

# CAMPUS CANADA our's

## UNB Poli Sci Students Visit Bourassa

by Bruce Bartlett

Ostensibly, the purpose of last week's trip to Quebec City was more-or-less to gain some first-hand experience with current political sentiments in Quebec. How successful the trip was in this respect ought, of course, to be judged individually by each of the twenty-seven students (and two professors) who made the trip. In comparison to last year's trip, however, one must frankly admit that in terms of a politically educative experience, this year's endeavor was somewhat less distinguished, for a number of reasons:

1. The level of political awareness and political interests among the students on the '71 trip was visibly lower than '70.
2. We did not have the fortune this year to meet Quebec students both in the city itself and at Laval.
3. Last year, a spring election was about to be called, everyone was assessing the chances of the Parti Quebecois, politically the atmosphere was electric. In March 1971, though, one sums to find the political atmosphere in Quebec somewhat de-fused; i.e. the Crises of last October have been quantitatively treated in the media to such an extent that a psychological saturation with politics appears to have taken place in Quebec. The controversy surrounding the FLQ crisis, the War Measures Act, etc., has been so long-and-heavy that public opinion in Quebec, politically, has become fatigued.

Optimistically, though, there were a number of political impressions fained from the trip. Justice Minister Jerome Choquette was a frustrating (though urbane) politician! In responding to questions concerning the proposed ident-

ity - cards system in Quebec and concerning his statements about "apprehended insurrection", he proved himself evasive, drowning the question in a flood of rhetoric and really failing to answer then satisfactorily. He repeated spoke of his great concern during the autumn crisis with the level of public fear and tension in Quebec. Guy St.-Pierre, Education Minister, was considerably more straight forward in answering questions put to him concerning the teachers' strikes in Quebec and the problems of making French the "working language" of Quebec (his department being engaged in programmes designed to facilitate the use of French as a working-language in Quebec). Unlike M. Choquette, M. St.-Pierre made no excuses.

Unfortunately, Premier Bourassa had only a couple of moments with the group, being pressed to return to the Assembly, where a debate on unemployment was in progress. Between the meetings with St.-Pierre and Bourassa, we did take in three-quarters of an hour of the National Assembly session. Despite the fact that he is about to step down as leader of the Union Nationale Party, ex-premier Bertrand (currently official opposition leader) was especially active. The small group of "péquistes" in the House indeed formed an impressive bloc. P.Q. leader René Levesque (who, tragically, failed to re-win his seat in the Assembly last April) wasn't in the galleries that day. His dynamic, charismatic presence in the Assembly is sorely missed this year.

Concerning the non-political aspects of the trip, it is fair to say that two nights "on the town" were roundly enjoyed by those who made the trip. Also fair to say, I venture, that those who could manage "en français" found themselves much more sensitive to the spirit of the city.

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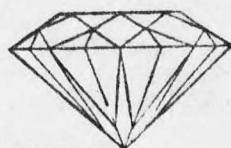
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