

Opinion Page

Politicians have "betrayed" those who can't speak French

Dear Sir,

A July 12 Globe and Mail article describing what happened at a meeting of The Committee of Corporate and Consumer Affairs illustrates what a linguistic mess this country is in.

Mr. Nickolas Murray, the president of The Canadian Consumers Association was appearing before this committee to make a presentation. Before he had the opportunity to speak the committee voted UNANIMOUSLY not to hear him and ordered him and his delegation out.

And what had Mr. Murray done, he dared to appear before this committee with his speaking notes in English. Incredibly this English speaking Canadian had the nerve to try and make his presentation in English from-English notes before a committee of the Government of Canada.

The chairman Mr. Garth Turner your MP from Halton Peel and the francophone MP's tore into him. Following his lead the 13 committee members, from all three parties, like a pack of jackals continued the attack.

There so called honourable members threatened him, degraded him, accused him of insulting and unlawful behaviour and suggested funding for his organization could be cut off. For 40 minutes these MP's lambasted him and his organization without once giving them the opportunity to even speak.

To quote Mr. Murray "It reminded me very much of McCarthyism. It's scary to think MP's could behave in this herd-like fashion."

In Quebec you might have expected this behaviour but this was Ottawa and yet not one of the Conservative, Liberal or NDP MP's saw anything wrong with what they were doing.

Clearly the three major political parties have betrayed all of us who cannot speak French in order to win votes in Quebec.

In an article in the July 23 Manchester Guardian Weekly, Mr. Maurice Allais, a Nobel prize winner from France pointed out the fact that English is now the only language for transmitting scientific thought throughout the world. Also, at the United Nations where the governments of all the nations of the world meet 90 per cent of ALL the documents prepared by these governments are written in English.

Yet, incredibly our government refused to hear this presentation because it was in English. Again a case of trying to appease Quebec.

This situation is only going to get worse unless we're prepared to do something about it.

Express your feelings to members of the federal and provincial governments; some may simply repeat the party line dictated from Ottawa and Toronto, others may listen, ask them what their going to do about discriminatory language legislation.

The following MPs are members of the Consumers Affairs committee: Garth Turner, Nic Lablanc,

Don Boudria, Catherine Callbeck, John Cole, Louise Seltham, Gabriel Larrivee, Ronald MacDonald, Peter McCreath, Marc Robitaille, John Rodriguez, Roger Simmons, Len Taylor, Brian White. Letters go free addressed to the House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6.

In Northern Ontario all Canadians who cannot speak French are being sacrificed to appease the francophone activists. If things continue to deteriorate under Mulroney and Peterson they soon might as well hang a sign on all federal and provincial government offices and agencies saying "No English Speaking Need Apply".

Why should all those who cannot speak French have to accept second class status to further the political ambitions of Mulroney or Peterson and Bourassa.

Jim Purdie
Haileybury, Ont.

Parking ticket protested

The following letter was sent to the Town of Halton Hills. It was filed with the Herald for publication.

Dear Sirs,
Please find enclosed my cheque for the parking ticket I received Aug. 3, 1989. I'm paying it because I am guilty of not putting money in the parking meter but I am doing so under protest.

I was parked in front of the store and I was only there for a total of two minutes. The meter maid must have seen me go in because she was writing when I came out.

The \$8 fee is an excessive amount for a parking infraction of two minutes - or 10 minutes for that matter.

I live in Georgetown and pay very high taxes. I resent my taxes being used to pay the meter maid's wages for this type of infraction.

Downtown parking should be

Dear Editor:

A headline in the Globe and Mail (July 17th, 1989) reads "Free AECL mini-reactor to heat university campus". So Atomic Energy of Canada Limited now thinks it can unload a give-away reactor on the University of Saskatchewan.

Not so fast: The teaching hospital at the University of Sherbrooke, Quebec, was ready to accept AECL's offer, until they smelled a rat, like the rest of the community. Late last year, the Hospital's Board of Directors unanimously rejected the Slowpoke project, even after oodles of public money was wasted by AECL promoting it. In so doing, the Board honoured: (1) a 1977 Quebec government moratorium on further development of nuclear power in that province; (2) a 1988 federal government all-party recommendation that called for a moratorium on new nuclear power plants in Canada until such time that Canadians can agree on an acceptable means of atomic waste disposal; and (3) universal public disapproval of nuclear industry growth.

Oh, but how the nuclear industry likes to blame the public for their

failures. When AECL hobbled away, one of their spokesmen said the Sherbrooke anti-nuclear coalition had engaged in a media campaign "designed to frighten rather than educate local residents."

AECL is perpetually tied up with public relations, so somebody else has to do the public education work on radiation. And what more exemplary candidates for the job than educators themselves. The stated concerns about the Slowpoke of the 400-member University of Sherbrooke Professors' Union were accidents, breakdowns, and nuclear waste. This is why a majority of Union professors passed a resolution against the project. Even in the nuclear medicine department - the body most frequently cited by AECL as user of the reactor - 29 out of 35 (83 per cent) of the resea-

chers signed a petition rejecting the Slowpoke! Add to this chorus of disfavor the 650-member nurses' union and the 2000-strong hospital workers' union.

One can only wonder how many times AECL will repeat this futile exercise before they finally get the hint.

Yours truly
Anne Hansen
Irene Kock
Nuclear Awareness Project

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Mrs. Dianne Fletcher,
Georgetown.



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