

Bilingualism is our destiny

The decision of the Quebec electorate to elect the Parti Quebecois will, it appears, lead to a new consideration of Bilingualism and Biculturalism in Canada.

It will lead both to a stronger argument for bilingualism at the governmental level and stronger arguments for and against bilingualism at the individual level.

Levesque's mandate seeming to be separatism, is actually of conservative democracy; contentious decisions made by plebiscite. Levesque is an astute politician, and realized (like MacKenzie King did with inscription) that he could make contentious decisions by having the electorate make them for him, and he could avoid the repercussions.

A strong 'separatist' government in Quebec, will force the federal government to give francophone Canadians equitable treatment throughout the country; Trudeau had promised that, and not delivered.

In his critique of separatism, Trudeau had argued that a decision by the people of Quebec to leave Canada would also place the one million plus Canadian francophones not in Quebec at the whims of the majority; and that only by trying to get equal rights for francophones throughout Canada, rather than preference for Quebecois, could he serve the interests of 'French Canadians'.

It was the ability of Pierre Elliot Trudeau to convince Canadian voters that, his was the only solution, that gave him his Prime Ministership. More importantly, it was his ability to convince Quebecois of this that made him Prime Minister.

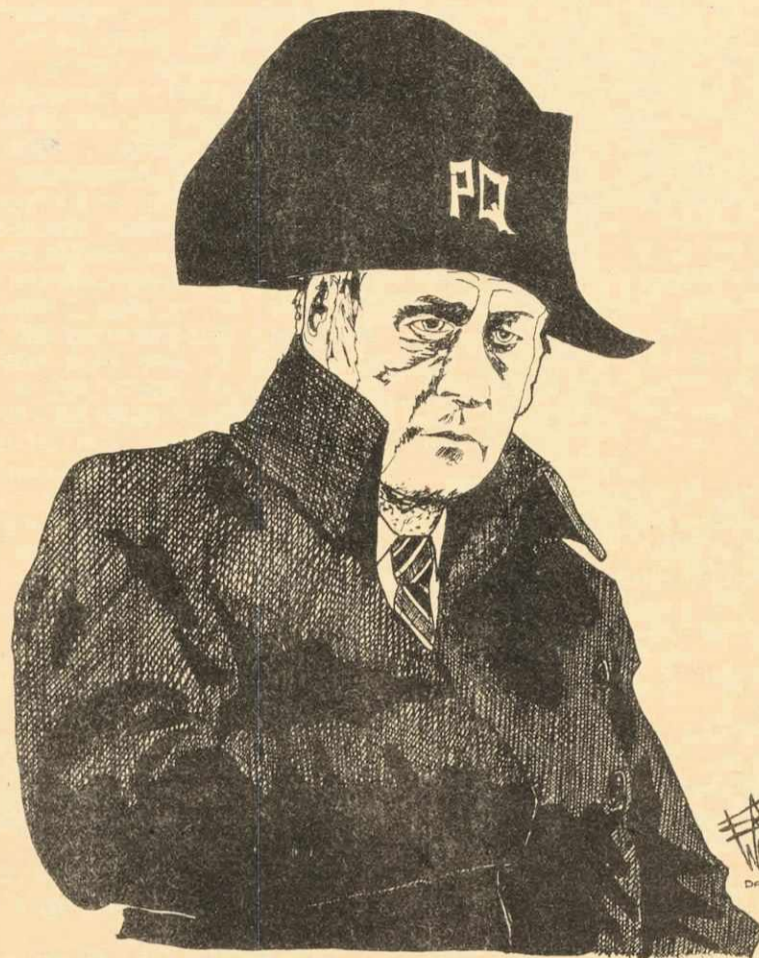
Perhaps now with the defeat of Jean Marchand by Jacques Yvan Morin in their Quebec City riding of Louis Hebert we will see a new phase in the debate. Morin, probably the foremost intellectual mind arguing in favor of separatism, will put Trudeau to the test.

Trudeau hoped to defer the pressure for separatism by arguing of the need for Quebec to protect francophones in the rest of Canada, since Trudeau has not done this it is likely that Morin will press the debate home. Now that he speaks, no longer as the adviser to the head of state, but as the spokesperson for the head of state, Morin will present Canadians with a first class intellectual debate on the destiny of the country. And he will win; not because he is a better debater (which he is) but because he has all the arguments against cultural genocide on his side, and Trudeau can no longer overlook them.

What we can see then is an effort, long overdue, by the federal government to protect the interests of francophones in the rest of Canada. It would seem likely that, Morin's position on separatism arises from a negative reaction to the power of anglophones in Quebec, and that if francophones outside Quebec, particularly in New Brunswick and the Ottawa Valley were able to reach the level of treatment that anglophones had within Quebec, the strength of his argument would diminish.

But all the decisions to bilingualize the country do not take place within Quebec City or Ottawa.

Student leaders at the Atlantic Federation of Students (AFS / FEA) and Atlantic Region of Canadian University Press (ARCUP) earlier this month decided to bilingualize both organizations because



students within the Atlantic region and on their own particular campuses were quite often francophone students who were fast becoming victims of cultural genocide.

All efforts to bilingualize the country do not happen out of fear, some happen out of the serious concern for the rights of others that are trampled, not by intent, but by ignorance.

In keeping with the ARCUP and AFS / FEA decisions, the **Dalhousie Gazette** will begin carrying news stories in both french and english. Not every one, but some, especially for those national student organizations who are attempting to serve in both languages.

It is the argument for Quebec separatism that pushes the unwilling into fair treatment for the unheard.

by Allan Zdunich

Letters To the Gazette must be typed if over 100 words. Letters must be less than 600 words. They will not be edited for brevity, coherency, or other reasons. Letters will be published as soon as possible.

Persons submitting letters must provide their name and a telephone number or some other method of reaching them, should there be some question about their identity. Anonymous letters and those with false signatures will not be printed. The use of pseudonyms will be considered in some cases. Deadline for letters is Monday noon.

Letters

Investing in foreign students

To the Gazette:

Ms. Fielding's letter (last week's Gazette), expressed a popular opinion on the question of foreign students enrolled in Canadian universities. Unfortunately, opinions almost always coalesce in the absence of facts, and are never a substitute for the intelligent statement based on proper research.

The status of international students is becoming a nationwide issue. An uncommon amount of attention is focused on what is a tiny minority of the student population. International students admitted to Canadian universities are faced with a series of discriminatory measures. First, the federal decision in 1972, to prevent visa students from gaining work while studying in this country. Recently, universities, on their own initiative, are imposing differential tuition fees, which may be double the amount paid by a Canadian student.

Efforts at sorting out the welter of questions behind this issue have so far been limited. When Fielding asks why, in the prevalent recession, should we permit visa students to compete in a job market which is inadequate to our own needs, she hardly expects a reasonable answer. Rightly so, for the question needs to be rephrased; why stand back and allow the government to continue with its policies which are responsible, from start, for limited job availability.

A brief on 'International Students' was recently presented to AFS by Don Soucy and Miguel Figueroa. The pockets of ignorance contained in Ms. Fielding's letter indicate she is not aware of the existence of this paper. The backlash against foreign students will not subside once ignorance has been dealt with. However, a heightened level of awareness on part of the student body will go far in countering the obvious moves of universities and governments to cloak political motivations with

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