

A night of frenzy, debate and emotion at Le Caron

They jammed the gynasium of Le Caron last Tuesday night.

There must have been over 100 people at the public meeting on French language education. That compares quite favorably with larger centres like Barrie and Orillia, where crowds of 25 to 50 showed up for similar meetings.

There were teachers from Le Caron and St. Joseph's; Anglophone and Francophone parents; and

a lot of interested people.

At the front of the room, sitting at a large desk which might be well suited for a bingo game, were the members of the committee and the two directors of Francophone education in Simcoe County.

The presentations from the panel were done entirely in French but questions were answered in English if asked in that language and a bilingual printed

outline corresponded with the speakers' words.

They were there to discuss the possibility of creating a French Language School Board. The problems inherent in that suggestion - the diversity of Catholic and non-Catholic Francophones - were gathered in the room as evidenced by some of the audience's concerns.

Three models for that board were presented to the audience.

The first outlined how both public and separate French language schools could be placed under one autonomous board.

This means that trustees would be whisked from their positions on the current Simcoe County School Board and Separate School Boards and united under the umbrella of a board based entirely on linguistic grounds.

Right now, school boards

are based on religious dualism in this province. A separate school is separate because of religion.

School Boards are not designated by language in Ontario. The principal aim of the committee is to see that changed.

One member of the audience questioned the ramifications of such a scenario. Holding his outline in the air, he asked if there was any guarantee that a proportionate number of Roman Catholic school trustees would be elected.

Of course there wouldn't be. Education was based on language in this case, not religion.

The director of the Public French Language Schools, Denis Chartrand, tried to explain the situation.

"It is quite possible that all 10 board members would not be Roman Catholic," he said. "Then again, all 10 could be Roman Catholic."

Within the guidelines of this model, Roman Catholics would receive religious instruction in the form of a regular course. Non-Catholics would be excused or "a human values kind of course might replace the Roman Catholic instruction," Chartrand explained.

Model number two received some criticism too. Here the French Language School Board

would be Roman Catholic and non-Catholics would simply buy services.

"Doesn't this model just divide the Roman Catholic and non-Roman Catholic Francophone?" one woman in the audience asked.

The committee's president responded in the affirmative.

"Yes it does," said Jean-Louis Bourdeau. "All the power belongs to the Roman Catholic ratepayers; non-Roman Catholic Francophones do not belong."

The third model, where services and administration staff are shared between Catholic and non-Catholics, seemed to engender the most positive response.

That model is being tested right now in Ottawa-Carleton. Maurice Lapointe is the interim Executive Director of the French Language School Board there. Lapointe says the Ottawa-Carleton experience has shown that education can be rationalised.

"There is a lot of autonomy for both the Catholic and non-Catholic, but a lot of co-operation too. We avoid duplication of services so we don't have to add weight to the taxpayer. We are saving money to go for better education," Lapointe insists.

This means the ad-

ministration for public and separate units is the same. Services like libraries are also the same.

"As soon as you explain that religious autonomy won't be affected, that this plan will just make more sense, then people are quite willing to co-operate with you," Lapointe says.

He says the net effect is creating one cohesive school board while still allowing for religious differences.

"But we have to make it all constitutional."

The momentum for the changes in Ottawa-Carleton came from teachers, librarians, parents, psychologists: "there was good movement on the base," Lapointe says.

But will an Ottawa-Carleton plan work as well in North Simcoe?

Chartrand says that's what the purpose of Tuesday night was. He says the whole week was successful in that so many people had constructive criticism and informed questions.

"I'm not convinced that any of the three models is going to be accepted. People tend to react to the models listed but then improvise from there.

For instance when we were in Barrie, one man said 'I like this particular model but how about these changes?' Well, that's just what we've been hoping for.



Malcolm takes the stand

Ever diligent to address any organisation who will listen, the Mental Health Centre's Malcolm MacCulloch was at the Budd Watson Gallery to talk to the

Hurononia Association for the Mentally Retarded. MacCulloch has become something of a celebrity during his 11 months in Penetanguishene.

MacCulloch addresses HAMR

The Chief Psychiatrist at Penetanguishene's Mental Health Centre was at the Budd Watson Gallery last week. Malcolm MacCulloch was there to address the Huronia Association for the Mentally Retarded.

MacCulloch explained that the modern term of mental retardation hasn't always existed. "It has replaced some more caustic phrases originating in Europe," he said.

Life is not easy for the mentally retarded.

MacCulloch cited one study which showed one-third of mentally retarded children were disturbed by their parents and 40 per cent were disturbed by their teachers.

Retardation cannot be general. There are degrees. One can be educationally retarded, trainable retarded, severely retarded or profoundly retarded.

As well, mental retardation is often just one of many disorders. The concomitant problems may include: some defect of hearing or vision, balance disorders and epilepsy.

But the mentally retarded have greater difficulty in telling us about the extent of their problems because of their condition.

"The symptoms are not obvious," MacCulloch

says. "If we become depressed and talk to someone else, it's pretty easy to tell. We have a large repertoire of highly developed communication skills."

It is less likely that we would notice in the mentally retarded and even less likely that they would know how to com-

municate their troubles.

This was never more apparent in children who are so handicapped.

"There's a lot of anxiety within a normal child," MacCulloch says. "Well, there's all this and more in mentally retarded children."

And there are problems in the family. The stress of

learning that there is a problem with one of the children can lead to disharmony in the marriage. The other children might be disadvantaged by the special view that others take of their brother or sister.

"It takes special concern," MacCulloch says.

TED LIGHTS TV



Cobra

DIGITALLY CODED

CORDLESS TELEPHONE

So convenient...
Make or receive telephone calls by the pool or in the yard or anywhere up to 1,000 ft. away.

So good...
No one will know it's a cordless.


BEST BUY RATED Only **\$169.**

Main St


Penetanguishene 549-7978

Bryants Jewellers

Time to.....



start thinking "Christmas"



SEIKO

The flair. The value. The leader.

Interesting interlock links. The dash of diagonal patterning. The drama of double gold-tone bezels on black. Each design innovation comes out of a move ahead in technology. In our time, that's the role of Seiko — leading technology into new paths of elegance and performance at prices that are a breakthrough in their own right. Come in and see the whole collection. You'll find that nothing in your daily life gives you more for the money than your Seiko Quartz.

SEIKO AUTHORIZED DEALER

66 Main St. Penetang

549-8911