

COLUMN

La route vers Glendon

Attempts at bilingualism

by Ed Drass

Last year *Pro Tem*, the Glendon College newspaper, ran a story on the tokenism of York University's bilingualism. It seems that while you can function reasonably well at Glendon in either French or English, you might as well leave your French behind when you pass the gates of York Main.

This might not be so unexpected if York wasn't trying to pass itself off as a bilingual institution. In the past, students visiting from Glendon; full-time York Main francophone students; and summer school kids from Quebec would only see their native tongue on the school's logo (and recently around the offices of the newly renamed YFS/FEY).

Mais la realite de cette difference linguistique entre les deux campuses disait que Glendon s'eloignait de York Main et maintenait ses propres services. Cela a aide a augmenter les tensions entre les deux bureaucraties, entre le CYSF et l'AECG (Association des Etudiant(e)s de College Glendon) et aussi entre *Excalibur* et *Pro Tem*.

In 1988 and 1989, York administration came up with a plan to draw all of York's college councils into the then CYSF, including Osgoode Hall, Atkinson and Glendon. Understandably, power struggles developed and resistance was strong at times from the GCSU (Glendon College Student Union).

Glendonites felt that they would become an afterthought at York Main and would lose the ability to manage their own affairs. There are similarities here with situations across the country between Quebec and the rest of Canada.

At the time, the CYSF realized

the situation was severe, and after getting together with the GCSU improved the situation with various measures including changing its name to the bilingual version of YFS/FEY. Jean Ghomeshi, current president of the YFS, said that while the name change would be a gesture to Glendon, it would also reach out to a "not insignificant number of francophone students at the Main campus" (approximately 1000). He expressed concern that the YFS would have to be careful not to appear to be mirroring the administration's token bilingualism at the Keele campus. Asked if he thought the YFS would encounter resistance for its measures, he outlined problems on two fronts. First, "unilingualists" on Main campus may complain about the cost of making the YFS bilingual. Secondly, Ghomeshi was concerned that Glendon students might see the move as only paying lip service to them. But he admitted that YFS didn't have the time or resources to provide all services in both languages as is the case at Glendon campus.

So, we can at least look for translated versions of YFS/FEY pamphlets as well as the freedom to address student council in both tongues. Glendon-York relations are still not perfect, so more than official measures may be necessary to improve the situation. Says Ghomeshi, "... [but] could you really operate at York Main in both languages? Not really."

Le debat sur le bilinguisme n'arretera pas, a notre universite et au Canada. Quand on a un pays et une institution avec des groupes distincts, il y a des mesures artificielles, et il y a des conflits. Que la tolerance regne.

Down from the skies



SOCIETY OF THE SPECTACLE: Daphne Schiff, director of the York courses, *Science of Flight* and *Physics of Flight* landed a small Cessna aircraft on the freshly-cut grass field between Murray Ross Parkway and Keele Street last Tuesday morning. Schiff's flight is an annual event sanctioned by North York mayor Mel Lastman and York president Harry Arthurs.

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