

# Trudeau and the End of a Canadian Dream



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In 1982 Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau realized his life's ambition: the patriation of the Canadian constitution and the enshrinement of a Charter of Rights and Freedoms. At the same time he dealt a severe blow to his arch-enemies, the nationalists in Quebec who believed that a significant and rewarding partnership with Canada was possible without renouncing their identity as Quebecers. Laforest reveals that Trudeau betrayed the trust of the people of Quebec during the 1980 referendum on sovereignty-association and contends that the whole patriation exercise, completed without the consent of Quebec, is not legitimate in that province. He also holds Trudeau responsible for the ultimate rejection of the "distinct society" clause in the Meech Lake Accord, which had given a glimmer of hope to Quebec federalists. Trudeau and the End of a Canadian Dream shows how constitutional reform, and the political culture it fostered, shattered the hopes of those who believed that being both a Canadian and a Quebecer was possible.

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目录:

[Trudeau and the End of a Canadian Dream 下载链接1](#)

标签

评论

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