresses in society can be canalized and dissipated."[89]

Davey's significance at this juncture stems from his dual role in the Prime Minister's inner circle. Despite Trudeau's later deriding of him as merely an "intellectual," an assessment echoed in John English's recent biography, he occupied an influential position as head of the SOC, responsible for coordinating the political struggle against the FLQ and Québec separatism, and as Program Secretary, the key exponent within the PMO of a "futurist" approach to government which eschewed ideological competition, emphasized scientific approaches and the necessity of "planning" as the central dynamics of policy-making.[90] As a physicist and anglo-Montréaler, Davey undoubtedly viewed with apprehension the possibilities for social and political disorder represented by the FLQ. However, his insistence upon the need to craft a political response to the FLQ was rooted in an allegiance, shared with Trudeau, to a new form of liberalism. One of the roadblocks in the way of "new Liberals" like Davey who wanted to recast Canadian liberalism in a more modern image was that there were in existence and practice older models of civic participation. One of the most prominent of these was corporatism, which had a particular resonance in Québec due to the social doctrines of the Catholic Church. Based on the theory of "intermediate bodies," such as family, labour unions, professional associations, and chambers of commerce which stood between the state and the individual, corporatism posited that through institutionalized channels and organs of consultation established between the government and these bodies, citizens would have a permanent and legitimate voice in legislation and policy-making. Significantly, far from being a relic of Duplessis-era that Québec swept aside during the Quiet Revolution, corporatism was given a new lease on life by the policies of the Lesage Liberal government, which ruled Québec between 1960 and 1966.[91] Québec

89 Ibid., 43-69, J.M. Davey to Torrance J. Wylie, National Director, Liberal Federation of Canada, 3 October 1970. Subject: Liberal Policy Convention, November 1970, *Choice of Discussion Topics and Policy Options*.

90 Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Memoirs (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1993), 160; for English's assessment of Davey, see *Just Watch Me*, 17, 39, 41, 43.

91 For the social corporatist model in twentieth-century Québec, see Pierre Trépanier, "Quel corporatisme? (1820–1965)," *Les Cahiers des Dix* 50 (1994); and Clinton Archibald, *Un Québec corporatiste?: corporatisme et néo-corporatisme: du passage d'une idéologie corporatiste sociale à une idéologie corporatiste politique* (Hull: Éditions de l'Asticou, 1983), 147–206. Archibald describes the reforms of the Lesage regime as one devoted to a more explicitly "political" "néo-corporatisme," which sought to create public institutions to supplement and enhance citizen participation in governance, that went beyond the legislature and social welfare programs.

Justice Minister Jérôme Choquette's reassurance on 10 October that the government would consult "groupes sociaux" and the priority it gave to "comités de citoyens"[92] had a clear corporatist resonance, and the 14 Oct. petition of the 16 "eminent personalities" who offered their offices as mediators between the Bourassa government and the FLQ kidnappers was a more explicit attempt to deploy Québec's liberal corporatist heritage to the resolution of the hostage crisis.[93]

Although corporatism originated in a conservative philosophy of social order and stability, it became apparent to a number of government figures during the October Crisis that it could no longer be included in the Canadian liberal canon. During the course of the 1960s, labour unions, one of the major players in the corporatist vision of society, had become considerably more radical and more confrontational in their attitude toward employers and governments.[94] The "war on poverty" waged by both levels of government during the 1960s had led to a proliferation of organizations claiming greater rights for the poor, and out of the focus on problems of the urban environment, a large number of "citizens' committees" had sprung up in large Canadian cities.[95] Particularly in Montréal, the years after 1967 witnessed the emergence of a "progressive coalition" of community action organizations, oriented to voicing the concerns of poorer neighbourhoods, and union activists united around a commitment to national self-determination and radical social change.[96] Were all these groups legitimate interlocutors of the state, given the presence of radical and revolutionary activists among some of them? Far from reinforcing the social authority of the state, it was feared that the admission of these groups under the liberal corporatist umbrella would not only institutionalize and prolong social insta-

92 LAC, PET, 44-8, "Texte de M. Choquette."

93 Tetley, *The October Crisis*, 14–15. Among the "eminent personalities," Claude Ryan's liberal political thinking was highly influenced by Catholic corporatist doctrines, as was that of Marcel Pépin, the head of the Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux (CSN), which had deconfessionalized in 1960. For Ryan, see Michael Gauvreau, "Catholicisme, nationalisme, et fédéralisme dans la pensée de Claude Ryan: la contribution de l'Action Catholique, 1945–1964," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, 62:3-4 (hiver-printemps 2009), 429-72.

94 For the radicalization of the major Québec labour organizations, the CSN and the Féderation des Travailleurs du Quebec (FTQ) after 1965, see Jacques Rouillard, *Histoire de la CSN, 1921–1981* (Montréal: Boreal Express, 1981), 221–34; Francois Cyr et Rémi Roy, *Elements d'histoire de la FTQ: La FTQ et la question nationale* (Laval: Editions cooperatives Albert Saint-Martin, 1981), 95–180.

95 For the "war on poverty" and the centrality of poverty reform to federal social security policy between 1965 and 1975, see Gareth Davies, "Understanding the War on Poverty: The Advantages of a Canadian Perspective," *Journal of Policy History* 9, no. 4 (1997): 425–49; Rodney S. Haddow, *Poverty Reform in Canada, 1958–1978: State and Class Influences on Policy Making* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 165–84.

96 For an analysis of the Montréal scene, see Louis Favreau, *Mouvement populaire et intervention communautaire de 1960 a nos jours* (Montréal: Les Editions du Fleuve, 1989), 15–24.

bility, but would lead to the grafting of "alien" ideologies of revolution and radical socialism onto Canadian liberalism, and the ideological polarization into distinct "conservative" and "radical" options, which would further destabilize the political system. In the process, it would destroy the *raison d'être* of the Liberal Party itself, but worse, it might even lead, under some circumstances, to the admission that violence was a legitimate means to effect social change. Thus, for James Davey, in the interests of eviscerating the corporatist heritage from Canadian liberalism, it was no exaggeration to claim that the FLQ had penetrated most of the "intermediate" bodies in Québec. In his estimation, it possessed sources of information inside the Québec government, the city of Montréal, the CEGEPs, and the Liberal Party. "In the course of these activities," he concluded, "the FLQ has obtained its effect through the leverage of such groups as the unions, the corps intermédiaires, universities, and others."[97] Corporatism, either wittingly or unwittingly, had become an accomplice for the FLQ infiltration of Québec society, and had to be vigorously countered by a stern reprobation of the idea that Claude Ryan, union leaders, or René Lévesque were in any way "representative" of the people of Quebec. "The Members of Parliament in Ottawa and Quebec," declared one position paper, "are the 'real' people's representatives: *by regular election*; people must not be fooled by appeals on the part of some interest groups (intermediary powers) to *replace* the people's representatives: same old 'corporatism' idea."[98]

Two main outcomes resulted from the "war on terror" waged by the Canadian government against the FLQ. The first was the death-blow to the quest of the revolutionary activists who comprised the FLQ to become mainstream political players in Québec. The second was a redefinition of Canadian liberalism on narrower foundations which, its promoters in the PMO hoped, would insulate the Canadian polity from the violence they believed was the corollary of ideological polarization. Viewed through this lens, many of the statements and assessments issued by the government were calculated to stifle any lingering allegiance to corporatism among the "intellectuals" and opinion-makers in the media. Throughout November 1970, the tenets of this "new liberalism" were articulated by leading government personalities. Speaking in the House of Commons, Justice Minister John Turner stated that as a result of the October Crisis, "We have become aware of the fragility of the democratic order." In the final analysis, the survival of the "democratic order" rested upon a "faith in a very special social order which is a part of the Canadian soul."[99]

It was left, however, to Prime Minister Trudeau himself, on the occasion of

97 LAC, PET, 43-24, General, "Memorandum to Mr. Robertson from J.M. Davey re role of Various Organizations in relation to the Quebec Crisis," 9-11-1970.

98 Ibid., 43-8, General, "Memo to PM re: A Strategy for Dealing with the FLQ by M.A. Crowe," 21-10-1970; ibid., 41-17, "Notes pour une interview télévisée," 30 octobre 1970.

99 Ibid., 38-3, "Bill C-181," 879.

the Policy Conference of the National Liberal Federation on 20 November 1970, to proffer a coherent philosophical underpinning to this new liberal ideology. His aim, and that of his "futurist" advisers in the PMO, was to put an end to a kind of hand-to-mouth political pragmatism and ideological bickering that had hampered the operations of government, and in particular, to dampen expectations that the government would move imminently in the direction of creating an array of more generous social programs.[100] J.M. Davey believed that henceforth the ability of modern liberalism to provide social cohesion would depend not on older practices of responding to corporate interest groups, nor on the perfecting of a needs-based welfare state, but on the creation of structures and processes through which social change could be harmonized with the protection and enhancement of the "rights and dignity of the individual." Davey concluded that the events of the 1960s had revealed a great deal of similarity between the major political parties, and that the key to future political success would rest upon "[m]ethodology and approach" rather than ideology.[101]

In communicating Davey's prescriptions to the wider party, Trudeau stated that liberalism's ultimate goal was to "make sure that we are not caught up in the vortex of change but that, on the contrary, try to dominate change," to ensure that Canadian society did not become the "victim" of undesired social change,[102] a clear reference to some of the radical movements of the past decade. Convoking the assembled MPs and party activists to a new consciousness of their "responsabilité libérale," Trudeau defined the modern liberal ideal as valorizing "au plus haut degré la liberté de l'individu," with the individual defined as an "absolu personnel," fully integrated into society and culture. "L'homme libéral," Trudeau maintained, was a feature of a specific moment of human history, and could only emerge at a stage where "la modification de la société par la violence est devenue intolérable à un grand nombre de consciences."[103] In polarizing "liberal man" and the recourse to violence, Trudeau interposed an insuperable ideological obstacle between Canadian liberalism and forms of radical activism that had flourished in the climate of the 1960s. These he dismissed as "déchets de l'histoire," an atavistic return to the "magie, et la superstition" characteristic of prehistory,[104] and therefore incompatible

100 According to John English, a consistent theme of Trudeau's first mandate (1968–1972) was to deflect and dampen expectations among Canadians that more generous social programs would be forthcoming. See *Just Watch Me*, 45.

101 LAC, PET, 43-69, Davey to Torrance J. Wylie, 13 October 1970.

102 Ibid., 46-21, PM Appearances 10-12-1970, "Broadcast of Interview with Prime Minster by Larry Zolf, on 'Weekend' CBC-TV Network at Close of Liberal Policy Convention, 22 November 1970.

103 Ibid., 46-21, "Notes pour l'allocution du Premier Ministre lors du Congrès sur la politique libérale," 20 novembre 1970.

104 Ibid.

with life in a modern polity. However, it was in his definition of the modern state, that he drew the clearest possible distinction between the new liberalism and its predecessors. Where older models of liberalism defined the citizen as the product of a mediation between individual and government involving a panoply of semi-public institutions, Trudeau now defined it as one of direct, unmediated contact. Referring to Emmanuel Mounier, his *maître à penser*, Trudeau charged the state with guaranteeing the fundamental status of the human person and removing obstacles to the free competition of spiritual communities. In accomplishing the second part of its task, the state was justified in using "contrainte" to ensure that no extraneous forces menaced the human person. The key to governing a modern state, he stated, was to bring government and people closer together, through better systems of communication and through an enhancement of the state's ability to balance organizational complexity with protection of the human person.[105] This assertion of an unmediated connection between government and individual would abolish the screen of semi-public institutions which, in an earlier phase of liberalism, had constituted civil society and had given meaning to citizenship. In Trudeau's emphatically modernist political calculus, these institutions, at best, hampered the work of government and at worst, harboured atavistic, non-liberal ideologies. Henceforth, apart from *corps intermédiaires* such as the police and security services, whose interests were directed to the preservation of law and order, the only "collective" organizations and social movements worthy of dialogue and state support were those devoted to furthering Trudeau's emphatic commitment to the extension of "personal" rights. Indeed, the funding of human rights organizations and social movements engaged in constitutional politics were a hallmark of his administrations after 1970 because, significantly, they did not deviate from the new liberal rapprochement of state and individual, articulated a pan-Canadian nationalism, and most emphatically, they did not represent ideologies advocating a recasting of the socio-economic order.[106] He believed that his new vision of the relationship between state and individual could underpin the modern democratic order by enlisting an overwhelming public consensus among the Canadian public, intellectuals, and makers of opinion. In destroying the terrorist menace, Trudeau and his advisers sought to achieve a much larger aim, that of moving Canadian politics into a new era, one where the authority

105 Ibid.

106 For the relationship between the federal government and these organizations, see Dominique Clément, *Canada's Rights Revolution: Social Movements and Social Change, 1937–82* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008), 36; Matt James, *Misrecognized Materialists: Social Movements in Canadian Constitutional Politics* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006), 68; Leslie A. Pal, *Interests of State: The Politics of Language, Multiculturalism, and Feminism in Canada* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993). I thank one of the anonymous reviewers of this paper for the suggestion of the police and security services as one of the *corps intermédiaires* to survive under this "new" liberalism.

of technique would replace the competition of ideologies as the vector of social change.

* * *

MICHAEL GAUVREAU is professor of history at McMaster University, Hamilton Ontario. Author of a number of award-winning works in Canadian history, he is currently working on an intellectual and political biography of Claude Ryan, Catholic activist, public intellectual, and Quebec Liberal politician, 1925-2004.

MICHAEL GAUVREAU est professeur d'histoire à l'Université McMaster de Hamilton (Ontario). Auteur de plusieurs ouvrages primés en histoire canadienne, il travaille actuellement à une biographie intellectuelle et politique de Claude Ryan (1925–2004), militant catholique, intellectuel public et politicien libéral québécois.