

MUGWUMP JOURNAL

The English Speaking Association has done it again

By EDISON STEWART

A few things off-campus come to mind this week and I think you'll find them interesting.

First, my age-old adversaries in the English Speaking Association have done it again. Last year, you'll recall, they asked the Premier to have the provincial government telephone numbers listed in English first and French second. In effect, they were asking dear old Richard to change the alphabet, because everybody knows "gouvernement" comes before "government".

They didn't push that little number very far, but now they've come up with a new scheme.

Many of the Acadian people in New Brunswick have been asking the government for a separate education department just for them. And up until last week the ESA opposed the idea. But in recent letters to the Premier and N.B. newspapers, the ESA president has said the ESA supports the idea totally, just so long as the French are the only people taxed to provide funds for the new department.

Briefly put, this is called designated

taxation. "He who pays the piper calls the tune" is another version.

Of course, every time the ESA brings this sort of thing up, they neglect to say how long the French people of this province have been paying taxes and getting damn little consideration in return. That, apparently, has never crossed their narrow little minds.

But suppose the politicians decided to take their suggestion seriously and implemented designated taxation. Would not the people of Ontario have the right to refuse paying taxes simply because some of it ends up in New Brunswick (where we can't afford to pay our own way)?

Naturally they would. But then perhaps the ESA reasons that the Ontario taxpayers are English and wouldn't think of doing such a nasty thing to their impoverished (English Protestant) brothers.

Either that, or they would say that it's because of that dread bilingualism New Brunswick is in debt. Well it's certainly true bilingualism is costing money, but it is a pittance compared to the debt we had long before bilingualism was ever heard of.

The ESA would be better off putting its WASPy shoulders to the wheel and helping

this province out. Racial conflict will only divide us; the ESA cannot possibly wiggle out of squarely-placed responsibility for continuing their divisive and narrow actions.

Went to a movie this week: "Walking Tall".

It's been getting great audiences every night for the last few weeks and the picture is so poor in relation to its reception that I thought I'd best write something about it.

"Walking Tall" is restricted to people 18 years and over. It is not restricted because of any great amount of sex; this is a violent picture and the X rating is derived from the umpteen gallons of blood spilt in filming this movie.

And there is no need for it. "Walking Tall" is the story of a wrestler returning to his hometown. When he is beaten up along the town's new sin strip he vows to clean it up. "Walking" is the story of how he becomes sheriff and does, in fact, clean up the town.

The plot is not new; the hero is overdramatized to an incredible degree; and the violence leaves you sinking in your seat.

The movie, says the theatre ad, just might emulate the success of "Billy Jack", a fairly good picture that drew large audiences everywhere it went. But "Walking Tall" will be no such movie. It may — just — be as successful (monetarily) as "Billy Jack". I don't know.

But its violence puts it in another class from "Billy Jack" entirely.

There is no need for the movie to show us a man knifed back and forth across his chest. There is no need to show us how the new sheriff breaks heads open with a four foot wooden club; no need to watch actors speak with blood gushing from their mouths; no need to see blood spurting from the sheriff's dying German Shepherd; no need to see the sheriff's wife's head shot off.

No need for much of the picture at all. Moviemakers can't tell me that all that blood was necessary; I can believe a man had his head broken open without it being shown to me. So can a lot of other people.

Walking Tall is a good story; it has a moral (good people should always Walk Tall, no matter the cost); and it entralls its audiences.

But the production is sick. I just thought I'd let you know.

ALONG THE TRACKS

League minutes to spend hours with; Volume one

By STANLEY JUDD

I have just received, from the Information Office of the League of Visionary English Underminers, the minutes of the League's winter convention. They were entitled, wisely enough, "Minutes To Spend Hours With, Volume One". Although the minutes are complete, they are still called Volume One. This is done in case Hector, the commander of the League, wishes to change what went on at the convention, at which time he will issue Volume Two. In this way, Hector has the power to control history. We admire him for that. It is a feat too rarely accomplished. As for spending hours with the minutes, no one complains. Every one of the two hundred and forty-five pages of minutes is pertinent to our cause. And we are all devoted until death (and perhaps longer) to realizing our visions and undermining the minds of those who don't, which is, in part, what our cause is all about (for those of you who are still asking).

Agents of the League are not permitted to speak of any convention until the minutes arrive. Until that time, we, even if we were in attendance, are not sure if the convention took place or not. Hector has devised a system of 'false' conventions which are held to see if there is any value in holding a real convention. However, I have never attended a 'false' convention because I have never seen any minutes from a 'false' convention and therefore they don't exist.

Once the minutes arrive, we all become 'informed sources' and are able to speak freely to our friends and to the press about the convention, unless of course you are an under-cover agent. Minutes of conventions are never sent to under-cover agents because of the importance of their remaining 'under the covers', so to speak. So the only conventions that under-cover agents attend are 'false' conventions, which, as I have explained, don't exist. In other words, receiving minutes from a convention is proof that the convention did, in fact, take place and that you, as an agent, did, in fact, attend. That is unless, of course, the minutes you receive are 'false' minutes of a real convention which are sent to agents who Hector believed are being watched by those who wish that the League did not exist and who are trying to infiltrate our ranks in order to destroy us from the inside. In this case, agents are instructed to let the minutes fall into the hands of anyone who appears interested. Now that the importance of the minutes is clear, let's move on to the convention itself. Remember that as a receiver of "Minutes To Spend Hours With, Volume One", I am an 'informed source' and everything I say is true - at least until Volume Two is received.

The 1973 Winter Convention of the League of Visionary English Underminers was held in Ottawa, Ontario. The exact dates are not known, but you can rest assured that it didn't begin until December 21st (Hector is insistent that winter conventions are held in the winter) and

that it ended before midnight on December 31st (which is when 1974 began). Ottawa was chosen as the site of the convention because Ottawa, it is said, is the pulse of the nation. Perhaps that is why Canadians are often referred to as deadbeats. Those of you familiar with Ottawa are aware of what I mean. What is most talked about by the inhabitants of Ottawa is a new, quite spectacular shopping center called Bayshore, which is as fate would have it, outside the city limits. Those who live inside the city limits can find nothing there worth talking about, save their neighbours (who in most cases aren't worth talking about either). But life goes on in the capital and we all breathe (ever so slowly) because of it.

Back to the convention. All the notables were there. It certainly was good to see everyone again. Agent Neville flew in from Peking. Agent Wopaul was up from Miami. Agents Schaefer and Flaminski bounced in (on an orange rubber ball) from League Headquarters in Regina. Also attending were many of our top-notch under-cover agents (whom I didn't see, but whose names were in the minutes) and their wives (whom I did see). Agents Fleetwood and Jitters also made it, although they had to leave early. Seventeen new agents, a few of them UNB students, had the privilege of attending and speaking at their first League convention. (For those new agents who received their minutes and haven't been able to find the text of your speeches included, don't worry. They're not there.

They never are.) Dick Tuck, the proposed guest speaker, didn't make it. Seems he was up to his old tricks again and wasn't planning to attend anyway. Hector, however, was one step ahead of him and had told him the wrong dates on which he was to speak, so that Dick Tuck's telegram (full of lines like "Ha ha, I fooled you all!") arrived four days after everyone had packed up and gone home.

What went on, you say? I don't know. The minutes say I was there, but I don't remember any of it, other than meeting my old friends and getting drunk. The minutes say that Agent Schaefer was elected to the League's Hall of Infamy for his successful recruiting drive in the Maritimes and for being a kind and loving friend towards all agents, but I don't remember. The minutes say that Agent Wopaul's request to take a course in cloud-seeding so that he could arrange to have the western White House "washed into the ocean" was turned down because its existence is serving the League's purposes quite well at the moment. Agent Wopaul was re-assigned to Miami where he is training crocodiles for the invasion of Miami's best hotels. Or so the minutes say. I don't know; I can't remember. The minutes say that I, Agent Stanley Judd, was elected Chief Information Officer for the League, but I don't remember, although I do know that that is now my job. How do I know? The minutes say so! Don't you understand? It's history now. It happened. I was there. It's the truth. It's all true - at least until "Minutes To Spend Hours With, Volume Two" is received.

DOONESBURY



by Garry Trudeau