

Faked separatist takeover of Quebec

Student project stuns Hum. 175 class

A CBC news bulletin graphic flashed on the television viewer in Humanities 175 Friday announcing the Quebec legislature had been taken by a separatist coup.

"For the second time in two years, a state of emergency has been declared and the War Measures Act invoked," the announcement continued stating Mitchell Sharp was acting prime minister because Pierre Trudeau could not be located.

Students were stunned. A continuing broadcast directed that no one leave the campus.

Course professor Frank Zingrone left the lecture hall and returned a

few minutes later saying "the whole thing is a student project, a hoax."

A voice called out from the back of the room, "they're all sick." The time lapse from start to end of the hoax — one-half hour.

Project head and first year student John Fecan explained, "I wanted to show the perception and deception of media. All discussion is based on the news, yet things can be omitted or added by the media, and we rely on it."

Fecan said outside of H.G. Wells' War of the Worlds radio broadcast which panicked all New York City, not too much experimentation has been done in media manipulation. Fecan, working with Bruce Woods, recruited other students to participate in the controlled experiment.

"I want to stress that the experiment was controlled. We had security guards outside the lecture

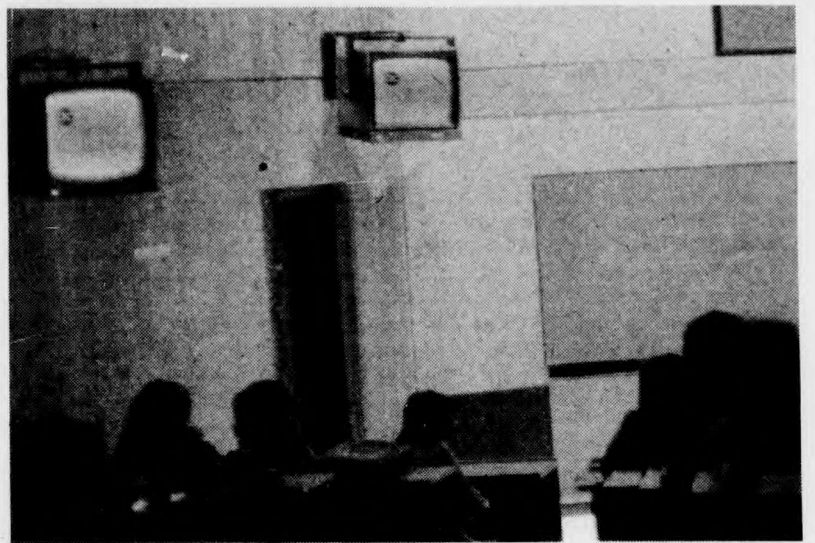
hall in case things got out of hand," Fecan said.

Zingrone said it was the presence of the security guard at the back of the room just as the announcement was made that convinced him the situation might be a legitimate crisis.

Fecan, public affairs producer for CHIN, recruited Radio York announcers to read the CBC bulletins and took the CBC graphics for use on the viewer. The total effect was professional enough to take in many of those present.

Zingrone knew nothing of the experiment beforehand, but said the nature of the course is such that it creates all kinds of frankenstein types.

The name of the course? Parables of reality.



The CBC graphic flashed on the tv screen in Hum 175 on Friday with a bulletin of the separatist takeover.

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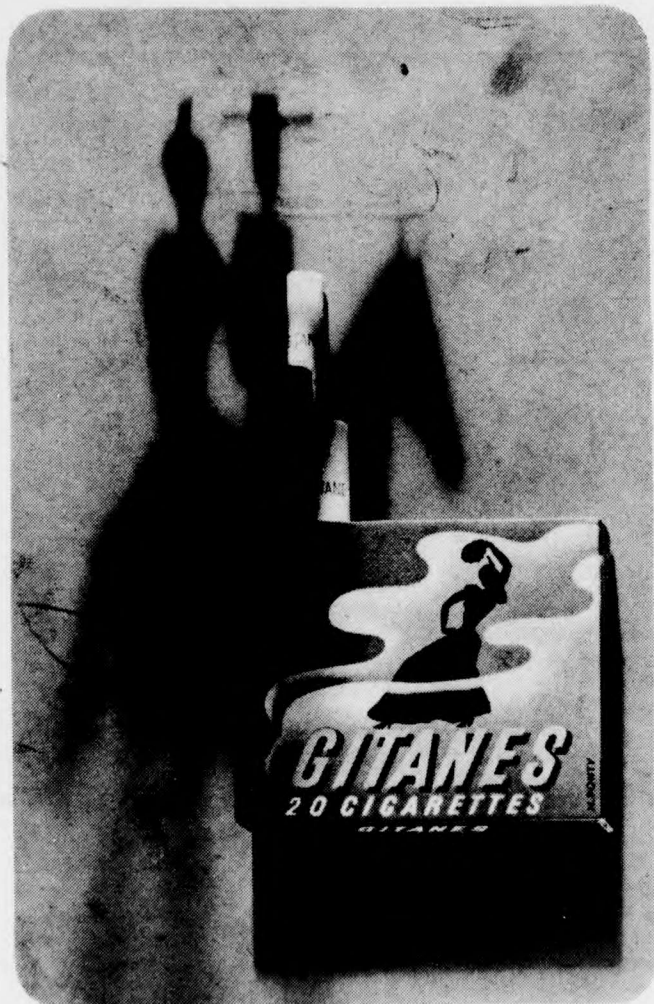
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