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- Rick Argals

Quebec Year Eight

Separatists, students hold weekend waffle

by Linda Bohnen

Glendon College and its Quebec Year Eight Forum are 20 years too late--Quebec will be a sovereign state within five years through an alliance of left and right-wing separatists.

This was the consensus reached by the majority of 500 students, speakers and professors participating in the Glendon College Forum last weekend.

It was the charming and rakish Gilles Gregoire, independent separatist MP who

summed up the mood of Quebec:

'I have received such a welcome (at Glendon) that I wonder why we want to separate. You people have understanding and are in good faith, but the people in power aren't. Tomorrow I will be back in the House of Commons and I will know why we want to separate.'

Both the speakers and the participants in the Forum seemed to be divided between separatism and some form of federalism on the basis of the economic rather than cultural consequences.

Prof. Michael Oliver, academic vice-president of McGill University was the only speaker whose main point was that the language rights of French-Canadians ought to be extended outside the province of Quebec, so that French-Canadians 'can live their lives in French'.

Prof. Oliver said Ontario held the key to the problem since she seemed willing to extend the rights of her French-speaking population.

Montreal student Jean-Claude Dallair demanded why Prof. Oliver was answering in English questions that had been asked in French.

'You're asking if we (the English-Canadian contingent) are not here. You welcome us in French, then switch to English for the balance of the speech and the questions. It's symptomatic of the whole English-Canadian attitude.'

Prof. Oliver compared the separatists with student activists and the Negro activists of the U.S. -- and was accused by the French-Canadian students of not carrying the analogy to the suppressed Negro population far enough.

The Saturday afternoon discussion with Robert Cliche, Heward Grafftey and Eric Kierans concentrated on the potentiality of violence and the economic consequences of the Quiet Revolution.

Cliche, leader of Quebec's New Democratic Party, denied that the Revolution is so quiet.

'Every morning I wake up wondering what bomb--social or political--will go off.'

Cliche described the Revolution as a break with the past, a past in which 'purveyors of myths' allowed the 'nation of shopkeepers' to take over Quebec's economy. He said Quebec's relationship with France was 'just normal' -- 'I will stop looking over to France provided you stop looking over to England.'

Kierans, Minister of Provincial Revenue in the Lesage government said, 'We must stick together to build something far better than we can achieve separately.'

He denied that Quebec could maintain her present state of affluence after separation, point out that there are economic arguments against the existence of an independent Canada.

Kierans called the Duplessis concept of government 'mid-Victorian' in comparison with the Lesage Government. About Lesage's reforms in education and religion, he said, 'We didn't

go too fast but we failed to explain what we were doing. The religious revolution upset a lot of people in the very roots of their being.'

He called the Revolution 'existential', saying that in Quebec students don't have to look to Vietnam or Red China to find problems; La réalité (de Québec) est absurde.'

Founders ombudsman

An ombudsman will be around to cut Founders College red tape from now on.

Founders council has ratified a new draft of the student court constitution and established the post of ombudsman, to be held by the second vice-president.

His purpose will be to expedite student court hearings and slash the red tape in non-academic matters dealt with by Founders council.

The ombudsman will be able to provide all students with information and assistance regarding non-academic matters.

The student court has been fully recognized by council, college master, faculty, and the university administration.

The court's functioning will remain flexible, with

its mode of operation left to the discretion of the manager. Six student jurors will hear evidence and judge in each case. Any student, faculty member or member of the administration can ask that the court be convened.

The court sessions will be open to the press only at the discretion of the court manager.

Bill Tilbury, Founders second vice-president said, 'We think this will work. We won't be held down by technicalities and red tape as has happened in the past.'

'With the backing of both students and administration, our decisions will carry some weight. For instance, if a student did not pay his or her fine imposed by the court, we could recommend to the master's office that their marks be withheld.'

McGill students still at it

Montreal (CUP) McGill students voted down the proposal that the administration drop charges against Daily editor Peter Allnut and two of his staff, Wednesday November 22.

In a campus-wide plebiscite students voted 2,964 to 2,243 against the proposal.

Meanwhile Mr. Allnut and supplement editor Pierre Fournier denied last Thursday (November 24), that the Realist article was printed to provoke a confrontation with the administration.

In a second plebiscite, students voted down a strike motion on the Daily issue.

Allnut said the truth of his statement denying a provocation motive was proven by the fact they printed a retraction.

The students are being tried by the senate committee not as McGill Daily editors, but as individual students. The Daily was a vehicle for their acts, said Prof. Perry Meyer, chairman of the committee.

John Fekete, in whose column the original reprint occurred, is taking the senate discipline committee and the principal of McGill to court.

Lawyers are challenging the committee's jurisdiction in disciplining students, pos-

sibly expelling them, under articles of the Quebec Code of Civil procedure.

Conway surprises Fulton fans

Dave Warga

Davie Fulton, former Conservative Minister of Justice, made an impressive speech at Founders Wednesday night dinner stressing that Canada was formed in 1867 on the concept of equality of cultures.

This concept today must apply on a broader scope to cover all the provinces, he said. It was a typical political speech.

However, Dr. Conway surprised much of his audience with the ardor and adroitness of his brief opening and closing comments. His was not so much a speech as a statement of deep conviction and a plea for unity. He said if we as French and English cannot live in harmony there is no hope for the United Nations and a world coalition.

We were impressed with Mr. Fulton. But, at Founders' next dinner (or sooner) we would like to hear more from Dr. Conway.



- Rick Argals

A Quebecois questions...

by C.W. Matte

I was one of the 50-odd representatives from the York Campus attending Quebec Year Eight last weekend. My 'special status' as a reporter for Excalibur came from a vague promise I had made to the managing editor that I would attempt to give my impressions if it, with just enough bias to show that I am a French Canadian.

The conference started with a sort of kick-off by McGill Academic Vice-Principal Michael Oliver in the form of a bilingual joke with a French punch line. The response from the audience indicated a better knowledge of the French language than I expected. Dr. Oliver drew an analogy between the quiet revolution in Quebec and the search for 'student power'. I suspect the students of the Université de Montréal did not swallow too well the additional analogy he made with black power.

Already during this first evening, from the type and tone of the questions, you could feel that the seminar groups on Saturday were likely to hear much more from the Quebec students about their proposed Quebec 70 than the present Quebec 67. They were speaking as if separation was already a fait accompli. Could it be that things were that far advanced?

The next day, in the afternoon, Quebec NDP chief Robert Cliche, in spite of his name, did not come up with too many cliches. Instead of union in a negative way in our desire not to become American, what he pro-

posed was a socialist state as a common Canadian goal and a factor of unity. What may be said of the other two speakers Eric Kierans and Heward Grafftey, is that amazingly enough, they both seem to understand very well the French-Canadian problem.

Then came the Saturday evening session. So far, the Forum had presented three dimensions of the situation: the cultural, economic and political. It took René Levesque to add to it a fourth dimension: one with an historical element and emotional overtone, the patriotic dimension in a purely Quebec domain. And he succeeded in breaking all the rules of the game, speaking twice as long as his opponent Jean-Luc Pepin. His ability to convince people is phenomenal and after hearing him, it was much easier to understand why the Quebec participants all seemed to be his militant followers.

Unfortunately, I could not attend the rest of the conference. What I had seen and heard, however, was sufficient to give me a pretty good idea of what is currently going on in a province I left some twenty years ago. This was my first contact with the Glendon campus. I was particularly impressed by the way many students can express themselves and discuss in French. To me, this speaks very much in their favour. At their age, I could do almost as well in English, because it was a necessity. In their case, it is hardly one. Or is it?