

Trudeau and his travails

Neil Wiberg

Minutes before the Prime Minister was to appear at Moot Court, the temporary press office at Osgoode Hall received a call from the CBC. The network's national unit had set up at the University of Toronto by mistake.

However, the crew raced to York and were set up in time. Their numbers swelled the accredited press contingent to a total of 86.

But in spite of a "national audience", York students did not ask the hard questions. In fact, the audience ignored the difficult issues.

Trudeau's last appearance at York was during his "gunslinger" phase, just before the 1979 election campaign. He has changed greatly since then, abandoning an aggressive approach for one which belies the fatigue he feels from his constitutional travails.

His main message was one of urgency in bringing home the constitution. He challenged the audience, taunting the Canadian people to take some action.

Trudeau differed from Premier Peckford on the question of urgency. He maintained that the constitutional dispute dates back some 54 years. Peckford argued that the current problems originated only with Trudeau's appearance on the federal scene in the mid 1960's.

Trudeau and Peckford also

differed on the possibility of unanimous consent among the provinces. The Newfoundland Premier believes that agreement is at hand and that another federal-provincial conference will resolve the dispute. Trudeau makes a far more pessimistic view.

Analysis

The Prime Minister argued that unanimous consent is an impossibility. He cited Quebec's last minute defection from the 1971 Victoria agreement as a typical example. Trudeau claimed that "what was good for Quebec in 1971, became good for everybody in '74, '75, and '76." Even if a position was agreeable to all provinces, one province would back out unless it received extra bonuses or extended rights, Trudeau maintained.

Peckford and Trudeau differed in their visions of Canada. Peckford believes Canada to be a federation of ten strong provinces, with strong control at the local level essential.

On the other hand, Trudeau feels that a national interest must prevail over regional interests. He conceptualizes this ideal in terms of a "national common good."

The Prime Minister was comfortable with his Osgoode audience. He managed to make several cutting remarks about his

political opponents, which were well received by the students.

He promised not to hold an election if the Tories were in the midst of a leadership convention.

This remark reminded students of Joe Clark's fight to win the leadership review vote at the upcoming Tory convention. It also cut down Clark for calling the last federal election when the Liberals were temporarily without a leader.

Technically, the Trudeau visit was flawless. The event started on time, despite the CBC difficulties. The microphones worked, the crowd was attentive and

appreciative, and the security precautions were adequate. The Liberal Club had even hung a "Bring It Home Pierre" banner to serve as an effective backdrop for audience shots on television.

Nevertheless something was missing. York students failed to bring forward any of the tough questions. Not one student questioned the propriety of amending the constitution out of Canada, just before it is to be brought back.

The Prime Minister provided us with a challenge and we failed to meet it.

Atkinson basement Floods and freezes

Berel Wetstein

A structural error in the design of Atkinson College is turning some of its basement offices into refrigerators.

According to York's Director of Physical Plant, A.K. Armour, it will take at least \$30,000 to correct the problem.

The comfort standards that exist in other buildings on campus do not exist in the Atkinson basement offices, where the temperature in some rooms has dropped to 9 degrees Celsius.

The director of facilities at Atkinson, A.P. Cote, says "this has been a problem ever since Atkinson opened and it's now

worse since the university cut back on heat at night." The lack of heat caused a pipe to burst on January 5 and resulted in workers being sent home for a few days, according to one member of Atkinson's janitorial staff.

The problem arises from a structural error in the original design which has the basement constructed with single pane glass.

Both Armour and Cote believe that unless the province releases funds for capital improvements the problem will not be solved.

Heavy-duty electric heaters and some re-insulation of window mouldings have been applied as a stop-gap solution.



Junior Yeowoman gymnast Cindy Jensen competes on the beam. See story page 12.

Bryan Johnson



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