

## Claire Hoy ? ?Déjà vu all over again?

Even a genius isn't always completely right. Take Stephen Hawking, for example.

The brilliant, physically-challenged scientist once quipped about his own condition that, "People don't have time for you if you are always angry or complaining."

That's true on a personal level. Nobody likes being around serial whiners. But obviously Hawking's wisdom doesn't apply to Quebec and the rest of Canada's tiresome reaction toward it.

You will know, of course, that Quebec's myopic PQ Premier Pauline Marois has called an election which pretty well everyone expects her to win, and in doing she has promised to eventually hold yet another referendum on "sovereignty" when the time (for her) is right.

The mainstream media, by the way, have long ago adopted the softer term "sovereignty" instead of the real term "separatist" to describe the Parti Quebec-ois aspirations. Why?? But we digress.

They've already held two and lost both of them ? the first in a squeaker ? and each time federalist politicians have gone through hoops to make sure Quebecers vote to remain part of Canada and promised the moon to make sure it happened. Then, when it did, and despite false PQ claims to the contrary, the federal taps opened up even further, and the cash began pouring in to soothe Quebec's self-perceived "humiliation" at the hands of those nasty Anglos to their west and east.

So here we go again. But rather than calling their bluff, or better still, scoffing at them over the notion they'd give up all those federal billions they get from the rest of Canada (ROC) to chase their impossible dream, the fretting industry is once again in a full-court press.

Reports out of Ottawa say Prime Minister Stephen Harper, fearing a majority PQ government on April 7, has already contacted all the other premiers and opposition leaders (Quebecers) Thomas Mulcair and Justin Trudeau, and urged one and all to temper their remarks, adopt a policy of non-interference, and, "Don't take the bait. Don't provoke."

Mind you, if the separatists ever do hold another referendum ? rather than continuing to use the threat to blackmail the ROC, as they have done historically with considerable success ? separating from Canada would be easier for them if Mulcair had his way. Rather than requiring a clear win on a clear question, as the Supreme Court has ruled on the issue, Mulcair and the NDP favor a simple majority plus one vote, a considerably lower standard to break up the country than the NDP itself demands just to change its party constitution.

But then again, we shouldn't be too surprised. After all, Mulcair's sainted successor, the late Jack Layton, along with then Liberal leader Stéphane Dion, having lost an election, were still willing to cut a deal with the opposition Bloc Québécois ? the Ottawa wing of the Quebec separatism ? to overthrow Harper's elected government, giving the Bloc a veto over anything that had any impact upon Quebec. Federal voters, by the way, would do well never to forget that betrayal of federal values. But again, we digress.

Quebec's historical view of itself as a victim of the English "conquest," while completely laughable in reality, has been the spigot through which federal cash has continued to prop up their profligate spending virtually non-stop since Confederation itself.

Quebec, for example ? which apparently can't stand us, but likes the cash ? gets about 60 percent of all equalization transfers from Ottawa. As a result, it's the only province that can afford to offer its' vaunted publicly funded daycare for \$7 a day, just a fraction of the \$49 it really costs. Quebec also boasts by far the lowest university tuition in the country and is the only province ? the only one ? to cover half the cost of private secondary schooling. It's also, as far as I know, the only province providing free in vitro fertilization treatments.

Equalization was established in 1957 with the purpose of allowing the "have-not" provinces to provide "comparable" services to the "have" provinces. Yet no province compares to Quebec's services. Not because they're? better money managers ? they have one of the worst debts in the country to boot ? but because the ROC has been suckered into paying for their Cadillac services while the rest of us limp by with used Chevrolets.

And so it goes. Yet another Quebec election. Yet another PQ government. Yet another threat of a referendum. And the same old panic ? albeit, much quieter than at other times ? from Ottawa and the other provinces.

Rather than tiring of their constant carping, alas, what we have, as Yogi Berra once quipped, is, "Déjà vu all over again."