

CASTOR COMMENT



In for lunch

(Photo by Mary Rowsell)

Correspondence

Student Claims —

Life at O.T.H.S. torture

I was all set to enjoy 4 or 5 years in North Dundas District High. Despite the overcrowding it was a great school with many courses, good administration, and lots of representation by the older Russellites. I had a great year in grade 9. . . almost.

Near the end of the year, just before the final exams, it was announced that the grade 9 Russell students of 1973-74 and the grade 8 students of Russell Public would be attending their next year at Osgoode Township High.

So we were herded into

O.T.H.S., which as we had figured was overcrowded from the first day. We were all lost with no-one to turn to. To make matters worse it was rumoured from then on that a number of the O.T.H.S. administrators were slightly prejudicial against Russellites. That rumour was proven true on occasion.

We, the first grade 10's at O.T.H.S., in my opinion suffered the most; through disorientation (making it harder to study) losing most of our friends from Russell, making few good friends at O.T.H.S., over-crowding, pre-

judice and no late buses after school, for extra-curricular activities.

It all ended up in a total lack of school spirit, which I imagine inspired many students to drop out.

By grade 12, the few Russellites of the same grade felt just as lonely as I did.

I am glad that I am out now. I wouldn't have been able to go through another year of the same mental torture.

Despite the suffering, I would have to admit that a lot of money must have been saved on transportation, which as I see it is the only reason we were sent to O.T.H.S. Why then didn't Russellites have any after-school buses for activities? The money saved must have gone somewhere but it sure as hell didn't go to the benefit of Russell students like it should have. God knows we suffered for it.

Now Russell students are going to be pushed around again and I don't think it's right. I think that Russellites should ask whoever is responsible to stop tossing students around like that.

June Graham,
Russell

Danny McNeill,
Russell

Dear Editor:

I would like to reply to the person who wrote "Education Fiasco" in the May 5th issue of the Castor Review.

The school board was accused of using the high school students as a "football" from one school to another. It was not the school board who initiated the shifting. The school board was requested by some people to take the children from North Dundas High School to begin with. The school board members were reluctant to do anything about it until they were instructed "in writing" by

the parents and ratepayers to return the children to North Dundas. Thus the written petition which was submitted to the board and brought about the transfer once again. The school board only carried out the instructions given by the residents. I might add though that the school board was very much in favour of having the students return to N.D.D.H.S. and were pleased to receive the petition from the people requesting this change.

Dear Mr. Van Dusen:

Enclosed is my tribute to a shy, old fashioned flower that crowds the foundations of many older homes in Russell. As a child - and who isn't when hunting for Lily of

the Valley - I delighted in gathering them.

Please convey my appreciation to Tina of her "Weathered Barn" in the May 5, 78 issue. We share some of the same values.

We continue to enjoy the Review.

Thyra Hudson,
Ottawa

Editor's Note:
We can appreciate the writer's confusion over the initials T.V.D. attached to "Weathered Barn". The author was actually Tina's father Thomas, publisher of the Castor Review. We'll assume Thyra's appreciation applies none-the-less.

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A model approach

The show of solidarity by francophone and anglophone parents attempting to preserve the character of St. Joseph's school is heart-warming.

These days when it seems French and English just abut everywhere else in the country are at each others throats, the spirit of cooperation shown by Russell parents makes us feel there's still hope.

The parents headed by a six-member consultative committee, are fighting together to keep St. Joseph's French. The Prescott-Russell board of education wants to restrict it to exclusive anglophone use.

The English parents want to keep their children among francophones so they'll become truly bilingual while the French parents feel their children stand to gain from mingling with anglophone classmates - some from Dutch and German backgrounds.

We see the joint campaign mounted by the parents as an example to be followed by other Canadians. Let's start practicing cooperation instead of segregation.

And let's hope the board of education doesn't force the St. Joseph classmates apart, thereby joining the faction working to pit English and French Canadians against each other.

Hollow-een

It's early yet but already Halloween's pumpkin face is protruding above the horizon. From Russell's point of view, the mask is a leering one.

The mask conjures up visions of fires in the street, loud, drunken youths destroying public and private property, apprehensive eyes peering from behind drawn shades.

For the children, whose time this is, there is no special meaning here - get the goodies and get home before the trouble starts.

Will the residents of Russell once again passively accept Halloween as a black mark on an otherwise bright calendar?

Booing O'Canada

When Ruth Ann Wallace at Toronto, Ont., switched to French while singing O Canada at a Timcoet Blue Jays ball game, she drew boos instead of applause. Deplorable as such incidents are, because of the ignorance displayed of the basic bilingual character of Canada's Confederation, they nevertheless show a deep, underlying resentment in English Canada at what is going on in Quebec.

Bill 101, the threats to divide Canada, the condition of almost de facto separation which appears at times to exist, are laid by many English speaking Canadians at the door of the present Quebec Government. This has resulted in a feeling of frustration across this country, a feeling that there is no way to satisfy Quebec's demands, which finds vent in such episodes as the booing which took place at Exhibition Stadium in Toronto.

Regrettably, the situation is not improving. Even a year ago, the singing of a few verses of O Canada in French would not have produced a negative reaction. But the reservoir of good will which had been built up appears to be running-out. This is unfortunate for all Canadians and for Canada's future.

Fishing for rights

Who are the St. Regis Indians trying to kid? The claim made by Band Chief Lawrence Francis that they hold aboriginal right to the St. Lawrence River and can thereby demand payment from people fishing or hunting the area would be laughable but for the connotations of law-breaking and violence which it implies.

The Indians asserted the same claim during the hunting season and were allowed to get away with it because of the supineness of the Federal authorities in the face of many challenge no matter how insipid and the stupidity of the provincial authorities who seemed to feel that they had no means of coping with blackmail and implied violence.

We are now moving into the ridiculous situation where a combination of Federal inertia and provincial stupidity will apparently permit the harassment and blackmail of law abiding citizens and visitors to the St. Lawrence area by a handful of individuals who happen to be Indians.

While this kind of procedure does not help the cause of the Indians (and, Lord knows, they have many legitimate griefs) it certainly reveals in all its ludicrous ineptitude the infinite capacity of the bureaucracy at both Federal and provincial levels to muddy the waters. It should be made unequivocally clear to our native brothers that the law of Canada prevails on the St. Lawrence River, that aboriginal rights as a concept remain to be legally defined, that a policy of first come, first served is not a substitute for law and that blackmail and intimidation will harm the Indians and no one else.

Lily-Of-The-Valley

Lily, where are you? shyly hiding
In a tall green cloister, shading your bloom;
A necklace of delicate ivory carved,
And finest French perfume.

Lily, I'm listening, are the fairies ready
This evening to ring each perfect bell?
I'm sure that it happens when humming-birds visit,
Ring once and I won't tell.

Lily, don't leave until we've touched noses,
I need the memory of your scent,
It's far too long to be without you,
Sleep safe 'till winter's spent.

Thyra Warner Hudson

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