

SECRET AND PERSONAL



4  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

11 February 1981

*PN has seen. f.u.*

*Dear Michael,*

*And 11/4*

Canadian Constitution

/ I understand that the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary has described to the Prime Minister the demarche made by Mr Gotlieb to Sir Edward Youde on 9 February. I enclose a copy of Mr Gotlieb's speaking note. For obvious reasons, this has been given a very limited circulation in the FCO. Mr Gotlieb declined to identify the provincial premier to which the note referred.

*yours ever*

*R M J Lyne*

(R M J Lyne)  
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street

SECRET AND PERSONAL

P.C.

## REPORT

The Premier called the High Commissioner Wednesday afternoon, February 4, for a general discussion about the situation in Britain and had a long conversation from about 3.30 to 4.30 pm.

During this conversation, Sir John

- 1) attacked the Prime Minister;
- 2) indicated the High Commissioner's involvement in planning to stop him;
- 3) urged the premier to join other premiers in doing so.

1) Sir John alleged that 'Trudeau's defence policies are destroying NATO, that his National Energy Policy is adversely affecting the Canada-US relationship, that he is making a mockery of the Economic Summit, that he is [threatening] the Commonwealth, that the breakdown in [destroying] relations with the UK is all the fault of Trudeau.' 'He mesmerizes you Canadians like birds in a tree and it's time you birds started flying out of the tree.' 'This machine that is riding rough shod over Canada must be stopped.'

2) Sir John took the view the provinces should get together to agree on an amending formula. The Premier argued that Quebec, at least, would never agree on a single item - constitutional reform, to which it has traditionally been opposed, especially on the verge of a general election. The High Commissioner argued that when he (Sir John) proposed the idea to Premier Levesque he seemed 'to have warmed to it'.

Sir John then argued that to defeat the government's resolution in the House of Commons, all that is necessary is to turn around the NDP and change the vote of 5 Liberal MPs from Quebec. The Premier asked, why specify Quebec MPs; Sir John said the pressure must be intense on them at this point because the polls show that 60% of the Quebec people are against what they are doing and that 2 of them have already given way. The Premier replied that he wouldn't give much weight to the polls, that the Prime Minister could turn them around in a week on the hustings. Sir John said, ironically, yes he can mesmerize you.

/3)

3) Sir John urged the Premier to attend the meeting with the other Premiers in Montreal Monday [today]. The Premier said he wasn't even invited. The High Commissioner said it would be no problem for him to go if he wanted to.

The Premier felt that throughout the conversation Sir John was putting pressure on him to stop the Federal Government.

9 February 1981