

Canada faces division

■ OUR OPINION: Quebec stands to lose more than it would gain if it succeeds in separating from Canada

"O Canada..." is a stirring national anthem for a nation on the verge of splitting in two.

Today, our sovereign friends to the northeast will vote to decide whether or not Quebec will separate from Canada.

We hope Canadians and Quebec separatists can settle their differences without having to put up new border crossings and make new maps.

At least the provinces haven't taken up arms against one another.

America was a mere 85-year-old when it had its own taste of division with the Civil War. That war that grew from stark economical differences between the wealthy North and the impoverished South — a region then dependent on the lucrative but inhuman slave industry.

Other examples of "separatist" attitudes in the U.S. include the 1992 California ballot that asked voters if they would like to become two states — specifically, Northern and Southern California. Surprisingly, pro-separation votes from both ends of the state outnumbered the anti-separation votes.

There's no real danger of California dividing because it would not be economically feasible. Although Northern California currently shoulders part of Southern California's financial burden, the north is also dependent on the wealthier south.

There are some interesting comparisons between a split California and a separate

French-Canadian Quebec. Some Californians north of the Bay Area see southern Californians as shallow, while many of the faster-paced valley dwellers see themselves as more sophisticated and cultured than their northern counterparts. In the final analysis, it all boils down to a debate over cultural autonomy that suddenly hits the brick wall of economic necessity.

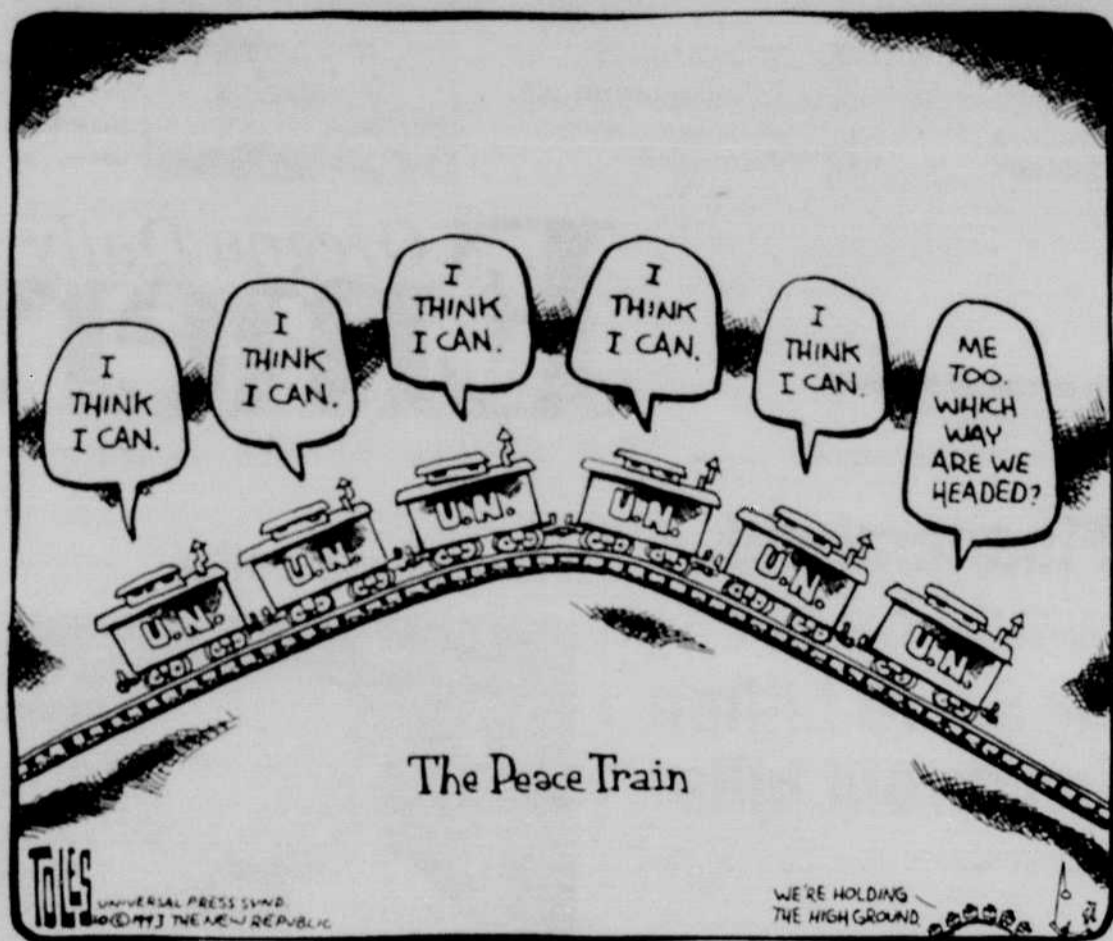
This may be the biggest similarity between Canada's impending decision and the contemplations of California.

French-Canadians are fiercely proud of their heritage and are currently being led through this time of nationalist pride by the charismatic Lucien Bouchard. Bouchard leads the opposition Bloc Quebecois in Canada's Parliament. Although Canada has enjoyed a relatively healthy 128-year union with French-Canada, Quebec separatists have wanted to secede since the late '60s. Add this to Bouchard's promises of "change" and the resulting formula could mean the dissolution of Canada.

With its future hanging in the balance, Canadian newspaper polls show 46.8 percent of registered voters favoring the separation with 41.4 percent against. Others are unwilling to commit either way.

With the separation, one-fourth of Canada's population and fully 22 percent of its domestic economy would be lost. The results would weaken the Canadian dollar, sharply raise interest rates, and probably bring recession.

Quite a punishment to hand out in order to sing a different national anthem.



LETTERS

Cal discipline

On Oct. 21 I attended the OSU-Cal game in Corvallis. Even though I'm a University student, my sister is a cheerleader at Oregon State, and I promised to go watch her.

Before the game, Benny, the OSU mascot, was swinging around a toy hammer and accidentally struck one of the California players. The player turned around and pounded Benny. Guess what? Benny was female.

What kind of attitude do you think this guy has toward women in general?

He outweighs her by more than 180 pounds and still feels the need to pound on a defenseless female. For what? His pride?

The cheerleaders and various reporters witnessed this and demanded an apology. The California coach said, "It was an accident. He just got caught up in the heat of the moment." Is this a standard defense men are supposed to give for assault or rape?

With a record of 2-5 and an inability to discipline its players, Cal should consider finding a coach with better leadership abilities.

I am writing this to our student body and players to remind us about discipline. If we are going to win (and we are), let's do it with dignity and class.

Save the pounding for the other team — on the field and by the rules.

Jason Ford
Fine arts

Missed it

Leann Bennett's commentary (ODE, Oct. 24) on the Dr. Martens' advertisement featuring the brand name printed on a naked woman's buttocks missed the point.

Bennett overlooked the advertisement's implication that Dr. Martens' shoes are as permanent as a tattoo. Did she miss the subsequent ad featur-

ing a man with the same tattoo and caption?

If we are to accept her "far-fetched theory," can we presume he has been "branded to show ownership — as is done to chattel and other forms of [female] ... property"?

Domestic violence is horrendous. But in Bennett's eagerness to climb on her soapbox, she ignores the obvious intent of the ad. I wonder how many of us actually arrived at the conclusion that "wearing Dr. Martens and kicking a woman's ass are fashionable?"

Ms. Bennett, please refrain from insulting our collective cultural intelligence.

Thomas S.D. Matlock
Psychology

Pink love

Pinkman, a.k.a. Michael Max, is a friend of mine, and he will remain a friend regardless of his past.

In Gayle Forman's column (ODE, Oct. 24), she questions the purpose of Pinkman. His purpose is to remind us that we can all find joy and fulfillment in ourselves, in our potential and in our capabilities.

Pinkman's message is one simple word: Love. That can mean love yourself, love others, love God or whatever is important to you. It's a lot more than just wearing a humorous costume and making "goofy faces."

Michael is using a talent of his to "ameliorate the world" in his own way. He brings a smile to our faces, diversity and humor into our daily schedules and an inspiration of love. Besides, kindness has to start somewhere. It has to start with yourself.

Jill Warner
Psychology

Unworthy media

The University's 10-year, \$320,000 per-year lease of the Register-Guard's High Street property not only drives up educational costs but also allows the Bakers to profit from having the property improved

and retained for future sales at three times its current value. (RG, Oct. 7).

Why not extend the existing University journalism and communication building, thereby negating utility, tax and remodeling costs and more than \$3 million income to the Bakers?

Because University's media teaching and practice seem bland and lack investigative zeal, I see no need to enlarge the media school.

In the public's interest, the Register-Guard's property lease must be set-aside and future University projects subjected to public hearings before millions are wasted.

John M. Reed, Jr.
Consumers Come First
Committee

No errors

The letter "No one perfect" (ODE, Oct. 27), is filled with flaws and errors. The operation to capture Adid was not a U.S. operation; it was a U.N. operation. It was the first time U.S. forces were placed under the auspices of the United Nations.

Secondly, the Pakistani armored vehicles were not key in the extrication of our survivors. It was because of the lack of training of the Pakistani forces that the situation deteriorated as it did. The Pakistanis were unable to operate their own tanks, and U.S. troops had to help them get moving.

Thirdly, the Marines in Lebanon were there as part of a medical unit. They gave aid to both sides in the conflict. The United States did not attack anyone, but were themselves attacked by terrorists. They made no mistakes other than not being able to stop a two-ton truck loaded with explosives sent by people they were trying to help.

So to Keith Quebodeaux I say, "Wake up and the read the facts sometime. Don't try to compare two situations that were different and unrelated."

David Kellett
History

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