



Just before the recent election in Quebec, with talks of a majority being won by Pauline Marois and her Parti Québécois, I called lawyer Brent Tyler in Montreal to ask him if we should re-establish the Special Committee for Canadian Unity (SCCU). Brent in turn discussed this prospect with Keith Henderson of the Equality Party and other obviously favourable and likeminded individuals.

Leading up to the 2012 Quebec provincial elections, separatist sympathy across the country was propagated at an alarming level. With pollsters' pre-election results predicting that the Parti Québécois would claim a majority government, Canada once again seemed on the precipice of a Canadian Unity disaster.

The high levels of separatist sympathy that were characterized right across Canada were very disconcerting, causing me to get into contact with Mr. Brent Tyler with regards to po-

tentially re-establish the SCCU to challenge the separation sentiment following the election.

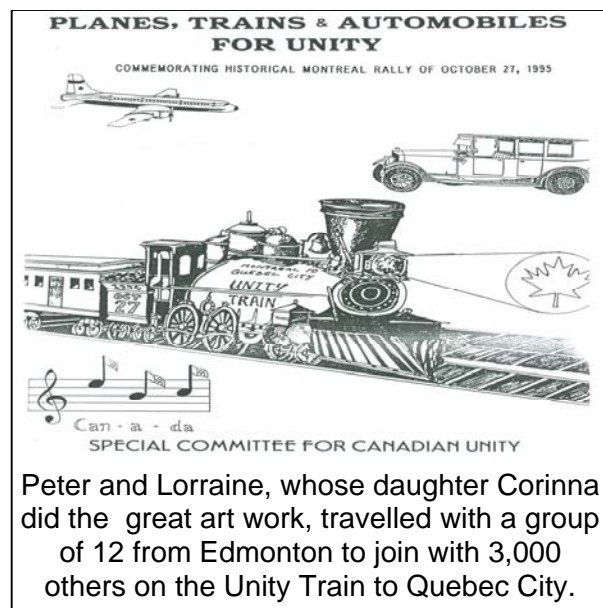
The SCCU was first formed in 1994, when the Parti Québécois came to power under Jacques Parizeau, determined to take Quebec out of Canada.

When Premier Parizeau revealed his plan for unilateral secession on December 6, 1994, the SCCU posted a letter three days later to Prime Minister Jean Chrétien requesting that

he send a reference to the Supreme Court of Canada to test the constitutionality of Quebec's *Bill 1, An Act respecting the sovereignty of Quebec*. Mr. Chrétien, unfortunately, declined.

During the 1995 referendum campaign the SCCU stood on a platform requiring that any secession-creating efforts be carried out in accordance with the Constitution. It sought to raise three issues:

1) the illegality of separatist Parizeau's process under Canadian constitutional law; 2) its ille-



Peter and Lorraine, whose daughter Corinna did the great art work, travelled with a group of 12 from Edmonton to join with 3,000 others on the Unity Train to Quebec City.



gitimacy under international law; and 3) the proposition that if Canada could be divided so too could be the province of Quebec.

The SCCU requested to be recognized as participants within the NO referendum committee but were turned down on the grounds that their message was too radical. They went to court to have their right of free speech declared and won. But by then it was so late in the campaign that they could hold only one public meeting.

The “radical” message was:

- To challenge unconstitutional actions in the Constitution of Canada
- To organize and encourage Canadians everywhere to spread the message of the benefits of Canadian Unity.

For several years prior to the 1995 referendum I had been following unity issues, particularly after the Bloc Quebecois was elected as Canada’s Loyal Official Opposition party in 1993. I had also written and had published many letters to the editor on the issue.

In 1995 I spent a week in Quebec City to promote Canadian Unity within Quebec in the lead up to the referendum in October.

Returning to Edmonton from Quebec City where we viewed first-hand the 1995 referendum vote, I knew I had to act. I sought out and consulted with three political parties to decide which I would begin working with. At the same

time I followed the work of several Canadian unity organizations, noting specifically the admirable work being done by the SCCU.

After consultations, my wife and I flew to Montreal and received permission and authority to personally Found with our own funding, in Edmonton, the Western Canada Chapter of the Special Committee for Canadian Unity.

During this disconcerting time in the Quebec-Canada relationship, both the Edmonton and the Montreal-based Chapters of the SCCU did much important public work on raising awareness. Unity issues, notably in Western Canada, were consistently being portrayed negatively by the media. The revival of negative unity sentiments in Western Canada today is disturbing.

The Quebec separatist movement gradually diminished, particularly after groups such as the SCCU illuminated the Skulduggery of the separatist effort. For example, in 1996 I worked with Brent Tyler connecting him to help Opposition Defence Critic MP Jim Hart to try to have Bloc Quebecois MP Jean Mark Jacob tried for treason for his letter as Vice Chairman of the Defence Committee calling on the Quebecers in the Canadian military to join a Quebec army after a 50+1% ‘yes’ vote!

We have now reactivated the SCCU in re-



Since 1996 Peter and Lorraine, with several volunteers, staged a Canadian Unity support table at the Alberta Legislature Grounds on Canada Day, until refused by the Sergeant-at-Arms in 2012 for political reasons.



response to the recent Quebec provincial election because we believe that we have entered a new period of peril to national unity that should be seized as an opportunity to challenge a pernicious myth rampant in Quebec that the province can secede unconditionally on the strength of a unilateral referendum vote of a simple 50+1% of those who vote.

The re-founding meeting of the SCCU took place on December 5, 2012 in Montreal, Quebec. The constitutional objectives of the SCCU are to protect the Canadian federation, its Constitution, and its territorial integrity, against attempts to achieve secession or other constitutional changes injurious to them, and in particular against attempts to achieve them by means other than those provided by the Constitution itself; and more generally to promote respect for basic rights and fundamental freedoms.

In 2000, the federal Liberal government's *Clarity Act*, sponsored by Minister Stéphane Dion, was brought into law as a safeguard in the case of another Quebec referendum for separation or, indeed, a referendum anywhere, of any part of Canada, for separation. Chiefly, this act gives the federal government the power to decide whether a proposed referendum question is clear before the public vote, as well as giving the federal government the power to de-

termine whether or not a clear majority of the people in that given area and not just of those that have come out to vote, has expressed itself following any referendum vote.

In direct response to *The Clarity Act, 2000*, the Quebec government drafted in 2000 *Bill 99*, which stipulates that Quebecers determine alone their future in a referendum outcome that receives at least 50% plus one of the votes for support. Furthermore, *Bill 99* declares that even in the absence of a referendum vote, Quebec's political fate could result only from decisions made by Quebecers and not by other Canadians.

The province of Quebec's *Bill 99* has received support from the federal NDP in Ottawa. Since the NDP receive much of their federal mandate from Quebec ridings in the 2011 election, this may not be surprising.

In fact, in 2013 the federal NDP proposed *Bill C-470*, which shamefully gives further support to the separatists and the Bloc Québécois' previous *Bill C-457* aimed to extinguish the *Clarity Act*.

However, the level of hypocrisy displayed through the support of Quebec's *Bill 99*, which advocates a 50+1% formula for major constitutional changes, is outrageous. Article XVI of the NDP's constitution requires a vote of a two-thirds majority of delegates at a party convention to make amendments to their con-



At the Alberta Legislature grounds on July 1 Canada Day to support Canadian Unity. Shown with Peter is John Baker, who purchased the very first SCCU Western Canada membership.

stitution.

Furthermore, Article 210 of the Parti Quebecois` constitution requires a two-thirds majority of the members of the National Conference of Presidents to amend the party`s constitution.

Imagine with a 60% turnout to vote, 50+1% would mean that it is possible that only 31% of Quebecers could vote to break-up Quebec and Canada!

Throw in a misleading question and the outcome would be even more undemocratic and dishonest. This would not be a democratic expression of the will of the majority of the people at all.

For years, the legality of Quebec's *Bill 99* has been battled in the courts of Quebec by Keith

Henderson and his lawyer, Brent Tyler, now once again with the full support of the SCCU.

Raising public awareness of the legal battle that is being waged over the constitutionality of Quebec's *Bill 99*, the SCCU, in a letter to Prime Minister Harper, has called for the government to expedite a reference to the Supreme Court to judge *Bill 99*'s constitutionality, are the first steps being taken by the SCCU.

Freshly mandated, the SCCU is just gearing up its fight to ensure Canada remains united.

UPDATE: Peter gave a statement in the House of Commons March 20, then traveled to Montreal for "Pastagate" a comedy fundraiser organized by the SCCU and putbacktheflag.com to support efforts against the separatists and their onerous language laws.

9111 - 118th Ave.
Edmonton, AB T5B OT9
(780) 495-3261
Fax: 495-5142

Web Site:
www.petergoldring.ca
Email:
peter.goldring.c1@parl.gc.ca

411 Justice Bldg.
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
(613) 992-3821
Fax: 992-6898

This brochure series is intended to highlight special issues that Member of Parliament, Peter Goldring, has been involved in. If you wish to comment, please take a moment to fill out the survey below, write

Your Opinion Matters...

Q1: Do you believe that the *Clarity Act* appropriately defines the rules for any part of Canada seeking separation to have the support of a clear majority of all the people of that area?

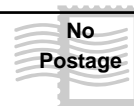
Yes No

Q2: Do you want to help and join the fight against issues threatening the unity of Canada?

Yes No

Comments: _____

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
Postal Code: _____
Telephone: _____



Peter Goldring
Member of Parliament
Edmonton East
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6