Forbes, “Rejoinder to ‘A Note on ‘Hartz-Horowitz at Twenty’: The Case of French Canada,” *CJPS* 21 (1998)

**Overview**

Response to Wiseman’s piece.

**Background**

* Hartzian theory provides an explanation for the presence or absence of socialism in “fragment societies”:
  + The failure of socialism to develop in the US is explained by the absence of feudalism form the American fragment
  + The failure of socialism to develop in French Canada *prior to* the Quiet Revolution, is explained not by the absence of feudalism (French Canada said to be a feudal fragment) but from the absence of liberalism (another necessary ingredient in the Hartzian dialectic)
* Wiseman claims that “there was a sudden influx of liberal ideas in the mid-20th century” and shortly afterwards, as a result, “the seeds of socialism sprouted.” As such, the Hartzian schema is particularly illuminating when applied to French Canada
* Ds
* Forbes would argue that French Canada was more clearly opening to “the outside world” at the end of 1759 than at the end of 1959, and it had clearly acquired some important elements of liberalism by the 1830s as French-Cdn politicians had become very skilled in the rhetoric and devices of British liberal constitutionalism
  + Argues that there was enough liberalism in French-Cdn political culture by the 1930s to combine with its for-the-sake-of-argument feudalism to make Quebec (from a Hartzian perspective) an especially rich territory for socialism
  + Did socialism develop in Quebec in the 60s and 70s? Yes and No.
* The failure of the Hartzian schema to throw much light on the fortunes of socialism in Quebec is a happy (or embarrassing) accident, not its most serious shortcoming
* More serious is its distortion of French-Cdn political thought
  + Hartz treats French Canada as a feudal fragment – and thus, not just a society that is an offshoot or a colony of another, but one whose political thinking is confined within the narrow bounds of a single basic outlook, orientation to politics, or ideological disposition – feudalism, liberalism, or socialism
  + It is this point that Forbes finds to be singularly unconvincing –
* Forbes’s main point was that French Canada is an obvious example of a fragment (an offshoot) that was not a fragment (a society open to only one basic ideology)